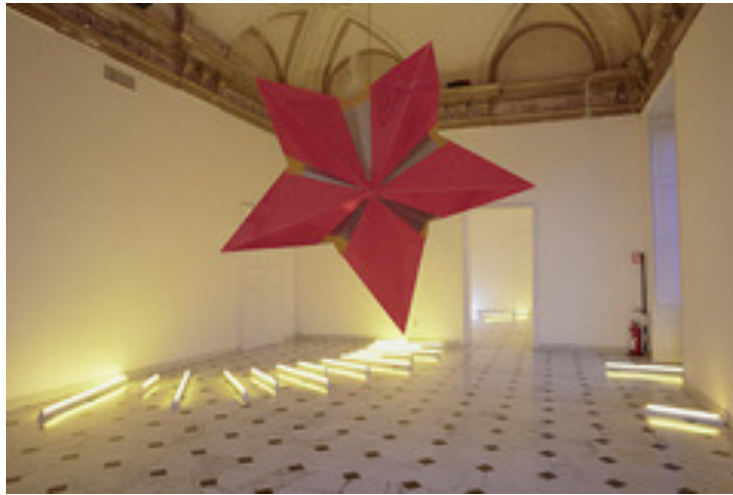


Kayne Griffin Corcoran

**ARTFORUM**

### Critics' Pick: Mark Handforth at Villa Croce



View of "Mark Handforth: Smoke," 2016.

"That strange duality" is perhaps the most illuminating phrase pronounced by Mark Handforth in this exhibition's accompanying catalogue. Indeed, duality is fundamental to the exhibition's title, "Smoke," which must have been chosen for its ambiguous meaning—whether as a sign or an enveloping atmosphere. Duality and ambivalence, moreover, are the Cartesian axes of the entire project. Handforth, who was born in Hong Kong in 1969, is known for creating works that enlarge and distort everyday objects, which he takes as material because of the way they can radically transform the relationship between viewer and work, existing in a realm suspended between reality and desire.

This show's progression of rooms is transformed into a surreal sequence, bringing to mind Futurist Italian artist Bruno Munari's *Macchine Inutili* (Useless Machines), 1933–66, a work in the museum's collection that has been incorporated into this exhibition. New and older pieces by Handforth alternate amid galleries and garden views: from twisted lampposts (*Lamphead Cross*, 2016) to a fluorescent mandala (*Shadow Sun*, 2016), and from an enormous coat hanger (*Diamond Hanger*, 2016) to an imposing dented star made of aluminum and foil (*Freeway Star*, 2016). Moving from room to room, viewers are drawn into a new perceptual dimension produced by the show. Throughout, Handforth succeeds in conveying what it means to blend a Pop imagination with Minimalism while creating an autonomous vocabulary of forms that fluctuate in space—and engage it.

*Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.*

- Paola Nicolin