

# NERO

## INTERVIEW WITH MARK MANDERS – COLLEZIONE MARAMOTTI

by Luca Lo Pinto



Mark Manders' *Cose in corso* is currently on display at Collezione Maramotti until 28 September. *Cose in corso* is the title that the artist has given to the project made for Collezione Maramotti, thus demonstrating its continuity with the tenets of his creative process. The *mise-en-scène* of this large installation uses objects which are already present in other works (bathtub, chairs, the unfinished body laid out on the wood plank resting on the chair), which are here contextualized differently. The installation rests on the floor made of iron tiles which create a virtual environment inscribed onto the exhibition space. The outcome is the creation of a stage representation which – as indicated by Manders himself – may hold a “conceptual potential narrative in a total frozen theatre”.

Here a short interview with the artist:

**It took you four years to realize *Isolated Bathroom/Composition with four colors*. It was a really long process, I'd imagine not only for practical reasons. Can you elaborate on why it took so long?**

I really like the doubting period in the process of making a work. I don't see this doubting as something problematic. I think it is a great and important tool for an artist. I like to think of many possible solutions to solve problems in a work and many times these solutions don't work out for the piece I'm working on but instead they give birth of other works. My studio, like language, is a big machine. So it 's not only for practical reasons why it can take so long to finish a work. I also only work on a piece when I want to and when I have the desire to finish it.

## How does time relate to your work?

All the works I have made seem to have just left behind by the person who made them. They are frozen objects in arrested rooms. It is fantastic to grow older and I try to freeze as many thoughts as possible in the best possible way.



**You have often mentioned De Chirico, both in regards to the work shown at Collezione Maramotti and to others. Do you consider *Isolated Bathroom/Composition* to be a composition, albeit three-dimensional, more of a painterly or sculptural nature?**

I just have this deep fascination for painting and I want to make works that are as silent as a painting. In my previous works you could step into the rooms but in this work you really look from the outside in a room. For me it is a three dimensional painting.

***Inhabited for a Survey (First Floor Plan from Self-Portrait as a Building)*, from 1986, is one of your earliest works, based (like many others to follow) on the idea of self-portrait. What is it about this idea that fascinates you?**

Making a self-portrait is for me something very fundamental. When you write a book it is for me very logical to write it in first-person. So when I decided to start working on a fictional building it needed a fictional inhabitant. It was logical to give him the the same name as me. It is a fictional self-portrait, a selfportrait in the form of a building. It is a kind of 3 dimensional book. I am very interested in thinking and that humans can create objects and can project thoughts into things.



**You're one of the few artists who runs a proper publishing house (Roma Publications). Can you tell us what kindled your passion for books, and when?**

A book is a great space to project thoughts into. The great thing about a book is that it is a space that you can put away and visit whenever you want. We like to make books that really feel like things or objects. What really fascinates me about making artist books is the way they relate to time. The way the pages relate to each other in sequence can be like a kind of architecture.

