

# Adrian Paci

## Per Speculum

Opening Thursday 23 November at 7,00 pm

francesca kaufmann is presenting the preview of Adrian Paci's new project 'Per Speculum'. Differently from Adrian Paci's earlier projects 'Per Speculum' is not inspired by a real incident but seems suspended in an undetermined, archetypical time and space dimension.

This 35 mm film is projected in the new gallery space. The main characters of 'Per Speculum' are children engaged in daring the sun with the segments of a mirror they had previously broken into pieces while it returned their image. The infants reflect the light from the branches of a tree they have climbed, thus infusing it with pulsing vitality. The breaking into pieces of the mirror is a dramatic, self-destructive act. It is followed unsuspectingly by the liberating gesture of a game. Simultaneously the perspective is inverted so that the sunrays are directed towards the spectator who is as if included in the work. Though light-hearted, the images of the film are endowed with subtle symbolical allusions which offer numerous interpretative openings. Above all, the breaking of the looking glass is a sign of anticipated bad luck in many cultures but here also becomes the excuse to play and gain knowledge. The title of the work itself quotes an often commented-on passage from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians *videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate tunc autem facie ad faciem* 13:12 ('We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face'). Its theme ponders human knowledge and its limited and indirect 'specular' vision seen in fact as the reflection of a truer knowledge. It is the nature of reflection which enables the film to reveal beauty in its natural element. Moreover the tree, portrayed in all its majesty, also recalls iconographic imageries such as Jesse's Tree, the Philosophical Tree and more generally the tree as a metaphor of life and genealogy. In a nutshell, the tree is a living and systematic structure able to sustain and unify plurality.

Alongside the film, Adrian Paci also presents a photograph which captures an immense abandoned structure in a desolate rural landscape enlivened by strong, blinding specks of light of uncertain provenance. Once again, the game with the mirrors and the sun disconcerts and endows space with the archaic beauty of light. Light intervenes within the form of all the works shown: the explicit light source of the slide-show shot during the preparation of the film thus links the projection and image in specular reflection.

The film 'Per Speculum' has been commissioned and produced by Milton Keynes Gallery and francesca kaufmann

Adrian Paci was born in Scutari (Albania) in 1969. He lives and works in Milano.

*To request further information and photographic material please do not hesitate to contact the gallery*