

Andrea Büttner: The Poverty of Riches

Andrea Büttner's work explores the crossover between religious and artistic rituals, as well as the similarities between religious communities and the art world.

Büttner is the third recipient of the Max Mara Art Prize for Women in collaboration with the Whitechapel Gallery, and was awarded a six-month residency in Italy. The residency gave her the opportunity to spend time with monastic groups, see Giotto's frescoes, and engage with the Maramotti Collection. She encountered the work of artists such as Alberto Burri, Enrico Castellani and Piero Manzoni, whose use of poor materials prefigures the Italian Arte Povera movement of the 1960s. These influences are evident throughout *The Poverty of Riches*, in which Büttner emphasises the gallery as a place of gathering and contemplation, and links the notions of poverty as expressed in Italy in the twelfth century by St. Francis and again in the twentieth century during the Arte Povera movement.

This exhibition presents work made from simple materials with traditional techniques and imagery. Woodcuts depicting Christian iconography, such as a table set for a meal, are presented alongside what Büttner calls 'paintings': monochromes made from the everyday textiles of public service uniforms like those of park wardens, policemen or refuse collectors. Through these works, together with other, evocatively humble materials – a pile of apples, a paper table cloth, a text only screen print – the artist explores the symbolic use of fabric and objects in Italian religious art as well as in its contemporary secular form.

The biannual Max Mara Art Prize for Women, provides one UK based artist with generous opportunities: time, funding and the experience of a six-month residency in Italy. **Andrea Büttner** was chosen as winner by a panel of judges - artist **Fiona Banner**, gallerist **Alison Jacques**, collector **Valeria Napoleone**, and writer and Director of Chisenhale Gallery, Polly Staple.

Following its presentation in London, *Andrea Büttner: The Poverty of Riches*, will be exhibited at the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Exhibition curated by Bina von Stauffenberg.

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