

EDUARDO SECCI

Press Release

Kevin Francis Gray

Curated by Sergio Risaliti

Milan, from June 3 to September, 2021

Opening | June 3, from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm

Exhibition hours | Tue – Sat / 10:00 am – 1:30 pm & 2:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Eduardo Secci is pleased to announce the **opening of the gallery's second location in Milan** with the exhibition of **Kevin Francis Gray from June 3 to September 25, 2021**. The solo show of the Irish-born artist, **curated by Sergio Risaliti**, presents some sculptures from the recent *Breakdown Works* (2020) series in dialogue with a selection of the most representative works of his artistic career.

The exhibition reflects the practice of Kevin Francis Gray, combining the study of classical sculpture techniques with a continual investigation of contemporary reality. He has been able to explore new ways of representation, experimenting with marble processing for nearly two decades.

The *Breakdown Works* series, created joining new materials, such as Giallo Siena marble, with bronze, raw concrete, steel, and ebonized wood, contrasts with sculptures characterized by smooth and finely worked surfaces. Gray's mastery continually toys between abstraction and figuration.

In works such as *Young Moon Girl* (2020), a celestial face seems to emerge from a material still in phase of refinement, that, through the insertion of geometrical elements, similar to crescents, makes the contrast even more evident. Likewise, the observer perceives the same tension in front of sculptures like *An Ceann Buí* (2021), a figure that lies between a moulded and raw material.

In this way, the exhibited works seem to retrace the artistic path and research of Kevin Francis Gray, now confident in combining his sematic material knowledge with the psychological dimension of his subjects and the meaning of the sculpture in the contemporary world.

"Sculpture is, perhaps, the privileged place of experimentation that sees in the possibility of crossing different techniques and heterogeneous materials a keystone for overcoming the post-modern appropriation and the obsession with intransitive newness. Kevin Francis Gray proves to us with new works that it is possible to develop the most daring research - the original - facing the great

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Western art history with its iconographic repertoires, rich in noble materials, retracing interrupted paths. And he does so by provoking us with complex games and surprising relations from a formal and conceptual point of view. The result is fascinating. After having enchanted us with exceptional mastery, the artist involves us in figurative reconstructions that do not disperse in sterile repetitions of styles or redundant baroque. His intervention - thanks to an in-depth study of stone qualities and techniques, genres and repertoires - aspires to produce disorientation and wonder, stimulating pleasure and imagination. A contemplation of the sculpted object becoming active because it actuates processes-efforts of reading and interpretation that are never boring or disorienting, as they are always accompanied and rewarded by sensations of pleasantness and enjoyment", exhibition's curator Sergio Risaliti explains.

Sergio Risaliti is the artistic director of the Museo Novecento in Florence and guest curator of the Contemporary Art department of the Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte.

Kevin Francis Gray - born in 1972 in Armagh in Northern Ireland -, lives and works between London and Pietrasanta.

The artist deals with the complex relationships between abstraction, figuration and portrait through sculpture. His research investigates the line between contemporary society and ancient times, reverberating aesthetics of neoclassicism.

He studied at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin (1995) and at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1996), before a Masters in Fine Arts at Goldsmiths College in London (1999). His works have been exhibited in United Kingdom at the Royal Academy (London) and Sudeley Castle (Winchcombe, Gloucestershire), in Ireland at the Crawford Art Center (Cork), Dublin Castle (Dublin) and Castletown House (Celbridge), in Italy at the Stefano Bardini Museum (Florence) and at the Palazzo delle Arti Napoli (Naples), in France at the Villa Santo Sospir (Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat), at the MAC VAL - Musée d'Art contemporain du Val-de-Marne (Paris) and at the Musée d'art moderne de Saint-Étienne métropole (Saint-Priest-en-Jarez), in the Netherlands at the Nieuw Dakota (Amsterdam), in Spain at the Artium, Centro-Museo Vasco de Arte Contemporáneo (Vitoria-Gasteiz), in Israel at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Tel Aviv), and in Canada at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (Québec).

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