

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

**GIANLUCA CINGOLANI. IMAGO SUM**

Italian Cultural Institute - Beijing, 19-25 maggio 2023

An initiatory journey in which two civilizations meet on the eternal ground of memory. With a site-specific installation consisting of six sheets of artificial silk and two videos, Cingolani returns to China with a tribute to Matteo Ricci and his work on Western mnemonics (art of memorization)

*Art of memory means*

拘方執一,俾握樞轉丸之妙”

利瑪竇, 西国记法

Three and a half years after his solo exhibition *Fragmenta* at Beijing's Today Museum in November 2019, Gianluca Cingolani returns to China and does so with the site-specific installation *Imago sum* at the Italian Cultural Institute in Beijing.

It is a tribute to the Art of memory narrated by what is still recognized in China as the cultural ambassador par excellence in relations with the Western world: Matteo Ricci. To this art Ricci in 1596 dedicates a small treatise written in Chinese and titled 西国记法 (Xiguo jifa).

*Imago sum*, curated by the G\_B Collective - a group of artists, historians, linguists and writers who identify with the idea of community work on the great themes of history – leads us along the path of memory created from and through images: to observe, imagine a space (a palace, a theatre, a colonnade), then insert what we wish to remember in that space. When we want to remember we come back with the mind to the palace, the theatre, we make an imaginary walk through the colonnade. This is the world of the *Artificiosa memoria* - o - *Ars memorativa*, as it was called by Cicero which presents itself as a building block of the Western culture, from the classical world to the Renaissance: in the installation *Imago sum*, we meet Matteo Ricci, but also Plato, Cicero and Giordano Bruno, crossing the world from East to West.

The exhibition itinerary unfolds through six rolls of artificial silk and two videos, made with the artistic technique of digital compositing. The works talk to each other, in a dialogue held together by the great Masters of the art of memory.

Artificial silk, an impalpable and subtle material that allows itself to be traversed by light, by shadows, and transforms itself with them, was the perfect material, for Gianluca Cingolani, to give body to his artistic work, which is born digital and finds in the backlighting of the digital screen its own constituent element. The space where the installation will take place, through its large windows, realizes a natural backlighting that enhances, through silk, the play of overlaps and transparencies created through digital compositing, giving a density to impalpable, invisible subjects: thus emerge, in the works of the exhibition, the great keywords of the art of memory - in Latin and Chinese, the two languages of Matteo Ricci - and the images of the natural and architectural places that this art has nurtured.

"*Imago sum* - I am image - is an installation work dedicated to the power of memory, which is also a great creative power" - the artist says - "in order to remember, one should be able to imagine. The power of imagination: this is what Ricci narrates to the Chinese."

Gianluca Cingolani (Macerata, 1964) has been working for years on wide registers, between music, digital composition and passion for calligraphy, creating installations and images that measure themselves against the great themes of History. Memory, writing and languages are the terrain on which his artistic research moves. A research always attentive to the connection of the techniques of the digital world with living matter, with light in its natural/artificial declinations. His canvases and rolls, his videos are the vibrant and subtle texture on which light plays deception, evoking worlds, giving body to dreamlike visions, to fragments of magical sentences, offering the viewer opportunities for contemplation to enter the fabric of Time.

Gianluca Cingolani has exhibited his work in museum institutions, historical places, major events. In China in 2019, his solo exhibition, "Fragmenta," was held at the Today Art Museum in Beijing.