

Press release

## Santiago Cucullu The new old days

Opening: Thursday 11 January 2018 from 7pm to 10pm

Duration: until 12 March 2018

Exhibition space: Galleria Umberto Di Marino - Via Alabardieri 1, 80121, Napoli

Opening hours: Monday - Saturday 3 pm / 8 pm – by appointment in the morning

Galleria Umberto Di Marino is pleased to announce the new solo show by Santiago Cucullu entitled *The new old days* which opens on Thursday 11 January 2018.

Over the years, the artist's work has focused mainly on the process by which an episode linked to one's personal, social and political life is conveyed to someone who has not played a direct part in it through an aesthetic experience.

By collecting small episodes taken randomly from the urban imagination or from subcultures, the creative process originates from the transformation of all the elements that comprise memory into concrete form. The spatial distance, the time elapsed, the unpredictability of events that occur from the moment the experience begins to the creation of the work, all are turned into an experience that each visitor perceives in a subjective manner.

Santiago Cucullu condenses this type of reflection into an extensive investigation into the medium and materials, passing through rooms occupied by installations made using wall drawings and ceramics.

The starting point is drawing, an intimate instrument through which the artist tries to avoid placing any type of objectification between himself and the experience since the only evidence of his presence in this specific place and moment is already affected by contingent conditions and the speed of execution. The ancient technique of decorating clay with underglazes involves an ancestral, metaphysical dimension that immediately evokes the origins of representation.

The piece can be fired up to four or five times and undergo various types of "shock" according to the materials, the order of application, and the temperature of the kiln. The effect caused by the various transitions can sometimes be unpredictable, giving the artist the sensation that it is the material itself that defines the way of conceiving the finished work. The themes of the wall drawings depict some of the stages that are no longer visible in the ceramics and that would be lost unless the artist had not decided to record them again through painting. At the same time, the use of everyday objects such as plates and wooden moulds bear traces of those who have used them, wear, humidity and a change of temperature, while the writing, taken from the word games of street slang and half forgotten notes, embraces the possibilities offered by the interruption and manipulation of meaning, generating unchecked energy based on errors and accidents.

The exhibition layout adds a further level of interpretation. The degree of aesthetic adherence to the narrative depends on the combination of items, the side of the plate that is shown and the internal references that emerge. The space of the exhibition is therefore subject to the loss of control of the final effect in order to highlight the cultural perspective from which we observe and interpret the world.

**Santiago Cucullu** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and currently lives between Milwaukee and Boston. He holds an MFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (1999). His work has been shown both nationally and internationally in public and private spaces, such as: Walker Art Center of Minneapolis (2000); Blum and Poe Gallery, Los Angeles (2001); Fondazione Sandretto Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy(2003); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo and Gavin Brown Enterprise at Passerby, New York(2004); Musee de Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey and Hammer Museum di Los Angeles (2005); Museum of Contemporary Art di San Diego (2006); Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal(2007); Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York e Looock Galerie, Berlino(2008); Salina Art Center (2010); Green Gallery, Milwaukee e Galeria Labor, Mexico City (2011); CIAC, Mexico City (2017).

He participated in 2004 at Whitney Biennial at Whitney Museum, New York, in 2006 at Singapore Biennial, in 2010 at Biennial of the Americas, Denver and in 2013 at Wisconsin Triennial, Madison Contemporary, Madison WI.

He realized two solo exhibitions at Galleria Umberto Di Marino: *The creaky shaft* in 2007 e *The Chosen Few* in 2011