

# Waddington Galleries

## PRESS RELEASE

### Mimmo Paladino **BLACK AND WHITE**

26 April – 20 May 2006



*Apocalisse Ventosa* 2005

Waddington Galleries is pleased to present *Black And White*, an exhibition of recent work – twelve paintings and four sculptures – by the Italian artist Mimmo Paladino.

The core of the exhibition is the large scale canvases, painted predominantly in black and white, where Paladino uses his traditional imagery of fragmented heads, hands and arms, suggested helmets, shoes and masks, and sets them into an abstract backdrop. Paladino has developed this idiosyncratic visual language from a range of influences, particularly Etruscan and Ancient Roman art, with reference to early abstract expressionism in painting style. The result is an effect of melded modernity and archaism, immediacy and distant past, modern mark-making alongside archaeological iconography.

Norman Rosenthal writes : “There is a sense of incisions made in black on white, white on black...of splattered paint that tells stories of specific worlds, even of the last century, that are in danger of being lost in our rush towards modernity that sometimes seem to exist even without those temporal roots that ultimately define our culture.”

The four sculptures in the exhibition are each unique. In plaster and aluminium, the surfaces of the three male figures and one female, are painted, again largely in black and white. The figures’ compositions are contained – standing upright with arms close to sides and where the head has been included the faces are expressionless. The sculptures bring into three-dimension the iconography of the paintings, the disembodied human features, the inclusion of seemingly arbitrary objects, whilst treating the sculpture surface itself as a canvas.

Mimmo Paladino was born in Paduli, near Benevento in southern Italy in 1948. He spent his childhood in Naples and attended art school at the Liceo Artistico di Benevento (1964-1968). In 1980 Paladino exhibited with fellow so-christened *Transavanguardia* artists Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Enzo Cucchi and Nicola De Maria, in the Aperto section of the Venice Biennale, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva. His first retrospective was held in 1985 at the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich. Other major solo exhibitions include: Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea in Trento (1992), Scuderie di Palazzo Reale, Piazza del Plebiscito and Villa Pignatelli, Naples (1995-6) and the South London Gallery (1999). In 2002-03 a

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retrospective was held at the Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italy and his most recent major solo exhibition was at the Museo di Capodimonte, Naples (2005-06).

Paladino's work is held in public collections worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York, and Tate, London. Mimmo Paladino lives and works in Paduli, Italy.

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