

PRESS RELEASE**PAOLO MOLINARI*****Mountain Language***

5 February – 4 March 2016

PRIVATE VIEW

Thursday 4 February 6 – 8 pm[View Exhibition Catalogue on-line](#)

For a hard copy please contact the Gallery.

*Holiday (La Casa dei Morti)* oil on canvas, 101 x 101 cm

Paolo Molinari (b. 1963, London) is Anglo-Italian, the son and grandson of immigrants and has lived all of his life in the Italian Diaspora of central London. This displacement from Italy and Emilia Romagna in particular, which he refers to as *'the earth of my fathers'*, is the subject of his paintings.

Since childhood **Molinari** has travelled back and forth to the Apennine Mountains of northern Italy making pilgrimages with close family, reuniting with relatives and experiencing the landscape and culture of the region. These accumulated experiences has caused him to question what we might inherit from our ancient ancestry; the things that lie deep in our subconscious and influences the way we see, the way we behave and the things that we find meaningful. And it is this cultural dichotomy that has led him to confront 'nostalgia' in its true meaning: of returning home to things known and unknown; of trying to recover and reconstruct history, personal or otherwise in an attempt to make sense of his place in the world.

In dealing with these issues **Molinari** has devised an original and elaborate way of working that gives us two paintings of the same subject, one on the back and one on the front. He first paints on the reverse of the canvas a highly detailed image of a subject usually taken from a photograph from one of his visits. This image is painted vigorously and leaves a slightly embossed surface on the front which he then develops, minimally, with paint and raw pigment that allows much of the canvas to remain untouched.

VERSO: *Holiday (La Casa dei Morti)* 101 x 101 cm

On the back everything resonates with an attention to detail: a house with its mountain architecture, birds, flowers, gardening tools as though he has found complete emotional fulfilment in the direct experience of the place. The front offers us something totally different and marvellous: ghost-like fragments that only suggest the presence of a building, the hint of a balcony, shuttered windows with maybe someone looking out, some foliage, or garden furniture; everything dreamlike. In the catalogue essay David Hopher describes this idiosyncratic approach as *...splitting the form and content of a painting, putting the content on the back and the form on the front. They are in a way "shadow" paintings in a language the Surrealists would have approved of and understood.*

Paolo Molinari trained at Central St. Martins (1984 – 87) and Chelsea School of Art (1990 – 91). This will be his first solo exhibition in London.