

EXPRESSION
DANIELE FORTUNA



25.09. - 25.11. 2026.

Zen Contemporary Art Gallery

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Zen Contemporary Art galerija s velikim zadovoljstvom otvara novu izložbenu sezonu samostalnom izložbom međunarodno priznatog talijanskog kipara Danielea Fortune, pod nazivom *Expression*.

Skulpture ovog iznimno nadarenog umjetnika fokusirane su na ljudsku figuru interpretiranu u duhu antičke tradicije, ali na način suvremene kiparske morfologije. Fortuna kroz svoje radove nastoji popularizirati likove iz klasične mitologije kojima se divio još od djetinjstva. Ručno oblikovani drveni elementi povezuju se poput svojevrzne skulpturalne slagalice, dok ih boja i umjetnički postupak dodatno udaljavaju od povijesnog predloška te smještaju u kontekst suvremenog vizualnog izraza.

Izložene skulpture Danielea Fortune dio su njegova posljednjeg ciklusa, koji otvara prostor novoj emocionalnoj fazi, u kojoj se osobno iskustvo pretvara u novu umjetničku energiju. Ciklus *Expression* stoga možemo promatrati kao svojevrzni osobni prijelaz, trenutak u kojem se prošlost prihvaća, oslobađa se njezine težine i otvara prostor za nešto novo, svojevrstan emocionalni zaokret u umjetnikovu radu, ali ne kao prekid s prethodnim opusom, već kao njegovo novo otvaranje. Njegove skulpture tako postaju više od samih djela, one su svjedočanstvo unutarnje transformacije i proslava jednog novog poglavlja života. Umjetnik i dalje na prepoznatljiv način spaja klasično i suvremeno, ali se njegov fokus sada pomiče, klasična figura više nije samo nositelj forme, već postaje i nositelj osjećaja. Ta se promjena ponajviše očituje u licima i njihovim izrazima, svaka skulptura nosi određenu emociju i vlastitu priču. Njihovi pogledi i lica kao da sami govore, bez potrebe za riječima. Ono što je u klasičnoj skulpturi često bilo idealizirano, smireno i gotovo nepomično, kod Fortune postaje živo i neposredno. Lica njegovih figura reagiraju, izražavaju, komuniciraju. Osmijeh, iznenađenje, ljutnja, strah, nježnost ili nemir postaju jednako važni kao sama fizička pojavnost skulpture. Svaka figura kao da dobiva vlastiti unutarnji život.

Uz nove radove izložena je i skulptura iz prijašnje faze *Venus Milo*. Međutim, ona nije tek podsjetnik na ono što je prethodilo ovom ciklusu, već uspostavlja dijalog s novim radovima i otvara prostor za neposrednu usporedbu njihova izraza. U tom susretu starog i novog postaje vidljivo koliko se skulptura može promijeniti kada joj se, uz tijelo i formu, doda i novi izraz na licu. Ono što je nekoć bilo sadržano prvenstveno u tijelu i formi sada se snažnije otvara kroz lice, pogled i emocionalni izraz.

Ciklusom *Expression* Fortuna i dalje gradi most između prošlosti i sadašnjosti, između idealizirane ljepote klasične figure i slobode suvremenog izraza, te otvara pitanje koje je istodobno jednostavno i duboko: koliko onoga što osjećamo pokazujemo drugima?

Ta rečenica možda najbolje sažima bit ovog ciklusa jer u vremenu u kojem živimo često skrivamo i kontroliramo emocije, a njegove skulpture rade upravo suprotno, one licu daju emociju, dopuštaju joj da bude vidljiva, nesavršena, neposredna i stvarna.

Izložba *Expression* potvrđuje snagu i prepoznatljivost Fortunina umjetničkog jezika, ali i njegovu sposobnost da klasičnu skulpturalnu tradiciju neprestano promišlja kroz suvremeni senzibilitet. Njegove zadivljujuće skulpture odišu snažnom vizualnom energijom i kreativnom inventivnošću, mijenjaju svoj izraz iz svakog kuta promatranja, pružajući vizualni i duhovni užitek.

Fortuna nas podsjeća da se život, poput skulpture, neprestano oblikuje. Svaka nova emocija, svaki novi pogled i svaki novi izraz otvaraju mogućnost da poznato vidimo drugačije i da u sebi pronađemo prostor za novi početak. Upravo zato ovi radovi postaju svjedočanstvo unutarnje transformacije, ali i proslava života, slobode i snage da prihvatimo promjenu.

"Živimo u vremenu u kojem pokazati ono što uistinu osjećamo postaje sve teže. Učimo kontrolirati emocije, skrivati ranjivost i nositi lice koje ne otkriva uvijek ono što se događa u nama. Expression je nastao iz želje da se prekine ta tišina. Klasične figure, mirne i dostojanstvene u svojoj vječnoj savršenosti, odjednom oživljavaju. Smiješe se, čude se, ljute se, osjećaju strah i pate. Napokon, osjećaju. Svako lice postaje priča o emociji, trenutku i nečemu što više ne mora biti skriveno. Jer možda prava ljepota nije u tome da izgledamo savršeno, već u hrabrosti da pokažemo tko smo doista. Svaka emocija zaslužuje lice." — Daniele Fortuna

Frankica Mitrović Mihić
Povjesničarka umjetnosti i kustosica izložbe



Surprise, acrylic on wood, 55 x 35 x 22 cm, 2026.



Ethereal Venus, acrylic on wood, 50 x 40 x 27 cm, 2026.

Zen Contemporary Art Gallery is delighted to open the new exhibition season with a solo exhibition by internationally acclaimed Italian sculptor Daniele Fortuna, entitled *Expression*.

The sculptures of this exceptionally talented artist focus on the human figure, interpreted in the spirit of ancient tradition through the language of contemporary sculptural morphology. Through his work, Fortuna seeks to bring the figures of classical mythology to a wider audience, characters he has admired since childhood. Hand-shaped wooden elements are assembled like a sculptural puzzle, while colour and the artistic process further distance them from their historical models and place them within the context of contemporary visual expression.

The sculptures presented in this exhibition are part of Daniele Fortuna's latest cycle, which opens the space for a new emotional phase, in which personal experience is transformed into new artistic energy. The *Expression* cycle can therefore be seen as a kind of personal transition, a moment in which the past is accepted, its weight released, and space is opened for something new — an emotional turning point in the artist's work, but not a break with his previous oeuvre, rather a new opening of it. His sculptures thus become more than works of art; they are a testimony to inner transformation and a celebration of a new chapter in life. The artist continues to bring together the classical and the contemporary in his recognisable manner, but his focus has now shifted: the classical figure is no longer merely a bearer of form, but also becomes a bearer of emotion.

This change is most evident in the faces and their expressions; each sculpture carries a particular emotion and its own story. Their gazes and faces seem to speak for themselves, without the need for words. What was often idealised, serene and almost motionless in classical sculpture becomes, in Fortuna's work, alive and immediate. The faces of his figures react, express and communicate. A smile, surprise, anger, fear, tenderness or unease become just as important as the physical presence of the sculpture itself. Each figure seems to acquire a life of its own.

Alongside the new works, a sculpture from an earlier phase, *Venus of Milo*, is also on display. However, it is not merely a reminder of what preceded this cycle; rather, it establishes a dialogue with the new works and allows for a direct comparison of their expressions. In this encounter between the old and the new, it becomes evident how profoundly a sculpture can change when, alongside the body and form, a new expression is added to the face. What was once conveyed primarily through the body and form now opens more powerfully through the face, gaze and emotional expression.

With the *Expression* cycle, Fortuna continues to build a bridge between past and present, between the idealised beauty of the classical figure and the freedom of contemporary expression, while opening up a question that is at once simple and profound: how much of what we feel do we show to others? This question perhaps best captures the essence of the cycle because, in the time we live in, we often hide and control our emotions, while Fortuna's sculptures do precisely the opposite. They give emotion to the face, allowing it to be visible, imperfect, immediate and real.

The exhibition *Expression* affirms the strength and distinctiveness of Fortuna's artistic language, as well as his ability to continually reinterpret the classical sculptural tradition through a contemporary sensibility. His captivating sculptures radiate powerful visual energy and creative inventiveness, changing their expression from every angle and offering both visual and spiritual pleasure.

Fortuna reminds us that life, like sculpture, is constantly being shaped. Every new emotion, perspective, and expression opens the possibility of seeing the familiar differently and finding within ourselves space for a new beginning. For this reason, these works become a testament to inner transformation, as well as a celebration of life, freedom, and the strength to embrace change.

"We live in a time when showing what we truly feel seems to have become increasingly difficult. We learn to control our emotions, to hide our vulnerability, to wear a face that doesn't always reveal what is happening within us. Expression was born from the desire to break this silence. Classical figures, still and composed in their eternal perfection, suddenly come to life. They smile, wonder, get angry, feel fear, suffer. Finally, they feel. Each face becomes the story of an emotion, a moment, something that no longer needs to be hidden. Because perhaps true beauty is not about appearing perfect, but about having the courage to reveal who we really are. Every emotion deserves a face." — Daniele Fortuna

Frankica Mitrović Mihić
Art historian and exhibition curator



Laugh, acrylic on wood, 45 x 35 x 20 cm, 2026.



Smile Venus, acrylic on wood, 60 x 40 x 22 cm, 2026.

Daniele Fortuna rođen je 1981. godine u Milanu. Nakon stečene diplome na Europskom fakultetu za dizajn i modu u Milanu, Fortuna se seli u Irsku gdje nastavlja studij umjetnosti. Po završetku studija vraća se u Italiju gdje u svom ateljeu u Piacenzi s puno osjećaja, strpljenja i ljubavi izrađuje skulpture kojima razotkriva svoje najintimnije osjećaje i preokupacije.

Fortunina umjetnost danas je prisutna na međunarodnoj sceni kroz samostalne i skupne izložbe, suradnje s galerijama te nastupe na umjetničkim sajmovima u Europi, Aziji i Sjevernoj Americi. Izlagao je, među ostalim, u Milanu, Rimu, Napulju, Parizu, New Yorku, Miamiju, Šangaju, Pekingu i Zagrebu, a njegova se djela nalaze u brojnim galerijama te privatnim i korporativnim kolekcijama. Prepoznatljiv spoj klasične ikonografije, suvremenog pop-izraza i jedinstvenog pristupa skulpturi u drvu osigurao mu je istaknuto mjesto među autorima suvremene skulpture.

Daniele Fortuna was born in Milan in 1981. After earning his degree from the European Institute of Design and Fashion in Milan, Fortuna moved to Ireland, where he continued his studies in art. Upon completing his studies, he returned to Italy and established his studio in Piacenza, where, with great sensitivity, patience and dedication, he creates sculptures that reveal his most intimate feelings and personal preoccupations.

Fortuna's art is now present on the international scene through solo and group exhibitions, collaborations with galleries, and participation in art fairs across Europe, Asia, and North America. He has exhibited, among other places, in Milan, Rome, Naples, Paris, New York, Miami, Shanghai, Beijing, and Zagreb, while his works can be found in numerous galleries as well as private and corporate collections. His distinctive fusion of classical iconography, contemporary pop expression, and a unique approach to wood sculpture has earned him a prominent place among contemporary sculptors.



Venus of Milo, acrylic on wood, 175 x 50 x 50 cm, 2025.



David Expression Roll, acrylic on wood, 58 x 22 x 20 cm, 2026.



Zen Contemporary Art Gallery

www.zencontemporaryartgallery.com

Phone 385 91 88 73 635

E-mail: info@zencontemporaryartgallery.com

Gradišćanska 30, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia

