



# I SEE RED EVERYWHERE

100 metre long red fabric and dead tree.

Über, Group show of fourteen artists.

Curated by Mark Mangion.

Portomaso, Malta, 2002.



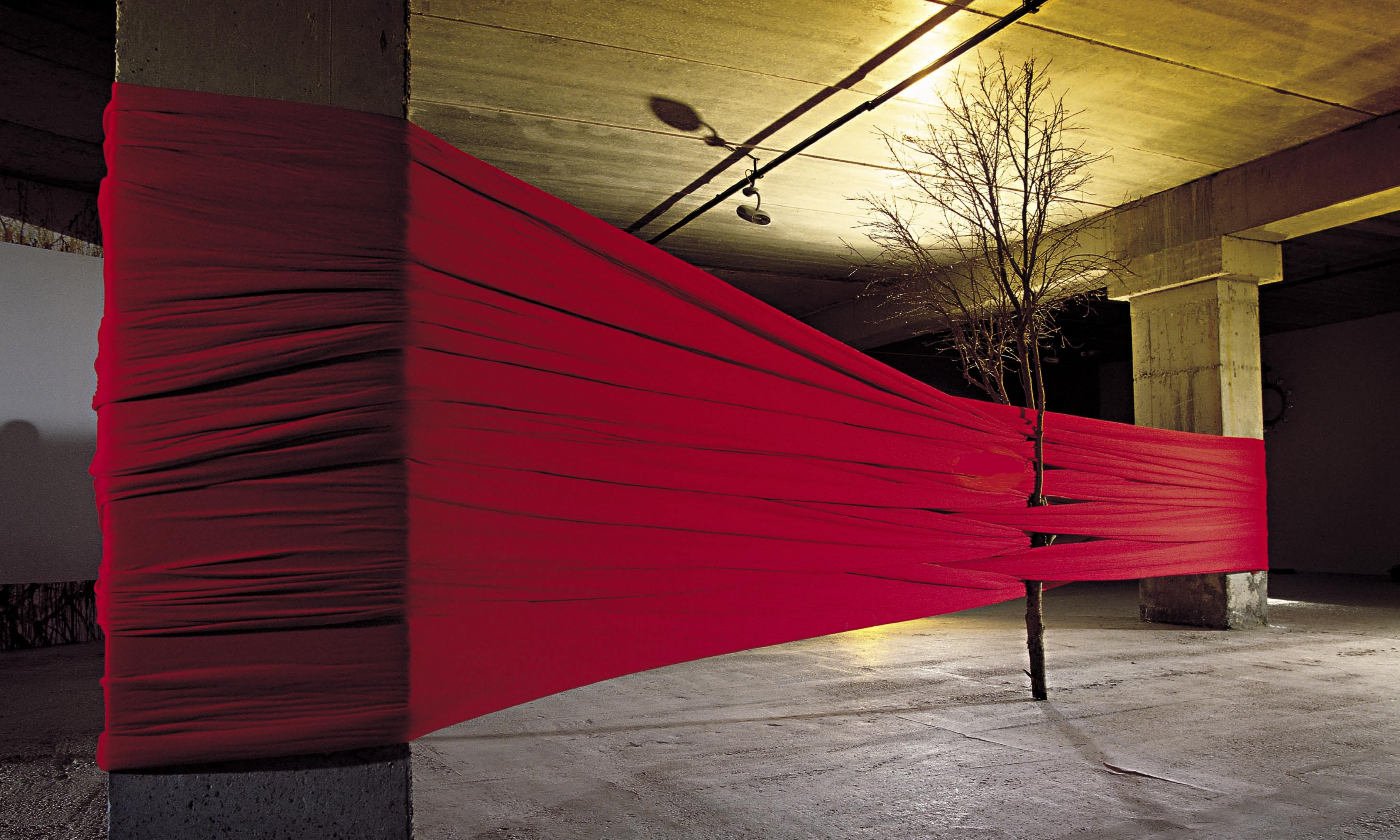
*I See Red Everywhere* encompasses a reflection of life in all its forms from the spiritual to the chaotic, from unconditional love to extreme hate. It sinuously explores the duality of man's destructive nature opposing his desire for total balance. Within this urgent, restless continuum of human existence – this almost figurative representation of the very life blood that drives and sustains us in perfect symmetry – the lifeless tree serves as a warning to man that by destroying nature – by upsetting and denying the balance of the natural world – he is in the gravest danger of annihilating himself. It is a warning he ignores at his peril. Red is powerful but it is not omnipotent.

FIONA CALDER



Red is probably the most abused colour in the spectrum. It shocks television viewers when it makes a sudden appearance at war scenes but returns to banality whenever it colours fast-food chains. The sheer strength and brilliance of red make it the most ambiguous of colours: it can represent sexual passion or even maternal warmth and patriotic love but it often borders on vulgarity. Its multivocal character is probably a result of its “excessive” nature. Red is always “in excess”: it is always too hot, too eye-catching, too partisan, too greedy, too painful, too noisy. It doesn’t ask politely for our attention; it demands it! This is the essence of its vulgarity. Red refuses to be subtle. It doesn’t know when enough is enough. The lone tree engulfed by red fabric in *I See Red Everywhere* stands at the other extreme. Without leaves and roots, the tree is denuded, its death laid bare before our eyes. This minimalism is the opposite of excess. Here, we are faced by the minimal visual and material requirements for a tree. The trunk and branches still resemble what once was a living thing, but this tree is no longer biologically active. Alive, the tree would be a symbol of patience. Dead, it has ceased its slow, organic quest for growth. Swallowed up by that torrent of red, the dead tree nevertheless acts as a fulcrum. It stands balanced calmly at the centre of that wave of violent colour, as though it were always meant to be there. It brings back a sense of order to the most disorderly, excessive colour of all. Excess is balanced by lack; energy is balanced by the stillness of death.

RAPHAEL VELLA





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