

MARC STRAUS NEW YORK

Sandro Chia

Exhibition On View: February 15 – March 31, 2019
Opening Reception: February 15, 6pm – 8pm

MARC STRAUS is proud to present its second solo exhibition of works by Italian artist, Sandro Chia.

Chia was a leading artist in the 1980's during the resurgence of figurative paintings. In a career spanning over four decades, Chia has exhibited in many of the most important museums and galleries of the world; including the MET, Biennale of Paris, São Paulo and three different iterations of the Venice Biennale.

His were youthful highly expressionist works. Now at age 72, they are quiet, introspective, and masterly. His fealty is to great Italian renaissance painting, but these new works are of this time. Chia has painted 36 new watercolors on paper that are so recognizably his, and yet retain all the vigor of his large canvases. Indeed, in this compressed scale the play of color and figuration is more sumptuous. These are personal characters with souls and purposes — probably all of them really self-portraits. They exist in their time and space with ambitions and destinies. There's a man and his rambunctious canine companion, living out their itinerant story. Where are they going?

Here the artist is looking at a life lived driven by the need to create and is after all limited by his talent. We all push against limitations and life inexorably moves forward. What do we make of the many lone protagonists, caught in a moment of time? There is a sense of place, time and narrative but much remains to be said. Perhaps we are to simply revel in the candor of Chia's hand; these unabashedly gorgeous works are done in the unforgiving medium of watercolor.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a recent bronze sculpture of a crouching figure whose outstretched arms interlock behind his head to exaggeratedly accentuate the body, thus achieving a posture that is both original and timeless. This is Chia's "Thinker" (2017), an homage to the human form. Chia's is time-weary, dreamy perhaps, meditative, alone. There are no absolutes after a life-long-lived for one activating their imagination as a career. In the end what is achieved? What was left undone?

Chia's sculptural technique is aligned with his painting, indelible hand-work that imbues the work with immediacy, affection, and undoubted humanity. As with these watercolors on paper, one can feel the artist's hand present in every contour; they are joyous. Sculpture and paintings: together they sum up the journey of an artist, this artist, with an indomitable spirit and belief in the necessity of art.

For more information, please contact Ken Tan (212-510-7646 / ken@marcstraus.com)



Sandro Chia, *The Thinker*, 2017
Bronze
57 x 38 x 29 in (144.8 x 96.5 x 73.7 cm)