

## GALLERIA RAFFAELLA CORTESE

### PRESS RELEASE

#### Michael Fliri

#### *AniManiMism*

Michael Fliri, *AniManiMism*

via a. stradella 1-4

William E. Jones, *Holes in the Historical Record*

via a. stradella 7

**Opening reception May 16th, 7 pm – 9 pm**

**May 17th - July 28th, 2018 | Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 1 pm / 3 pm – 7:30 pm and by appointment**

Galleria Raffaella Cortese is pleased to present *AniManiMism*, Michael Fliri's third solo show at the gallery since his first collaboration in 2007.

Fliri's practice is at the intersection of performance, sculpture, photography and video. His work, which cannot be summarized in a single definition, investigates concepts such as metamorphosis, mutation and disguise. The protagonists of his works – often the artist himself – continuously undergo a process of alteration or transformation, where body, landscape and metaphors merge into an engaging whole. His research, focused on investigating identity, manifests itself through the recurring theme of the mask and therefore the partial concealment and change of the face. Pursuing this common thread, the artist is showing sculptures, photographic works and a video installation.

On view at the space in via Stradella 1 is *Where do I end and the world begins*, an installation of sculptures created through a process employing two molds – a positive and a negative one – of masks from the Mask Museum in Diedorf (Germany): a mixture of lacquer and chalk, poured into the interior of a mask, is pressed by the exterior of a second mask, leaving the impressions of two different masks on both sides of this initially malleable material. The holes connecting the different masks' eyes allow viewers to "see" through the masks, thus creating new "individualities" capable of evoking the diverse cultural traditions that produced them. The new photographic series *My Private Fog II* further develops the theme of the encounter between face and mask, its changes and the new possible creations that this union can generate. The artist previously explored these subjects in the photographic series entitled *My Private Fog I* (2014). The artist's breath, altering the mask's transparency, exponentially decreases the visibility of the face itself. This creates images that, informed by the landscape that distinguishes Fliri's birthplace and home, South Tyrol, allude to shapes such as those of crystals, glaciers and snowy peaks. Themes of identity and disguise are also investigated in the sculptures of the *Gloves* series in which, for the first time, gloves are employed as "masks" for hands: the gestures represented suggest the action of covering one's face and thus hiding their features.

Metamorphosis is also at the core of the four-channel video installation *AniManiMism*, which gives the title to the exhibition. On view at via Stradella 4, it was produced and first exhibited on the occasion of Fliri's expansive solo show at De Garage, Cultuurcentrum Mechelen, Belgium in 2017. In this work Fliri achieves a tremendous poetic and evocative force linked to metamorphosis: the artist's hand, moving a mask made of transparent material, creates a shadowplay projected onto a cloth. In front of this "dance," viewers bear witness of the infinite possibilities of image creation. Hands, often present in Fliri's works and frequently evoked for their inherent shaping potential, echo in the words that make up the title of the exhibition: "mani" ("hands" in Italian) and "animation."

"For me, transformation represents new possibilities, new opportunities," says the artist. "Everything is in motion and isn't defined. The idea of the undefined is what interests me most." The central focus of his work thus raises questions about creation and identity: what determines whom? What we are? How do we form the image of ourselves? Are we really who we think we are?

Michael Fliri was born in Tubre (Italy) in 1978. He lives and works between Innsbruck, Zurich and Tubre. His works have recently been featured at: Cultuurcentrum Mechelen (2017); Mu.ZEE, Ostend (2017); Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato (2017-2011); Museion, Bolzano (2016); Mambo, Bologna (2016); MACRO, Roma (2016); Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck (2016); Kunstsammlungen, Chemnitz (2016); Mart - Museo di Arte Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (2015); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2015); Biennial of Moving Image Contour, Mechelen, Belgium (2015); Zeppelin Museum, Friedrichshafen (2014); MAC, Lissone (2013); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2012); Generali Foundation, Vienna (2010); Mart - Museo di Arte Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (2010); 3rd Moscow Biennale (2009); Fondazione Merz, Turin (2009); HangarBicocca, Milan (2009); Galleria Civica, Trento (2008). In the 2017 Mousse Publishing published the catalogue *Michael Fliri: Replace Me as the Substitute*. It was presented on the occasion of his solo show at De Garage - Cultuurcentrum Mechelen a Mechelen, Belgium.

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