

SHERRY FRUMKIN GALLERY

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Giuseppe de Piero

..going from nowhere to nowhere...

September 4 – October 9, 2010

Reception Saturday, September 11th from 6 - 8pm



Sherry Frumkin Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by **Giuseppe de Piero** from September 4 through October 9. A reception for the artist will take place from 6 to 8 pm on Saturday, September 11. A catalog of the exhibition, with essay by Carmine Iannacone will be available. In one of the poems by the artist included in the catalog (a poem for each sculpture) de Piero suggests he is "writing with objects."

The sculptures and paintings in the exhibition "**..going from nowhere to nowhere...**" reference the distance in time, space and memory that exists in the 28 years between the studio he left in England in 1982 and his present studio in Long Beach, California.

In three previous exhibitions with the gallery, de Piero's sculptures contained a conceptual narrative that ran through each work. *An Hour Beyond Midnight* in 1992 consisted of 12 pieces, each of which documented a move in an imaginary chess game. The works in *Beyond the Boundary* in 1994 re-created an imaginary Garden where a cricket match provided the means to examine ideas of rule making, rule breaking and fair play. *Theoretical Existence*, his last exhibition in the gallery in 1998, invited viewers to piece together a chain of circumstances alluded to in his previous shows.

Though no narrative *per se* runs through these 14 works, common themes appear. Hand made chains, water elements, birds, timepieces, allusions to chess

and cricket and concrete word plays around measurements (a "hand" which equals 4 inches), a "chain" which equates to 22 yards, and a "stone" which is 14 pounds) are palpable elements of the works.

In his essay, Carmine Iannaccone observes, "Giuseppe de Piero hasn't set out to create mysteries, he simply reframes the mystery of things that is already there. Any of his sculptures is no more enigmatic than the bowl of fruit on your kitchen table or the pair of slippers at the foot of our bed. On the other hand, it's no less enigmatic than any one of those either."

Giuseppe de Piero was born to Italian parents and adopted as a toddler by a British coal miner and his Italian-born wife (who, family lore has it, was part of the Italian resistance). He grew up in rural post-war England in the small mining village of Keresley End where being Italian and Catholic made him something of an outsider.

He attended Nuneaton School of Art and then St Martin's, the leading London art school, where experimentation in performance and other new art forms were in the ascendance. He famously referred to himself in the year at St Martin's as "Prisoner in Room N 1974-5" and described one of the experiences this way:

In Room N we (nine of us) spent six weeks not being able to communicate verbally. The basic premise was:
Nine chairs around perimeter of room.
Materials in centre of room.
A strand stood next to the materials with a number of rubber belts on them. We could only use the materials, or move from our chair if we had a belt. The first week or so: Nine people=nine belts. Then it changed from various numbers but never, ever nine, so that someone always depended upon the kindness of others to work.
I seem to remember one student (Lars) taking all the belts so that no-one could move, whilst I smuggled in a pair of scissors & cut up the belt(s) so that everyone had the chance to work.
...
I started to break through the wall next to my chair using a chisel. BIG meeting. Told not to do it; defended myself by using the letter which had been sent to us in the summer ... The letter said, "the group, as artists, will not stop short at concrete boundaries..."

An irrepressible artist, de Piero founded the "GG" art movement, one of many performance groups to emerge in Great Britain in the early 1970s. Part conceptual artist, part exquisite craftsman, his works have been described as having "filtered Duchamp's obsession with unsolvable puzzles through Joseph Cornell's hauntingly sentimental assemblages and H.C. Westermann's perversely well-made riddles." (D. Pagel, LA Times)