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MANUELLA MUERNER-MARIONI

"ENCHANTED SOUL-stice"

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The French artist Niki de Saint Phalle proclaimed, "Life...is never the way one imagines it. It surprises you, it amazes you, and it makes you laugh or cry when you don't expect it." A student of Saint Phalle and a disciple of her mosaic technique, Swiss artist Manuella Muerner-Marioni's opulent mixed media works masterfully employ the natural beauty of glass to capture the emotive expression of the figures and forms. These compositions are crisply articulated kaleidoscopic homages to the mosaic art form originating from Ancient Greece through Byzantium, and are joyously graced with a strikingly sonorous spectrum of color. Ms. Marioni's work investigates the body by abstracting and fragmenting the human figure through mosaic application of industrial materials. Her work extends beyond her compositions by engaging the actual body in space through the addition of reflective surfaces. Our natural bodies are juxtaposed to the fragmented figures and even become complicated additions to the industrial compositions.

Varied interpretations emanate as her work elicits a myriad flow of visceral responses from the viewer. As Ms. Marioni stated, "The surroundings and environment of my beholders should become a part of my artwork. The perceived image of my sculptures change every time I change my perspective." With *In Testa Musica Italiana*, Ms. Marioni builds the human face out of industrially reflective material. The use of glass expands the dimensionality of the sculpture by involving external spacial participation from viewers and the environment through its reflective surfaces. Ms. Marioni brings the kaleidoscopic visuality of her sculpture to a two-dimensional surface in *Brainstorming*. However painterly the composition initially feels with the use of acrylic, the introduction of reflective surfaces transforms the painting into a portal through an expansion of the composition beyond its borders and even heightens viewer engagement because at an instant, one becomes a part of the work. In *New Fashion*, in addition to reflective material the artist incorporates dazzling color into her oeuvre and sparks audience imagination at the same time as she delights our vision. Ms. Marioni expands the definition of the mosaic technique through her aggressive grid application of paint in *Metamorphosis of Golden Torso*. Ms. Marioni mimics the application of materials to form a mosaic through painting, fragmenting the human body by representing its contours only through abstract linear brushstrokes. Her commentary on the human figure, and even inclusion of the actual body in her work investigates, expands and even complicates perceptions of the human body in natural space and time.

This award-winning international artist works in her native Switzerland and throughout Europe. Ms. Marioni has collaborated with the Niki de St. Phalle Foundation for the past decade and also exhibits her work around the world, throughout Europe and the United States. In Europe she continually exhibits in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and France. Ms. Marioni's sculptures, paintings and mixed media works continue to entice art connoisseurs and enthusiasts in the U.S. with her frequent shows in New York City and Chicago.