

**Robert Motherwell**

**preview January 26, 2017**  
**opening February 4, 2017 – 6 pm**

*The exhibition opening in the new year at **Galleria d'Arte Maggiore G.A.M.** offers the rare opportunity in Italy to admire the work of **Robert Motherwell**, a cultured and refined artist who gave one of the most original interpretations of the great season of the American Abstract Expressionism. After the preview during **Arte Fiera**, the exhibition – curated by **Alessia Calarota** – officially opens on February 4<sup>th</sup> with a selection of works that shows the rich cultural heritage left by the artist to the following generations. After the cubist and the surrealist experiences, Motherwell turned to a gestural painting. However, his interest for abstraction and the formal elements don't prevent him from including personal, political and literary issues to «express what happens inside human beings», in a mental and physical union with the paintings themselves.*

Motherwell's works – whether they are oils, prints or collages – are characterized by simple and flat shapes where colors, from black to warm and bright tones, create a play of contrasts with the background in a perfect balance between free and controlled brush strokes. It is evident the surrealist lesson, known by the artist during his studies at school and then during a trip in Europe in 1938. The idea of following our own intuition and the theory of free associations typical of the surrealist movement will be later useful to Motherwell to investigate universal issues like human origin, the relationship between life and death, oppression and revolution, winning the challenge of conveying these themes through a gestural painting. In New York he meets Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning and Mark Rothko who introduce him to the Abstract Expressionism. He shortly becomes one of its most famous exponents, reaching his full maturity at the end of the Forties with works where it is easy to recognize the influence of Franz Kline's black and white strong images. Contrary to Pop Art, a contemporary movement in those years, Motherwell considers more introspective subjects, maybe also as a result of his education in the most prestigious universities. Motherwell was in fact an acute intellectual, for sure the artist of the New York School with the strongest education in art, literature and philosophy. The artist agrees with Baudelaire when the poet says that "painting is a vocation, a magical operation whose meaning could be read only as we read nature: as a vast system of analogies". In Motherwell's works there are his biography, the most various experiences lived with his natural tendency in self-examination, his trips – as for example the one in Messico with Roberto Sebastian Matta in 1941 – and his never passive relationship with the world and the events that mark the history. An artist who considers the aesthetic experience as the last chance for a possible redemption of our civilization after the horrors of the war, releasing on the canvas the darkness of our unconscious.

Robert Motherwell was born in Aberdeen, Washington, on January 24, 1915. Between 1932 and 1937, the artist studied painting at the California School of Fine Arts of San Francisco graduating before at the Stanford University and then at Harvard, studying literature, philosophy and history of art. He studied also at the Columbia University, where the meeting with Meyer Schapiro will be very important. His first solo exhibition was in 1944 at the Peggy Guggenheim Art of this Century in New York. The same year, the first museum to buy one of his artworks is the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), before organizing a solo show of the artist in 1965. Motherwell died in Provincetown, Massachusetts on July 16, 1991.