

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fabio Viale

Stargate

10 January – 23 February 2013

New York, NY: 4 December 2012 – Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce *Stargate*, Fabio Viale's first solo exhibition in New York. For his realistic sculptures, Viale uses marble exclusively to recontextualize banal objects, such as crates and tires, and to reinterpret art historical icons. *Stargate* is on view from 10 January through 23 February 2013.

The exhibition title refers to Viale's recent work *Stargate* (2010/2011), which consists of stacked and attached plastic grocery crates crafted in marble on a large scale (78 3/4 x 63 x 47 1/4 inches). With unusual technical virtuosity, Viale creates a kind of totem-like work, suggestive of a doorway leading to other worlds and galaxies -- unknown adventures.

Viale works alone, using machinery to roughly carve blocks of marble, and finishing the sculpture by hand. In *Thank you and Goodbye* (2012), Viale employs a computer-controlled robot to render large-scale "paper bags" made of marble.

Infinite (2011) presents two life-size interlocking tires in white marble. Based off of real rubber tires, the crafting of *Infinite* is so intricate and precise that it replicates each tread mark and corporate logo visible on the original objects.

Most surprising and incongruous is *Ahgalla III* (2008), a functional boat 55 1/8 inches long. The artist has navigated *Ahgalla* in the sea near Carrara and on the waterways in Milan, Venice, St. Petersburg, and Moscow. Viale has long been fascinated with the relationship between water and marble, which is formed by the sedimentation under the seabed. The artist is retracing the stone back to its origin. *Anchor* (2010) transforms an object used in construction into a monumental sculpture.

History and memory inspire Viale's *Souvenir* series: *Souvenir (Pietà) III* (2006) is a life-size marble sculpture of the dead body of Jesus based on Michelangelo's *Pietà* (1498-99). In Viale's work, however, the body of Jesus is lying over a block of marble instead of in the arms of the Virgin Mary. By isolating the figure of Jesus, Viale criticizes the commercialism of such symbols, the mass appeal and distribution of these figures as replicas, as "souvenirs".

Born in Cuneo, Italy in 1975, Viale lives and works in Torino, Italy, where he studied sculpture. Viale's recent solo museum exhibitions include *Marble* at Loft Project Etagi, Saint Petersburg (2011); *Fabio Viale: Marble* at the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscow (2011); and *Primo piano d'artista: Fabio Viale* at the Museo del Novecento, Milan (2012). Viale's work has been included in recent group exhibitions at the Millennium Art Museum, Beijing (2006); XIII Biennale Internazionale Di Scultura di Carrara, Italy (2008); Gian Enzo Sperone Gallery in Sent, Switzerland (2010); and The Flag Art Foundation, New York (2011). This year his work, *Thank you and Goodbye* earned first prize by the jury of the 2012 Henraux Foundation Award in Querceta, Italy.

A catalogue will be published on occasion of this exhibition. For more information and images, please contact Maryse Brand at + 1 212 999 7337 or maryse@speronewestwater.com. Please find further documentation on our website www.speronewestwater.com.

This exhibition runs concurrently with *A Picture Gallery in the Italian Tradition of the Quadreria (1750 – 1850)*.