

## *SAL*

Galleria Mattia De Luca

Palazzo Albertoni Spinola  
Piazza di Campitelli 2, Rome

April 6th – June 21st, 2024

*SAL*, curated by Luigi Sansone is the first retrospective in Rome dedicated to the multifaceted and groundbreaking oeuvre of **Salvatore Scarpitta** (New York, 1919 - 2007), illustrating the artistic journey of the Italian-American artist and celebrating his exceptional contribution to the artistic landscape of the latter half of the 20th century through some of his most significant works.

The exhibition focuses on two distinct periods, the **Italian period**, and the **American period**. The Italian period, rooted in Rome, showcases Scarpitta's early Expressionist works, which gradually transition into abstract-figurative art, leading to the informal of material paintings. This phase culminates with the creation of extroflexed canvases and bandaged works displayed at Plinio De Martiis' Galleria La Tartaruga during the landmark exhibition of April 1958.

The American period began with Scarpitta's exhibition at Leo Castelli's gallery in New York in January 1959 and extended until 2007, the year of the artist's passing. This highly creative phase of Scarpitta's career further explores the theme of bandages while branching into four principal directions: the geometric works featuring the distinctive 'St. Andrew's cross' structure; the dynamic integration of materials sourced from the world of car racing into the bandaged pieces; the fabrication of racing cars themselves; the creation of sleds and towing structures inspired by elements of Native American culture.

In addition to abstract-figurative paintings, which marks the inception of the "bandaged" works, the exhibition will showcase several extroflexed canvases such as *Senza titolo* (Untitled), 1957, *Dimensione* (Dimension), 1958, along with other canvases adorned with bandages like *Ammiraglio* (Admiral), 1958, and *Tensione* (Tension), 1958. Many of these works will make a significant return to the Roman art scene following their display at the historic exhibition held at Galleria La Tartaruga in 1958, and later at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York in January 1959 – the two most important exhibitions in Scarpitta's career.

One of the standout pieces from Scarpitta's repertoire, *Gunner's Mate*, 1961, will be featured in the exhibition. This composition consists of four "X"-shaped structures, each supporting three bandaged works. This installation has retained its original form over time, unlike the others created during the same period, which the artist dismantled. Today, the individual components exist independently, allowing for deliberate assembly in various interchangeable sequences.

A central aspect of Scarpitta's artistic vision is the world of racing cars, a theme featured in the exhibition with *Sal's Red Hauler Special*, 1966-67, a car dedicated to Jean Christophe Castelli, son of Scarpitta's gallerist and close friend, Leo Castelli. Additionally, *Incident at Castelli*, 1987, a substantial installation, captures the fusion of art, speed, and life. Directly stemming from his works featuring bandages are the sleds, as stated by Scarpitta himself, exemplified in the exhibition by the totemic *Hill Canoe*, 1990, and *Mr. Hyde (Dr. Jekyll)* and *Mrs. Hyde (Mr. Hyde)*, both created in 1989.

The exhibition ends with the display of a collection of **posters, catalogs, photographs, and documents**, providing a comprehensive exploration of Scarpitta's world from his origins in Rome to his success in the United States.

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### Information

Exhibition Title: *SAL*

Period: April 6th – June 21st, 2024

Location: Galleria Mattia De Luca, Palazzo Albertoni Spinola, Piazza di Campitelli 2, Rome

Opening Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am-7 pm

Contact: ph: +39 06 6991188, email: [info@mattiadeluca.com](mailto:info@mattiadeluca.com)

Press Office: Alessandra Santerini, mob +39 335 68 53 767, email: [alessandrasanterini@gmail.com](mailto:alessandrasanterini@gmail.com)

### SAL – List of Works



1

*Mrs. Hyde (Mr. Hyde), 1989.*  
Canvas, wood, metal and mixed media.  
204 x 60 x 13 cm



2

*Mr. Hyde (Dr. Jekyll), 1989.*  
Canvas, wood, metal and mixed media.  
208 x 58 x 13 cm

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## Room 1



3

*The Corn Queen, 1959.*  
Bandages and mixed media.  
120,5 x 76 cm



4

*Toga, 1958.*  
Dedicated to Plinio De Martiis.  
Canvas and mixed media on panel.  
24 x 35 x 2 cm



5

*Senza titolo, 1958.*

Dedicated to "To Cy" (Twombly).

Everted canvas.

35,5 x 30 cm



6

*To Franz, 1959.*

Dedicated to Franz Kline.

Bandages and mixed media on panel.

27 x 33 x 4 cm



7

*Dimensione, 1958.*

Painted everted canvas.

250 x 172 cm



8

*Hill Canoe, 1990.*

Canvas, wood, headdress, mixed media.

298 x 186 cm



9

*Tensione, 1958.*

Bandages and mixed media.

54,5 x 73 cm

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10

*Racer Roller (Roller Board),*  
1963.

Canvas, belts, metal and mixed  
media on panel.

72 x 60 x 9 cm



11

*Baton noire,* 1979.

Bandages, wood, rubber and  
mixed media.

63 x 56 x 11,4 cm



12

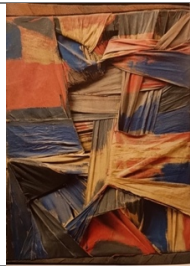
*Sal's Red Hauler Special,* 1966-  
67.

Dedicated to Jean Cristophe  
Castelli.

Racing car.

110 x 270 x 128 cm

Room 2



13

*Ammiraglio*, 1958.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
86 x 60 cm



14

*Gunner's Mate*, 1961.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
195 x 180 cm



15

*Homage au bœuf écorché*, 1961.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
157 x 122 cm



16

*Vulcania*, 1960.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
76,1 x 72,6 cm



17

*Box Kite*, 1961.  
Bandages and mixed media on  
panel.  
164 x 135 cm



18

*Incident at Castelli*, 1987.  
Installation of photographs and a  
car wreck.  
220 x 295 cm + 177 x 170 x 65  
cm



19

*Senza titolo, 1958.*  
Dedicated to Bergman.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
90 x 75 cm

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Room 3



20

*Acolytes*, 1960.  
Canvas and mixed media on  
panel.  
67 x 57 x 5 cm



21

*Senza titolo*, 1957.  
Everted canvas and mixed media.  
87 x 105 cm



22

*Senza titolo (Extramural n. 16)*,  
1958.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
63 x 50 cm



23

*Tovagliolo*, 1959.  
Dedicated to Naride Menghi.  
Bandages and mixed media.  
59 x 66 cm



24

*Bicicletta*, 1948.  
Dedicated to Beulah and Sandy  
Roth.  
Oil on canvas.  
40 x 60 cm



25

*Miller Shell*, 1968.  
Metal and fiberglass.  
61 x 35,5 x 35 cm

## Glass Case

- 01 · *Scarpitta*, “Quaderni di Arte Attuale” curated by Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome.  
De Luca Editore, Rome, 1958.  
First publication of the Series, copy no. 92 of 500.
- 02 · *mETRO*, Rivista Internazionale dell’arte contemporanea, serie 1, numero 3.  
Bruno Alfieri Editore, Milan 1961.  
Chapter 7: *I Simboli Ottici crescono: Scarpitta*.
- 03 · *Scarpitta*, Galleria del Naviglio, Milan, February 1956.  
Exhibition pamphlet, texts by Cesare Zavattini and Giulio Turcato.
- 04 · Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome, July – October 1958.  
Presentation of the exhibitions of the period.  
The solo exhibitions of Twombly and Scarpitta in April and May 1958 are mentioned.
- 05 · *Sal Scarpitta*, Scott Hanson Gallery, New York, in collaboration with Leo Castelli, February 1990.  
Exhibition catalogue.
- 06 · *Sal Scarpitta*, Scott Hanson Gallery, New York, in collaboration with Leo Castelli, February 1990.  
Exhibition opening invitation.
- 07 · *Il gesto – 3*, rassegna internazionale delle forme libere, curated by Movimento Arte Nucleare.  
Editors: E. Baj, S. Dangelo, P. Manzoni. Cover by L. Fontana.  
Milan, September 1958.
- 08 · *Scarpitta*, Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome, April 1958.  
Exhibition flyer.
- 09 · *Salvatore Scarpitta*, Galleria Ippolito Simonis, Turin, November 1987.  
Exhibition pamphlet.
- 10 · *Salvatore Scarpitta*, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, February 1980.  
Exhibition presentation text.
- 11 · *Scarpitta*, Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome, May 1957.  
Pamphlet d’Esposizione, testo di Cesare Vivaldi.
- 12 · *The New Lincoln Speedway*, Official racing Magazine, August 1994.  
Magazine of the Lincoln Speedway, Abbottstown, PA.  
On cover, lower: Kenny Adams, race winner, with Salvatore Scarpitta, racing team owner.
- 13 · *Tableaux de Scarpitta*, Galerie Aujourd’hui, Bruxelles, January 1964.  
Exhibition opening invitation.
- 14 · *Scarpitta*, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, April 1960.

Exhibition poster, sent via mail to Nadia Scarpitta in Los Angeles.

- 15 · *Salvatore Scarpitta*, curated by G. Celant.  
Edizione della Galleria Notizie di Torino e dello Studio C di Brescia.  
Turin, 1972. First edition.
- 16 · *Scarpitta 1958 – 1963*, Galleria dell'Ariete, Milan, October 1964.  
Exhibition catalogue.