



## PRESS RELEASE

### **LUCIANO VENTRONE. THE LIMITS OF TRUTH**

#### **From abstractionism to abstraction**

*A retrospective to be held at Fondazione Stelline from 31 January to 10 March.  
Organized by Angelo Crespi, the exhibition puts on display 30 works that explore  
the development of a painter nicknamed “the Caravaggio of the twentieth century” –  
from cells magnified under the microscope to the famous still lifes*

[Milan, 22 January 2019] From 31 January to 10 March, **Fondazione Stelline** will be hosting **The Limits of Truth**. From Abstractionism to Abstraction, a retrospective organized by Angelo Crespi encapsulating the oeuvre of Luciano Ventrone, described by his discoverer Federico Zeri as “the Caravaggio of the twentieth century”.

**The thirty works in the show, many of which on public display for the first time**, explore the long career of an artist who began painting in the classic figurative tradition at a very young age in the early 1960s, encouraged by a strong sense of vocation. His later development saw him take an interest in informal art and arte programmata before beginning his experiments with geometric forms – a thorough apprenticeship full of departures and variations that surged on the waves of the different currents swirling through Italian post-war painting. On the back of this excellent experience he was able with increasing confidence to evolve his own highly personal style, “**Ventronian abstract realism**”, in which the building blocks of painting (form, colour and light) are placed at the service of a Platonic philosophical concept that unveils the world of primal ideas.

From the **1990s onwards** his **still lifes** especially ceased to be mere representations of the real, efforts to achieve mimesis worthy of praise on their own terms. Rather, as Angelo Crespi explains, thanks to a resolutely cultivated talent they became successful attempts to go beyond reality and **establish the “limits of truth”**, the fine line beyond which lies genuine understanding. These works keep their distance from the real objects depicted, the better to achieve the maximum abstraction of “things out there” and to capture their essence.

Luciano Ventrone, who describes himself as an abstract artist attempting to come to terms with reality, a metaphysician forced to consider the transience of nature, is not only one of the leading and best known figurative painters in the world, but has a good claim to be considered a **scientist painter**. Ever since his paintings of the **1960s** depicting **cells magnified under the microscope** – later used as illustrations for books on neurology – he has honed his ancient technique consisting of patiently adding layers of oil paint, while keeping a close eye on the latest developments in advanced technology as it enables us to see ever “further” beyond the real.

Con il patrocinio di





Herein lies the source of the astonishment elicited by painting that tricks not the eye but the mind, causing a short circuit as we attempt to make sense of something that in reality doesn't exist: fruit, vegetables and flowers that are never quite this perfect, never so effectively lit, never so finely poised on the verge of being real.

*Luciano Ventrone was born in Rome in 1942. An article by Antonello Trombadori published in an issue of "L'Europeo" in 1983 led the art historian Federico Zeri to take an interest in the artist's work and to advise him to concentrate on still lifes. This marks the point when Ventrone began his long and as yet unfinished exploration of nature's many aspects, capturing ever more minute details that are almost invisible to "eyes bombarded by millions of images", as is typical in our day and age. Besides intriguing Federico Zeri, this endlessly probing scrutiny has over the decades brought Ventrone's work to the attention of other acute observers of the contemporary art scene, such as Sergio Zavoli, Duccio Trombadori, Marco Di Capua, Vittorio Sgarbi, Achille Bonito Oliva, Roberto Tassi, Giorgio Soavi, Edward Lucie-Smith, Beatrice Buscaroli and Eugenia Petrova, to name a few.*

## **LUCIANO VENTRONE. THE LIMITS OF TRUTH**

### **From abstractionism to abstraction**

Curated by Angelo Crespi

**31 January – 10 March 2019**

**Opening: 30 January 2019 h. 6.00 p.m.**

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 10.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. (closed Mondays)

### **Free admission**

Fondazione Stellite, c.so Magenta 61, Milano

Info: [fondazione@stelline.it](mailto:fondazione@stelline.it) | [www.stelline.it](http://www.stelline.it)

### **Fondazione Stellite**

corso Magenta 61,  
20123 Milano  
tel. +39.02.45462.411  
[fondazione@stelline.it](mailto:fondazione@stelline.it)  
[www.stelline.it](http://www.stelline.it)

### **Ufficio stampa**

Studio BonnePresse  
Marianna Corte +39.347.42.19.001  
Gaia Grassi +39.339.56.53.179  
[info@bonnepresse.it](mailto:info@bonnepresse.it)  
[www.bonnepresse.it](http://www.bonnepresse.it)

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