PRESS RELEASE

**Federico Guida**

**ARBOR**

curated by Mimmo di Marzio

**10 November – 11 December 2022**

Sala del Collezionista and Quadriportico del Chiostro

**10 November 2022 – 8 January 2023**

Quadriportico del Chiostro

[Milan, 27 September 2022] Major contemporary painting returns to the **Fondazione Stelline** in Milan with the exhibition *Federico Guida: Arbor*, which takes its name from the Latin word for ‘tree’ and presents a selection of large new works in which transcendence and humanity, science, religiosity and history coexist. **Curated by Mimmo di Marzio**, the exhibition is on display in the Sala del Collezionista and the Quadriportico del Chiostro from 10 November to 11 December 2022, and continues in the Quadriportico until 8 January 2023.

The exhibition contains **the artist’s most recent production**, which ranges beyond the pictorial tradition and appropriates the styles and expressive forms of installation art. In his work, Guida examines the symbolism of the cross as a ‘genealogical tree’ and the foundation of the human condition. He explores the continuous balance between verticality ascending toward the mystery of the divine, and earthly quotidian horizontality and vanitas.

The recurring formal element of the cross is a reference to the profiles of Giotto and Cimabue’s medieval crucifixes preserved in Florence. Guida uses this form as a support for a composite pictorial narrative in which he weaves symbolism and narrative with abstraction and figuration. Each installation, composed of oil painting on linen mounted on wood, has a strongly conceptual dimension that interlinks the qualities of the sacred and the profane.

The powerful contrasts that coexist in each work stir deep sentiments: the portrait of a sorrowful mother, the rawness of violated flesh, the trompe l'oeil illusion of wood and the abstract torments of the canvas are sublimated into cosmic images, galaxies, eclipses

and nebulae, creating a tendency towards the Absolute and transforming the installations into totemic representations of existence.

An extensive catalogue in Italian and English, published by Prearo and edited and with texts by Mimmo di Marzio, accompanies the exhibition.

*The show has been organised by Fondazione Stelline in collaboration with* ***The Bank Contemporary Art Collection****, an influential entity that collects important artworks and carries out extensive research into new pictorial trends in Italy, with sporadic but significant incursions also into international painting. The Bank has always paid particular attention to the figurative genre, which has recently shown a strong resurgence in interest. The Guida exhibition therefore represents a new stage in the commitment to promoting and valorising Italian art. The collection now comprises the work of more than one hundred contemporary artists and is conceived as an organism that will continue to grow, evolve and transform in order to establish their work nationally and in Europe.*

***Federico Guida*** *was born in Milan in 1969, where he lives and works. He inherited his lifelong passion for painting and drawing from his grandfather and father. He attended the Brera Academy of Fine Arts and worked in the studio of painter Aldo Mondino. Far from seeking aesthetic beauty, Guida’s painting focuses on the human figure and ordinary people. He unites his solid technical background with a figurative language rich in personal connotations through the use of a variety of media: photography, oil paint, acrylic, chalk and fabric. The naked human bodies, immortalised in twisted and intertwined poses, provoke reflection on the drama of human existence, alleviated by the natural softness of flesh, which emerges in the lesson on light learnt from Caravaggio. Guida has depicted Milanese nights, asylums, and young and old down-and-outs, following a personal and unique practice that includes continuous stylistic refinement and constant attention to the human body and soul. He has held numerous national and international exhibitions and his work can be found in public and private collections.*

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*Sala del Collezionista Quadriportico del Chiostro*

Hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 10:00 – 20:00 (closed on Mondays)

Free entrance following current regulations for access to museums and exhibition spaces

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