



## ***No Jokes Please; We're Italian: New Works by Stefano Mezzaroma***

Private View: Tuesday 28 February 2012, 6:30pm

Exhibition Opens: Wednesday 29 February 2012

Where: The Italian Cultural Institute, 39 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8NX

The Italian Cultural Institute in London will host an exhibition of work by contemporary, Milan-based artist Stefano Mezzaroma. The Minister of Culture in Rome has endorsed the exhibition, entitled *No Jokes Please; We're Italian*, to promote to a British audience the best in Italian contemporary culture. His work blends fine and urban art techniques while weaving a social commentary which embodies the notion of the new age "Contemporary Pop artist."

Growing up in Rome as a child, Mezzaroma became fascinated with popular culture from a young age. It was not until his time at Bocconi University in Milan where he was studying economics, did Mezzaroma begin to answer his creative calling while exposed to the atmosphere of the cultural capital. Jumping head first into the arts scene, Mezzaroma began to experiment with various creative mediums including collage, spray paint and digital manipulation as a self-taught artist. Drawing inspiration from Pop artists and the constant bombardment of advertisements, the artist's work has grown into a unique perspective on the societal effects of politics, branding and marketing on an international scale.

Combining his influences of Jackson Pollock, Keith Haring, Andy Warhol and Mimmo Rotella, Mezzaroma sees himself as a Contemporary Pop artist who borrows elements from Warhol's screen printing and Rotella's movie poster collages whilst placing his own modern twist with new artistic techniques and humour that comes through in each piece. Such works include his depiction of the infamous dictator Mao Tse Tung with the Google logo altered to include Chinese stars; an ironic statement about the country's free speech policy in the online forum. Another work portrays the iconic film image of American blockbuster *Jurassic Park* with the title changed to read "Microsoft", demonstrating that the usage of the PC operating system has become archaic.

Catching the eye of Roberta Armani, famed fashion house founder Giorgio Armani's niece, Mezzaroma sold his first major work to her which is now proudly displayed behind the designer's desk. He also regularly collaborates with the label and was DJ for Vogue Night Out at the flagship store in Rome. Learning to DJ while in Milan, Mezzaroma became a regular in the House scene

hosting major club nights in the city centre and has released popular remixes with DJ Jurij and Pamela Prati.

Exhibiting internationally at such a young age, Mezzaroma has already shown across Italy, Monaco and St. Petersburg, Russia. He was selected to exhibit for the Italian Pavilion at the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale in 2011 and has work on permanent display at the Haussmann Gallery in Cortina D'Ampezzo.

For more information on Stefano Mezzaroma or the Italian Cultural Institute contact Will Paget at [will@pagetpr.com](mailto:will@pagetpr.com)/ +44 (0)20 7323 6963

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Stefano Mezzaroma**

Stefano Mezzaroma, at only 27 years old, has forged a successful career as both a DJ and artist. Brought up in Rome and moving to Milan for university, Mezzaroma began a self-taught art career inspired by the international cultural scene. Experimenting with new artistic media including spray paint, collage, screen printing and digital manipulation he was able to develop his own unique style which he describes as 'Contemporary Pop Art'. Mezzaroma has exhibited at the 2011 Italian Pavillion at the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale and largest solo show took place at the Spazio Underground in Rome. Collectors of his work include the illustrious Italian designer, Giorgio Armani who also hires Stefano regularly as a DJ.

#### **The Italian Cultural Institute**

The Italian Cultural Institute in London is the official Italian governmental body dedicated to promoting Italian language and culture in England and Wales. The Institute supports and organises a range of activities to this end, ranging from exhibitions and concerts to scientific research and language classes. They also facilitate lecturers from Italy teaching in English and Welsh Universities and assist Italian researchers and students to further their studies in England and Wales. The Institute looks to establish links with other organisations and individuals with the aim of promoting Italian culture in England and Wales. Always looking to reach new audiences the Italian Cultural Institute will collaborate with both emerging and established talents in 2012, to bring a varied programme of the finest in contemporary art, music, and gastronomy.