

PRESS RELEASE

The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia University
and the Italian Cultural Institute of New York are pleased to present the
PREMIO NEW YORK
SPRING 2008 EXHIBITION
April 15-April 28

Opening: Tuesday, April 15, 5:30-7:30 pm at the Italian Academy
1161 Amsterdam Avenue (just south of 118th Street), New York, NY 10027
Subway #1 to 116th Street

March 30, 2008—The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America at Columbia University, together with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Directorate General for Cultural Promotion and Cooperation) and the Italian Cultural Institute of New York are proud to sponsor the Premio New York (New York Prize), a residency program for young Italian Artists. The artists in residence for the spring semester of the Sixth Edition of the Premio New York are Andrea Mastrovito and Silvia Vendramel.

Andrea Mastrovito presents *Libraries Are Not Made They Grow*, a site specific piece in the Italian Academy Library which comments on both contemporary culture and art. As the artist says: "You should always read a book twice. At least that's what I've read once in D.H.Lawrence's preface for his *Apocalypse*. So I started reading that book and I never finished it, too boring. In Damien Hirst's, *On the Way to Work* I found out that he discovered art through artbooks and not through exhibitions. Today you can discover this exhibition through all these books, and you don't have to read them even once! Of course, you must know that this is a beautiful library. Until a few years ago, it was not full. Like your stomach, you have to fill it. If you have a pocket, you need money. If you have a library, you need books. The Italian government sent boxes full of books. Good books and bad books: if somebody sends you a book, he's a good friend. So, when people from Columbia now look through the window of our library, they're really gratified because now they find we have books, so we have intelligence! Umberto Eco once was asked: "You've got a lot of books in your library: have you read all of them?" He answered: "If I had already read them, why should I keep them here?" This show is the fastest way to read them: they're just images of themselves, like in Plato's cavern, they've got only two dimensions, so you can just take a look at their spines, that's all they've got, with their title, the ultimate summary; you can read them as many times as you want, it's easy and fast, and then you'll have time to go shopping and watch television. You'll really enjoy it, trust me."

Andrea Mastrovito has exhibited in the M.A.X.X.I. museum in Rome and the Centro Pecci in Prato among many other institutions in Italy and has had numerous solo shows in Europe and the U.S. His work was exhibited in one man shows this spring at the Foley Gallery and at the Pulse Art Fair, both in New York.

Silvia Vendramel presents *Here Exactly*, continuing her artistic research through the use of sculpture and installation. Her interest in sculpture runs along two parallel tracks where introspection and tangibility meet and maintain a constant dialogue. In the exhibition *Here Exactly*, Vendramel assembles pieces that may suggest real objects; musical instruments, beds or pottery are envisioned in the artist's quest for the innermost sense of representation. Her research begins with the collection of shapes and material. Through gradual articulation in space, she gives shape to a language that owes as much to intuition as to the potential of the material. Her work introduces a series of fragmentary compositions where assonant elements rhythmically converse with each other through a constant backward and forward movement. Sculpture as an "action of transformation" is a major concern in Vendramel's work. Her multifarious use of handcrafted and natural objects presents a sinuous, yet fully aware reflection on the recent history of sculpture. In some works the symbolic is the central objective in Vendramel's work while in others the symbol merges with the character of the material and becomes the inner instrument for representation. In view of the relation each piece maintains with the surrounding space, the artist realizes a series of works whose character can be defined simultaneously as spontaneous and empirical. The leading role of texture and color confers a cryptic yet evocative character to her work.

Silvia Vendramel's work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany

Exhibition hours: Weekdays from 9:30am to 4:30 pm
www.italianacademy.columbia.edu