

THINKING ITALIAN
MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

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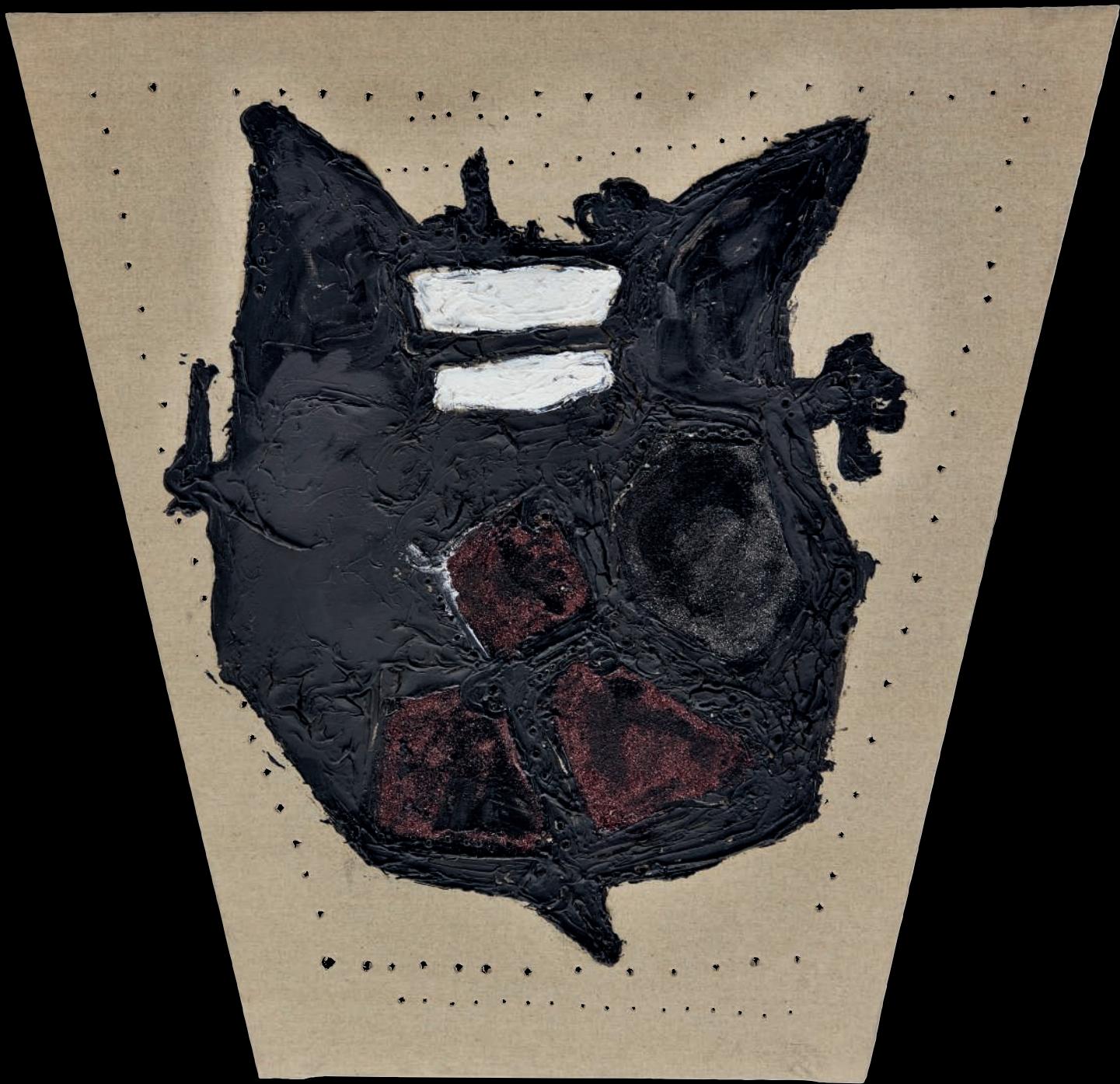




















THINKING ITALIAN

FRIDAY 6 OCTOBER 2017

AUCTION

Friday 6 October 2017

immediately following the Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Auction

8 King Street, St. James's
London SW1Y 6QT

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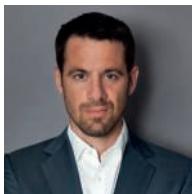
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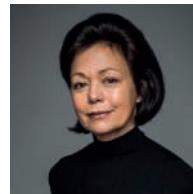
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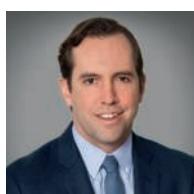
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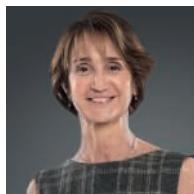
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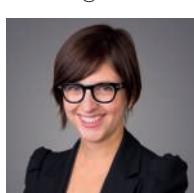
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CONTENTS

9 Auction Information

10 Christie's International Post-War & Contemporary Art Department

18 Property for Sale

234 Conditions of Sale • Buying at Christie's

237 VAT Symbols and Explanation

238 Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice

239 Storage and Collection

249 Absentee Bids Form

IBC Index

CREDITS

FRONT COVER:

Lot 106
Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita*, 1961 (detail)
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DACS, London 2017.

FLAP:

Lot 102
Franco Angeli, *Fiore Partigiano*, 1962 (detail)

BACK COVER:

Lot 112
Alberto Burri, *Sacco*, 1953 (detail)
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Collezione Burri, Città di Castello –
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FLAP:

Lot 117
Alberto Burri, *Nero con punti rossi*, 1957 (detail)

OUTSIDE FRONT WRAP:

Lot 108
Michelangelo Pistoletto, *Uomo che guarda un negativo*, 1967
© Michelangelo Pistoletto.

OUTSIDE BACK WRAP:

Lot 114
Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale, Attese*, 1964 (detail)
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INSIDE WRAP:

Lot 109
Alighiero Boetti, *Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine*, 1976-1977 (detail)

INSIDE FRONT COVER FLAP:

Lot 107
Fausto Melotti, *L'aquila*, 1966 (detail)

INSIDE FRONT - PAGE 1:

Lot 105
Salvatore Scarpitta, *Harness for Loving*, 1964 (detail)

PAGES 2 - 3:

Lot 124
Marino Marini, *Cavaliere*, 1976

PAGE 4:

Lot 116
Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale*, 1956

PAGE 5:

Lot 113
Lucio Fontana, *Il Guerriero*, 1949 (detail)

PAGES 6 - 7:

Lot 115
Alberto Burri, *Rosso plastica*, 1966 (detail)

PAGE 8:

Lot 120
Michelangelo Pistoletto, *Ficus*, 1965 (detail)

PAGES 14 - 15:

Lot 131
Maurizio Cattelan, *Untitled*, 2001

PAGE 16:

Lot 126
Lucio Fontana, *Testa di Medusa*, 1948

INSIDE BACK COVER - FLAP:

Lot 101
Mario Schifano, *N. 6*, 1960 (detail)

THINKING ITALIAN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Defined by eclecticism, revolution and a deeply rooted yet ever-changing dialogue between the past and the present, Italian art of the 20th Century encompasses some of the most influential artistic creation of our times. From Giorgio Morandi and Marino Marini, to Alberto Burri, Lucio Fontana, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Maurizio Cattelan, this October, *Thinking Italian* presents a new way of looking and thinking about Italian art in all its multi-faceted forms. Offering a curated and concentrated selection of works from across the century, this sale embodies and celebrates the diversity of this epoch of extraordinary creativity.

From the iconoclastic vision of the Futurists in the opening years of the 20th Century, to the rebellious practices of the protagonists of Arte Povera in the post-war era, there is one unique and unifying characteristic that has tended to underpin almost all of the art made in Italy during the modern era: a pervasive sense of history and time. The birthplace of Western art, Italy has a unique cultural heritage, spanning from the Roman Empire, to the glories of the Renaissance, the imperial splendour of the Catholic Church and the sumptuous drama of the Baroque, all of which played an essential role in the formation of the modern Italian landscape. Nostalgia, atavism and the classical past jostled alongside modernity and consumerism to create a way of living and thinking about the world that is completely unique to Italy. It is this unique dialogue between the ever-present classical past, and the constantly changing present that lends Italian art an aesthetic, style and approach like no other.

As the 20th Century progressed, Fascist rule and the devastation of the Second World War were swiftly followed by the economic 'miracle', which heralded an entirely new and dynamic national identity for the country. By the beginning of the 1950s, Italy was in the midst of an unprecedented level of growth that transformed the social and cultural fabric of the country. From art, cinema and literature, to architecture, fashion and design, the arts experienced a radical renewal; a 20th Century renaissance that saw Italian artists and designers taking their place on an international stage. Defined in the popular imagination with the film, *La dolce vita*, this important era gave Italy a unique cultural identity and a distinct iconography, and at the same time, with the outpouring of film, fashion, design and art, it helped establish a tradition of an Italian sense of style and taste that has lasted until the present day.

Overseen by the indomitable creative power of Alberto Burri and Lucio Fontana, this new age of contemporary art in Italy saw artistic traditions overturned and boundaries redefined and radically expanded. Rome, Milan and Turin became hotbeds of creativity, dynamic centres that attracted artists, dealers and critics from all over Italy and across the world. Life in all its forms was brought into art, whether through the use of unorthodox, industrial materials as in the work of Burri, Salvatore Scarpitta, or later Giovanni Anselmo, or in a more conceptual way, seen most notably in Fontana's *Concetti spaziali* or Alighiero Boetti's *Lavori biro*. Exerting an enormous influence on contemporary art across the world, most notably in America, these artists paved the way for many of the artistic developments in the latter decades of the 20th Century.





mario
SCHIFANO

'I used to think that painting meant starting from something absolutely primary [...] and that's how I painted works with blue, red, yellow or green. I used to say these are signs of energy [...] The first painting with just yellow and nothing in them, empty images [...] they went beyond or fell short of any cultural intention. They only wanted to be themselves'

M. SCHIFANO

Nodis

PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

λ 101

MARIO
SCHIFANO (1934-1998)

N. 6

signed and dated 'SCHIFANO 1960' (on the stretcher)

enamel on paper laid down on canvas

15 x 18½in. (38 x 46cm.)

Executed in 1960

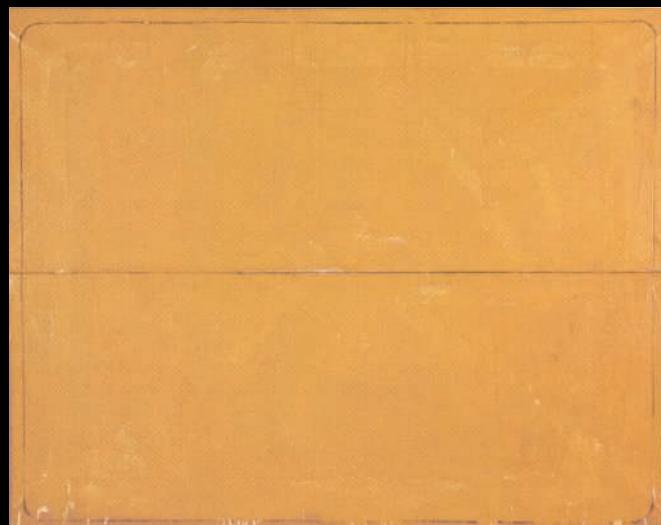
£40,000-60,000

\$53,000-78,000

€44,000-65,000

**'Making a yellow painting was making a
yellow painting and that's all'**

M. SCHIFANO



Mario Schifano, *Vero Amore No. 3*, 1962. Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin.
Artwork: © DACS 2017.

PROVENANCE:

Galleria La Salita, Rome.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Parma, Salone Scuderie in Pilotta, *Mario Schifano*, 1974, p. 76, no. 30 (illustrated, p. 123).

Rome, Galleria La Salita, *Prime Opere*, 1980 (illustrated, unpagued).

Rome, Studio Casoli, *Mario Schifano - Quattordicimila giorni e oltre*, 1998 (illustrated in colour, p. 2).

Milan, Fondazione Marconi, *Schifano 1960-1964 Dal Monocromo alla Strada*, 2005 (illustrated in colour, p. 20).

This work is recorded in the Archivio Mario Schifano, Rome.

NO6

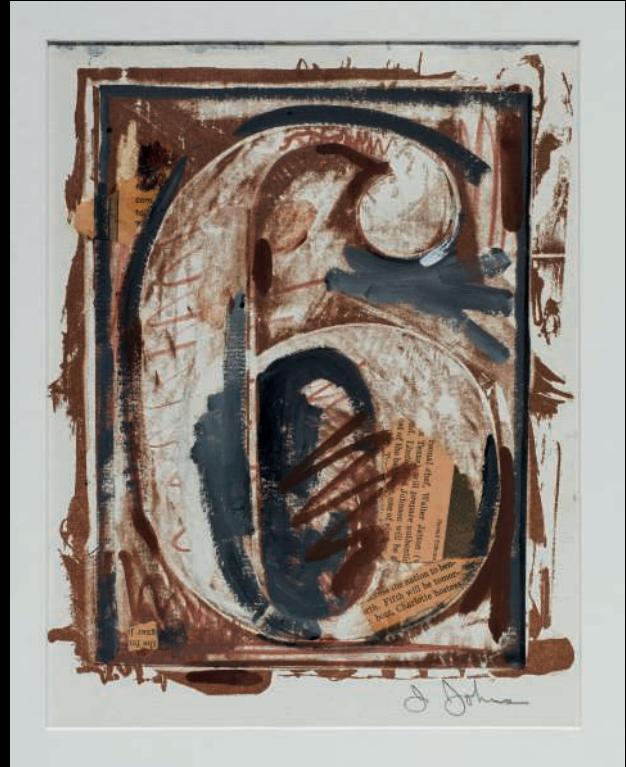


Robert Indiana, *External Hexagon*, 1964.

Tate Collection, London.

Photo: © Tate London, 2017.

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Jasper Johns, *Six*, 1960-1971. Centre Pompidou, Paris.

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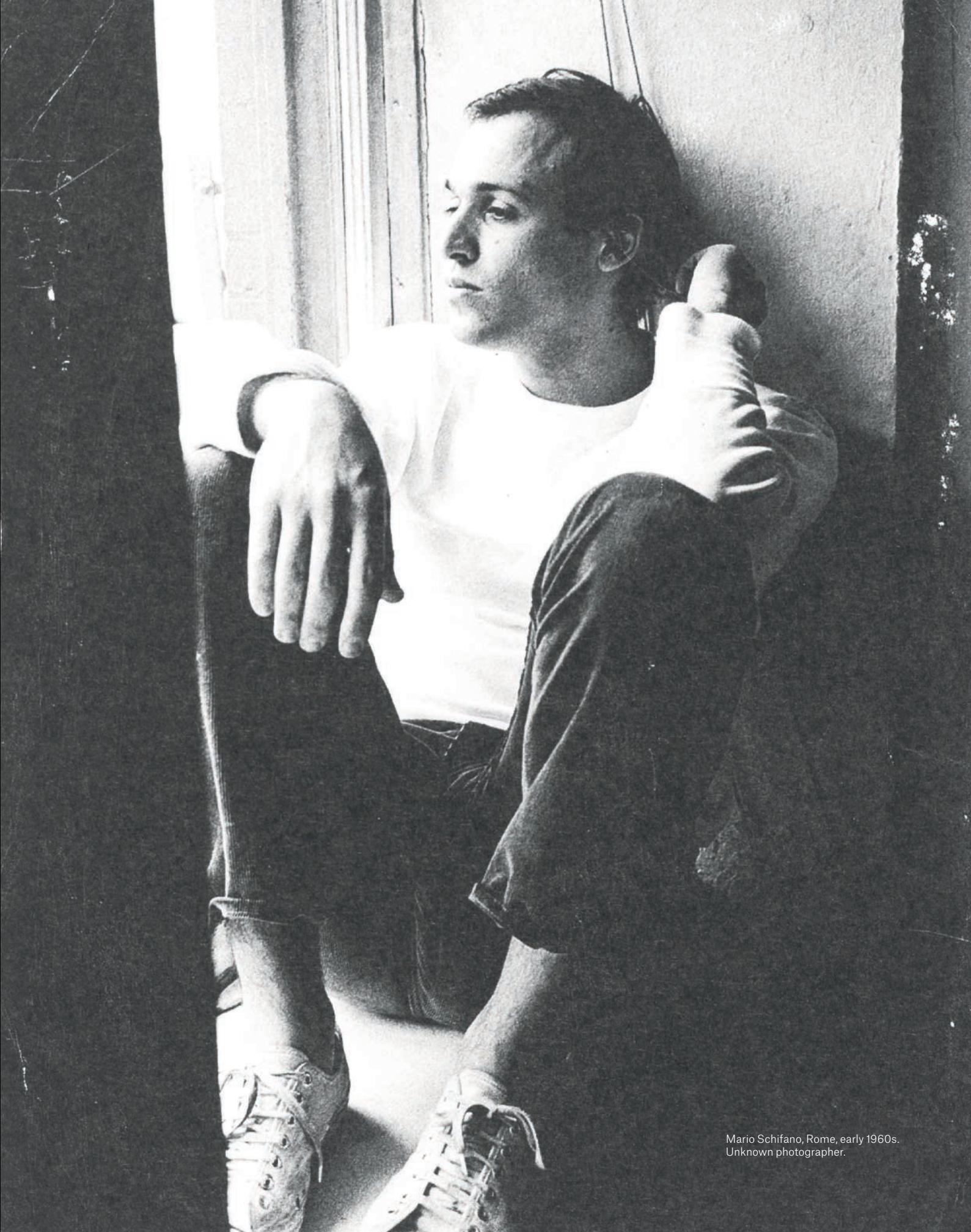
'I was starting from a special zero, that wasn't a resetting zero. It was zero. It was something much more modern than a work of art, that I wanted to do'

M. SCHIFANO

Executed in 1960, *N. 6* is one of the very first of Mario Schifano's breakthrough series of monochrome enamel paintings, a radical group of works that not only established the artist's reputation, but redefined and reaffirmed the aesthetic potentials of painting in the post-war era. Rendered with parcel paper laid down on canvas and covered in thick, tactile enamel paint, often embellished with industrial numbers or symbols, the *Monochromi* were at once entirely abstract yet at the same time insistently painterly; paintings that defied definition. Absorbing the ephemera of contemporary life in Rome, Schifano pioneered an aesthetic that broke from the subjective, gestural abstraction of the *Informel*, as well as the slick, minimal conceptualism of his Milanese contemporaries. In this way, he returned painting to a *tabula rasa*, reassessing the power of the composite materials themselves and opening up the possibilities of paint. 'At first I used to paint with a very few colours', Schifano recalled in 1972, 'because my work expressed the idea of the emblematic, of street signs, of perceptual phenomena, of primal things. I thought that painting meant starting from something absolutely primal... I would paint works like this: with blue, with red, with yellow, with green, these were signs of energy... with

nothing in them, empty images (...) that went beyond any cultural intention. They wanted to be only themselves' (Mario Schifano in an interview with E. Siciliano, (trans. F. Luino), 'Lui ama Nancy la fotografa', *Il Mondo*, 16th November 1972).

1960 was a watershed year in the life and art of Schifano. Up until this point, Schifano had been making *Informel*-inspired works. Often composed of a monochrome coloured, cement base incised with tactile incisions, these early works allowed Schifano to explore the material qualities and physical possibilities of painting. The emergence of his *Monochromi* in 1960 therefore serves as both a culmination of his recent work and a new beginning. In November 1960, these breakthrough works were included in a group show of five artists – Franco Angeli, Tano Festa, Francesco Lo Savio and Giuseppe Uncini – held at the Galleria La Salita, Rome and organised by Pierre Restany. Founded in 1957 by Gian Tomaso Liverani, the first owner of *N. 6*, the Galleria La Salita became one of the foremost galleries for contemporary art in the city, and it was this exhibition that brought Schifano major international notice and critical acclaim.



Mario Schifano, Rome, early 1960s.
Unknown photographer.

PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT ITALIAN PRIVATE COLLECTION

λ 102

FRANCO
ANGELO (1935-1988)

Fiore Partigiano (Partisan Flower)

signed, titled and dated 'Fiore Partigiano Angeli 1962' (on the reverse)

enamel, acrylic and plaster on canvas and toile

47¾ x 55½in. (120.3 x 140cm.)

Executed in 1962

£55,000-75,000

\$72,000-98,000

€61,000-82,000

'It is the paradigm of erasure, involving materials and screen, that is at the root of a new image, as a kind of reaction to the invasive overabundance of the image and Roman iconophilia'

LUCA MASSIMO BARBERO



Reverse of the present lot

PROVENANCE:

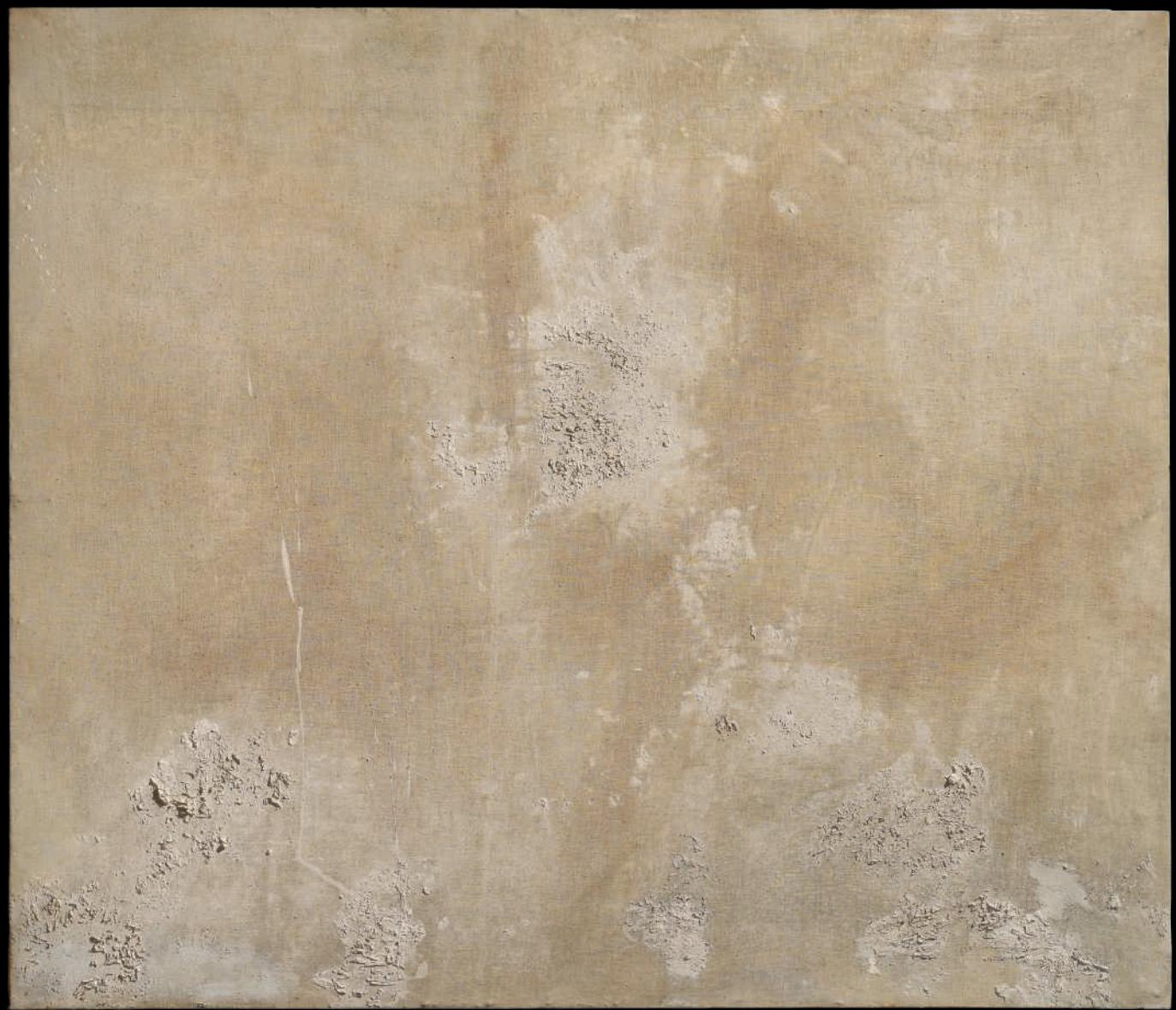
Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome.

Plinio De Martiis Collection, Rome.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in the 1990s.

The work is registered in the Archivio Franco Angeli, Rome, under no. P-230617/119.

Executed in 1962, *Fiore Partigiano (Partisan Flower)* is an early, monochrome work by Franco





Political posters on a wall in Rome, 1946.

Photo: Roger-Viollet/Topfoto.

'Having broken with the model of Burri and Arte Informale, through the thin but tenacious veil of material, Angeli patiently recovers — interrupting his work thousands of times, losing the trace and immediately reacquiring it — the 'forms' of his feeling. This is a difficult undertaking since once form is grasped, it dissolves, and all that is left is the impalpable aura: dust from wings, nostalgia 'absence'. And it is this 'absence' of a form so acutely mourned and so mercilessly denied by the mesh in which Angeli wants to enclose it that emerges on the surface of the painting. A shiver: a life that timidly drives us on and is worn out in silence. Not 'things', but the tears of things'

CESARE VIVALDI

Angeli, one of the leading members of the later-named Scuola di Piazza del Popolo, a group of artists living and working in Rome in the early 1960s. Politically active from an early age, and a member of the Campo Marzio Communist party in Rome in the 1950s, Angeli instilled his art with a distinctly political aspect, of which the present work is among one of the earliest examples. The title, *Fiore Partigiano*, is a line from *O Bella Ciao*, the famous anti-fascist Partisan song that rose to prominence in Italy in the 1950s and 60s. This emotive song became a powerful symbol of resistance, a hymn for those who fought against the Nazis after the fall of Mussolini's government in 1943. Just visible behind the veil of gauze that covers the monochrome surface, adorned in places with splashes, drips and areas of impastoed white paint, is a hammer and sickle — an instantly recognizable Communist symbol first used during the Russian Revolution. Angeli would continue to use these powerful political symbols in his art, with swastikas, red stars and national flags proliferating, and often veiled.

Self-taught, Angeli was exposed in the late 1950s to the work of Alberto Burri. Seeing how Burri manipulated and repurposed the ubiquitous materials of everyday life — sacking, wood, or plastic — to create a new form of art, Angeli likewise immersed himself in the artistic potential of materials

as he moved away from the influence of the *Informel*. In *Fiore Partigiano*, the surface of the canvas is covered in a fine layer of gauze, a material that would remain central to Angeli's practice throughout the 1960s. Having worked in both a laundry and an upholstery shop in his youth, he had been exposed to the tactile potentials of these synthetic textiles from an early age, and integrated these materials — particularly nylon, toile and gauze — into both his abstract and representational images, creating semi-transparent screens that seem simultaneously to conceal as well as reveal. In the present work, the layer of gauze casts a veil over the hammer and sickle behind, blurring the boundaries between image and object, sign and symbol. The amorphous, powdery accumulations of white paint hint at an image lurking beneath the surface of the work, or, as critic Cesare Vivaldi wrote, there are, 'hints of forms, attempts at forms, spasms of dulled paint-matter unable to be configured in definitive forms' (C. Vivaldi, quoted in L. Massimo Barbero, *Imagine: New Imagery in Italian Art, 1960-1969*, exh. cat., Venice, 2016, p. 34).

Opposite: Franco Angeli in *Morire gratis*, a film by Sandro Franchina, 1966.



λ 103

ALIGHIERO
BOETTI (1940-1994)

Origami (Aereo) (Origami (Plane))

signed 'alighiero e boetti' (in the centre)

pencil and colored ink on paper

6 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 1 1/4 in. (16 x 16 x 4.5cm.)

Executed in 1990

£10,000-15,000

\$14,000-20,000

€11,000-16,000

'Just as you can unfold a leaf of paper, so, too you can order or mix up a pair or class of concepts, without ever privileging one of the two opposing notions. On the contrary, you will always find the one in the other, the order in disorder, the natural in the artificial, the shadow in the light, and vice versa'

A. BOETTI

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner.

This work is registered in the Archivio Alighiero Boetti, Rome, under no. 6733 and is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity.

Origami belongs to a series of works bearing the title *I vedenti* (The sighted) - a title which has been stamped onto the base of this paper plane with a special device that Boetti had made which used needles to puncture paper in a manner similar to that used to validate passports and other official documents. In a paradox that Boetti was fully aware of, the words 'I vedenti', rendered in this way, are barely visible. The reference is to the idea that Boetti had of an artist being someone who had a unique, even secret insight into the true nature of the world.

In this work, made in 1992 as part of a series of works born from games Boetti played with his daughter Agata, a drawing or watercolour has been transformed into a paper plane. In order to see the drawing, the paper plane would have to be unfolded. It therefore remains, hidden, secret, unseen.



VINCENZO
AGNETTI

'I am interested in the
tale that is true, alive
and essential and I am
unconcerned with the
narrator who happens to
recount it'

V. AGNETTI

CH
IN SIE
NEI
DI UN

I U S ()

S T E S S ()

C O R P ()

N A L T R ()

λ104

VINCENZO
AGNETTI (1926-1981)

Ritratto di amante (Portrait of Lover)

paint on felt

signed and dated 'Agnetti '71' (on the reverse)

31½ x 47¾in. (80 x 120cm.)

Executed in 1971

£80,000-120,000

\$110,000-160,000

€88,000-130,000

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist.

Lodi Collection, Italy.

Soliani Collection, Italy.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

This work is registered in the Archivio Vincenzo Agnetti, Milan, under no. 0337RF1971011702341.

**'An event of value does not limit itself to what it displays,
but to what it leaves'**

V. AGNETTI

CHIUSO
IN SE STESSO
NEL CORPO
DI UN ALTRO

'My works act as a signal for propagating what I have accumulated, by which I mean my theoretical and critical research. I write about things from which I call forth my paintings, which, in their turn, provide me with ideas for further research and writing...'

V. AGNETTI

Created in 1971, *Ritratto di Amante* is an exquisite example of the lyrical linguistic style which formed the foundation of Vincenzo Agnetti's series of *Feltri* (Felts). These geometric panels centre on a series of succinct, but deeply poetic, statements plucked from the artist's imagination, their carefully constructed patterns echoing the structure of a poem as they traverse the picture plane. Appearing in a standardized, almost stencil-like, typeface that was printed or engraved onto pieces of monochrome, machine-produced felt, the regularity of their forms seem to stand in opposition to the highly expressive nature of the words themselves. Although recognisably figurative, and comprehensible to those who speak Italian, the brevity of these statements and their looping, self-reflexive nature complicates our understanding of their meaning. Agnetti hoped that in disrupting the regularity of linguistic systems in this way, he could demonstrate the inherent mutability and subjectivity of words, and encourage his viewers to recalibrate their approach to language and art in the process.

In *Ritratto di Amante* (*Portrait of a lover*) the statement reads 'Closes/ In himself/ In the body/ Of another.' Romantic and profound, it appears to suggest the visceral joining of two bodies, their forms melting into one another as they are united by an intense passion. Grasping the fleeting moment between the transformation of being to being, the title conjures a sensual narrative in the mind's eye of the viewer, providing a small glimpse into a private moment of all-consuming desire. For Agnetti, the success of an artwork lies in the impression it leaves on the viewer, and the lyrical ambiguity of the words he chose were intended to have an emotional impact, to be processed subjectively by the viewer, imbued with their own personal interpretations, and remembered long after their original encounter with the artwork. Describing this phenomenon, Agnetti explained: 'An event of value dies not limit itself to what it displays but to what it leaves' (V. Agnetti, quoted in B. Corà, 'Agnetti: A New Visual Language, An Unmeasurable Temporality,' in *Vincenzo Agnetti: Territories*, ed. B. Yasar, A. Kachel & C.

Fiske, exh. cat. London & New York, 2017, p. 113). By merely suggesting a potential narrative to the viewer, Agnetti hoped they would build their own scenario from his words.

The highly tactile nature of the *Feltri* offer a sensuous contrast to the cold, plastic aesthetic of Agnetti's series of *Assiomi* (*Axioms*). The haptic quality of the material feeds into the sensuous nature of the subject suggested by the title and its statement – the union of two bodies in a passionate embrace, their bodies mingling as they fold in on one another. Agnetti's use of felt echoes the experimental art of the Arte Povera movement, which celebrated the rawness and tactile qualities of the material, as well as its pliable nature. Although it is considered one of the oldest known forms of textile, by the 1960s the idiosyncratic, organic tufts and tangles which had previously characterised its surface had disappeared, replaced by the smooth, uniform finish and regular dimensions of machine manufacturing. This cheap, everyday material, produced as an industrial insulation, reflected the Arte Povera celebration of so-called 'poor' materials, and appeared prominently in artworks by Joseph Beuys and Jannis Kounellis. By incorporating it in this series of works, Agnetti may have been offering a similar commentary on the changing technological landscape of post-war Italy.

By titling the *Feltri* after the traditional art historical genres of portrait (*ritratto*) and landscape (*paesaggio*), Agnetti challenges our understanding of the artwork, upending our expectations by replacing the images we associate with these terms with his enigmatic, text-based aesthetic. Reimagining the picture plane, the *Feltri* reference Western pictorial tradition, while also resolutely stepping outside of its boundaries. In this way, *Ritratto di Amante* may be seen to embody the complex concept of 'forgetting by heart,' a dialectical statement that recurred throughout Agnetti's career, by simultaneously referencing and divesting the artist of the overwhelming traditions, rules and expectations placed on him by history.

QUANDO L'AGNELLO RU
IL PRIMO DEI SETTE SIGILLI
UNO DEI QUATTRO VIVENTI DISSE
CON VOCE DI TUONO: VIENI

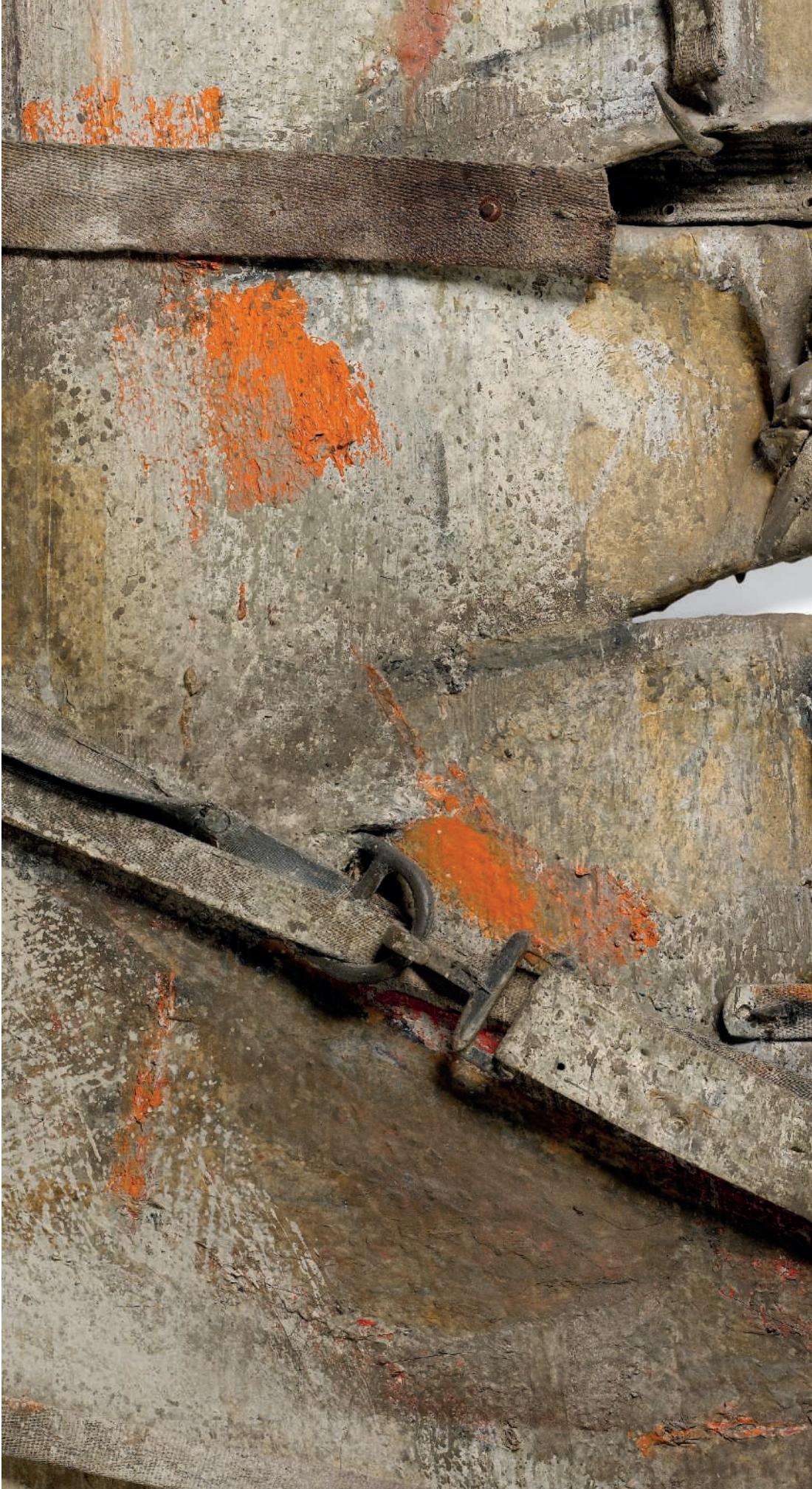


Vincenzo Agnetti in his studio, 1970.
Artwork: © Vincenzo Agnetti.
Photo: Ugo Mulas © Ugo Mulas heirs.
All rights reserved.

Salvatore
SCARPITTA

'I needed to recover that lost matter in some way, so I polished this iconoclastic idea and I brought the canvas from a terrible state to a 'surreal' one, almost abstract due to the raw and unrefined canvas, no longer torn but pulled'

S. SCARPITTA





λ 105

**SALVATORE
SCARPITTA (1919-2007)**

Harness for Loving

signed and dated 'Scarpitta 64' (lower left); signed, titled and dated 'SCARPITTA
'Harness for loving' 1964' (on the reverse)

painted canvas, hooks and belts

47½ x 41½in. (121.5 x 106.5cm.)

Executed in 1964

£600,000-900,000

\$790,000-1,200,000

€660,000-980,000

'One hopes that the viewer will see beyond the objective fact under his eyes and will transcend it. It's the process of transmutation of a physical object into spirit, which is a purely artistic fact, and I believe in this as the objective of my way of being an artist'

S. SCARPITTA

PROVENANCE:

Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

Galleria Notizie, Turin.

Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia.

L. Sansone Collection, Milan.

Galleria Niccoli - ACIG, Parma.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in the late 1990s.

EXHIBITED:

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Salvatore Scarpitta*, 1972, no. 16 (illustrated, unpaged). This exhibition later travelled to Brescia, Studio C.

Milan, Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, *Salvatore Scarpitta 1958-1985*, 1985-1986, p. 43 (illustrated, p. 28).

Arona, ex Convento della Purificazione, *Scarpitta*, 1998, no. 20, p. 78 (illustrated in colour, p. 52); historical installation view illustrated, p. 27).

Bagheria, Civica Galleria Renato Guttuso, *Scarpitta*, 1999, no. 66, p. 145 (illustrated in colour, p. 106).

Castelluccio di Pienza, La Tartaruga Associazione per l'Arte Contemporanea/ Galleria Niccoli Parma, *Scarpitta*, 2000.

Milan, Centro d'Arte Arbur, *Scarpitta*, 2000-2001, no. 20, p. 94 (illustrated in colour, p. 48).

Perugia, CERP - Centro Espositivo Rocca Paolina, *Oltre la Superficie, attraversamento - estroflessione - disseminazione*, 2001 (illustrated in colour, p. 51).

Turin, GAM - Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, *Salvatore Scarpitta*, 2012-2013, no. 41, p. 280 (illustrated in colour, p. 175).

Milan, Studio Gariboldi, *Salvatore Scarpitta*, 2014 (illustrated in colour, unpaged).

LITERATURE:

G. Di Genova, *Storia dell'Arte Italiana del '900*, Bologna 1990, p. 262.

L. Sansone, *Salvatore Scarpitta. Catalogue Raisonné*, Milan 2005, no. 335 (illustrated, p. 190; illustrated in colour, p. 360).





Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale, Attese*, 1959.
Fondazione Lucio Fontana, Milan.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

Executed in 1964 and widely exhibited ever since, *Harness for Loving* is one of Salvatore Scarpitta's final 'bandaged' works, a breakthrough and career defining series that he had begun in 1958. Using pieces of torn canvas layered atop one another and coated in glue, the artist created a new form of art that turned the tools and materials of art making into the artwork itself. At once painting and sculpture, the material composition of these works collapsed the distinctions between subject and object to become instead a three-dimensional, autonomous object. Over the subsequent years, the artist developed these bandaged works to become ever more complex entities. In *Harness for Loving*, Scarpitta has incorporated a tangle of belts, harnesses and hooks into the composition, creating a large and visceral structure strewn in places with vibrant red paint that resonates with a striking potency. Standing at the pinnacle of this important series, this is one of last bandaged works that Scarpitta executed before he made an abrupt change of direction, creating replicas and sculptural constructions of racing cars.

After the artist's break out exhibition in Rome in 1958, he met the legendary gallerist and dealer Leo Castelli. Persuaded by Castelli to return to his native USA, Scarpitta decided to leave Italy and set sail for New York at the beginning of 1959. This was to be a decisive moment in the artist's career; as he described, 'In January 1959 I disembarked in America together with my works. I had decided: I felt that the period of Roman art was over. After all, everything runs its course. I understood that the situation was starting to change in Rome: people were starting to imitate American Pop Art and to remove the true content of "our" Italian art... But at the time maybe I didn't even reason too much, I felt like it was an inner personal need: the desire had come back to understand where I came from' (Scarpitta, quoted in L. Sansone, *Salvatore Scarpitta: Catalogue Raisonné*, Milan, 2005, p. 67). Returning to America, the country he was born in though had left in 1936, when his family moved from California to Rome, Scarpitta was met with a wealth of new inspiration. Befriending many of the Abstract Expressionists and New York School of artists in downtown Manhattan, including Willem

'I started using certain things tied to the canvases, like seatbelts, buckles for harnesses, buckles from parachutes, aeronautical straps or straps from racing cars, exhaust pipes, and I grafted these things into my canvas, as if to take myself back toward a world that was more reassuring, now that I was back in America'

S. SCARPITTA

De Kooning, Franz Kline, Mark Rothko and David Smith, he started to move away from the stripped down, reduced aesthetic of his earlier work, and integrate new components and external references into his practice.

The harnesses and belts that criss-cross the surface of *Harness for Loving* can be regarded as a reflection of Scarpitta's interest in the world of motorcar racing. As a child he had a passion for racecars, and on his return to America, became immersed in this world once more. In contrast to Italy, a war ravaged country just beginning to undergo industrialisation, America in the early 1960s was a place of rapid modernisation and consumerism with a booming economy. Here, Scarpitta embraced modern American life, reconnecting with the world of his past. This had an immediate effect on his art. 'I started using certain things tied to the canvases', he later explained, 'like seatbelts, buckles for harnesses, buckles from parachutes, aeronautical straps or straps from racing cars, exhaust pipes, and I grafted these things into my canvas, as if to take myself back toward a world that was more reassuring, now that I was back in America' (*ibid.*, p. 72).

The two cuts that sever through the pieces of canvas in *Harness for Loving* are immediately reminiscent of Lucio Fontana's contemporaneous *tagli*. Scarpitta's torn up canvases are often connected to Fontana's slashes; indeed, it has been suggested that Scarpitta was the first to tear through the canvas itself, serving as a major influence on Fontana who would do the same a year later in 1958. Whether or not this is true, the motivations for both artists in their assault on the traditional picture plane were different. While for Fontana, the slash – a slick, singular and deeply elegant gesture – was entirely conceptual in its genesis, for Scarpitta, the holes through the pieces of torn canvas were a result of the layering of pieces of canvas. In the present work, the horizontal slits that penetrate the top half of the canvas have a visceral and corporeal quality. They resonate with a powerful vitality absent in the clean conceptualism of Fontana's equivalent works, and in the present context, serve to heighten the sexual undertones of the work, implied by the tangle of criss-crossed belts across the ripped canvas, and by its title, *Harness for Loving*.



LUCIO
FONTANA

'When, in the final burning moments of the universe, time and space no longer exist, no-one will remember the monuments built by man although not one hair of his head will have been lost. We do not intend to abolish art or stop life: we want paintings to come out of their frames, and sculptures from under their glass case. An aerial, artistic portrayal of a minute will last for thousands of years in eternity'

L. FONTANA







Piazza San Marco, Venice.
Photo: Roon the Agency / Alamy Stock Photo.



λ°♦ 106

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita

signed 'l. fontana' (lower right); signed and titled 'l. fontana Concetto Spaziale,

In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita' (on the reverse)

acrylic and coloured glass stones on canvas

59 x 59in. (150 x 150cm.)

Executed in 1961

Estimate on request

'In his nocturnal tribute *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita*, we sense the forms and rhythms of the empty spaces of the colonnades of the Piazza immersed in a "black light" that vibrates with the device of the coloured pietre, like tessere torn from a destroyed mosaic and tossed in the air'

LUCA MASSIMO BARBERO

PROVENANCE:

Toninelli Arte Moderna, Milan.
Private Collection, Milan.

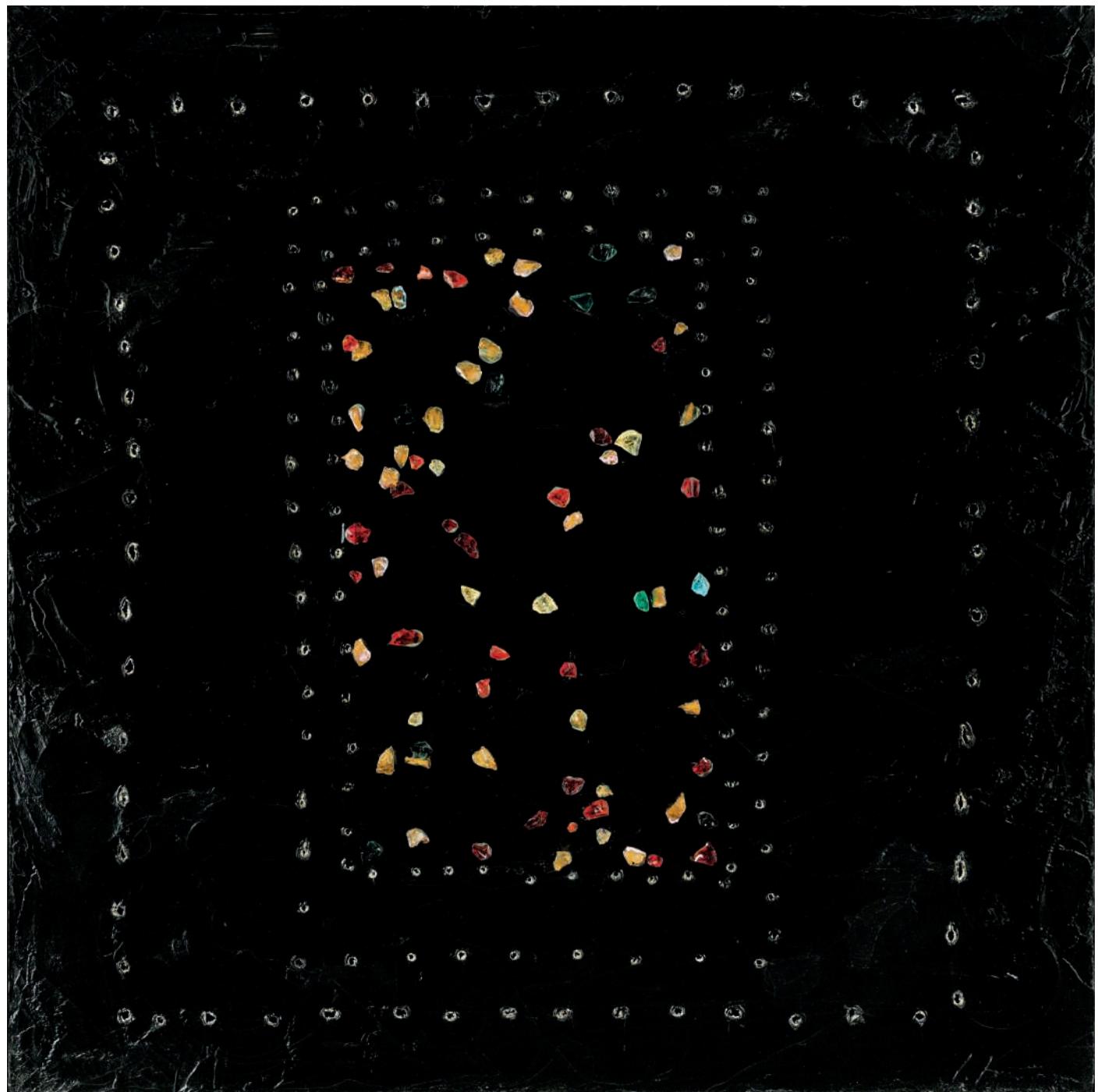
EXHIBITED:

Venice, Palazzo Grassi – Centro Internazionale delle Arti e del Costume, *Arte e Contemplazione*, 1961.
Milan, Palazzo Reale, *Lucio Fontana*, 1972, no. 160 (illustrated, p. 209).
Milan, Kunsthaus Zürich, *Lucio Fontana. Concetti spaziali*, 1976, no. 72.
New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Lucio Fontana 1899-1968. A Retrospective*, 1977, no. 69 (illustrated, p. 75).
Madrid, Palacio de Velázquez, *Lucio Fontana. El espacio como exploración*, 1982, no. 58 (illustrated, p. 80).
Munich, Staatsgalerie Moderne Kunst, *Lucio Fontana*, 1983-1984, no. 82 (illustrated, p. 100).
This exhibition later travelled to Darmstadt, Mathildenhöhe and Bielefeld, Kunsthalle Bielefeld. Toyama, The Museum of Modern Art, *Lucio Fontana*, 1986, no. 72 (illustrated, pp. 72, 116).

This exhibition later travelled to Karuizawa, The Museum of Modern Art Seibu Takanawa; Tokyo, The Seibu Museum of Art; Fukushima, Iwaki City Art Museum and Amagasaki, Seibu Tsukashin Hall.
Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, *Lucio Fontana*, 1987-1988, p. 238 (illustrated in colour, p. 239). This exhibition later travelled to Barcelona, Fundació Caixa de Pensions; Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum and London, Whitechapel Gallery.
Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, *Lucio Fontana. Retrospektive*, 1996-1997, no. 65 (illustrated in colour, pp. 107, 220). This exhibition later travelled to Vienna, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig.
Verona, Palazzo Forti, *Lucio Fontana, Metafore barocche*, 2002-2003 (illustrated in colour, pp. 86, 125).
Venice, Guggenheim Museum, *Lucio Fontana: Venezia – New York*, 2006-2007 (illustrated in colour, p. 93). This exhibition later travelled to New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

LITERATURE:

M. Tapié, *Devenir de Fontana*, Turin 1961 (illustrated, unpaged).
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environnements spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. I (illustrated in colour, p. 74); vol. II, no. 61 O 51 (illustrated, p. 110).
E. Crispolti, *Fontana. Catalogo generale*, Milan 1986, vol. I, no. 61 O 51 (illustrated, p. 373; illustrated in colour, p. 382).
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo generale di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. II, no. 61 O 51 (illustrated, p. 559).
B. Hess, *Lucio Fontana 1899-1968. A New Fact in Sculpture*, Cologne 2006 (illustrated in colour, p. 58). *Audible Presence: Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein, Cy Twombly*, exh. cat., New York, Dominique Lévy, 2013 (historical installation view illustrated, p. 42).





Giovanni Antonio Canal, *Piazza San Marco, Venice, circa 1730-1734*. Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, M.A.
Photo: Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop, 1943.106. Photo: Imaging Department © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

'If, at first, closed in his towers, the artist represented himself and his stupor and the landscape he saw through the panes of glass, and, then, descended from the castles into the cities, knocking down the walls and mixing with other people, he saw at close hand trees and objects, today, we, Spatial artists, have escaped from our cities'

L. FONTANA

An ever-changing, animate play of light, space, colour and pictorial concept all interacting on a dark, flat, thickly-painted square surface *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* ('Spatial concept, In piazza San Marco at night with Teresita') is a defining work from Lucio Fontana's much-celebrated cycle of paintings: the *Venezie*. This sequence of twenty-two large-scale, sumptuously ornate and often dazzlingly reflective, Baroque-inspired oil paintings, made between the spring and summer of 1961 and dedicated to the theme of Venice, are today recognised as the painterly culmination of Fontana's Spatialist research.

Taking the form of an oil painting made on canvas, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is, as its title suggests, a 'spatial concept' centred upon the image, architecture and idea of one of the most famous, historic, romantic and frequently-painted places on earth: St Mark's Square in Venice. More than this however, it is an image of the piazza San Marco by night. Shimmering, dark, and also illusive in its play of light, shadow and fluid surface, the painting is therefore, also reflective of nocturnal Venice and of the floating city's illustrious history as a place of love, mystery, romance and illusion.

Here, the abstract and the celestial are linked to the figurative and the terrestrial through the conceptual language of Fontana's Spatialist vision. In a simple, visually associative way, Fontana has employed the elegant abstract and conceptual language of his art – his highly tactile and seemingly still fluid, light-reflecting black paint, radiant, sparkling Murano-glass stones (*pietre*) and an architectural grid of punctured holes (or *buchi*) – to conjure an image in the viewer's mind that approximates the sensation of the piazza San Marco by night, as if seen from a multitude of viewpoints.

Among the first of this rare and magnificent sequence of 'paintings' dedicated to the city of Venice, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is unique among the *Venezie*, however, in the way in which, within its single image, it not only encapsulates many of the themes and ideas of the cycle as a whole but renders them in a way that is both universal, and also distinctly personal at the same time. Fontana's title for this work specifies the unique time, place and locale of this *Concetto spaziale* ('Spatial concept'), inscribing the picture as being at night, in St Mark's Square, and, uniquely, with his wife, Teresita. This inclusion of his wife in the scene is a dedication that bestows upon this *Venezia* not merely an invocation of



Teresita and Lucio Fontana, Venice, 1956.
Photo: Courtesy of Fondazione Lucio Fontana, Milan.



‘Art is going to be a completely different thing...Not an object, nor a form...Nothing more to do with bourgeois consumption, beauty attached to a sellable object. Art is going to become infinite, immensity, immaterial, philosophy... Enough with the bourgeois function of art. Open the doors’

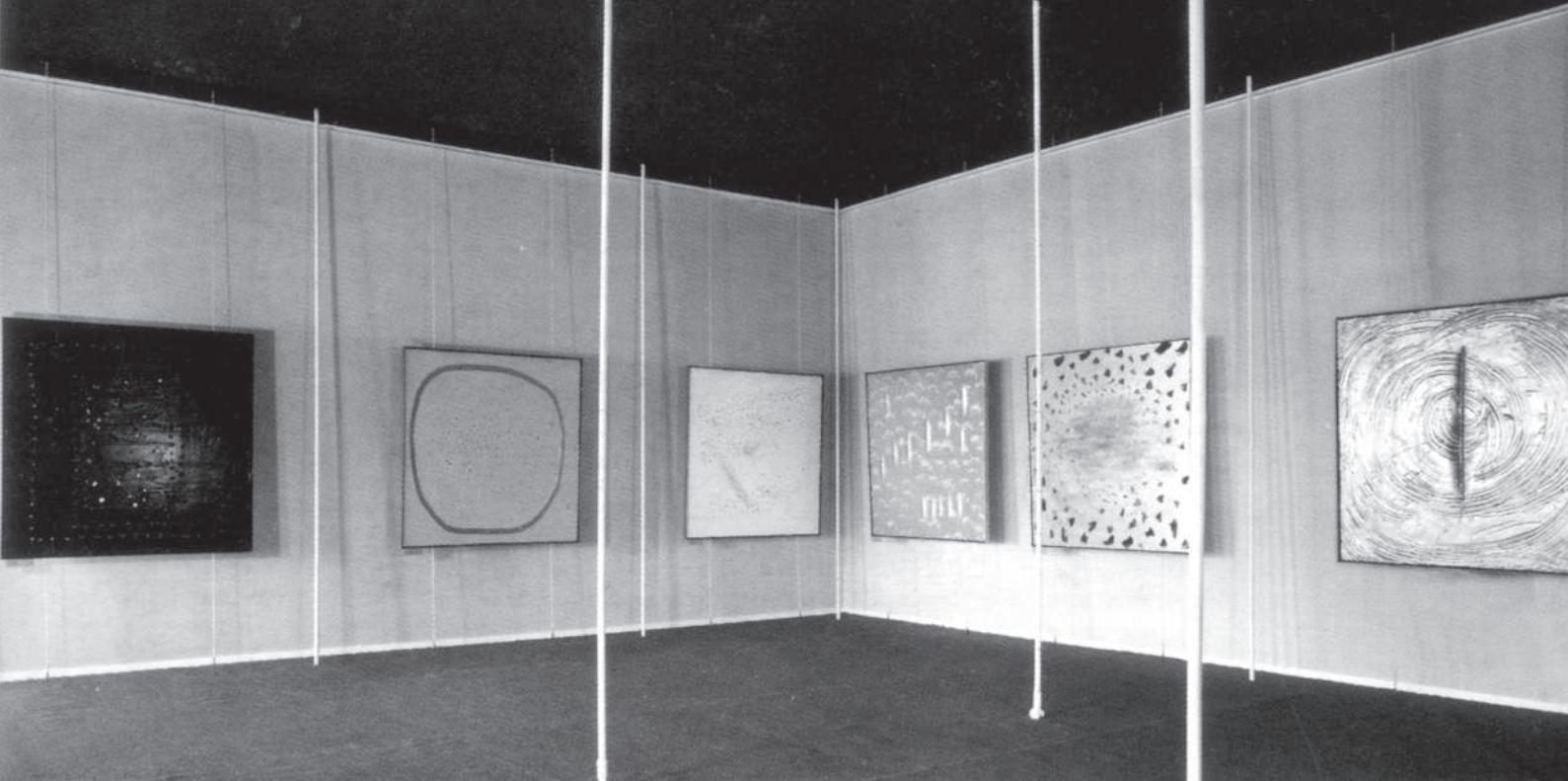
L. FONTANA

Venice as a famous locale of romantic dreams but also as a place of particular personal significance for the artist. Through the prism of Venice, therefore, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is a work that spectacularly combines both a highly personal and specific sense of earthly time and place with a broader, Spatialist understanding of the universal play of light, space and time throughout the cosmos.

Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita was one of the initial eleven *Venezie* that Fontana conceived specifically for a major exhibition held in July 1961, entitled *Arte e Contemplazione* ('Art and Contemplation'), which was organised in the Palazzo Grassi by the French critic, curator and champion of the *Informel*, Michel Tapié. Deliberately ostentatious and Baroque Spatialist visions, these works were conceived as an homage to and evocation of Venice and its tradition in art. They are the most painterly of all Fontana's creations and marked an exultant culmination of the artist's long-term pictorial experiments with light and space, along with a more recently developed interest in the physical possibilities of paint, and its capacity for both artifice and abstraction. Rendered in a thickly impastoed, glossy, black, synthetic oil, the fluid, glass-encrusted surface of *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* declares a sensuous materiality that also imbues the picture with a distinctly sculptural quality. It has been constructed with such an insistent focus on the rigid geometry of this iconic architectural site, that it appears also to amalgamate much of Fontana's lifelong interest in architecture. In this way, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is a work that, like many of the *Venezie*, seamlessly integrates painting, sculpture and architecture – the three principal areas of Fontana's artistic research – into a triumphant union.

A city he knew intimately, Venice was a site of enormous significance, both personal and professional, for Fontana. It was the place in which he had made his reputation as a pioneering Spatialist artist in the Biennales and forged important relationships with collectors, gallerists and dealers, many of whom became his lifelong friends. More importantly however, it was the city in which he and his wife had spent their honeymoon and, over the following years, the couple frequently returned to the city together, with Teresita often accompanying Fontana for his stays during the Biennales.

While the image itself is an abstract Spatialist construction, the title that Fontana has bestowed upon *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is one that immediately imbues the work with a suggestion of romanticism. A number of works of the



The *Venezie* installed in the exhibition *Arte e Contemplazione*, Palazzo Grassi, Venice, July–October 1961. The present lot is on the far left.

Photo: Courtesy of Fondazione Lucio Fontana, Milan.

Artworks: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

‘The whole city shed, from the outset, any material consistency[...] The [Venezie] destroy the visible only to reconstruct it at the end of the dark night in which nothing which was before remains, and all that will be is foretold’

P. ROUVE

Venezie have these unabashedly romantic, gently lyrical subtitles – ‘Night of Love in Venice’, ‘At Dawn Venice was all Silver’ or ‘Moon over Venice’, but this is the only example in the series in which Fontana appears to make reference to a specific moment in time spent in the city along with its direct biographical reference to his wife. With many of these romantically inspired titles, Fontana was playing with the idea of the kitsch, romantic sentimentality that had come to define Venice in the more recent past. Cut off from the rest of the world, the floating city with its sparkling light, intense colours, opulent gilded architecture and picturesque vistas and winding walkways offered a magical fantasy, a place of romantic escapism far removed from the real world. It was the British Romantics and the pleasure-seeking tourists of the Grand Tour of the 18th and early 19th Century that propagated the idealised version of Venice, fictionalising the city as a place of hedonism, romance, indulgence and fantasy. This concept continued to perpetuate over time. The archetypal city of love, honeymoons and marriage proposals, the city became the ultimate romantic cliché; a place for starry-eyed lovers to cruise the canals in gondolas, serenaded by musicians, or wander the deserted moonlit streets holding hands; an overblown parody of itself that was expounded in popular culture, mass-media and advertising. Seen within this context, *Concetto spaziale*, *In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* captures a sense of this kitsch romanticism for which Venice had become so well known. Hovering between romance and overt cliché, it amalgamates, like the rest of the *Venezie*, both the romanticism of Venice’s past and the populist myth of the contemporary city, blending high and low culture in one enigmatic, deeply poetic image.



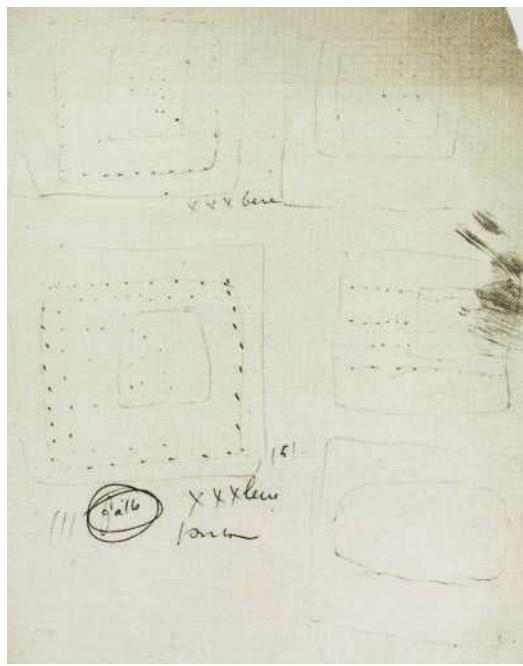
Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale*, Mezzogiorno in Piazza S. Marco, 1961.

Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

Photo: Courtesy of Fondazione Lucio Fontana, Milan.



Map of Venice, by Sebastian Munster. Published circa 1560.
Photo: Private Collection / Bridgeman Images.



Lucio Fontana, *Study for Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita*, 1961.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

Fontana executed *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* and the *Venezie* in his Milan studio, working simultaneously and intensively on different works in the group. Abstract in their appearance yet nearing narrative in their supposed subject, together they play out like an imaginary diary of fleeting yet vivid sensory and visual memories, presenting a tale of life wandering through the city at different times of day. Unusually for Fontana, he inscribed each of the *Concetti spaziali* – the all-encompassing title he had used for his multi-faceted production since the late 1940s – with descriptive subtitles that directly reference memories, both seen, felt or experienced, of Venice: 'Venice was all Gold', 'At Dawn Venice was all Silver', 'Venice Flooded', or 'Festivity on the Grand Canal'. Of the twenty-two *Venezie* that Fontana made in total, the artist bestowed such titles upon almost all of them. Only four works remain untitled. Following the Palazzo Grassi show, Fontana immediately made at least four more *Venezie*, three of which he included in a selection of ten 'Venice' paintings that he chose to represent him at his first ever one-man show in America, held at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York, in November 1961. At some point during 1961, Fontana also made seven other 'Venice' paintings, all on the same, 150 x 150cm square-canvas format. The *Venezie* offered two different experiences of Venice: some conjure contemplative, poetic atmospheric conditions and light effects – the moon rising over the lagoon, or the city at dawn, for example – while others are based on specific architectural locations and anecdotal impressions – the site of a wedding taking place, the image of swirling Baroque marble volutes of church façades in the city, and most prominently, the Piazza San Marco.

With its black, shimmering surface, *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* presents a unique combination of these two distinct themes, blending atmosphere, topography and autobiography in a single image. Serving as the symbolic embodiment of the beauty, culture and distinction of the city as a whole, the Piazza San Marco with its elegant colonnades, geometric pattern of polished white tiles,





The hand of Lucio Fontana throwing stones, 1966.
Photo: Ugo Mulas. © Ugo Mulas Heirs. All rights reserved.



Archangel Saint Michael with sword, Byzantine icon, 11th century.
Basilica di San Marco (Treasury), Venice.
Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence.

sweeping vistas and bustling day-to-day activity had provided rich subject matter to artists across all ages. Fontana was no exception: the powerful iconography of the square served as the inspiration for four of the *Venezie* series, and was the only topographical site to which he returned more than once.

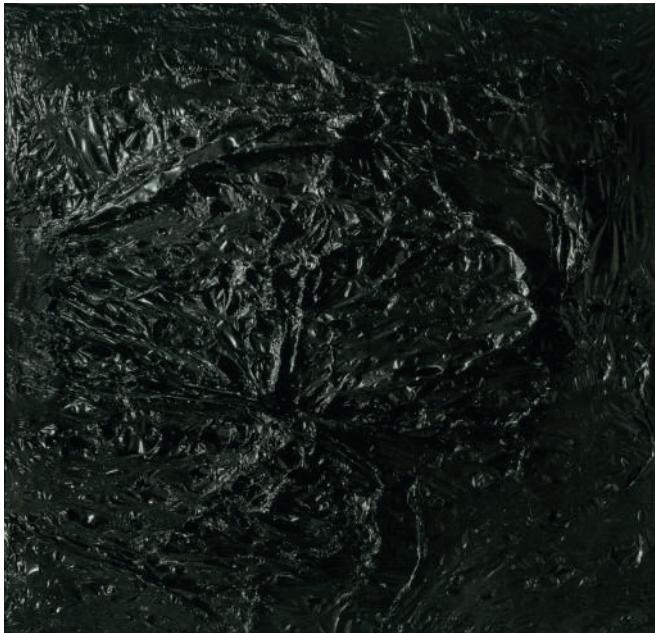
Initially, the Piazza served as the starting point for the present work and one other, *Concetto spaziale, Mezzogiorno a piazza San Marco* ('Spatial concept, Noon in Piazza San Marco') (Private collection), which presents a dazzling day time impression of the heaving energy of the square at noon, filled with people and flooded with an all-encompassing golden light. Encircled with an amorphously shaped ring of gold, the centre of the glowing, almost lurid yellow canvas is punctured with a swarming array of randomly sized and placed *buchi*, heightening the sense of light flooding in from all angles across the densely packed square. Hanging next to each other in the Palazzo Grassi exhibition, these two pendant works worked in perfect accord, creating an emphatic yet deeply poetic juxtaposition of night and day, darkness and light, ordered geometry and organic arbitrariness.

The insistent geometric structure of *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* is heightened by the linear rows of constellation-like holes that puncture the surface of the canvas. The most radical act of Fontana's artistic idiom, these linear trails of perforations create minute chasms of

intangible darkness, serving, as in all of Fontana's *buchi*, as portals to another realm; an infinite, unknown and boundless space filled with possibility and mystery. In this way, the real, topographical space of the square exists within a wider, more conceptual spatial realm; transcending the specific location from which it was inspired, to exist in a universal spatial dimension. Its centre strewn with glass pieces that appear like an astral vision of stars and cosmic matter, it is a work that both instantly evokes Venice as much as the artist's otherworldly *Concetti spaziali* of the previous years; a bold new conception of an earthbound location set within a cosmic realm.

The formation of the holes also carries an architectural implication. The enclosed rectangular shapes created by the rhythmic rows of perforations form the outline of the elaborate three-tiered colonnades that line the square, creating an aerial vision of the architecture, as if viewed from the Campanile or from an even higher vantage point: from outer space. Fontana's interest in architecture was deep and long lasting and therefore it is not surprising that the geometric structure of the Piazza, complemented and repeated by the rectangular formation of the Basilica nearby, were of particular interest to him. The studies that Fontana executed in preparation for the present work emphasise the clear connection he made between the square and its inherent geometry. In all of the small sketches, Fontana drew squares within squares, speckled with different arrangements of holes.





Alberto Burri, *Nero plastica*, 1963. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello – DACS 2017.

'I moved beyond the limits of perspective...pushing towards a discovery of the universe and a new dimension; that of infinity. It was this research that drove me to perforate the canvas, the base that had always supported all of arts, and so in doing, I created an infinite dimension, a value x that, for me, represented the base of all contemporary art...'

L. FONTANA

With all his work of various media, Fontana, who had once called himself a 'space artisan', was looking to explore how matter exists within space, seeking to sculpt space itself and integrate it as an active component of his artwork. In the present work, Fontana has constructed form from negative space. The holes that puncture the canvas – black chasms of emptiness – serve paradoxically as physical entities, implying the rhythmic pattern of architectural pillars that intersect the all-encompassing black void of night. Enveloped in darkness, the cavernous, empty square is conveyed via its essential architectural framework, implying, through absence, its presence. In this way, Fontana has revealed the inherent order and essential structure that lay beneath the extravagant ornamentation of the city. At night, when all the lavish confectons and architectural adornments were shrouded in darkness, the light no longer catching the gilded domes nor sculpted marble façades, and the hoards of people gone, all that remains is the architectural imprint of the city; in this case, the regulated, geometric formations of the columns that line the enclosed rectangle of open space.

As with a number of the *Venezie*, in *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita*, Fontana returned to the pieces of coloured Murano glass that he had affixed to the surface of the punctured canvases with the series of *Pietre* ('Stones') begun in the early 1950s. While in previous *Pietre*, these glass pieces conjured stellar-like constellations, in the *Venezie*, the addition of this embellishment had a resonant iconographic significance. Nowhere were these jewel-coloured pieces more ubiquitous than in the fantastically ornate Basilica of Saint Mark. In addition to the dazzlingly decorated façade and mosaic-lined walls and cupolas, standing in the centre of the church is the Pala d'Oro, a rectangular-shaped Byzantine gilded altar panel embellished with enamel plaques and a plethora of precious stones. Sparkling against the black surface, the jewel-coloured stones of *Concetto spaziale, In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* have clear allusions to these extravagantly decorative designs, their rectangular enclosure particularly reminiscent of the

jewel-encrusted Pala d'Oro. Capturing the essence of the gilded wonders for which St Mark's, and Venice as a whole is known, Fontana created a modern day version of these spectacular adornments, relishing the architectural splendour of the city and distilling it into his unique Spatialist form.

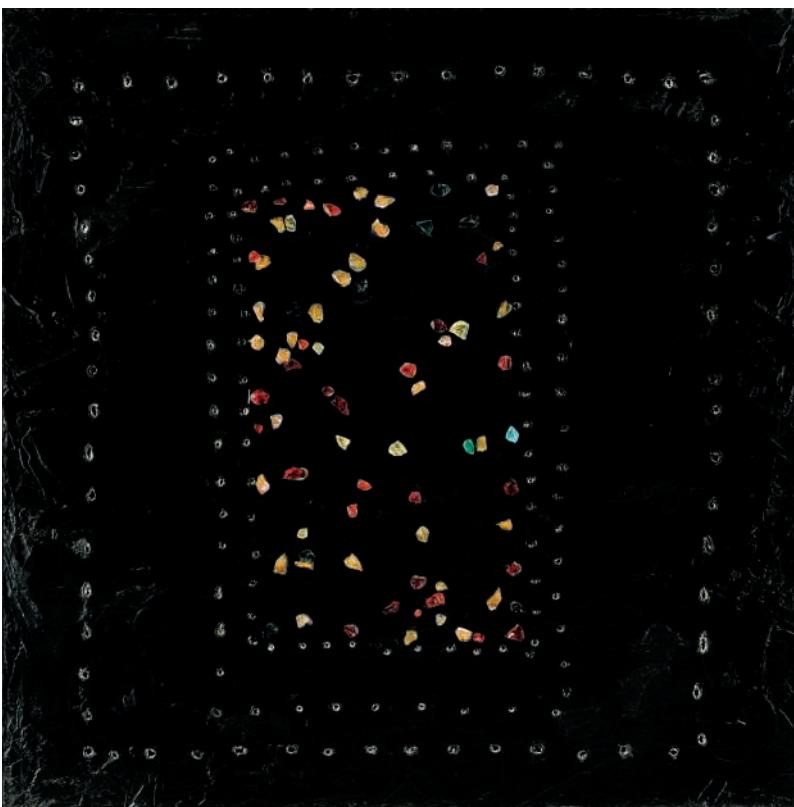


Lucio Fontana, *Concetto spaziale, La fine di Dio*, 1963.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.





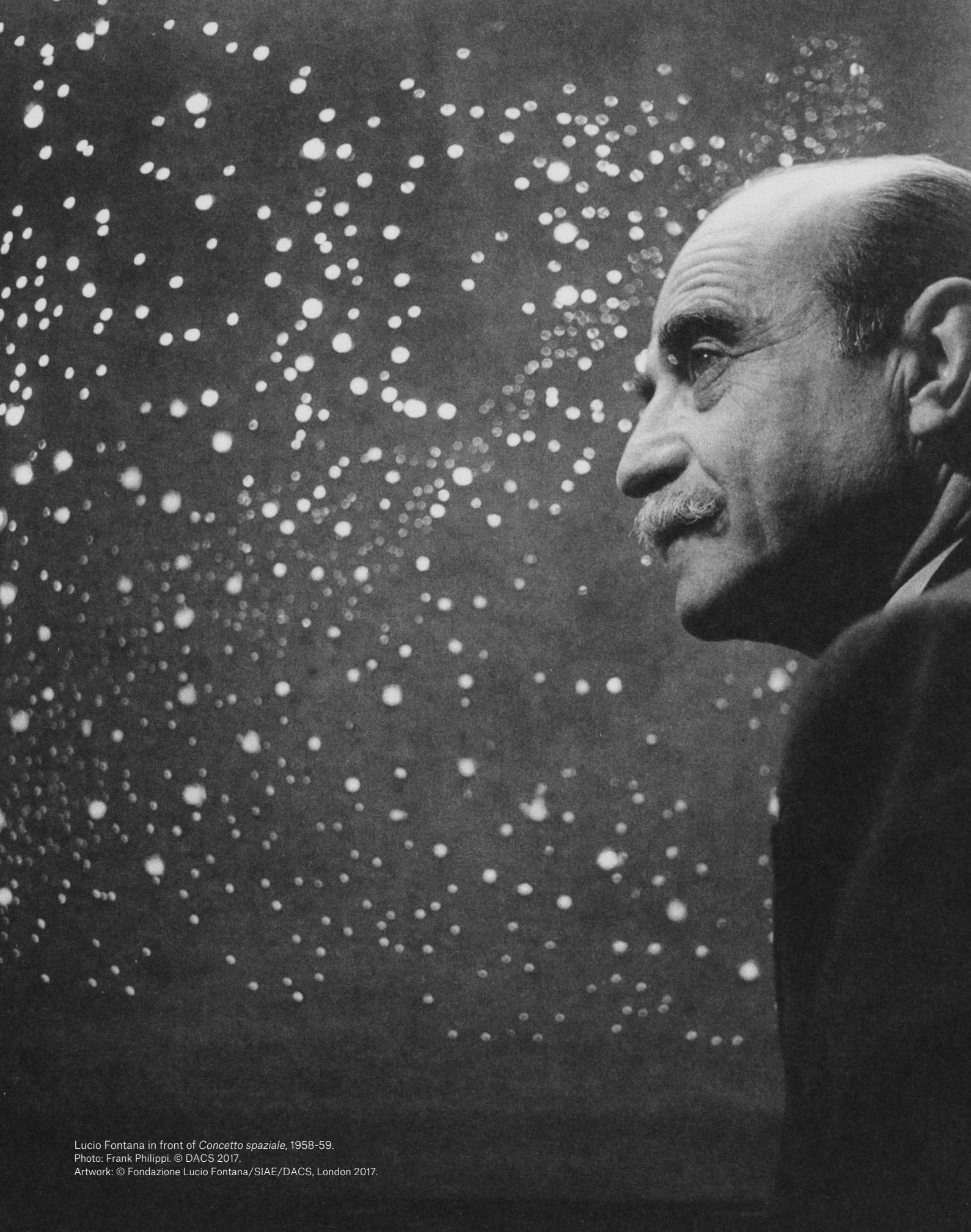
Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, *San Domenico in gloria*, 1723. Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.
Photo: Art Collection 3 / Alamy Stock Photo.



The present lot.

The imposing physicality and self-declaring materiality of *Concetto spaziale*, *In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* was achieved through Fontana's adoption of a new plastic, synthetic-based paint. Spread, poured, dabbed, raked or even applied by the artist's own hand, the surface of the work takes on a thick and visceral sculptural quality. Applied with a palette knife, the densely applied black pigment covers the surface of the canvas like a pool of water, its soft undulations creating the effect of gentle ripples reverberating across the top of this reflective surface. The enhanced fluidity and manipulability of this medium encouraged a heightened painterliness and an even further breaking down of the traditional boundaries between painting and sculpture. Most of all, the new plasticity of this shiny paint allowed Fontana a freedom to engage with the whole history and tradition of oil painting and picture-making which, in Italy at least, was rooted strongly in the history and idea of Venice and the story of Venetian art. The result of this was that, in part, what Fontana created in the cycle of *Venezie* that he made in 1961, was a series of playful and highly inventive anti-paintings: pictures that appear to pastiche and mock the art of oil painting at the very same time that they pay tribute to it and to the magical city where, in Italy least, it had begun.

In this way, Fontana, in *Concetto spaziale*, *In piazza San Marco di notte con Teresita* and the rest of the *Venezie*, produced not only the most complex, multi-layered, painterly expressions of his entire career, but also an outstanding series of works that also seem to reveal and reflect upon the endless fascination, elemental nature and ultimate redundancy of their own medium. Openly ambiguous, complex, fascinating, radiant and dazzling, these paintings are gloriously faux, Baroque articulations of light, colour energy and material form all coalescing together into a single concept or idea. It is a concept that, like Venice itself, however, seems somehow to be suspended in space – somewhere between heaven and earth. In this way, Fontana's magnificent pictures are an expression of the Spatialist artist's deeply held belief that, in the end, as with the city of Venice itself, it is spirit that triumphs over matter and the idea of the place that transcends its material, earthbound reality. In the new Spatialist era of the future, Fontana wrote: 'art is going to be a completely different thing...Not an object, nor a form...Nothing more to do with bourgeois consumption, beauty attached to a sellable object. Art is going to become infinite, immensity, immaterial, philosophy...Enough with the bourgeois function of art. Open the doors' (L. Fontana, *Art et création* I, 1968, p. 78).



Lucio Fontana in front of *Concetto spaziale*, 1958-59.

Photo: Frank Philippi. © DACS 2017.

Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.







Piazza San Marco, Venice.
Photo: JNS/Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images.



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED ITALIAN GENTLEMAN

λ* 107

FAUSTO
MELOTTI (1901-1987)

L'aquila (The Eagle)

brass, painted plaster and wire mesh

28 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (73.2 x 31.5 x 18cm.)

Executed in 1966

£200,000-300,000

\$270,000-390,000

€220,000-330,000

‘The distance between Man and God
cannot be the infinite. Otherwise we
would be abandoned beasts’

F. MELOTTI



Alberto Giacometti, *The Palace at 4 a.m.*, 1932-33.
Purchase. Acc. n.: 90.1936. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
© The Estate of Alberto Giacometti (Fondation Giacometti, Paris and
ADAGP, Paris), licensed in the UK by ACS and DACS, London 2017.
Photo: © 2017. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/
Scala, Florence.

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Milan.
Galería Elvira González, Madrid.
Cardi Gallery, Milan.
Acquired from the above by the present owner

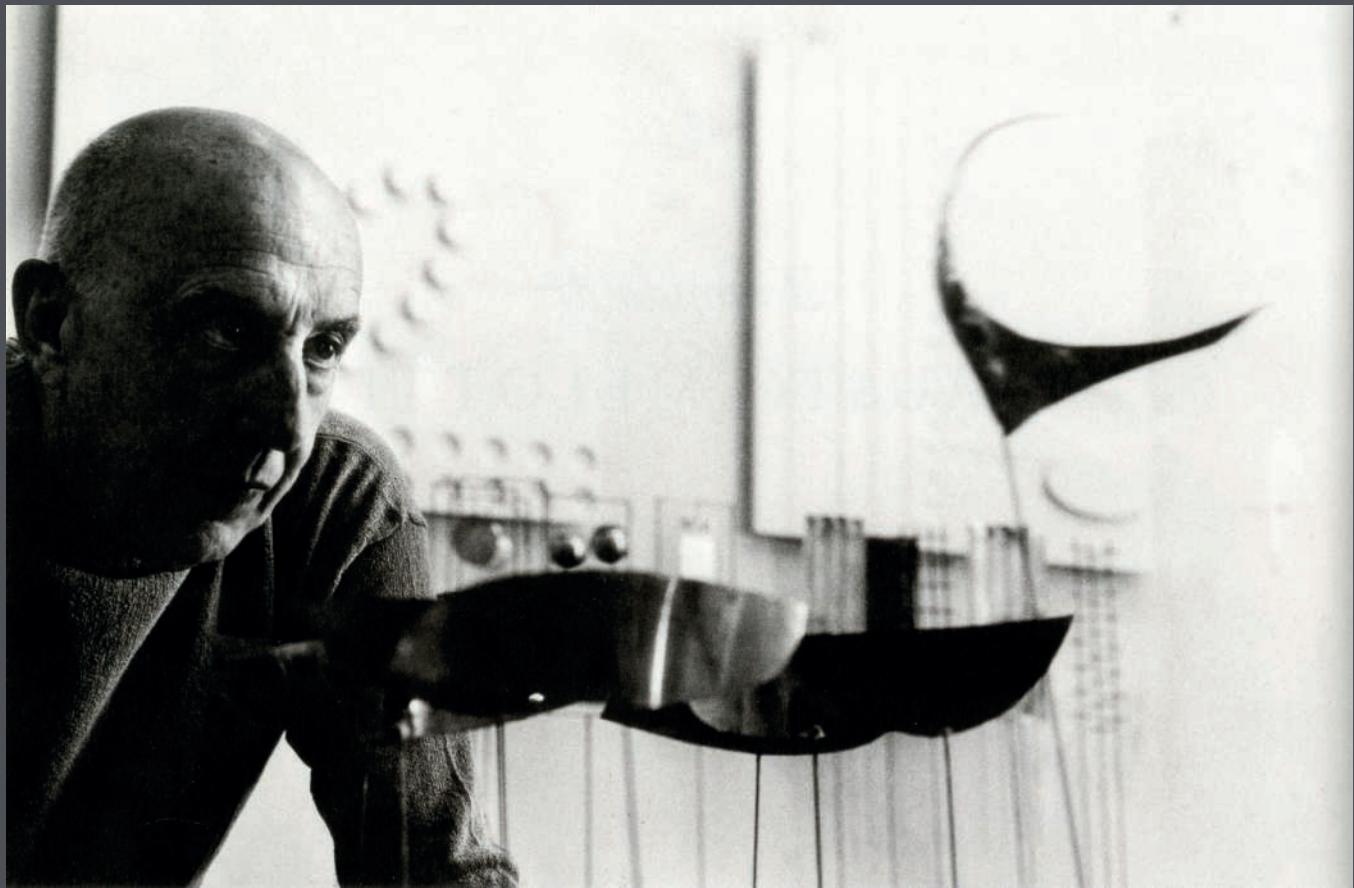
EXHIBITED:

Rome, Galleria Editalia, *Melotti dipinti e sculture*,
1987.
Madrid, Galería Elvira González, *Fausto Melotti*,
2015, p. 118 (illustrated in colour, p. 23).

LITERATURE:

G. Celant, *Melotti. Catalogo generale. Sculture*
1929-1972, Milan 1994, vol. I, no. 1966 3 (illustrated,
p. 172).
Fausto Melotti, exh. cat., Naples, MADRE Museo
d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina, 2011-2012,
no. 294 (illustrated in colour, unpagued).





Fausto Melotti in his studio, 1970s.

Photo Ugo Mulas © Ugo Mulas Heirs. All rights reserved.

Artworks: © Fondazione Fausto Melotti. Courtesy the Estate of Fausto Melotti and Hauser & Wirth.

Evoking ideas of flight, nature and nurturing, *L'aquila (The Eagle)* belongs to the second-half of Fausto Melotti's career, when the artist turned to brass to draw in the air the scenes and characters of his whimsical universe. Conceived in 1966, the work dates from a period of renewed and growing critical interest for Melotti. That same year, the artist was invited to exhibit a series of rigorous, abstract works from the 1930s at the XXXIII Venice Biennale, while, the following year, an important personal exhibition at the Galleria Toninelli d'arte moderna in Milan would present his brass sculptures to the public for the first time, receiving great critical acclaim. From that moment onwards, Melotti's dainty and imaginative sculptures would captivate the attention of the critics, entering into a dialogue with the burgeoning Arte Povera movement and their alchemical transformation of humble materials, while affirming nonetheless a distinct and fresh artistic voice.

Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of *L'aquila (The Eagle)* is how brass and plaster are transformed - with great economy of means - to evoke the flight of an eagle over its nest. Threads of brass suffice to evoke the spiky edge of mountains' ridges, while the heavy lump of plaster stuck in between them vividly recalls the thick nests of eagles and the way they perch on the top of peaks. Melotti then portrayed the eagle with effective simplicity: two crossed sheets of brass give the bird a sense of élan and speed, while a piece of mesh is used to evoke its broad, imposing wings. The angle at which these two elements are disposed immediately calls to mind the way eagles

plane over mountains. The inclusion of the nest, moreover, introduces in the work the idea of nurturing, opening up the work to further associations. One could wonder whether behind the artist's decision to portray this menacing, predatory bird in the caring act of returning to its chicks there may be the intention to symbolically evoke the idea of motherhood or filial affection.

In its reference to the natural world, *L'aquila (The Eagle)* maintains nevertheless an interesting relationship with abstraction. For if the work evokes the presence of an eagle, it also eschews any descriptive form of realism. Despite their lively imagery, Melotti's brass sculptures are indeed always rooted in abstraction. In the 1930s, the artist had begun his career as an abstract sculptor, associated to the movement of rationalist architects *Gruppo 7*. The Second World War, however, would tarnish the idealistic, avant-garde dreams of the young Melotti, leaving a deep mark on him and pushing him away from pure abstraction. 'I must confess', he explained, 'that the war has caused me great inner pain and sickness. One cannot make abstract art, one cannot even think about it when the soul is full not of desperation, but of figures of desperation' (Melotti, quoted in S. Whitfield, *Fausto Melotti: sculptures and works on paper from 1955 to 1983*, exh. cat., London, 2006, n.p.). In the aftermath of war, Melotti thus turned to clay, with which he started creating the '*teatrini*', small enclosed 'stage sets' on which objects, small characters, small pieces of cloth and iron are placed, creating symbolic, narrative scenes.



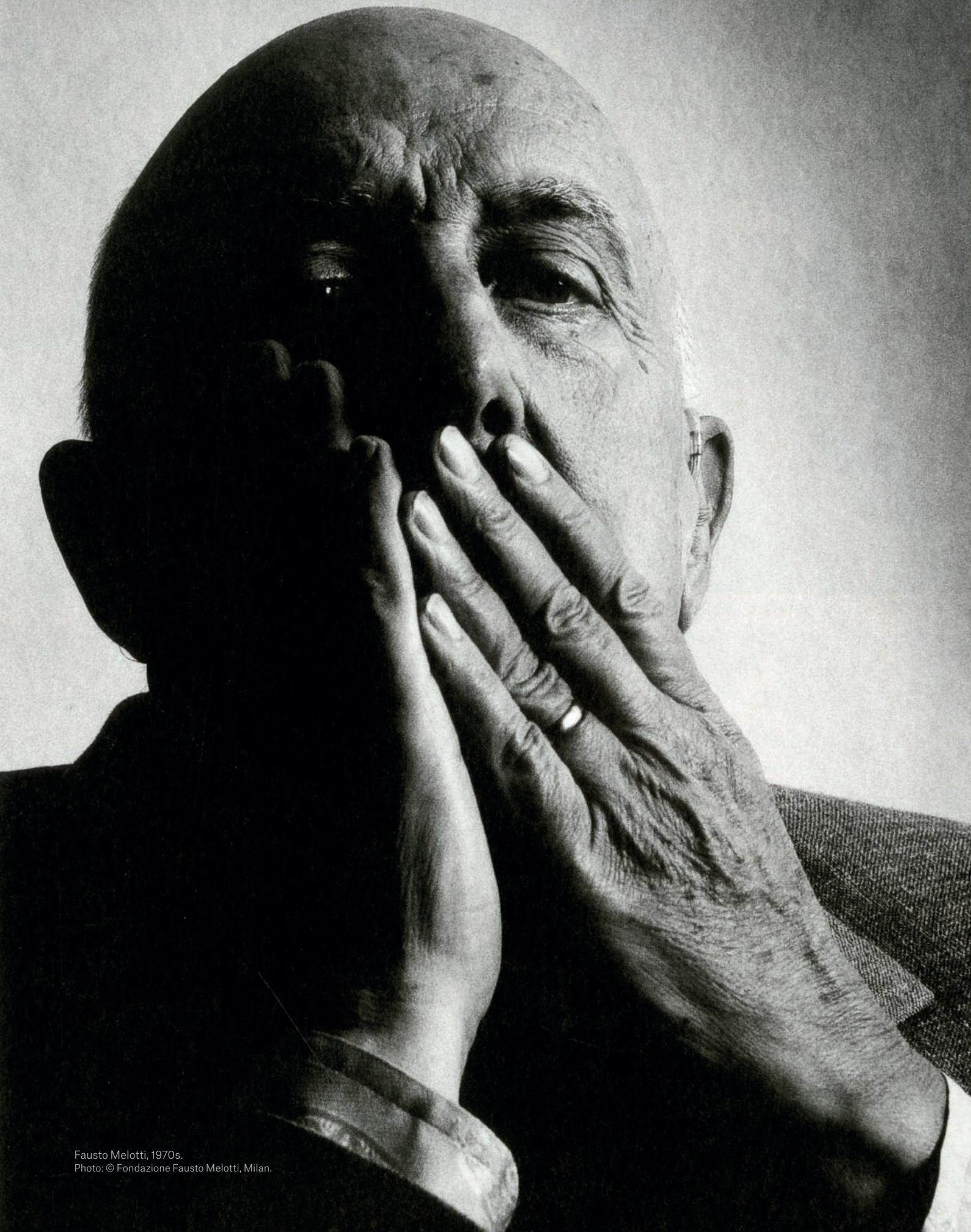


Yet, abstraction continued to be linked, for Melotti, to an idea of harmony, order and peace difficult to observe in nature, and to which art had to aspire to. 'When you look at a tree', Melotti argued, 'you see it as something beautiful and it is. Then you realise that it's full of insects killing each other, of microbes... Everything in nature is nastiness... Anyhow, it's the only model in which we can see ourselves reflected. In abstract art, thank God, we don't have these horrendous models' (Melotti, quoted in *Ibid.*). In art - or rather, in the abstraction proper to art - nature can be reflected in more harmonious, serene terms. The brass sculptures which Melotti created in the second-half of his career return to this idea, combining abstraction with delicate, playful touches of figuration. It is in this regard, that works such as *L'aquila (The Eagle)* express an idea of nature which remains firmly rooted in the imaginary, abstract world of lines, proportions and shapes that is proper to Melotti's conception of art.

Indeed, Melotti often thought of his brass sculptures as drawings, that is to say indifferent to their three-dimensional advantage in the quest for mimesis. 'I use metal', he explained, 'because it brings me close to drawing: with metal I can draw in space' (Melotti, quoted in *Melotti, exh. cat.*, Rome, 1983, p. 10). Works such as *L'aquila (The Eagle)* maintain the freshness and spontaneity of a child drawing, in which meaning is inferred through an instinctive system of signs and lines that bypasses notions of mass, perspective, texture and shadowing, normally associated with sculpture. In this regard, works such as *L'aquila (The Eagle)* challenge the basic premises of sculpture, its three-dimensionality and its privileged relation to the tangible world. Melotti's brass sculptures refuse mass, to incorporate air and space into their symbolic world. They forego sculpture's heavy presence and promise of durability by embracing fragility. Brass is thinned into threads, meshes and sheets, which quiver and shine with a lightness that recalls the dangling structures of Alexander Calder. It is in this dimension that works such as *L'aquila (The Eagle)* express Melotti's most affecting contribution to the Twentieth Century's radical redefinition of sculpture.

'I use metal because it brings me close to drawing:
with metal I can draw in space'

F. MELOTTI



Fausto Melotti, 1970s.
Photo: © Fondazione Fausto Melotti, Milan.

michelangelo
PISTOLETTO

'When I realized that someone like Pollock, although he attempted to transfer life onto canvas through action, did not succeed in taking possession of the work, which continued to escape him, remaining autonomous, and that the presence of the human figure in the painting of Bacon did not succeed in rendering a pathological vision of reality... I understood that the moment had arrived to make the laws of objective reality enter the painting'

M. PISTOLETTO





PROPERTY FROM A MAJOR AMERICAN COLLECTION

λ* 108

MICHELANGELO
PISTOLETTO (b. 1933)

Uomo che guarda un negativo
(Man Looking at a Negative)

signed, titled and dated 'Pistoletto 1967 -UOMO CHE GUARDA UN

NEGATIVO.' (on the reverse)

painted tissue paper on polished stainless steel

90½ x 47½in. (230 x 120cm.)

Executed in 1967

£2,500,000-3,500,000

\$3,300,000-4,600,000

€2,800,000-3,800,000

**'I am of the opinion that each and every
thing also contains its opposite'**

A. BOETTI



Alighiero Boetti, *Gemelli (Twins)*, 1968
© DACS, 2017

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris.

Kornblee Gallery, New York.

Harry N. Abrams Collection, New York.

Thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Kornblee Gallery, *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, 1967.

Boston, Institute of Contemporary Art, *Young Italians*, 1968, no. 32 (illustrated, unpage). This exhibition later travelled to New York, Jewish Museum.

Venice, Palazzo Grassi, *Michelangelo Pistoletto*, 1976, p. 115, no. 111 (illustrated, p. 57, titled 'Alighiero Boetti che guarda un negativo in trasparenza').

Houston, Institute for the Arts, Rice Museum, *Michelangelo Pistoletto - Mirror Works*, 1979, p. 18, no. 7 (installation view illustrated, p.17).

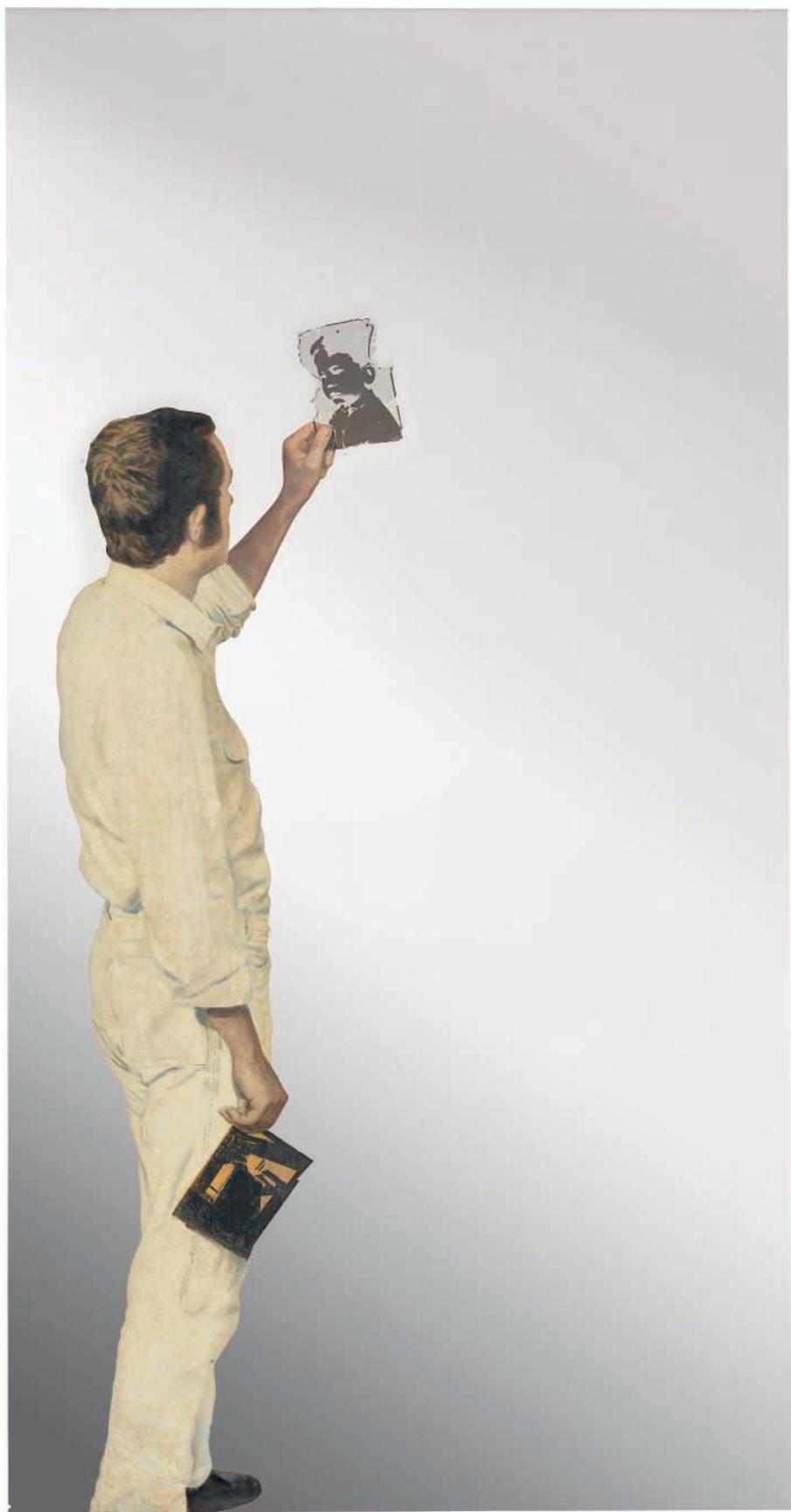
Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art,

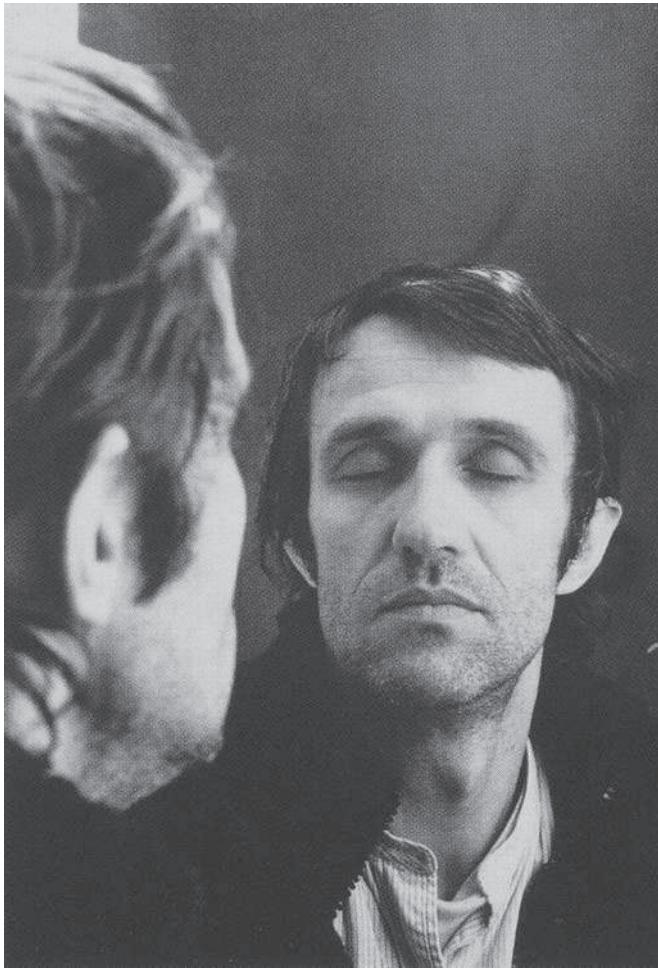
Michelangelo Pistoletto. From One to Many, 2010-2011, p. 377, no. 44 (illustrated in colour, p.237, historical installation view illustrated, p. 236, titled 'Alighiero Boetti che guarda un negativo'). This exhibition later travelled to Rome, MAXXI - Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo.

LITERATURE:

A. Boatto, *Michelangelo Pistoletto - Dentro/Fuori lo specchio*, Rome 1969, no. 43 (illustrated, unpage, titled 'Uomo con negativo').

Pistoletto, exh. cat., Florence, Forte del Belvedere, 1984, no. 81 (illustrated, p. 87, titled 'Alighiero Boetti che guarda un negativo in trasparenza').





Alighiero Boetti, *Specchio cieco*, 1975.

Artwork: © DACS 2017.

Original Photo: © Gianfranco Gorgoni.

Held in the same collection since 1969, *Uomo che guarda un negativo* (*Man looking at a negative*) (1967) is an exceptional early Mirror Painting by Michelangelo Pistoletto, that features the artist himself and Alighiero Boetti, the grand master of conceptual Arte Povera. Boetti, sharply dressed and depicted with crisp realism in paint on tissue paper, stands with his back to us, holding a photo negative of a child's face up to the light. Reflected in the surrounding surface of polished stainless steel, the viewer steps into Boetti's space, sharing his mirrored environment. Thus taking part in the composition, they complete and animate the artwork: Pistoletto not only offers a playful interactive experience, but also poses a compelling inquest into the relationship between artist and viewer. His treatment of the negative that Boetti is inspecting adds a virtuoso detail, with its light areas left unpainted to create a brilliant sense of true transparency. Boetti's own artistic captivation with the idea of doubling and reflection makes him an exquisite subject. Image within image and artist within artwork conspire in an extraordinary Mirror Painting of rare and vital importance, standing testament to the twin outlooks of two of the greatest Italian pioneers of the last century.

Appropriately, this work was executed in 1967 – the same year that Germano Celant first coined the name for 'Arte Povera', the avant-garde movement of which both Boetti and Pistoletto were guiding forces. Boetti provides a perfect vehicle for Pistoletto's Mirror Painting treatment. He not only shared Pistoletto's ludic sensibility, inventive spirit and creative charisma, but also,

'I always find myself talking about this idea of the double, which is a subject that, as the critics say, runs through all of my work. The fact is that we are confronted by a natural reality: it's incontestable that a cell divides in two, and then in four, and so on; that we have two legs, two arms, two eyes, and so on; that mirrors double images; that man has founded his whole existence upon a series of binary models, including computers; that language proceeds by pairs of opposed terms, like the ones I cited above: order and disorder, sign and design, etc. It's obvious that this concept of the pair is one of the fundamental archetypes of our culture'

A. BOETTI

in his own work, was fascinated with the concept of doubles. Pistoletto chose the photograph of him (taken in Pistoletto's Turin studio) looking at a negative – with its implied opposite of the positive – as if to highlight this shared aspect of their artistic projects. Boetti believed that the world's unity comprised of a balance of opposites, based on the coexistence of harmony and chaos. He trained himself to write and draw ambidextrously; in *I Gemelli*, a 1968 double self-portrait, he manipulated photographs so as to appear to be holding hands with an identical twin; in 1973, he renamed himself as the dual persona *Alighiero e Boetti* ('Alighiero and Boetti'). From the alphabetical games of his *Arazzi* to the geopolitical collaborations of his *Mappe*, his practice was driven by the opposing poles of the individual and society, error and perfection, order and disorder. 'The fact is', he wrote in 1988, 'that we are confronted by a natural reality: it's incontestable that a cell divides in two, and then in four, and so on; that we have two legs, two arms, two eyes, and so on; that mirrors double images; that man has founded his whole existence upon a series of binary models, including computers; that language proceeds by pairs of opposed terms, like the ones I cited above: *order and disorder, sign and design*, etc. It's obvious that this concept of the pair is one of the fundamental archetypes of our culture' (A. Boetti, quoted in S. Lombardi (ed.), *Dall'OGGI al DOMANI*, Brescia 1988). Standing forever in the mirror of the present work, he is a gatekeeper at the threshold between the world of reality and that of reflections, his own image fluctuating between physical and pictorial space.

Like Boetti, Pistoletto saw this doubling as a way of understanding the world. Rejecting the 'base' myth of Narcissus, who falls in love with his own reflected image and drowns diving into the smooth surface of his pond, Pistoletto preferred to see the reflection as a revolutionary instant of dawning self-consciousness. 'I think rather that one has to seek the beginning of history', he wrote recently, 'by tracing back to the moment in which man recognises his own image in the mirror as an image of himself detached from himself, like a double, like a representation of himself, that is, like an emblematic sign of himself. That is the moment at which the phenomenon of rationality is revealed. Rationality, intervening between man and his image, gives man his independence and the ability to make use of that image ... In







The present lot installed in Pistoletto's exhibition at Kornblee Gallery, New York, 1967.

Photo: Eric Pollitzer

Artwork: © Michelangelo Pistoletto.

this way one produces the expressive and communicative signs that make up art and on which the evolutionary patterns of civilisation are structured' (M. Pistoletto, 'The Mirror', in *Riflettiamoci*, exh. cat. Studio Guastalla Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Milan 2013, p. 11). As with Boetti's rule-based studies of chance, sign, system, word and number, the Mirror Paintings are therefore more than a mischievous undermining of art's traditional prerogatives: they form part of a wide investigation into the mysteries of man's experience of being in the universe.

The Mirror Paintings, or *Quadri specchianti*, evolved out of a series of self-portrait studies that Pistoletto painted in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which were influenced by the existential paintings of Francis Bacon. One day in 1961, he saw his own face reflected in the glossy black background of an emerging self-portrait. 'I saw it come toward me,' he recalled, 'detaching itself from the space of an environment in which all things moved, and I was astonished' (M. Pistoletto, *Il rinascimento dell'arte*, 1979, quoted in *Michelangelo Pistoletto: From One to Many 1956-74*, exh. cat. MAXXI, Rome 2011, p. 143). Almost instantaneously, Pistoletto realised the new direction in which he should take his work. 'The figure of a man seemed to come forward, as if alive ... but the true protagonist was the relationship of instantaneousness that was created between the spectator, his own reflection, and the painted figure, in an ever-present movement that concentrated the past and the figure in itself to such an extent as to cause one to call their very existence into doubt: it was the dimension of time itself' (M. Pistoletto, *Minus Objects*, Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa 1966). From this point onwards Pistoletto began to refine his paintings and to title them 'The Present' in reference to what he now realised was their true subject – the living, present moment of the constantly changing real space and time that had now entered into the reflective surface of his painting. From these painted works, the Mirror Paintings were born.

Isolated in their reflective panel, Pistoletto's subjects (usually friends, colleagues and other people he knew) assert and question the difference between the world of representation and the reflective 'reality' of the mirror. Gazing at these works, the viewer immediately enters into a paradoxical and problematic world, seemingly both participating within the often intimate and private space of the subject – a mother nursing her child, an artist in the act of drawing or, as in this work, Boetti considering his own creation – and yet also remaining remote and separated, in an alternate space and time that simultaneously exists within the same picture. Pistoletto's figures always, because of the hand-crafted nature of their representation, inhabit an entirely different world, frozen, and often alone, in a time that is clearly past. And yet, at the same time, and seemingly within the same frame or dimension of the picture, the viewer is also able to stand within the work, participating in and observing the real space and time of the gallery – one that within the confines of the picture plane always appears as an ever-changing present. The viewer, whose image also appears in the mirror, interacts with both these different space-times and consequently acts as a bridge between two separate worlds. 'When I realized', Pistoletto recalled, 'that someone like Pollock, although he attempted to transfer life onto canvas through action, did not succeed in taking possession of the work, which continued to escape him, remaining autonomous, and that the presence of the human figure in the painting of Bacon did not succeed in rendering a pathological vision of reality ... I understood that the moment had arrived to make the laws of objective reality enter the painting' (M. Pistoletto, interview with T. Trini in 1964, quoted in G. Celant, *Identité Italienne*, Paris 1981, p. 81). Pistoletto's solution was to use the reflective mimesis of the mirror as a way of letting reality and the life of the person, be it himself or the viewer, enter into the work as both subject and performer.



'For me the mirror was not only an illusionistic pathway back through the wall, back into the space of the traditional perspective or even into the material cut of Fontana and the mysterious dark space behind the canvas. It suggested a double projection, in to the wall and out into the space of the viewer. In a way it integrated painting and sculpture. You could virtually walk in the space that was reflected in the painting ... For centuries we have been projecting ourselves into the fictional space of painting. I thought it was time to have the space project out to us, to once again create space'

M. PISTOLETTO

Until he began to silkscreen directly onto the mirrored surface in 1971, Pistoletto's early Mirror Paintings, as in the present work, were made by the complex and painstaking process of blowing up a photograph, cutting out the silhouette of the figure, and then tracing it onto a semi-transparent onion-skin paper with oils and pastels. This image was then glued onto the reflective metal surface of the 'mirror'. The delicacy of Pistoletto's method is clear in *Uomo che guarda un negativo*: Boetti's hair, skin and clothing are captured with a graceful clarity of colour and depth, with soft tones and gentle contrast appropriate to his languid, contemplative pose. The subtle detail of the negative itself, with its transparent areas left blank, displays the dazzling technical touch of an artist who by 1967 had truly mastered his medium. The intimacy of the photograph of Boetti being taken from behind, capturing him in a moment of contemplation in his friend's studio, also speaks touchingly of an ease and familiarity between the two artists.

In 1988, Boetti wrote: 'I am of the opinion that each and every thing also contains its opposite' (A. Boetti, quoted in S. Lombardi (ed.), *Dall' Oggi al Domani*, Brescia 1988). Pistoletto said, earlier, that 'Man has always attempted to double himself as a means of attempting to know himself' (M. Pistoletto, 'The Last Famous Words', in I. Gianelli (ed.), *Pistoletto*, New York 1967, p. 72). These parallel statements are beautifully borne out in Pistoletto's Mirror Paintings just as they are in Boetti's works. They embrace duality and multiplicity while allowing for the viewer's subjective unity; they comprehend the flux of existence even as they provide a space for the study of the individual self. An intimate testament to a friendship and a profound vehicle for self-discovery, *Uomo che guarda un negativo* shows Boetti looking at a negative – the inverse of a photograph – and also shows us looking at a reversed version of our own image. In doing so, we not only bear witness to two men's remarkable quests for knowledge through art, but also become conscious, moving participants in the theatre of our own lives.



M. Pistoletto reflected in the present lot in occasion of the opening of the artist's exhibition at the Rice Museum, Houston, 1979.
Photo: Paul Hester
Artwork: © Michelangelo Pistoletto.



alighiero
BOETTI

"That is why if I were to tell you the great emotions and feelings of my life, I'd have to confess that none of them have been stirred by Nature. A petal, a butterfly, a sunset – these can all be beautiful. However, in my opinion, the great emotions come from listening to a work by Mozart, from reading a poem. Because in those there is thought made up of thousands of coincidences, synchronicities...[and] memories'

A. BOETTI

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PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED EUROPEAN GENTLEMAN

λ 109

ALIGHIERO
BOETTI (1940-1994)

Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine
(*The progressive disappearance of habit*)

signed and inscribed 'inseparabili alighiero e boetti'
(on the reverse of the first element)
ballpoint pen on paper mounted on board, in five parts
each: 39% x 28in. (100.8 x 71.2cm.)
overall: 39% x 140%in. (100.8 x 356.2cm.)
Executed in 1976-1977

£600,000-800,000
\$790,000-1,000,000
€660,000-870,000

**'Beauty is an expression of thought,
and of the urge to express it'**

A. BOETTI



Alighiero Boetti in his studio, Rome 1974.
Photo: Antonia Mulas.
© Eredi Antonia Mulas - All rights reserved.

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Germany.
Anon. sale, Christie's London, 6 December 2000,
lot 55.
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

LITERATURE:

J.C. Ammann, *Alighiero Boetti, Catalogo generale, Opere 1972-1979*, Milan 2012, vol. II, no. 789
(illustrated in colour, p. 222).

This work is registered in the Archivio Alighiero Boetti, Rome, under no. 2154.

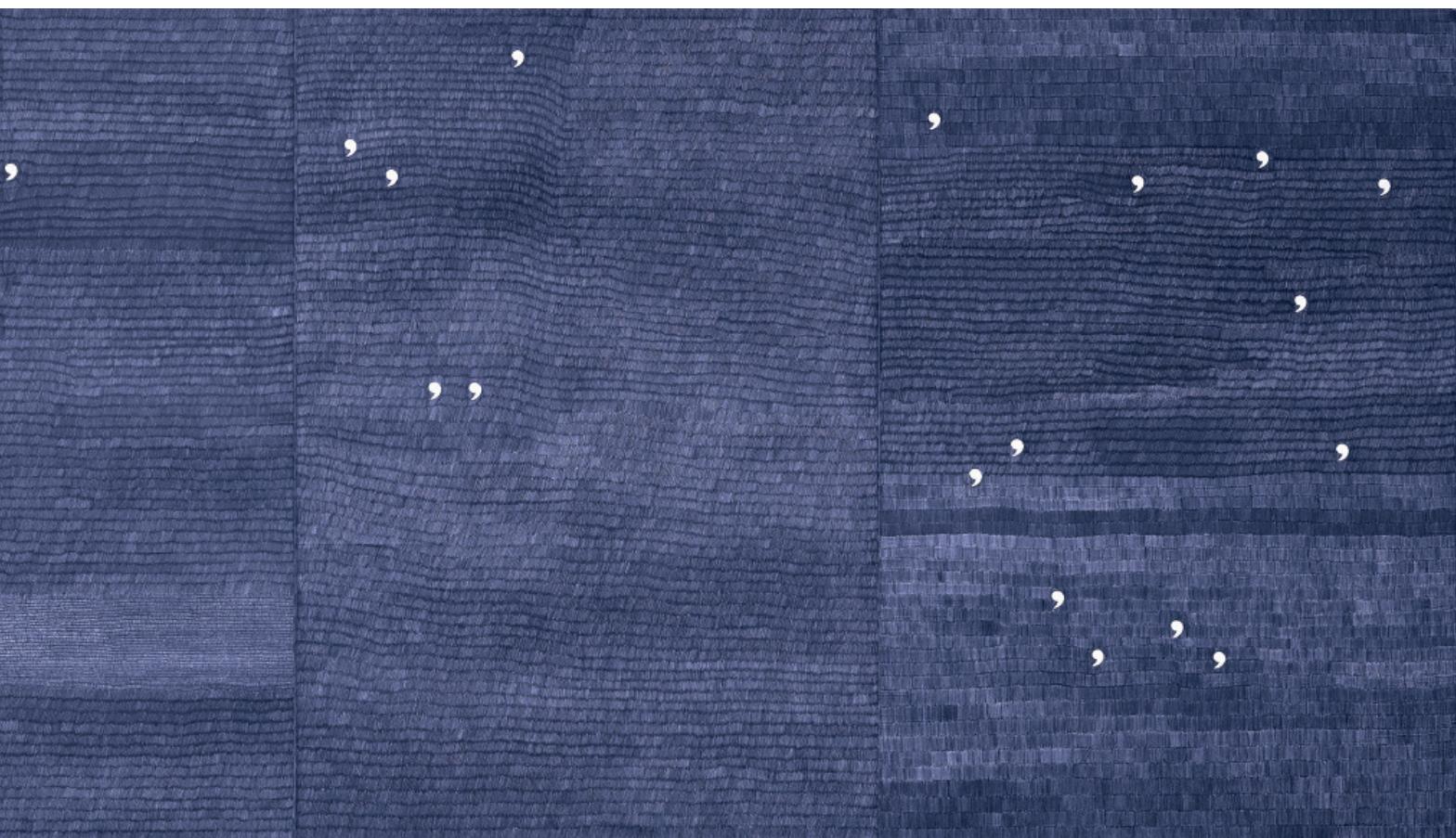


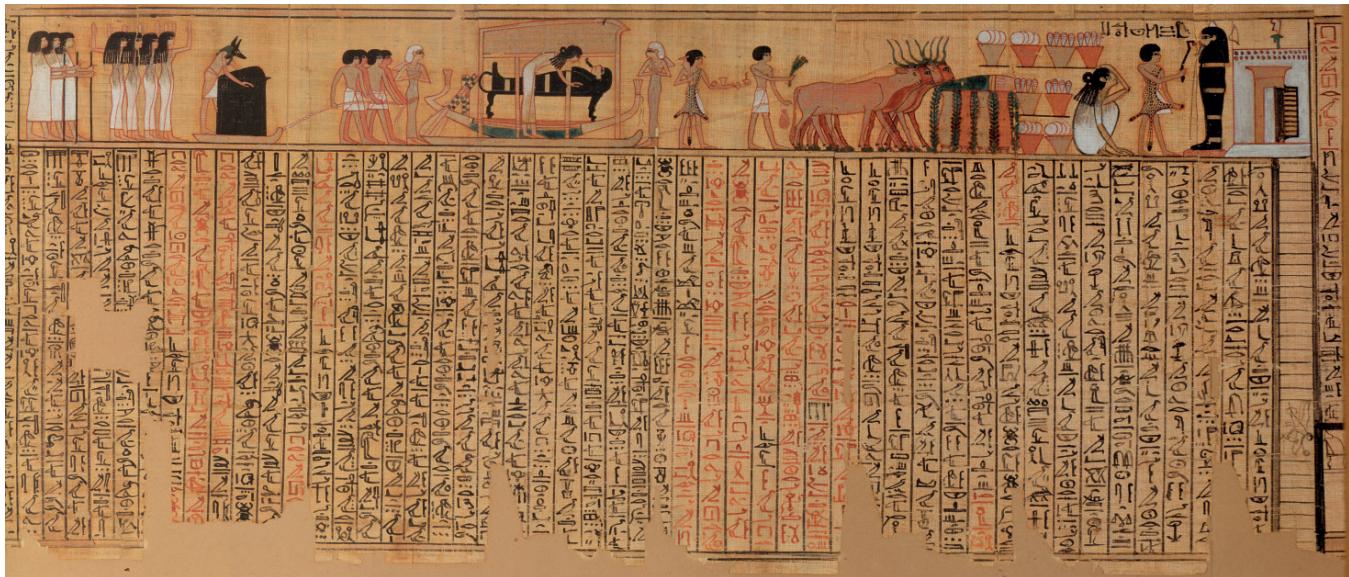
Alighiero Boetti in his studio, Rome 1974

Photo: Antonia Mulas.

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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z





The spirit of the deceased descending into its tomb, from the Book of the Dead of the scribe Neqbed, New Kingdom, Egyptian 18th Dynasty (circa 1567-1320 BC). Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Photo: Louvre, Paris, France / Bridgeman Images.

'All that is important is the rule. Anyone who does not know it, will never recognise the prevailing order in things, just as somebody who does not know the order of the stars will always see confusion where an astronomer has a very clear view of things'

A. BOETTI

Executed over the course of several months in 1976 and 1977, *Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine* (*The Progressive Disappearance of Habit*) comes from Alighiero e Boetti's acclaimed series of ballpoint drawings (*lavori biro*) which explore the relationships between linguistic, numerical and visual systems of information and knowledge. Begun in 1972, these works utilise the simple medium of the ballpoint pen to create richly textured fields of colour, with each panel filled with delicate strokes of ink and subsequently punctuated by a number of small, bright white commas. Though seemingly dispersed randomly across the page, each comma is carefully placed so as to correspond to a particular letter of the alphabet, identifiable by tracing the order of their position and aligning them with the alphabetical key that lines the left hand side of the composition. Discussing this technique, Boetti explained: 'A word turns into a sign, into a compilation of commas with a meaning. You see, that is a rule. You follow the thread of these commas. To follow the thread of a conversation is a tautology, and, quite apart from the rule, there is the structure of the transformation of the word into a sign. This is what you must make visible, you must render the comma as something that is not stable, that is unstable, and these small white points stand on a background hatched with pens by another hand' (Boetti, quoted in *Alighiero Boetti: Mettere al mondo il mondo*, exh. cat., Frankfurt, 1998, p. 63). Reading from left to right, the viewer is able to gradually decipher the coded message by tracing the invisible lines between the commas and the letters, revealing a self-reflexive spelling of the title of the work. Involving the viewer in the process of 'revealing' the meaning of the artwork, Boetti creates a playful game that both deconstructs and celebrates the power of letters to convey information.

In each of the *lavori biro* Boetti employed a group of collaborators to realise his vision - while the artist developed the concept for each work, and planned and defined the basic grid pattern of the background, the actual execution of the composition was left to external craftspeople. A similar method was used in the artist's *Arazzi* and *Mappe* series, which both relied on the technical skills of a group of Afghan embroiderers to achieve their finished look. By adopting this process, Boetti established a form of relational aesthetics whereby he could explore the role of the artist as a conceiver but not ultimate creator of a work of art, undermining the perception of the artist as supreme genius. In the case of the *biro* drawings Boetti drew his assistants from his local neighbourhood of Trastevere in Rome, and requested that each alternating panel was coloured by a member of the opposite sex. Armed with a clearly defined set of rules, these anonymous collaborators would spend countless hours carefully filling the large panels with intricate layers of cross-hatching, a time intensive process which Boetti felt was intrinsic to the very nature of the *biro* drawings: 'The drawings in *Biro* are concentrates of time, they convey to me a physical impression of extended, immense time' (Boetti, quoted *ibid*, p. 59).

Made up of five individual panels, each painstakingly filled with rich, subtly gradated fields of royal blue ink, *Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine* presents a shimmering vision of space, the white commas appearing like a mysterious astronomical constellation or a series of falling raindrops against a monochrome expanse. While the laborious process demanded a heightened level of attention from Boetti's collaborators, to ensure the surface was filled as densely as possible without leaving any gaps or spaces,

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Joan Miró, *La Baigneuse (O Bañista)*, 1925. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.
Artwork: © Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London 2017.
Photo: © 2017. Album/Scala, Florence.

'I am interested in primary matters, such as the alphabet, the map, the newspaper, among other things owing to the spring which thus tautens between order and disorder'

A. BOETTI

a number of subtle, textural shifts can be detected throughout. Indeed, each panel is imbued with the distinctive rhythm of its maker, their idiosyncratic approaches to the process resulting in fluctuating fields of colour which appear to undulate in a wave-like motion across the composition. These subtle variations are dependent on a number of different factors, from the quality of the ball-point pen used, to the varying amounts of pressure applied to the surface, the speed and length of each individual's stroke to their temperament on a given day, and even the gradual loss of pigment that occurred as the pen began to run out of ink. Revelling in the unexpected results proffered by chance, error or the peculiarities of the maker, Boetti embraced the quirks this form of collaboration brought to his vision, as his instructions were interpreted and executed differently by each individual hand.

As with all of the *lavori biro*, *Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine* is anchored by a simple, but highly specific code. Transforming the letters of the title into a series of commas, Boetti enciphers the enigmatic phrase of

so that only those familiar with the artist's highly particular system of image making are easily able to uncover its meaning. In this way, the artist disrupts the highly ordered linguistic system of the Latin alphabet, exposing it as a sophisticated but ultimately artificial system of communication, a man-made construct that may govern our lives but which is not a natural part of it. This drives the viewer to a new understanding of the arbitrary nature of its rules and systems, pointing to the essential, but ultimately inconsistent, role it plays in our lives. As such, *Il progressivo svanire della consuetudine* can be seen to feed into one of the central concepts which lay behind much of Boetti's work – *ordine e disordine* (order and disorder). This principle, based on the idea that the world is in a constant state of flux between the forces of order and disorder, appeared in numerous different permutations throughout Boetti's oeuvre, and focused on the way in which these two divergent concepts permeated and interacted with one another to generate a harmonious unity. In revealing this fundamental duality of these two apparent opposites, Boetti believed he could heal the traumatic rifts that divide our contemporary world.



Alighiero Boetti at the barber's, published in the catalogue for his exhibition at Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa, 1967.
Photographs by Anna Pivi Paolini

giuseppe
UNCINI

'I work with iron and cement. I use these materials with propriety, meaning that I do not conceal them or use them to achieve particular effects; on the contrary, I employ them as they are employed in yards, to construct houses, bridges and roads - to construct everything man needs. At the basis of all this there lies a need to build and organize: the creative principle at the root of all human progress. This is what I wish to express through my objects'

G. UNCINI





λ 110

GIUSEPPE
UNCINI (1929-2008)

Cementoarmato (Reinforced Concrete)

signed, titled, inscribed and dated 'g. uncini "cementoarmato" N. 24

settembre 1961 Roma' (on the reverse)

reinforced concrete and iron

44½ x 75¾ x 2¾in. (113 x 191 x 6cm.)

Executed in 1961

£150,000-200,000

\$200,000-260,000

€170,000-220,000

'An object entirely constructed, where CONSTRUCTING - far from coinciding with a more or less historically defined form of constructivism, as many later suggested - is conceived as the joining, disjointing, juxtaposing, closing or opening, concretizing and materializing of space and marks, the latter as presence and the former as measure. The choice of reinforced concrete, a material clearly linked to the idea and the modes of construction, was far from a casual one'

G. UNCINI



The present lot installed at the Galleria L'Attico, 1961.
Artwork: © Archivio Opera Giuseppe Uncini.

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist.

Studio Erica Fiorentini, Rome.

Private Collection, London.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Rome, Galleria L'Attico, *Cementarmati 1958-1961*, 1961.

Milan, Studio Marconi, *Uncini. Opere dal 1959 al 1973*, 1973.

Rome, Galleria Seconda Scala, *Giuseppe Uncini, 1975*.

Gubbio, Palazzo dei Consoli, *Gubbio 79 - 20 Anni di ricerca di Uncini*, 1979.

Macerata, Pinacoteca e Musei Comunali, *Giuseppe Uncini - La Logica fantastica*, 1983.

Rome, Palazzo dei Congressi, '60-'90 *Trenta anni di avanguardie romane*, 1991 (illustrated in colour, p. 137).

Rome, Associazione Culturale L'Attico, *Cementarmati 1958-1961*, 1997.

Rome, Studio Erica Fiorentini, *Nicola Carrino Giuseppe Uncini. Costruire. Dal 1960, 2005-2006* (illustrated in colour, p. 7).

LITERATURE:

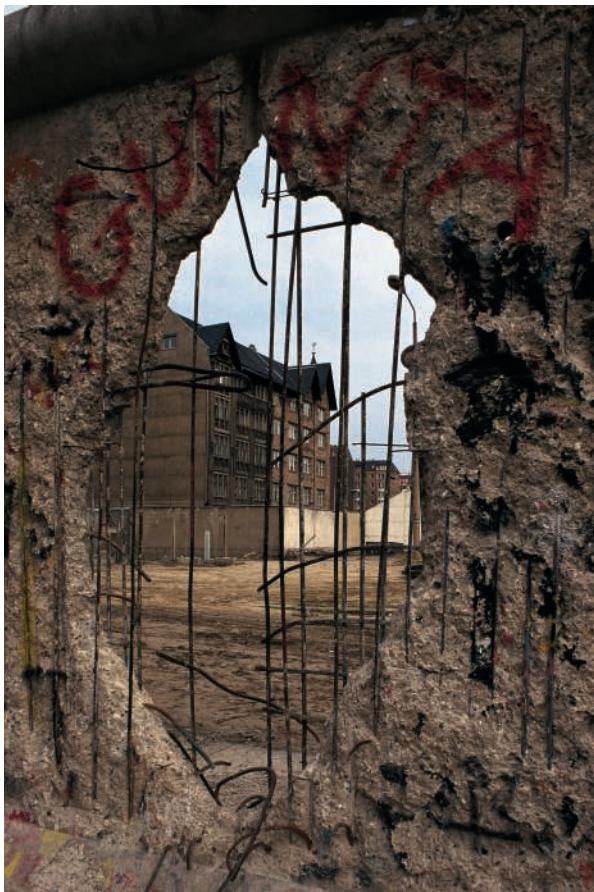
Giuseppe Uncini Raum aus Fläche und Struktur, exh. cat., Städtische Kunsthalle Mannheim, Mannheim, 2001 (historical installation shot illustrated, p. 76).

B. Corà, *Uncini. Catalogo ragionato*, Milan 2007, no. 61-035 (illustrated, p. 228).









A breach in the Berlin Wall, after the unification of the country.
Photo: © 2017. DeAgostini Picture Library/Scala, Florence.

With a powerful and commanding monumentality, Giuseppe Uncini's *Cementarmato* is one of the artist's defining series, the *Cementarmati* ('Reinforced Concrete Works'), a body of radical works that saw the artist embrace industrial materials in his quest to pioneer a new form of art making. First begun in 1957, this series presented, like the work of Alberto Burri, Piero Manzoni, Lucio Fontana and others, a new conception of art; one that was based not on the conventional format or traditional notions of a painting or sculpture, but was instead wholly unique, self-referential and self-defining. 'For me, in that period', Uncini later reflected, 'the important point was that the work should not be a surface-support on which to represent an idea, but that this should be a constructed object, which did not represent, but signified itself alone' (Uncini, quoted in F. Menna, 'The Flat Surface', in *Giuseppe Uncini: Una collezione 1959-1976*, exh. cat., Milan, 1995, p. 22). Taking concrete and iron, Uncini opened the viewer's eyes to the artistic potential that lay not in superficial images painted or drawn upon canvas, but in the materials and objects that surround us everyday; a concept that was to have an enormous impact both on the protagonists of Arte Povera, as well as Minimalism. Composed purely of these industrial materials – cement and iron bars – *Cementarmato* is expunged of any external references. Monochrome, geometric and minimal, in this work, the iron supports emerge from the block of poured concrete, their horizontal emphasis creating a powerful dynamism that runs through this resolute structure.

Like many of his contemporaries, Uncini wanted to forge an art form that broke away from the gestural subjectivity of *Art Informel*. Living and working in Rome, his deep and abiding interest in materials was what allowed Uncini to do this. In the late 1950s, he created a body of works – the *terre* – which

'In these *cementi-armati* Uncini's intentions seem to me to be very clear: poetic virtuosity of matter, of materials; and the poetic virtuosity of making - the constructive aspect typical of Man - which turns that material into an instrument according to empiric naturalness'

ENRICO CRISPOLTI

were constructed from a range of everyday materials, including sand, cement or soil, and adhered onto board. However, though radical in their adoption of quotidian materials, Uncini still felt these works were tied to tradition due to their insertion into a pictorial plane. Uncini found the solution to this problem when, in 1957, he adopted concrete as the primary component of his constructions. Now the material was both the support and the subject; allowing the artist to, in the words of Bruno Corà, shift 'from the significant, though abstract, representation of a painting to the entity of a constructed self-supporting and self-eloquent "object"' (B. Corà, *Giuseppe Uncini, catalogo ragionato*, Milan, 2007, p. 40).

Uncini himself explained the genesis of the *Cementarmati*: 'It was the idea of using matter in an appropriate way that brought about my first reinforced concrete pieces... My project consisted in considering geometry in this way, as matter assuming a form within space according to a thought... In Europe we had not only had Mondrian and the twentieth century Bauhaus, but we had behind us Renaissance perspective and "divine proportion", and even further back in time the mathematical model of Greek architecture... For me, to create art means...to reason on Italian drawing, on matter that finds its own profound meaning again: it means every day I keep thinking, while I am in my studio, that I descend from Giotto and that Laurana worked in my Marche. Bringing form to life and distilling an idea, and then finding a lucid synthesis of it, understanding its syntax and proportions...' (Uncini, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 50).

With its combination of concrete and iron bars, *Cementarmato* is evocative of the industrialisation and the rapid modernisation that was occurring all over Italy in the post-war era. After the destruction and devastation wrought by the Second World War, in the 1950s, Italy experienced what is known as the 'miracolo economico'. Throughout this decade, the country witnessed an unprecedented boom in industry and infrastructure, as cities transformed into modern urban metropolises. Within this context, *Cementarmato* takes on a greater resonance, evoking the rush of new constructions that were being erected across the country. Indeed, in 1959, at the time Uncini was in the midst of this series, two large reinforced concrete buildings were being constructed in Rome itself: the Stadio Flaminio, and the terminal for Fiumicino Airport. Uncini was well aware of the links between his works in cement and the civic use of this industrial material, recognising in both man's innate need to create and to construct. In this way, *Cementarmato* and the rest of this series, stand as powerful monuments to this new epoch, the embodiment a new raw and elemental form of beauty. As Uncini explained: 'I work with iron and cement. I use these materials with propriety, meaning that I do not conceal them or use them to achieve particular effects; on the contrary, I employ them as they are employed in yards, to construct houses, bridges and roads – to construct everything man needs. At the basis of all this there lies a need to build and organise: the creative principle at the root of all human progress. This is what I wish to express through my objects. These are objects, because painting or sculpture proper always represent or mimic something, whereas I do not wish to mimic or evoke things, roads or bridges, but rather to salvage the principle from which they spring' (G. Uncini, 'Interview by Italo Mussa', in *Uncini: I primi e gli ultimi*, exh. cat., Foligno, 2011, p. 103).



Giuseppe Uncini in his studio, 1959.
Artwork: © Archivio Opera Giuseppe Uncini.
Unknown photographer.

λ 111

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale, Teatrino

signed and titled 'I. fontana Concetto Spaziale' (on the reverse)

waterpaint on canvas and lacquered wood

42 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (109 x 109 cm.)

Executed in 1965

£150,000-200,000

\$200,000-260,000

€170,000-220,000

‘...figurations of man in space, the anguish that seeks forms and has not yet found them, the fear of getting lost, this line of holes indicates man’s journey in space, these are the forms of the inhabitants of other worlds. I place myself in the position not of an artist, but almost of a scholar, of a researcher who closes himself in the world’

L. FONTANA



Lucio Fontana on set during a performance of *Ritratto di Don Chisciotte* in the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, 1967. Set and costume design were all by the artist
Artworks: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Bleue, Stockholm

Acquired directly from the above by the previous owner circa 1965

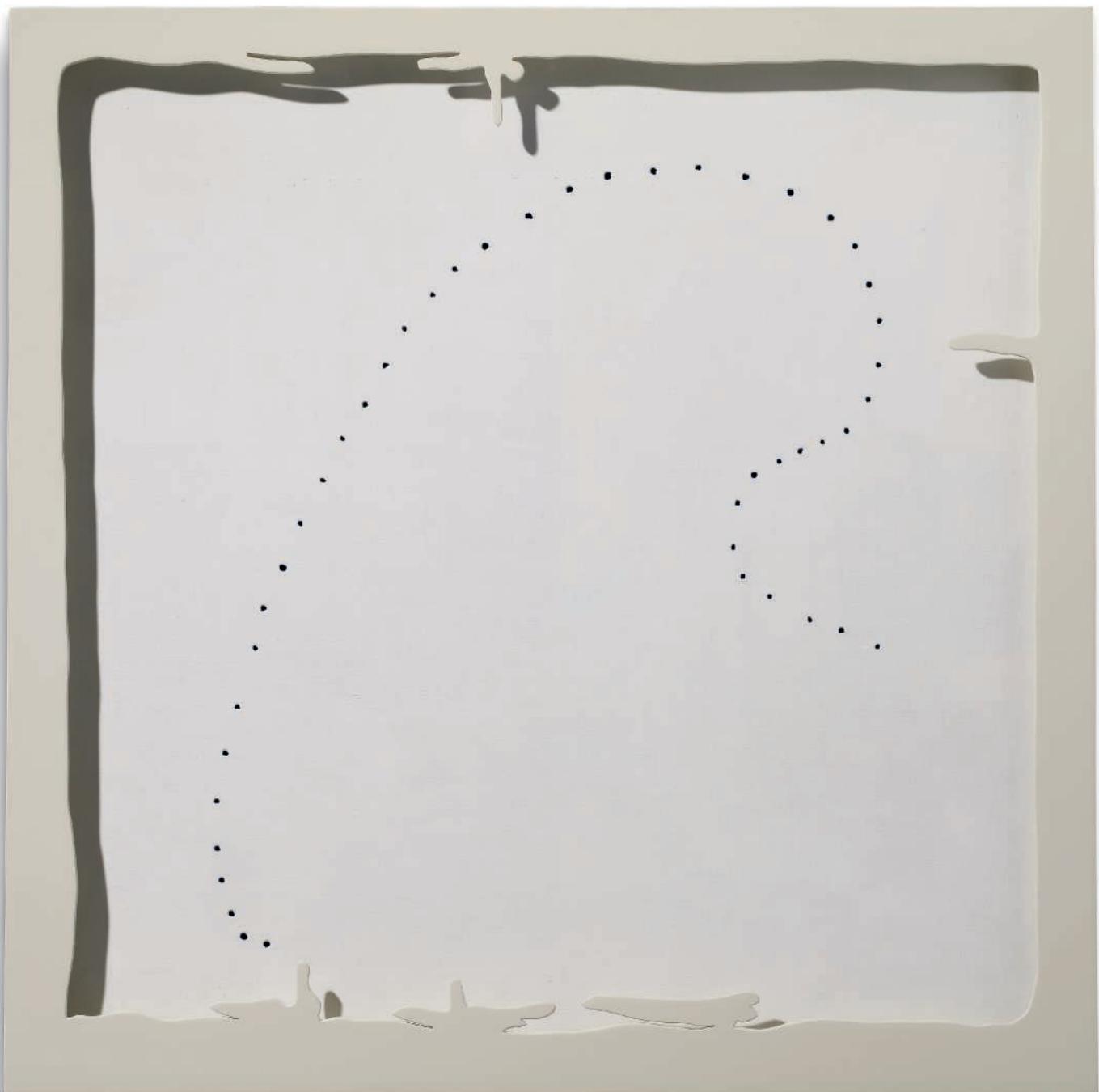
Thence by descent to the present owner.

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environnements spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. II, no. 65 TE 69 (illustrated, p. 172).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo generale*, Milan 1986, vol. II, no. 65 TE 69 (illustrated, p. 609).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. II, no. 65 TE 69 (illustrated, p. 796).





A medieval missionary discovering the point where the Earth and sky meet.
From *L'atmosphère : météorologie populaire* by Camille Flammarion, 1887.
Photo: British Library, London, UK / © British Library Board. All Rights Reserved / Bridgeman Images.

With its lacquered frame gleaming around the white, monochrome canvas, which is punctured with a solitary constellation-like trail of holes, *Concetto spaziale, Teatrino* perfectly demonstrates the mysterious and magical combination of Spatialism and lyricism that was embodied in Lucio Fontana's celebrated *teatrini* or 'Little Theatres'. Begun in 1964, when Fontana stood at the peak of his prolific and innovative career, the *teatrini* saw the artist create another visual incarnation of Spatialism, the radical movement he had founded in the 1940s. Combining a sense of the bold and stylised figuration of Pop art, the prevailing artistic tendency of the time, with his lifelong dedication to the evocation of space, both physical and metaphorical, these playful works present theatrically framed windows into space. As he explained in his own words, they were a type of, 'realistic Spatialism... Also a little bit in the fashion of these Pop Art things... but still in my way. They were forms that Man imagines in space' (Fontana, quoted in P. Gottschaller, *Lucio Fontana: The Artist's Materials*, Los Angeles, 2012, p. 114). Executed in 1965, *Concetto spaziale, Teatrino* is one of the most enigmatic of this playfully exuberant series, a work of sleek and elegant minimalism that conjures a cosmic realm.

The addition of a frame to surround a canvas pierced with *buchi* ('holes') was an idea Fontana had first explored in 1959. However, it was not until 1964 that he returned to this concept, incorporating this new physical element into his *Concetti spaziali*. Seeking with his *buchi* and *tagli* ('cuts') to invoke a sense of the boundless, infinite space that lay beyond and around the canvas itself, with the *teatrini*, Fontana altered the visual perception of this spatial dimension by adding a contoured lacquer frame. In this way, he introduced a theatrical, sometimes figurative element to his work, creating a fictional, confined space bordered by a horizon line. The stage-like configuration of *Concetto spaziale, Teatrino* invites the viewer to contemplate the physical space projected directly in front of them, marked by the sharp silhouettes of

'I was thinking of those worlds, of the moon with these holes, this terrible silence that causes us anguish, and the astronauts in a new world. And so in the artist's fantasy these immense things have been there for billions of years... man arrives, in mortal silence in this anguish, and leaves a vital sign of his arrival they were these still forms with a sign of wanting to make the inert matter live, weren't they?'

L. FONTANA

the forms of the surrounding frame. Space becomes the spectacle, and the viewer the audience. As Enrico Crispolti has described, 'The shaped lacquer frames and the clean grounds of the sky traversed by ordered constellations of holes indicate a new desire to create an objectified configuration of a kind of spatial "spectacle", which Fontana presents with an almost classical imaginative composure' (E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana: Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan, 2006, p. 79).

Fontana often cut strange, stylised amorphous forms into the frames of the *teatrini*, creating three-dimensional protrusions that seem to grow from the sides, casting shadows across the monochrome surface of the canvas. Many of these mysterious shapes, indentations and projections suggest recognisable, figurative motifs – aquatic forms, mountainous peaks or other earthbound landscapes, for example – which impart a sense of narrative into the *teatrini*. In contrast to this however, in the present work, Fontana has conjured a far more astral impression; what Enrico Crispolti described as a type of 'cosmic figuration' (Crispolti, *ibid.*, p. 79). Surrounded by a sleek white frame, the empty, white monochrome canvas of *Concetto spaziale, Teatrino*, marked by a solitary arabesque of holes, becomes a window onto the cosmos, a celestial theatre that offers a panorama of emptiness and endlessness. Rather than being an enclosed projection of finite space therefore, this work embodies the artist's long-felt desire to encapsulate the infinite. As Luca Massimo Barbero has written, 'These works do not possess "theatricality" in the sense that they are a story, but respond to the artist's constant need to create an image that exists where everything is really metaphorical, the fruit of fantasy and the memory of a possible future universe. In the *teatrini* it is possible to grasp a kind of unity, between image, object, material and that "philosophical" state which Fontana was often concerned with as a new idea. Man in Space is alone, alone before Infinity' (L.M. Barbero, in Crispolti, *ibid.*, p. 79).



Lucio Fontana. Portrait by Lothar Wolleh.
© Oliver Wolleh, Berlin. Artwork: © Fondazione
Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

alberto BURRI

'My painting... is an irreducible presence that refuses to be converted into any other form of expression. It is a presence both immanent and active. This is what it stands for: to exist so as to signify and to exist so as to paint. My painting is a reality which is part of myself, a reality that I cannot reveal in words... I can only say this: painting for me is a freedom attained, constantly consolidated, vigilantly guarded so as to draw from it the power to paint more'

A. BURRI





λ 112

ALBERTO
BURRI (1915-1995)

Sacco

signed, inscribed and dated 'Burri Roma 53' (on the reverse)

burlap, canvas and oil on canvas

33 1/2 x 39 1/2 in. (86 x 100 cm.)

Executed in 1953

Estimate on request

‘Burlap bindings
strong and raw
open, and show within...
field of fears
finding pressures
giving
burlap blendings
wake the blind’

MINSA CRAIG

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist.

E. Tersigni Collection, Rome.

Private Collection, Rome.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *X Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte - Situazione dell'arte non figurativa*, 1972-1973, p. 217 (listed with incorrect dimensions, unpaged).

Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera, *Burri*, 1984, no. 28 (illustrated in colour with wrong orientation, p. 50).

Moscow, Museum of the New Tretjakova - Central House of the Artist, *Tendencies in Italian Art, Rome 1947-89*, 1989. This exhibition later travelled to Leningrad, Central Hall of the Exhibitions.

Prato, Museo Pecci, *Burri e Fontana*, 1996, no. 15 (illustrated in colour, p. 111).

Budapest, Szépmuvésti Muzeum, *Painting in Italy 1950-1960*, 1997, p. 84, no. 8 (illustrated in colour, p. 46). This exhibition later travelled to Prague, Istituto Italiano di Cultura and Krakow, National Museum.

Florence, Tornabuoni Arte, *Burri. Viaggio al termine della materia*, 2005, p. 188, no. 20 (illustrated in colour, p. 79).

LITERATURE:

C. Brandi, *Burri*, Rome 1963, no. 66 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 190).

M. Calvesi, *Alberto Burri*, Milan 1971, p. 24, no. 105 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 105).

‘Burri’ in *La Nuova Enciclopedia dell'arte*, Milan 1986, no. 1 (illustrated, p. 147).

A.B. Oliva, ‘Il quadro e la cornice’ in *Il Mondiale*, Rome 1990.

Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini (ed.), *Burri. Contributi al catalogo sistematico*, Città di Castello 1990, no. 240 (illustrated in colour with wrong orientation, p. 65).

M. Venturoli, ‘Alberto Burri’ in *L'arte in Italia*, Florence 1992, no. 532 (illustrated in colour, p. 342).

G. Piccioni, ‘Burri racconta Burri’ in *L'Informazione*, Rome 1994 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 19).

M. Baiocchi, G. Santuccio and R. Zuccaro, ‘Burri Alberto’ in *La Piccola Treccani, Dizionario Encyclopedico*, Rome 1995.

G. Marziani, ‘Tagli cuci e brucia sul quadro’ in *L'opinione delle libertà*, Rome 1996.

G. Serafini, *Burri. La misura e il fenomeno*, Milan 1999, p. 242, no. 54 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 61).

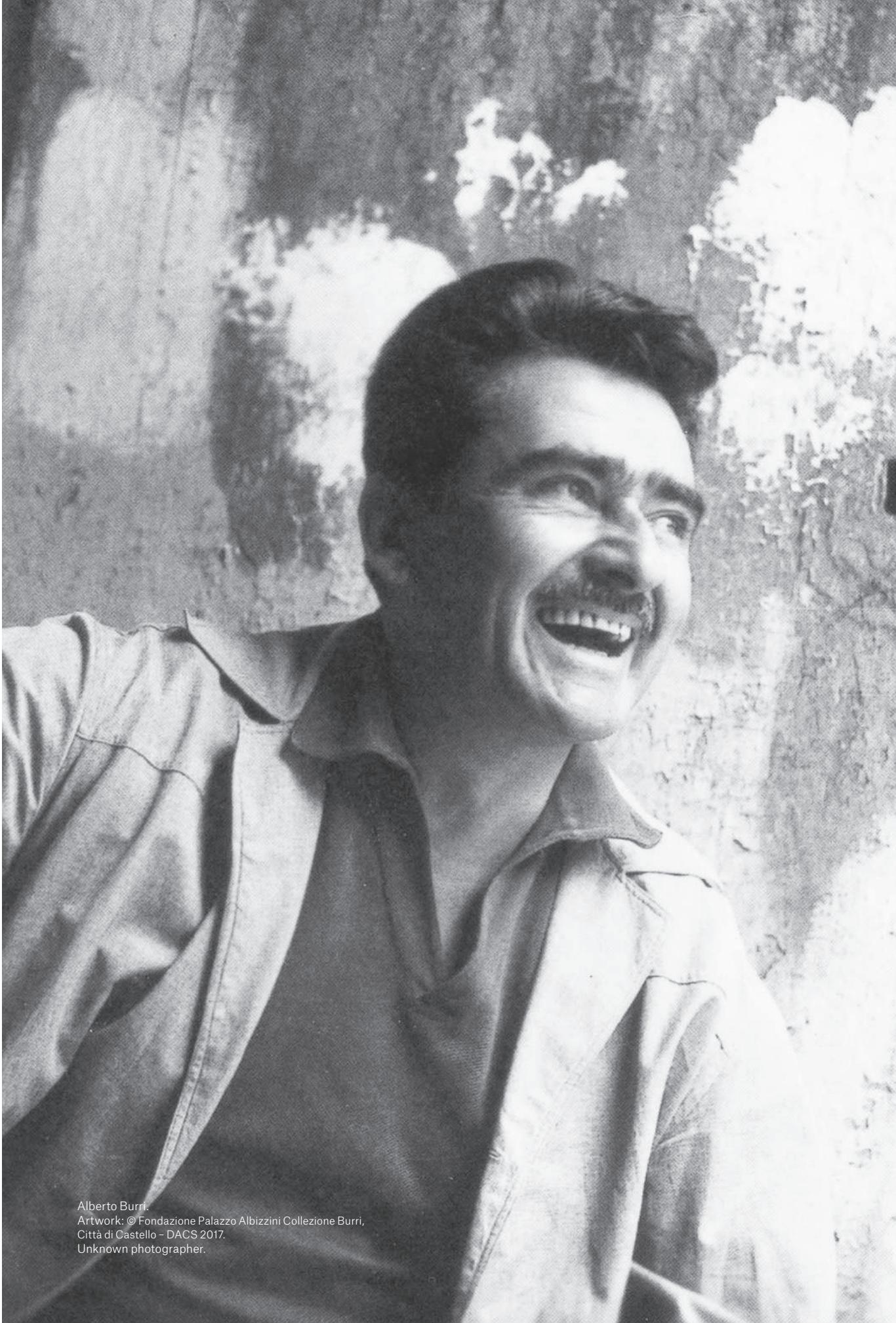
P. Palumbo, *Burri una vita*, Milan 2007 (illustrated, p. 52).

G. Serafini, *Burri. Matter first*, Florence 2015 (illustrated in colour, p. 53).

Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini (ed.), *Alberto Burri. General Catalogue*, Città di Castello 2015, vol. I, p. 305, no. 436 (illustrated in colour, p. 186); vol. VI, no. i.5323 (illustrated in colour, p. 68).







Alberto Burri.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri,
Città di Castello – DACS 2017.
Unknown photographer.



Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Saint Francis Meditating*. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence - courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Atti Culturali e del Turismo.

A magnificent and groundbreaking combination of material and rich pigment, Alberto Burri's *Sacco* belongs to the artist's breakthrough series, the *Sacchi*: a rare and highly celebrated group of works that not only launched his career but have now come to define his oeuvre. The godfather of post-war Italian art, Burri's use of burlap sacking, a humble, quotidian material, was revelatory. With these works, Burri invented an entirely new form of painting: using unorthodox materials, he created works that were self-defining, autonomous and based solely on their own inherent materiality, no longer representations of reality, but incarnations of life. In an era that had undergone unimaginable destruction and catastrophe, Burri found that traditional means of picture making were no longer able to embody the sentiment of the times. Just as humanity had endured unspeakable violence, so Burri pushed painting to its limits, traumatising and deconstructing its very constitution to leave only its constituent parts. In this way, the *Sacchi* can be regarded as icons of post-war art; elegiac and monumental, they heralded a new direction for painting in the latter half of the 20th Century, opening the door to a new understanding and conception of art. With an almost Baroque sense of drama, grandeur and monumentality, *Sacco* was executed in 1953, a breakthrough year in Burri's life and career, during which his work began to receive international critical acclaim.

Though the first *Sacco* was executed in 1950, the origins of this revelatory series date back to Burri's internment as a Prisoner of War in Hereford, Texas. Serving as a medic in the Italian army, Burri was captured by the British forces while fighting in Tunisia in March 1943. Due to an agreement between the Allies, he, along with other Italian POWs, was taken to America, where he would remain captive for the duration of the war, until he was repatriated in January 1946. It was while here that Burri first took up painting

'I see beauty and that is all. And beauty is beauty and that is all, whether it is a beautiful *sacco* or whether it is a beautiful *legno*, *ferro* or anything else... I am sure that every picture that I make, whatever the material, is perfect as far as I am concerned. Perfect in form and space. Form and space: these are the essential qualities that really count'

A. BURRI

as a pastime. Despairing of his situation, Burri found in art an escape from reality. When the art supplies ran out, he started using burlap sacking – a material so ubiquitous during wartime, that it has become indelibly connected to war, used for sandbags, tents, camouflage netting, as well as sacks for grain and foodstuffs – as the support for his painting, stretching it and covering it with a ground layer to use as a makeshift canvas.

When, in 1946, Burri returned to Italy, and embarked on a career as an artist, leaving behind his former life as a doctor, this inherent interest in the material components and structure of a painting became the abiding concern of his artistic practice. Shunning paint, the brush and canvas, he instead turned to industrial materials: tar, oil and, crucially, burlap sacks, the latter a material that was almost omnipresent in the war ravaged country. A country devastated by invasion, civil war and Allied bombardment, Italy was reliant upon aid from the United States. Thanks to the Marshall Plan, sacks filled with grain, sugar and other essentials, filled the many ruined Italian cities, and it was these that Burri turned to in his earliest works. Reconstituting these burlap pieces as an artistic material, Burri first integrated sacking into his work as collaged pieces in oil paintings – *SZ I* of 1949 (Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello, Italy) being one of the first – and a year later, in 1950, extended this concept, inaugurating the *Sacchi* with the first *Sacco* constructed entirely from burlap. Evoking the reality of contemporary Italy in its destitute, poverty-stricken form, these works had an immediate and intense impact, radical not just in their formal construction, but in their iconographic meaning and symbolism in the immediate aftermath of all out war.

Sacco and the majority of the *Sacchi* are composed from burlap fragments that Burri received in an agreement with the owner of a flourmill in Città di Castello, the Umbrian town in which he was born and had grown up. Transporting these pieces to his Roman studio, Burri then chose pieces at random to use as the sole protagonists of his work. When in 1954, the American critic, Milton Gendel visited Burri in his studio, he recalled that, in the midst of the white-washed, ascetic and minimal space, there was, 'an island of the heap of rags and scraps that Burri consults like a reference library of shapes and textures as he works' (M. Gendel, 'Burri Makes a Picture', *ArtNews*, December 1954). With some burlap pieces rougher or more fine, worn, sun-bleached or stained than others, Burri could exploit the textural and aesthetic differences of this highly evocative material. He methodically tore, stretched or ripped the burlap fragments, fraying their edges or pulling at their seams, and by turn, stitched, tacked or glued the varying pieces together to create the richly textured patchwork effect that makes the *Sacchi* so distinctive. In the present work, a thick, dark brown piece of burlap dominates, held together in the centre with a thick, rope like line that weaves its way through the composition. In a number of the fissures and holes of this piece, Burri – so adept and dexterous at sewing that one of his Roman neighbours named him 'The Tailor' – has patched a lighter, more loosely woven piece of fabric, creating amorphously shaped





Rembrandt van Rijn, *Return of the Prodigal Son*, circa 1668.

State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.

Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence.

forms throughout the surface. Holes are also left visible, stitches evident and tensions in the warp and weft exaggerated, highlighting the utilitarian function and degradation of this material. Lined with thick black fabric, the patchwork composition is lent a physical sense of depth, the dark shadows conjured by the holes and breaks just visible against the dark background fabric. On top of this carefully constructed collage of burlap, Burri subsequently added planes of monochrome colour; painting parts of the sacking itself in dramatic tones of black and red. Working continuously from the front and back of the work, Burri gradually built up a composite of paint and material, every part of the work's construction laid bare.

In creating a painting from burlap sacking, Burri broke decisively and radically with traditional modes of art making. With the *Sacchi*, he rejected the standard construction of a painting, breaking down the conventional and hitherto undisputed relationship between the support and the image. No longer was paint the primary medium, and the brush the tool with which to create some form of image – be it representational or abstract. Instead, the support and construction of the work of art itself became the sole protagonists. As Cesare Brandi, the first critic to write a monograph on Burri, wrote: 'the *Sacco* is really nothing but the canvas on which painters have painted from time immemorial... Up to this point the warp and woof of the canvas had only been a rhythmic texture in the painting. Burri took a step further: he established the texture of the canvas as the painting itself. An unpainted painting, in its pre-natal state' (E. Braun, *Alberto Burri: The Trauma of Painting*, exh. cat., New York, 2015-2016, p. 45). With a work such as *Sacco*, Burri conceived an entirely new mode of picture making, one that was based entirely on the physical properties of materials and pigment. 'I could achieve







Robert Rauschenberg, *Rebus*, 1955.

Partial and promised gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder and purchase. Acc. n.: 43.2005.a-c. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York.

Artwork: © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation/DACS, London/VAGA, New York 2017.

Photo: © 2017. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.

that same shade of brown', Burri explained his motives behind using sacking, 'but it wouldn't be the same because it wouldn't contain everything I want it to contain. It has to comply as a surface, as a material and idea, which would be impossible using paint' (Burri, quoted in B. Cora & C. Sarteanesi, *Alberto Burri, Catalogo Generale*, Città di Castello, 2016, p. 37).

Yet, although radically original in their construction, Burri by no means devolved himself from nor denied the history of painting. He still referred to his works as 'paintings', and, with their balanced, carefully composed compositions, they resonate with the same, often lyrical, sometimes sensuous, and always arresting beauty as the great art of the past. Throughout his career, Burri strove above all for a sense of compositional balance in his material constructions, declaring that this was the most important aspect of his work. 'Painting should be decorative', he explained, 'in other words it should follow the rules of composition and proportion... Balance of the shapes placed in the space... at least this... balance that can be pulled terribly one way or the other, but it is always in balance...' (Burri, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 34). Never constructed haphazardly nor arbitrarily according, the *Sacchi* were created over long spans of time, each piece of burlap, every tear, stitch or stroke of paint added with the upmost consideration. This instinctive sense of compositional and spatial balance is perfectly exemplified in the present work. The rectangular composition is structured with a series of horizontal lines, created both by lines in the

sacking, and the areas of paint that Burri added. The piece of rope that runs vertically down the centre of the canvas acts in dialogue with the horizontal emphasis, uniting a composition that is itself a construction of decaying, worn materials that are being stretched and strained to their extreme. Every aspect of this *Sacco* – the material, the pigment, the threads, stitches and frays – exists in a perfect equilibrium, creating the absorbing power and visual beauty that defines this work. A dramatic, deftly composed Caravaggesque-theatre of colour and materials, *Sacco* resonates with a sensuous visual power.

It is often suggested that Burri's groundbreaking *Sacchi* are evocative of the art of the early Italian Renaissance. Though Burri never acknowledged this influence publicly, his use of searing vermillion, velvety black and the natural browns and ochre tones of the burlap pieces – all of which are present in *Sacco* – are evocative of Umbrian and Tuscan Trecento and Quattrocento altarpieces and art works. Burri, who was born and raised in Umbria, was familiar with many of these sites; 'I have Umbria inside me', he once declared, 'because I breathed it. That's the point' (Burri, quoted in B. Cora, *ibid.*, p. 35). Surrounded by some of Piero della Francesca's greatest works – the frescoes of Arezzo, Assisi, Sansepolcro – as well as the painting of Raphael and Luca Signorelli, he was from a young age immersed in the unrivalled compositional proportion, sumptuous colour and visual harmony of these Quattrocento works (see. E. Braun, *op. cit.*, p. 41). Later in his life,

'[The Sacchi are] the summary of ideal psychological reasoning, of reasoning on shape and colour. I could achieve that same shade of brown, but it wouldn't be the same because it wouldn't contain everything I want it to contain. It has to comply as a surface, as a material and idea, which would be impossible using paint', constantly consolidated, vigilantly guarded so as to draw from it the power to paint more'

A. BURRI

these works once more played a pivotal role in Burri's artistic development. In 1948, shortly after his return to Italy, at the very beginning of his artistic career, Burri had embarked on a trip to Paris, and subsequently travelled the length of Italy, journeying from Sicily to Venice and admiring the plethora of churches and the Renaissance masterpieces housed within. His companion on the trip, the British art student, Sandra Blow, remembered how familiar Burri was with the frescoes they visited and recalled how he had noted all the 'abstract elements in Renaissance frescoes', and 'the nature of space-creating compositional structures' (S. Blow, quoted in Braun, *ibid.*, p. 41). His interest in the surface and the textural, physical qualities of materials is reminiscent of these time worn artefacts and fresco paintings; works that have become cracked, faded and worn over the millennia that have passed since their creation. This deep knowledge of these Renaissance works can be seen to have informed Burri's ability to create, from a selection of unorthodox materials, works such as *Sacco*, which exude an often majestic monumentality and a powerful sense of compositional structure and harmony. His perceptive eye enabled him to transform what could have been assemblage-like composites of material into a new form of contemporary painting.

In the context of the post-war era however, *Sacco* and the rest of this series take on a deeply evocative power, with the damaged, visceral materials, gaping, wound-like holes, lacerations and stitches, and the redolent, searing





Joan Miró, *A Drop of Dew Falling from the Wing of a Bird Awakens Rosalie Asleep in the Shade of a Cobweb*, 1939.
University of Iowa Museum of Art, Iowa City.
Artwork: © Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London 2017.

'The object that Burri puts together with extraneous strange materials is not figuration or representation. It is a picture or, better yet, the fiction of a picture, a sort of reversed *trompe l'oeil* in which the picture no longer imitates reality but reality imitates a picture'

GIULIO CARLO ARGAN

red pigment all serving as powerful reminders of the violence and horror that the world, and Burri himself, had just endured in the Second World War. 'Every patch in the sacking', the critic Herbert Read wrote of Burri's work, 'every gaping wound-like hole, the charred edges and rugged cicatrices, reveal the raw sensibility of an artist outraged by the hypocrisy of a society that presumes to speak of beauty, tradition, humanism, justice and other fine virtues, and is at the same time willing to contemplate the mass destruction of the human race' (H. Read, quoted in M. Duranti, *Alberto Burri, Form and Matter*, exh. cat., London, 2012, p. 5). Unlike other European post-war artists such as Lucio Fontana, Jean Dubuffet or Wols, Burri had experienced war at first hand, witnessing the carnage more viscerally and physically than most as a medic. Though he actively rejected the idea that his art was a form of catharsis from the traumas he had endured – 'Contrary to what so many have hypothesized and written', he stated, 'I never had "flashbacks" of any type [with images] of gauze, blood, wounds or the like' (Burri, quoted in Braun, *op. cit.*, p. 33) – Burri's wartime experiences undoubtedly informed the radical materialism of his art. Burri's material surfaces have been equated to corporeal membranes, the stretched, taught, and ruptured burlap sacking in the present work evocative of a skin that seems alive with the fissures and blemishes that mark its tormented surface. The gaping, yawn-like hole in the lower left of the composition, where the pieces of sacking hang open, and drips of blood red paint mark the black crevice revealed behind, is wound-like.

Yet, perhaps most importantly, Burri has salvaged these lowly, surplus pieces of sacking and has revived them, stitching and patching them together in an act that is at once healing and redemptive. Exalting the visual and artistic possibilities of these discarded materials, Burri created works of a new raw and elemental beauty, turning destruction into creation. As James Johnson Sweeney wrote, 'Burri transforms rags into a metaphor for bleeding flesh, breathes life into the inanimate materials which he employs,

making them live and bleed; then heals the wounds with the same evocative ability and the same sensibility with which he first inflicted them. What for the Cubists would have been reduced to the partial distillation of a painted composition, to a *Merzbild* for Schwitters, in Burri's hands becomes a living organism: flesh and blood... The picture is human flesh; the artist is a surgeon' (J. Johnson Sweeney, quoted in M. Gale & R. Miracco, *Beyond Painting: Burri, Fontana, Manzoni*, exh. cat., London, 2005-2006, p. 32).

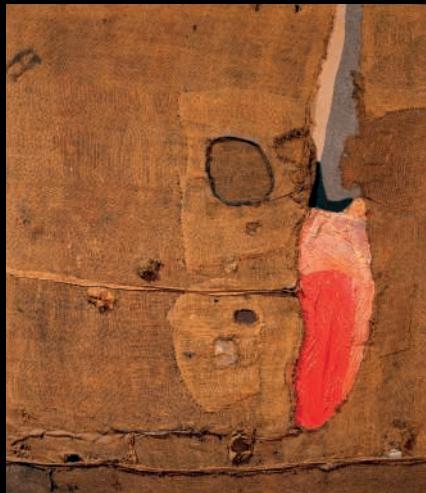
Sacco was executed in 1953, a time that saw Burri rise to international acclaim and fame. It was this year that he met the influential director of the Guggenheim museum in New York, James Johnson Sweeney, who would become one of his leading champions, inviting him to show in a group exhibition at the Guggenheim: 'Younger European Painters', held in December 1953. It was also during this year that a group of the *Sacchi* were shown for the first time in the USA, appearing first in Chicago before travelling to the Stable Gallery in New York later in the year. The *Sacchi* had an immediate and groundbreaking influence on Burri's contemporaries, both European and American. The now legendary and much documented encounters between Rauschenberg and Burri took place in the spring of 1953. These meetings would have a huge importance for Rauschenberg's development as an artist. Having travelled around North Africa with Cy Twombly, Rauschenberg paid several visits to Burri's Roman studio, where he saw the artist's monumental *Sacchi* hanging. On his return to the US later in the year, Rauschenberg began to make his own collages that integrated fabric components, and the following year, he began what have become his career-defining works, the *Combines*. Burri's pioneering deconstruction of the concept of a painting, and the new embrace of all forms of materials influenced a generation, paving the way for younger artists, Salvatore Scarpitta and Piero Manzoni, and later, the protagonists of Arte Povera.



Alberto Burri selecting sacks, early 1950s.
Unknown photographer.

ALBERTO **BURRI**

SACCO WORKS IN INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS



Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Burri Collection, Città di Castello

Alberto Burri, *Sacco 5P*, 1953.

Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello – DACS 2017.

Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence



The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Alberto Burri, *Composizione*, 1953.

Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello – DACS

2017. Photo: © 2017. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation/Art Resource, NY/ Scala,

Florence



The Museum of Modern Art, MoMA, New York

Alberto Burri, *Composizione 8*, 1953.

Mr. and Mrs. David M. Solinger Fund. Acc. n.: 542.1954.

Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello – DACS 2017.

Photo: © 2017. Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.

‘When I get an idea, I work on it and as soon as I see that it has found its equilibrium, it is finished and I go on to something else’

A. BURRI

Tate Gallery, London

Alberto Burri, *Sacco e Rosso*, 1954.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri,
Città di Castello – DACS 2017.
Photo: © Tate London, 2017



Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin

Alberto Burri, *Sacco*, 1953.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri,
Città di Castello – DACS 2017



Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

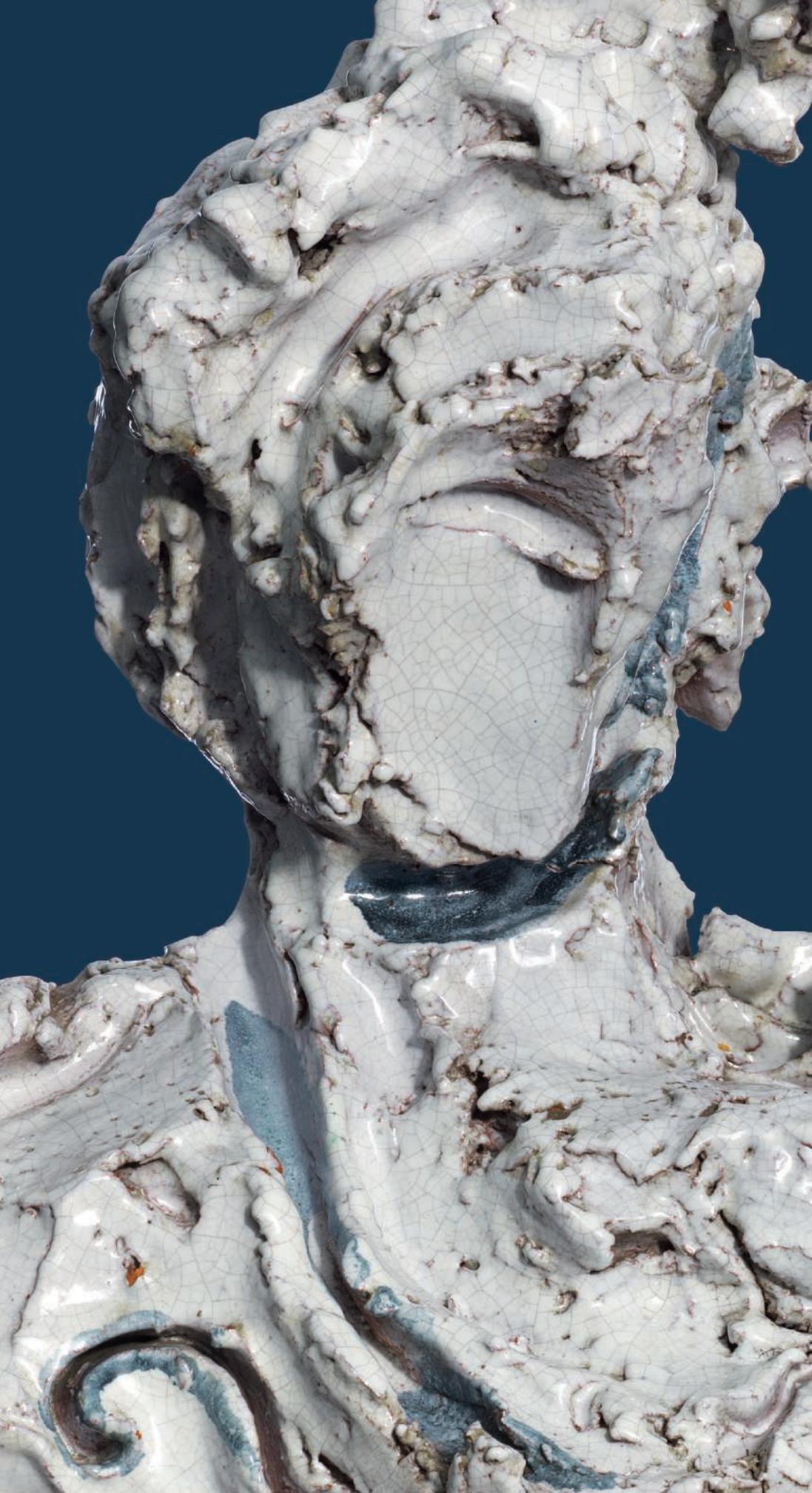
Alberto Burri, *Sacco*, 1953.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri,
Città di Castello – DACS 2017



LUCIO
FONTANA

'It is necessary to overturn and transform painting, sculpture and poetry. A form of art is now demanded which is based on the necessity of this new vision. The Baroque has guided us in this direction, in all its as yet unsurpassed grandeur, where the plastic form is inseparable from the notion of time, the images appear to abandon the plane and continue into space the movements they suggest'

L. FONTANA





λ*o♦ 113

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Il Guerriero (The Warrior)

incised with the artist's signature and date 'l. fontana 49'

(on the reverse of the base)

gold paint on glazed ceramic

46½ x 18½in. (118 x 46cm.)

Executed in 1949

£1,000,000-1,500,000

\$1,400,000-2,000,000

€1,100,000-1,600,000

**'The problem of making art instinctively
became clearer to me, neither painting nor
sculpture, nor lines delimited in space, but
continuity of space in matter'**

L. FONTANA



Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *David*, 1623-24. Galleria Borghese, Rome.
Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence - courtesy of the Ministero Beni
e Att. Culturali e del Turismo.

PROVENANCE:

Capitini Collection, Milan.

Vantellini Collection, Milan.

Galleria Zarathustra, Milan.

Private Collection, Lentate sul Seveso.

Anon. sale, Christie's Milan, 24 May 2004, lot 320.

Galerie Karsten Greve AG, St. Moritz.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris,

Lucio Fontana. Rétrospective, 2014, p. 296

(illustrated in colour, pp. 105 and 130).

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo Generale*,

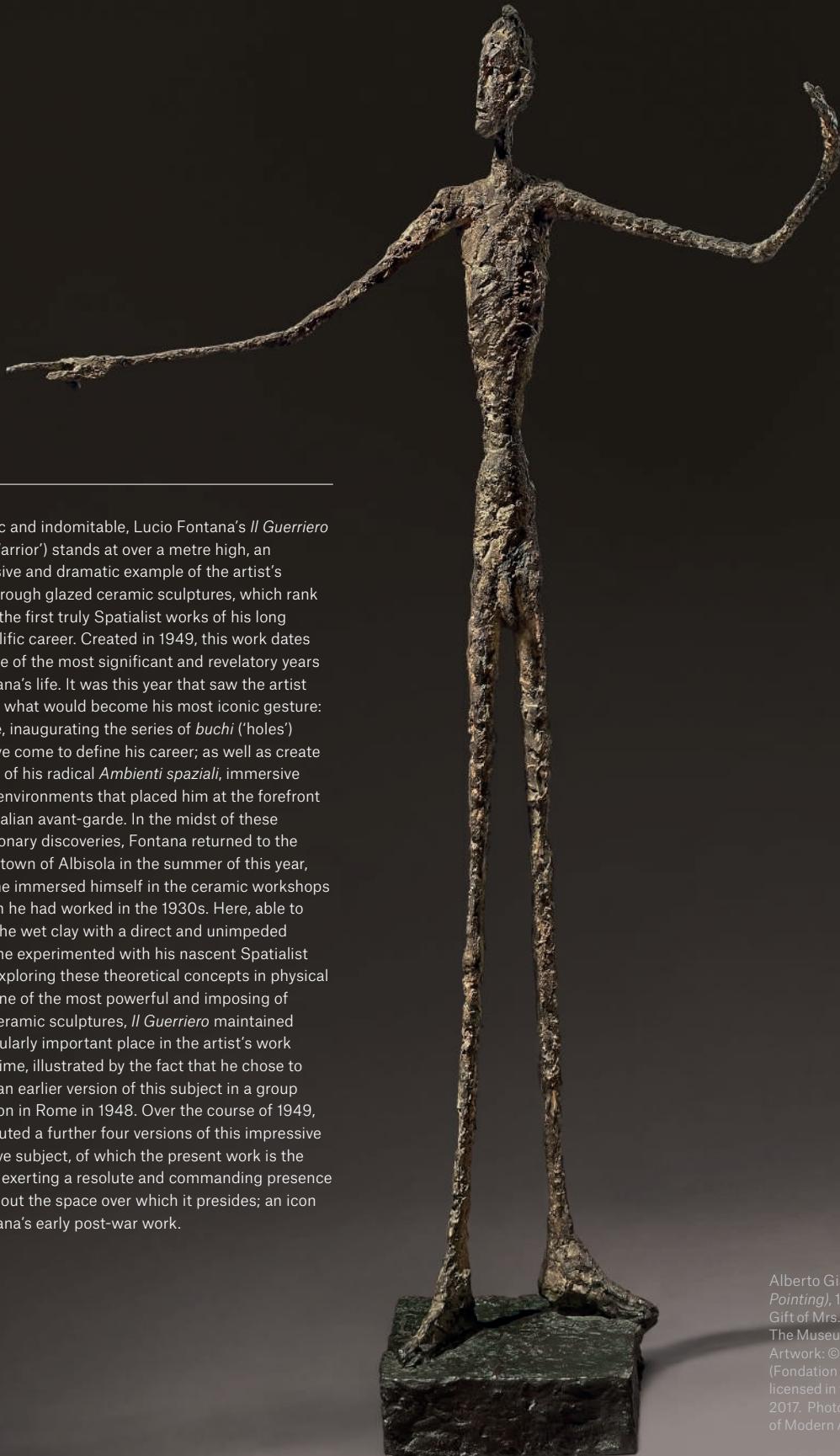
Milan 1986, vol. I, no. 49 SC 8 (illustrated, p. 94).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo Ragionato di*

sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni, Milan 2006, vol. I,

no. 49 SC 8 (illustrated, p. 216).





Majestic and indomitable, Lucio Fontana's *Il Guerriero* ('The Warrior') stands at over a metre high, an impressive and dramatic example of the artist's breakthrough glazed ceramic sculptures, which rank among the first truly Spatialist works of his long and prolific career. Created in 1949, this work dates from one of the most significant and revelatory years of Fontana's life. It was this year that saw the artist execute what would become his most iconic gesture: the hole, inaugurating the series of *buchi* ('holes') that have come to define his career; as well as create the first of his radical *Ambienti spaziali*, immersive spatial environments that placed him at the forefront of the Italian avant-garde. In the midst of these revolutionary discoveries, Fontana returned to the coastal town of Albisola in the summer of this year, where he immersed himself in the ceramic workshops in which he had worked in the 1930s. Here, able to model the wet clay with a direct and unimpeded vigour, he experimented with his nascent Spatialist ideas, exploring these theoretical concepts in physical form. One of the most powerful and imposing of these ceramic sculptures, *Il Guerriero* maintained a particularly important place in the artist's work of this time, illustrated by the fact that he chose to exhibit an earlier version of this subject in a group exhibition in Rome in 1948. Over the course of 1949, he executed a further four versions of this impressive figurative subject, of which the present work is the largest, exerting a resolute and commanding presence throughout the space over which it presides; an icon of Fontana's early post-war work.

Alberto Giacometti, *L'Homme au doigt (Man Pointing)*, 1947.
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd. 678.1954.
The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York.
Artwork: © The Estate of Alberto Giacometti
(Fondation Giacometti, Paris and ADAGP, Paris),
licensed in the UK by ACS and DACS, London
2017. Photo: © 2017. Digital image, The Museum
of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.



Willem de Kooning,
Clamdigger, 1972. Private
Collection.
Artwork: © 2017 The Willem
de Kooning Foundation
/ Artists Rights Society
(ARS), New York and DACS,
London.



Lucio Fontana in his studio. Milan, 1951.

Photo: © Giancolombo.

Artwork: © Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

Regarding himself above all else a sculptor, Fontana had, since his earliest days as an artist, been interested in the powerful artistic potential of materials – both tangible and intangible. Indeed, it was through sculpture that he realised his essential aims as an artist; he recalled that it was when, in 1930, he created the now lost *Uomo Nero* – a large and radical work in plaster covered with black tar – that, ‘the problem of making art instinctively became clearer to me, neither painting nor sculpture, nor lines delimited in space, but continuity of space in matter’ (Fontana, quoted in E. Crispolti and R. Siligato (eds.), *Lucio Fontana*, exh. cat., Rome, 1998, p. 118). Having worked in a variety of different sculptural modes, both figurative and abstract, Fontana returned from Buenos Aires to Milan in 1947, with a radically new artistic outlook. Believing that traditional modes of painting and sculpture were outmoded, unable to reflect the modern epoch, he called for a reformation of the visual arts. He wanted art to come out of its frame and off its plinth and embody the dynamic concepts of movement, colour, time and space, freed from the conventional artistic categories of painting, sculpture and architecture. These ideas coalesced to become what Fontana called Spatialism. ‘Man is tired of the forms of painting and sculpture’, he declared in the *Manifesto Blanco*, a tract penned by a group of avant-garde artists in 1946. ‘The oppressive repetitions show that these arts have stagnated in values that are extraneous to our civilization, and have no possibility of

development in the future...we abandon the practice of all the forms of known art, we commence the development of an art based on the unity of time and space’ (*Manifesto Blanco*, 1946, in *ibid.*, p. 116).

Like the Futurists before him, Fontana believed that art had to reflect and correlate with the society in which it was created. ‘Let us fling open the figure and let it incorporate within itself whatever may surround it’, Boccioni had declared in 1912 in the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture*, and Fontana’s sculpture encapsulates this same concept. ‘The quiet life has disappeared’, Fontana declared in the *Manifesto Blanco* of 1946 – the first tract to introduce the pioneering ideas of Spatialism. ‘The notion of speed is constant in the life of man. The artistic age of paralytic forms is over...The old immobile images no longer satisfy the needs of the new man, who has been formed in the need for action, in coexistence with mechanics, which imposes constant dynamism...Appealing to this transformation in the nature of man, in psychic and moral terms and in all human relations and activities, we abandon the practice of all the forms of known art, we commence the development of an art based on the unity of time and space’ (*ibid.*, p. 116). For the Futurists working in the formative years of the 20th Century, this meant encapsulating the new speed, simultaneity and dynamism of the modern metropolis into their art with the use of fragmented forms and the rejection





of pictorial convention. Half a century later, modern life was characterised by revolutionary scientific and technological breakthroughs – Einstein's space-time continuum, the dawn of space travel, or the invention of the nuclear bomb, to name but a few monumental examples – and Fontana felt passionately that contemporary art had to reflect this; 'I assure you', he stated in 1949, the same year that he created *Il Guerriero*, 'that on the moon they will not be painting, but they will be making Spatial art' (Fontana quoted in S. Petersen, *Space-Age Aesthetics: Lucio Fontana, Yves Klein, and the Postwar European Avant-Garde*, Pennsylvania, 2009, p. 6). Removing sculpture from its pedestal, he shunned the traditional sculptural materials of marble or bronze, and instead immersed himself in the malleability and expressive potential of wet clay. In *Il Guerriero*, the convulsive, richly modelled surface comes alive, its peaks, rivulets and troughs penetrating and thereby activating the space over which it presides. Light and shadow falls in dynamic patterns across the tactile surface of the warrior, as if this powerful figure is in a state of constant, rippling movement, with energy pulsating throughout its core. No longer a static, immovable monument to the past, it is a vital and dynamic symbol of the post-war era, an indomitable impression of both man and art emerging defiant from the destruction of the Second World War.

While being inherently of its time, *Il Guerriero*, as with the majority of Fontana's ceramic glazed sculptures of this period, also embodies the past, in particular the Baroque. A figure that clearly absorbed Fontana, the subject matter of this work plays on the many depictions of great warriors in the history of art, conjuring Michelangelo's monumental David or Bernini's Baroque vision of the same biblical character. With its exaggeratedly *contrapposto* pose, resolute and powerful presence, and sense of flamboyant, decorative detail – the arabesque incisions that adorn the figure's chest, and likewise the feather-like plume that sits atop his head – *Il Guerriero* instantly conjures the dramatic visions of gladiators, warriors and soldiers that populate the art of the Baroque. Likewise, the white glaze that covers the dynamic surface of this work is reminiscent of the smooth marble of these earlier works, yet, crucially, it has come alive through Fontana's dramatic modelling. Fontana had a particular fascination with the art of the Baroque, recognising in the sculpture and painting of this epoch the same commitment to the representation of movement that drove his own Spatialist explorations. '[the] Baroque was a leap ahead', he declared in the *Manifesto Blanco*, '...it represented space with a magnificence that is still unsurpassed and added the notion of time to the plastic arts. The figures seemed to abandon the flat surface and continue the represented movements in space' (*Manifesto Blanco*, 1946, *op. cit.*, p. 115). This idea of matter continuing into space would come to define Fontana's lifelong artistic explorations. With a sense of heroic grandeur and its swirling, sumptuous mass of gestural, roughly modelled forms that penetrate and articulate the space surrounding them, *Il Guerriero* embodies these revelatory new concepts; a powerful, early example of Fontana's newly expounded Spatialism.



Lucio Fontana in a ceramics studio in Albisola, 1956.

Unknown photographer.

Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

LUCIO
FONTANA

'In future there will no longer be art the way we understand it... No, art, the way we think about it today will cease...there'll be something else. I make these cuts and these holes, these Attese and these Concetti... Compared to the Spatial era I am merely a man making signs in the sand. I made these holes. But what are they? They are the mystery of the Unknown in art, they are the Expectation of something that must follow'

L. FONTANA





PROPERTY OF A EUROPEAN LADY

λ 114

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale, Attese

signed, titled and inscribed 'I. Fontana Concetto Spaziale ATTESE 1 + 1 - 00
00 00 Buona sera' (on the reverse)

waterpaint on canvas

25% x 32½in. (65 x 82cm.)

Executed in 1964

£2,000,000-3,000,000

\$2,700,000-3,900,000

€2,200,000-3,300,000

'We plan to separate art from matter, to separate the sense of the eternal from the concern with the immortal. And it doesn't matter to us if a gesture, once accomplished, lives for a moment or a millennium, for we are convinced that, having accomplished it, it is eternal'

L. FONTANA

PROVENANCE:

D. Bellantoni Collection, Milan.

Vedovi Gallery, Brussels.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2003.

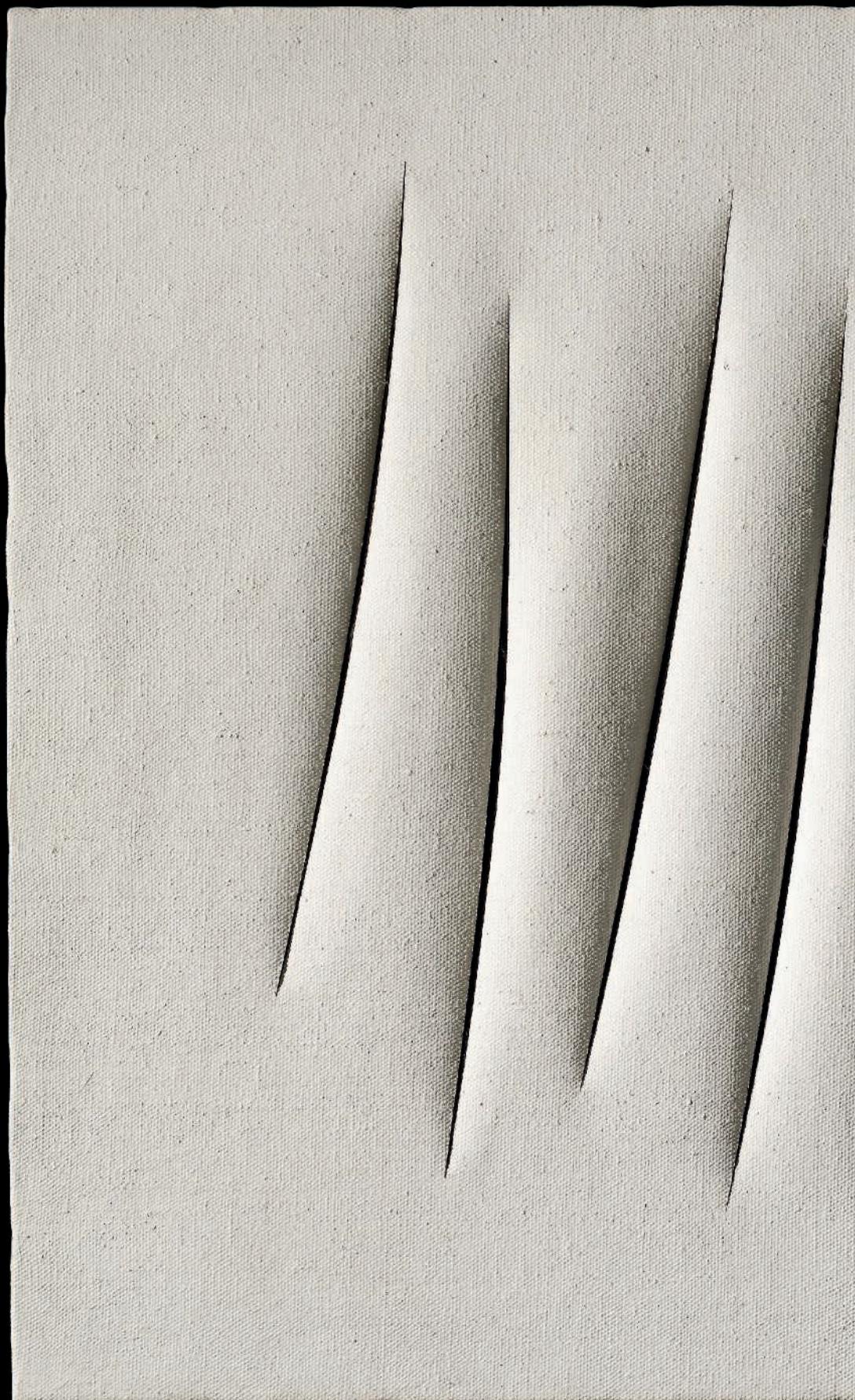
LITERATURE:

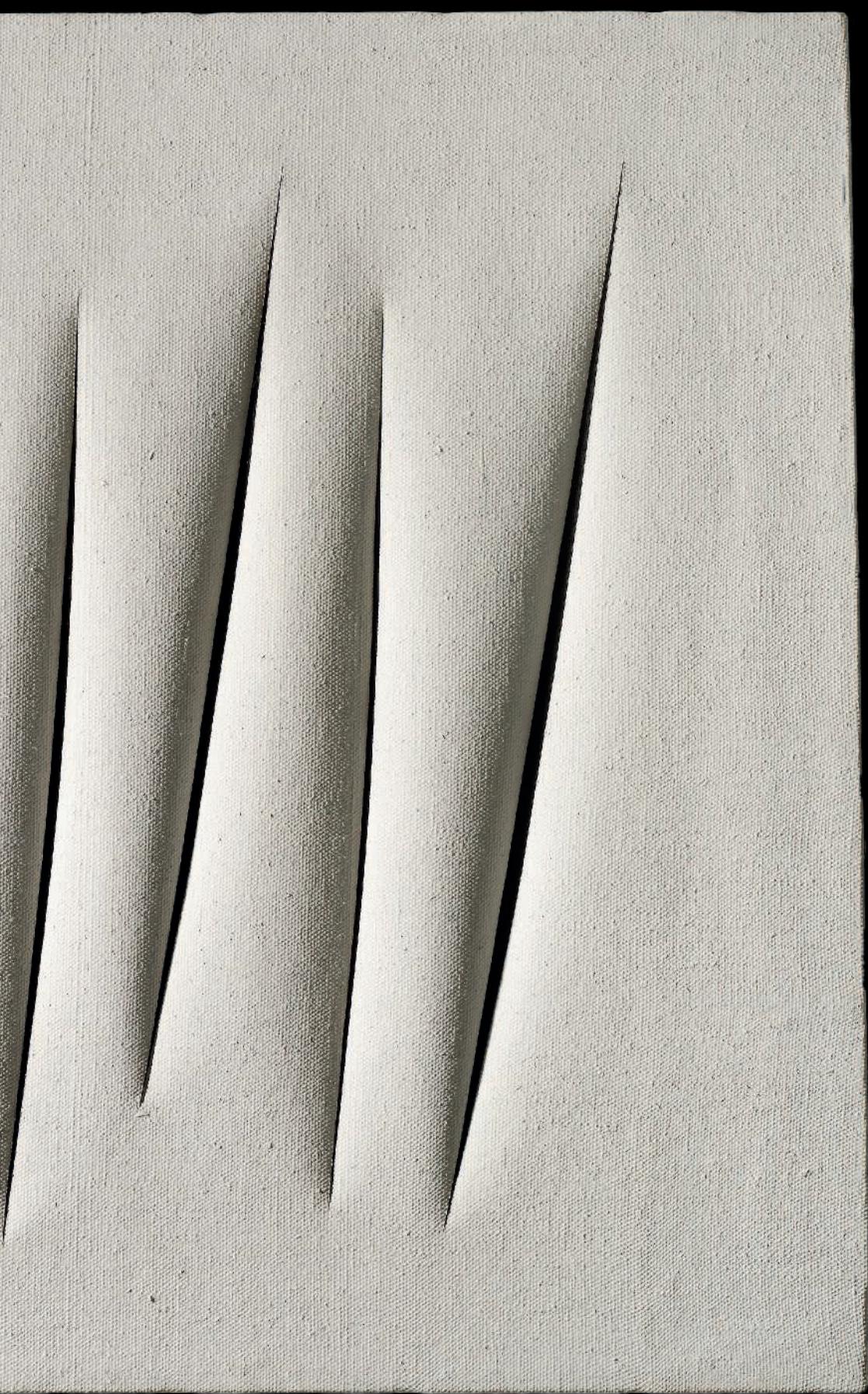
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environnements spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. II, no. 64 T 1 (illustrated, p. 150).

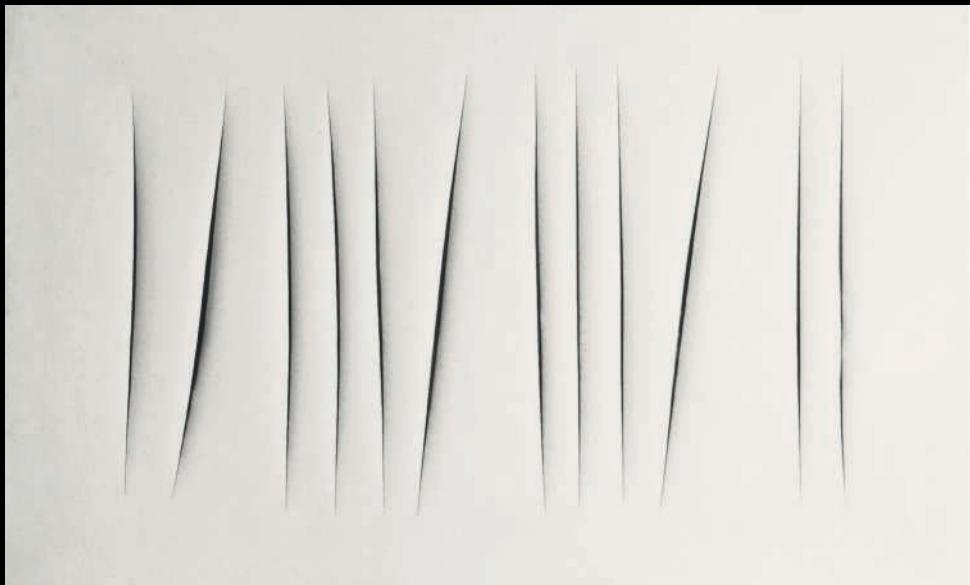
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo generale*, Milan 1986, vol. II, no. 64 T 1 (illustrated, p. 515).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. II, no. 64 T 1 (illustrated, p. 706).









Lucio Fontana, *Concetto Spaziale, Attese*, 1964. Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Turin.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

'My art is directed towards this purity, it is based on the philosophy of nothingness, a nothingness that does not imply destruction, but a nothingness of creation...'

L. FONTANA

Eight white slashes penetrate the pristine white surface of *Concetto spaziale, Attese*, executed in 1964; a supremely elegant example of Lucio Fontana's series of *tagli* ('cuts') that have come to define the artist's prolific career. It is in the striking contrast between the pristine white luminosity of the surface and the velvety darkness of the enigmatic voids in *Concetto spaziale, Attese*, that Fontana's Spatialism, the movement he founded in 1947, finds its purest and most complete expression. With the discovery of the cut or *taglio*, Fontana made his most monumental breakthrough, succeeding in opening up the previously inviolable two-dimensional surface of the canvas to incorporate the space surrounding it and reveal the limitless black void behind: the enigmatic fourth dimension. Creating a rhythmic cascade of gliding movement, the gently angled cuts of *Concetto spaziale, Attese* send ripples of energy coursing throughout and beyond the expansive surface of this work, turning it from a static, inert work of art into a dynamic object that interacts and encompasses the space surrounding it; neither painting nor sculpture but a 'Spatial concept'. Revelatory in its concept and poetic in its appearance, *Concetto spaziale, Attese* immortalises the fleeting moment of the gesture for eternity; a crystallisation of the artist's career-long formal and conceptual concerns. 'With the *taglio*', Fontana stated, 'I have invented a formula that I think I cannot perfect...I succeeded in giving those looking at my work a sense of spatial calm, a cosmic rigor, of serenity with regard to the Infinite. Further than this I could not go' (Fontana, quoted in P. Gottschaller, *Lucio Fontana: The Artist's Materials*, Los Angeles, 2012, p. 58).

Fontana had begun his series of *tagli* in 1958. Since he had returned to Milan from Buenos Aires in 1947, he had sought to make art that would embody and reflect the dramatic developments in science, space travel and technology; all of which were at this time rocking the very foundations on which society had been founded. He wanted to create art that would transcend the inherent physicality and materiality of the canvas, and instead invoke a perpetual spatial realm that existed beyond the parameters of measurable time. Seeking to integrate light, real time and space into art, Fontana abandoned the traditional artistic modes of painting and sculpture, and instead began to create 'Spatial concepts', works that straddled definition and defied convention. In this way, his art could exist both in material space, and at the same time, denote the immateriality of the mysterious void. Penetrating the canvas with a single, irrevocable downward cut, Fontana was able to transform the art work from a receptacle of

Opposite: Lucio Fontana with collector Betti Barman at the opening of the artist's exhibition at Galerie Iris Clert, Paris 1964.
Photo: Courtesy Fondazione Lucio Fontana, Milan.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.





Robert Rauschenberg, *White Painting [seven panel]*, 1951. Private Collection.
Artwork: © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation/DACS, London/VAGA, New York 2017.

'Spatial is what is beyond the perspective...
cosmos...Which are all ideals aren't they?
Foreground, middleground and perspective,
which is the third dimension and which is
also parallel to the discovery of science....
Einstein's discovery of the cosmos is the infinite
dimension, without end. And here we have the
foreground, middleground and background,
what do I have to do to go further? I make a
hole, infinity passes through it, light passes
through it, there is no need to paint...everyone
thought I wanted to destroy; but it is not true, I
have constructed'

L. FONTANA

painterly illusionism into a three-dimensional object, whilst at the same time creating a portal to another dimension, revealing another world akin to the uncharted territory of the infinite cosmos. Behind each cut lies a pool of dark, perpetual space, full of mystery and possibilities. In this way, the mystical openings visible in *Concetto spaziale*, *Attese* invite the viewer to engage with the dark infinity beyond the picture plane, creating an almost transcendent experience. 'I moved beyond the limits of perspective...pushing towards a discovery of the universe and a new dimension; that of infinity', Fontana explained in 1967. 'It was this research that drove me to perforate the canvas, the base that had always supported all of arts, and so in doing, I created an infinite dimension, a value \times that, for me, represented the base of all contemporary art...' (Fontana, quoted in P. Campiglio (ed.), 'Milan, 10 October 1967: Carla Lonzi interviews Lucio Fontana' in *Lucio Fontana Sedici sculture, Sixteen sculptures 1937-1967* exh. cat., London, 2007, p. 39).

The white monochrome surface of *Concetto spaziale*, *Attese* was for Fontana the ultimate vehicle with which to express infinity and liberation from matter – the two concepts that had driven his artistic experimentation since the late 1940s. Throughout his career, he experimented with a variety of colours for his monochrome *tagli*, however it was white that he concluded was the ultimate hue to attain the sense of limitless, infinite space and radiant luminosity that he wanted to convey with these works. White, he said, is the 'purest colour, the least complicated, the easiest to understand', that which most immediately and most successful conveyed a 'pure



Lucio Fontana at the Biennale, 1966.
Photo: Archivio Cameraphoto Epoche/
Getty Images. Artwork: © Fondazione
Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.





Jackson Pollock, *Blue Poles*, 1952. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

Artwork: © The Pollock-Krasner Foundation ARS, NY and DACS, London 2017. Photo: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra / Purchased 1973 / Bridgeman Images.

‘Now in space there is no longer any measurement. Now you see infinity...in the Milky Way, now there are billions and billions... The sense of measurement and of time no longer exists. Before, it could be like that...but today it is certain, because man speaks of billions of years, of thousands and thousands of billions of years to reach...and so, here is the void, man is reduced to nothing...When man realises...that he is nothing, nothing, that he is pure spirit he will no longer have materialistic ambitions...man will become like God, he will become spirit’

L. FONTANA

simplicity', and the 'pure philosophy', which he sought to attain in the works of the last years of his life (Fontana, quoted in E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni, Tomo I*, Milan, 2006, p. 79). Two years after he created *Concetto spaziale*, Attese, Fontana furthered this exploration into the visual potential of white in his critically acclaimed and hugely influential installation at the 1966 Venice Biennale, for which he was awarded the Grand Prize. Consisting of a luminous white room filled with twenty monochrome white canvases of equal size, each with a single vertical incision down the centre, this installation was revelatory, and served as the summation of his prior experimentations into light, space and matter.

Fontana added the subtitle – Attese or 'Expectation' – to each of his *tagli*. With this addition, Fontana made reference to the sense of the infinite that lay beyond each of the thin elegant chasms of darkness revealed by the tears through the canvas. This boundless realm evoked not only the immeasurable space beyond the surface of the earth, but also the vastness of the human mind. By opening up and redefining the possibilities of art itself, Fontana was simultaneously seeking to unlock the parameters of human consciousness, liberating the potentials of human imagination that had been stifled by conventional society. As if to illustrate this point, Fontana has inscribed on the back of *Concetto spaziale*,

Atteste the phrase: 'ATTESE 1+ 1 00 00 00 Buona sera', a playful yet potent reminder of the limitless possibility he felt these Attese possessed.

Perhaps more than any post-war artist, Fontana's work captures the anticipatory spirit of the epoch. A time of revelatory discoveries – both scientific and technological – man's place within the universe had been completely redefined and human potential radically reconsidered. Contemporary life was filled with new questions and possibilities: if man could leave the earth's atmosphere and exist in space, would it one day be possible for him to live on the moon? Space travel changed the course of the 20th Century and, by trying to capture and distil this same sense of pioneering exploration, Fontana too altered the course of post-war art. 'In future there will no longer be art the way we understand it', he declared. 'No, art, the way we think about it today will cease...there'll be something else. I make these cuts and these holes, these Attese and these Concetti...Compared to the Spatial era I am merely a man making signs in the sand. I made these holes. But what are they? They are the mystery of the Unknown in art, they are the Expectation of something that must follow' (Fontana, quoted in L. M. Barbero, 'Lucio Fontana: Venice/New York' in L. M. Barbero (ed.), *Lucio Fontana: Venice/New York*, exh. cat., New York, 2006, p. 47).



Lucio Fontana working on *Concetto spaziale*.

Photo: © Giancolombo.

Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT ITALIAN COLLECTION

λ 115

ALBERTO
BURRI (1915-1995)

Rosso plastica (Plastic Red)

plastic and vinyl combustion on Cellotex

14¾ x 7½in. (37.5 x 19.5cm.)

Executed in 1966

£500,000-700,000

\$660,000-910,000

€550,000-760,000

‘I place the plastic on it and burn it. Nothing is left to chance. What I do here is the most controlled and controllable type of painting... You need to control the material and this is achieved by mastering the technique’

A. BURRI



EXHIBITED:

Bologna, Palazzo Pepoli Campogrande, *Alberto Burri*, 1991-1992, p. 184, no. 98 (illustrated in colour, p. 109). This exhibition later travelled to Locarno, Pinacoteca Comunale Casa Rusca. Turin, Mazzoleni Galleria d'Arte, *Alberto Burri. Tra Materia e Forma. Opere scelte 1948-1993*, 2003.

LITERATURE:

Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini (ed.), *Burri. Contributi al catalogo sistematico*, Città di Castello 1990, no. 763 (illustrated in colour, p. 181). L. Lambertini, "Nel segno di Burri" in *Arte in*, no. 88, 2003-2004. Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini (ed.), *Alberto Burri. General Catalogue*, Città di Castello 2015, vol. I, p. 406, no. 1137 (illustrated in colour, p. 209); vol. VI, no. i.6612 (illustrated in colour, p. 165).

Tiziano Vecellio, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1515-18.
Basilica of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice.
Photo: © 2017 Cameraphoto/Scala, Florence.





Robert Rauschenberg, *Untitled*, 1954.
The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, New York.
Artwork: © Robert Rauschenberg Foundation/DACS, London/VAGA, New York 2017.

Gleaming undulations ripple across much of the seemingly liquefiant surface of Alberto Burri's *Rosso plastica*, created in 1966. This work is one of Burri's celebrated *Plastiche*, many of which are now held by museum collections throughout the world, including the Centre Pompidou, Paris, the Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Rome, the Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York.

In works such as *Rosso plastica*, Burri managed to wed fire to form: he applied heat to the found material that dominated his surface in order to achieve the appearance he desired. This was a highly-controlled process in which Burri would often move the material itself, or move himself, resulting in a slow dance as he eked the work into existence. Melting, singeing and stretching the red plastic of the title, Burri was able to create a relief that bears all the traces of its own execution. Escaping the restrictive two dimensions so often occupied by traditional paintings and pictures, this work bursts into the viewer's space, spilling over and thereby insisting on

'The symbolism of Burri is very elementary and straight-forward, it's a sign, a signal before even being a symbol. The red is the flame itself, burning the colour, it's life, it's energy. The black stands for what's left of the flame after it has burned, it's death but death that still carry a trace, a residue of life. It is thanks to impulse of both life and death that red and black become more than two colours in Burri's work. They represent they way that matter show itself by transcending. Since Matisse's red, the only one that deserves to be recognized as such is Burri's red, and perhaps, only Miro has been able to extract something that could anticipate Burri's black'

V. RUBIU

its own emphatic materiality. It is the inverse of the *Tagli* of his contemporary, Lucio Fontana, who prised his surfaces apart in order to create space. In *Rosso plastica*, the focus is on the surface itself, which bulges outwards, invading our space. And in contrast to the serene, transcendental slashes of Fontana, in Burri's work, the oleaginous appearance of the red plastic fills it with a sensuality, an appeal to tactility as well as sight, that is almost mouth-watering.

By the time Burri created *Rosso plastica*, he was already established as an artist of international renown. Indeed, the previous year, the Tate Gallery in London had acquired his *Sacco e rosso* of 1954, adding to the ever-growing panoply of his works in public collections; he had been widely championed in the United States by this time. In 1966, the year that *Rosso plastica* was created, Burri also participated in the XXXIII Venice Biennale, where he showed a group of related *Plastiche*. This exhibition would be visited by a variety of prominent people—as a government minister, the future president Giulio Andreotti was given a tour, while Burri was photographed with his friend Ben Nicholson, whom he had known for over a decade, standing in front of one of the works.

In hindsight, the link between Nicholson and Burri appears logical, as both were interested in the picture surface and also in the nature of composition. For Burri, despite his reliance on found materials, retained a strong drive to arrange these in a manner that promoted an internal sense of harmony. 'Painting must be decorative, which means it must conform to compositional and proportional canons,' he explained.

'How can a picture be out of proportion, or, for example, "lean" to one side... The sense of balance is innate... at least in the balance of forms in space... requiring equilibrium between two opposites, even the extreme opposites' (Burri, quoted in B. Corà, 'Burri: The Measure of Balance', pp. 27-35, C. Sarteanesi & S. Tosini Pizzetti (ed.), *Burri: opera 1949-1994: La misura dell'equilibrio*, exh. cat., Parma, 2006, 32).





Mark Rothko, *Red on Maroon*, 1959. Tate Modern, London.
Artwork: © 1998 Kate Rothko Prizel & Christopher Rothko ARS, NY and DACS, London. Photo: © Tate, London 2017.

“The words don’t mean anything to me; they talk around the picture. What I have to express appears in the picture. With the other elements it is involved in a whole chain of pulls and tensions. But this is only the architectonic structure. For the rest I have nothing to add’

A. BURRI

In *Rosso plastica*, this is evidenced in Burri’s manipulation of the surface in order to achieve various visual rhythms, with long pleats juxtaposed with others that are mere dashes in comparison. Similarly, there is a sense of framing, with the glossy plastic affixed to the surface. In a sense, this focus on visual rhythms recalls even his earliest works, created during his captivity in Texas when he was a Prisoner of War, and first turned to painting. One of the few works that survives from that period is *Texas*, of 1945, a bleak description of the merciless heat of the landscape there. It prefigures the artist’s interest in monochromes, as it is largely created through a restrained palette of hot red and orange: the signs are almost subsumed by the atmosphere. Looking at the vertical *Rosso plastica*, the viewer nonetheless can see a new incarnation of the spirit of *Texas*. Burri’s eye for colour and composition remains central in both. Indicating a further sense of continuity in Burri’s work, the sculptural surface of *Rosso plastica* also recalls other works from the earlier part of his career, the *Gobbi* of the early 1950s. In those works, Burri had forced the canvas outwards using props and struts behind the surface.

Ever since *Texas*, the colour red had remained a key weapon in Burri’s artistic arsenal. Many of his works are restricted to a strict palette comprising black, white, gold and sackcloth alongside vivid reds. Where in some of his earlier compositions, the use of red was often as a highlight, shown in flecks on the thread tying two areas of canvas, as a glimpsed fragment thrusting sacking into bolder relief, or as a bold field alongside other elements, in *Rosso plastica* the red has come into its own. Burri was able to acquire the plastic that would form his works as a prepared volume of colour. He had no need to paint, only to turn the material to his own purposes. This was an Informel

continuation of Henri Matisse’s cut-outs, in which the artist’s scissors and prepared paper had allowed him to draw with colour. Burri pushed this even further—by acquiring the plastic that he used here, colour was a given. It was appropriated in the form of the material that he has stretched, melted and fixed. It is a given in *Rosso plastica*, and everything else—the shapes that it is forced to adopt, the variations in texture, the pleats, the singes, are the result of Burri’s intervention. It is thus both parallel and opposed to the *Red Painting* of Robert Rauschenberg, which dated to around the time of his influential meeting with Burri. Where Rauschenberg took a number of objects and materials and united them under a varied veil of red, Burri has taken red itself and explored its potential properties.

And it is not just the properties of the colour—rich with its evocations of blood and fire—that are present in *Rosso plastica*, but also of the material. After all, Burri has managed to push it to new boundaries of expression through his interventions, his creation of the various structures that support the work, his application of heat and strength alike. In this way, he has celebrated the humble plastic itself, just as he had done with the sacking of his earlier works. He has taken the ephemera of modern existence, shipping and packing materials that are all too easily discarded after serving their intended purpose, and has rearranged them in a manner that demands the viewer’s attention and appreciation. Discussing this process, Burri explained: ‘I chose to use poor materials to prove that they could still be useful. The poorness of a medium is not a symbol: it is a device for painting’ (Burri, quoted in *Alberto Burri: A Retrospective View 1948-77*, exh.cat., Los Angeles, 1977, p. 72).



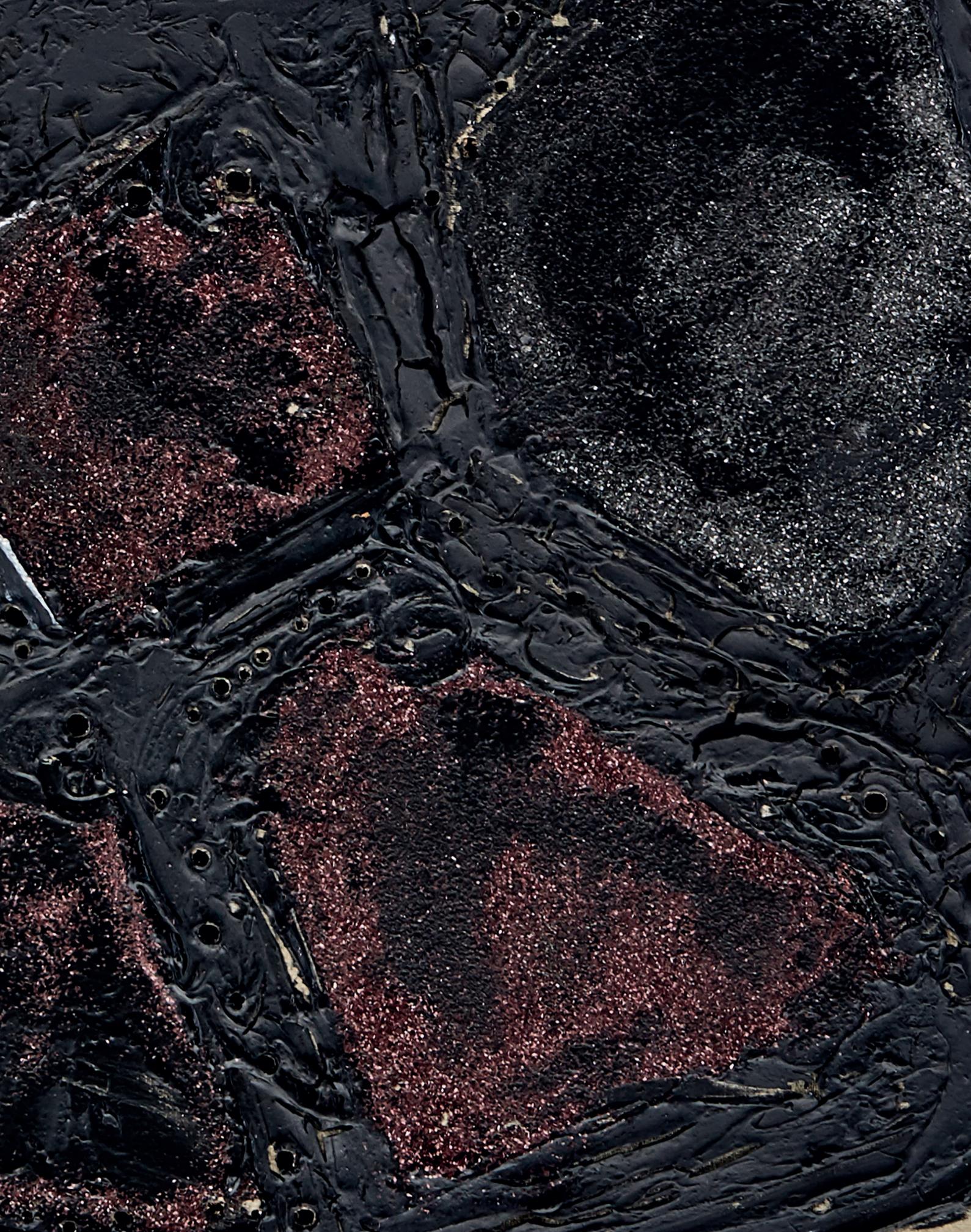
Alberto Burri working in his studio, Rome, 1960-61.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri,
Città di Castello - DACS 2017.
Unknown photographer.

LUCIO
FONTANA

'If, at first, closed in his towers, the artist represented himself and his stupor and the landscape he saw through the panes of glass, and, then, descended from the castles into the cities, knocking down the walls and mixing with other people, he saw at close hand trees and objects, today, we, Spatial artists, have escaped from our cities; we have broken our enveloping container, our physical shell and have beheld ourselves from above, photographing the Earth from rockets in flight'

L. FONTANA





PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTION

λ 116

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale

signed and dated 'I. fontana 52' (lower right); signed, titled and dated 'I. fontana
1952 Concetto Spaziale' (on the reverse)

oil and glitter on canvas
39 1/2 x 37 1/2 in. (100 x 95 cm.)
Executed in 1956

£1,000,000-1,500,000
\$1,400,000-2,000,000
€1,100,000-1,600,000



Robert Motherwell, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic No. 110. Easter Day*, 1971.

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Artwork: © Dedalus Foundation, Inc. / VAGA, NY / DACS, London 2017.

Photo: © 2017. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation / Art Resource, NY / Scala, Florence.

PROVENANCE:

Grosso Collection, Turin.

Anon. sale, Sotheby's London, 29 June 1994,
lot 27.

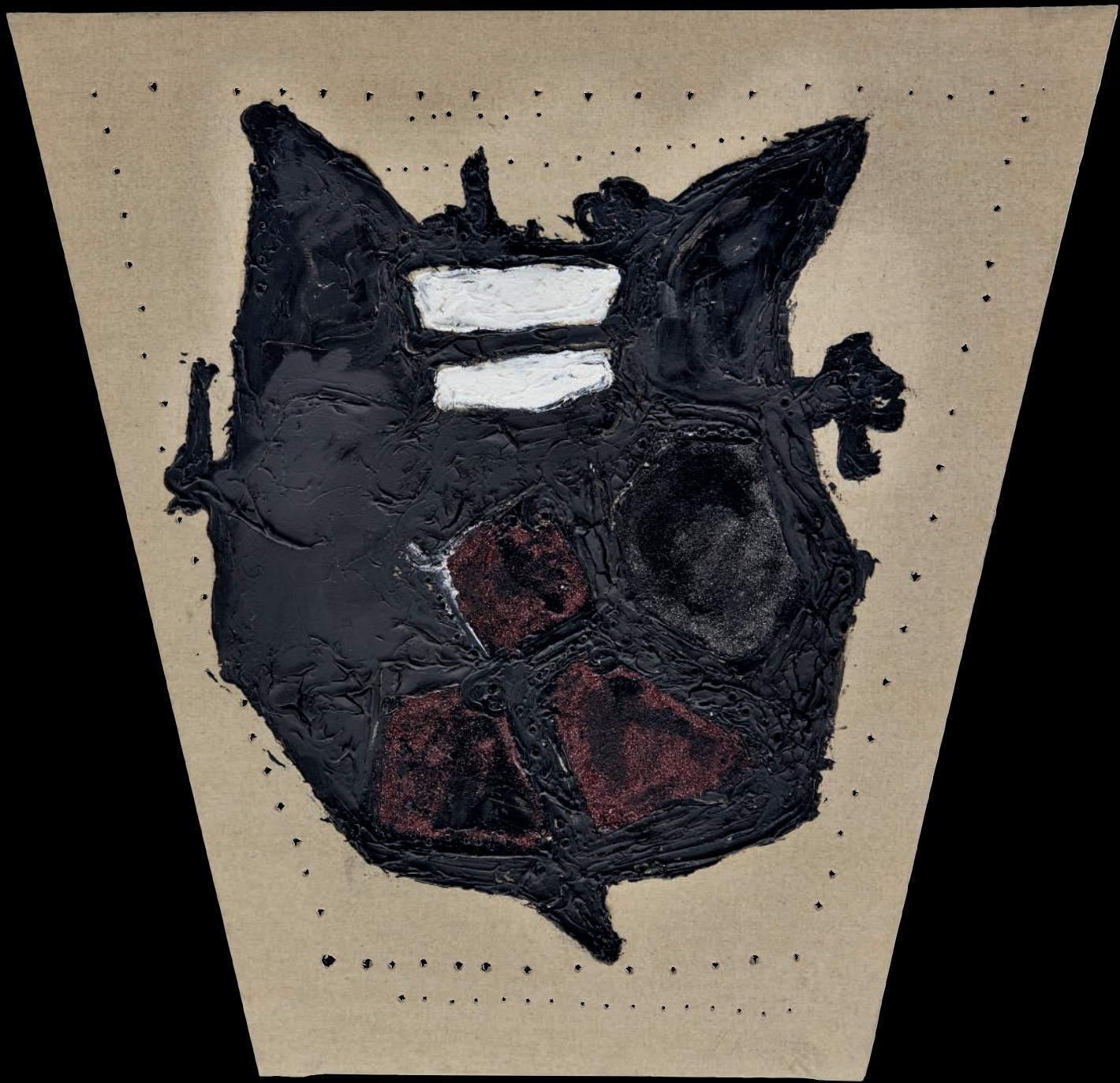
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environnements spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. II, no. 56 BA 33 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 51).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo generale*, Milan 1986, vol. I, no. 56 BA 33 (illustrated with wrong orientation, p. 175).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. I, no. 56 BA 33 (illustrated, p. 328).





Jean Dubuffet, *Ponge feu follet noir*, 1947. Fondation Beyeler, Basel.
Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2017.

Dating from 1956, *Concetto spaziale* forms a part of Lucio Fontana's celebrated *Barocchi*, a series he created during a brief period in the middle of that decade. Of these works, *Concetto spaziale* is particularly rare, one of only five *Barocchi* created on a shaped canvas, rather than a rectangle. This was a method Fontana deployed only a handful of times in this series. Of these, one is in the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires, the capital of the artist's native Argentina. Two others, which were both in the collection of Mario Oliveri, have been widely published and exhibited, often as a pair—they are subtitled *Il Paradiso* and *L'Inferno*. Though he executed *Concetto spaziale* in 1956, as stated in Enrico Crispolti's catalogue raisonné, it seems that Fontana dated this work retrospectively, something he often did, inscribing a date of 1952 on both the recto and verso of this work.

In the *Barocchi*, Fontana pushed to new extremes the contrast between the materiality of the picture surface and the immateriality of the voids he created within it. This is all the more the case in *Concetto spaziale*, as Fontana has deliberately left much of the canvas in reserve, allowing it to sing with its raw warmth. This serves to emphasise the substantiality of the painted area, which itself makes use of a range of techniques in order to highlight both matter and gesture. Indeed, the impasto of the paint itself takes the form of a relief against the flat plane of the raw canvas. Fontana has also thickened the paint in various areas, not least with the *lustrini* identified by Pia Gottschaller, which add an extra dimension to the glittering play of light within the picture (see P. Gottschaller, *Lucio Fontana: The Artist's Materials*, Los Angeles, 2012, pp. 46-48).

'It is necessary to overturn and transform painting, sculpture and poetry. A form of art is now demanded which is based on the necessity of this new vision. The baroque has guided us in this direction, in all its as yet unsurpassed grandeur, where the plastic form is inseparable from the notion of time, the images appear to abandon the plane and continue into space the movements they suggest'

L. FONTANA

Within the painted area, Fontana has limited himself to a palette dominated by black, articulated by the bars and hints of white. Despite this rigorously restrained colour scheme, Fontana has nonetheless managed to conjure a range of textures within the paint surface, further articulating it. Meanwhile, mostly surrounding the painted area are rows of holes, punched through the canvas itself, adding another level to the play of light and of substance within *Concetto spaziale*. The appearance of the painted zone recalls some of Fontana's sculptures from the same period - it is a spatial form, a zone whose striations, like the arms of a galaxy, escape and invade the surrounding universe. This adds a further dynamism to the overall effect of *Concetto spaziale*.

Crucially, these various techniques all combine to trace the movements of the artist himself. Painted at a moment when *Art Informel* was in the ascendant in Europe, *Concetto spaziale* reveals Fontana's own involvement in expression through movement. The painterly quality of *Concetto spaziale*, combined with the results of Fontana's energetic puncturing of the canvas, record the movements of the artist - they are the evidence of the decisions, of the moments of his life. Each gesture has been captured within the fabric of the work.

Fontana saw this as an evolution of the 'hole', the development that he had pioneered less than a decade earlier but which would come to define much of his artistic legacy. He was attempting to create works of art that were appropriate at the dawn of the Space Age - after all, *Concetto spaziale* was made only the year before Sputnik was launched. During this period, Fontana was attempting to find new modes of expression that were appropriate at a



time when mankind stood on the threshold of escaping its own planet, of launching into the Cosmos and sailing through the stars. On a monumental scale, this was evidenced by his architectural projects, the vast ceilings and sculptures he was making in collaboration with architects at the time, including a number for churches. Fontana was teetering at the threshold of a new era, and sought an art that was appropriate for it. Looking at *Concetto spaziale*, the viewer can appreciate Fontana's statements on religious art to which the Baroque is traditionally linked: 'God is invisible, God is incomprehensible; this is why no artist today can depict God seated on a throne with the world in his hands and a beard... The religions, too, must adapt themselves to the state of science' (Fontana, quoted in B. Hess, *Lucio Fontana 1899-1968: "A New Fact in Sculpture"*, Cologne, 2006, p. 68).

That idea of being on the brink of a new era had informed the *Barocchi* in particular, as Fontana was all too aware that the original Baroque period, of which so many artworks are in evidence throughout Italy, had itself been a moment of vital innovation. Fontana linked his own innovations in Spatial Art with those precursors:

'a change is necessary both in essence and form. It is necessary to overturn and transform painting, sculpture and poetry. A form of art is now demanded which is based on the necessity of this new vision. The baroque has guided us in this direction, in all its as yet unsurpassed grandeur, where the plastic form is inseparable from the notion of time, the images appear to abandon the plane and continue into space the movements they suggest. This conception arose from man's new idea of the existence of things; the physics of that period reveal for the first time the nature of dynamics. It is established that movement is an essential condition of matter as a beginning of the conception of the universe. At this point of evolution the requirements of movement were so powerful that the plastic arts were unable to respond' (Lucio Fontana, *Manifesto tecnico dello Spazialismo*, trans. C. Damiano, 1951, reproduced in L. Massimo Barbero (ed.), *Lucio Fontana: Venice/New York*, exh. cat., Venice & New York, 2006, p. 229).

Just as science had rendered obsolete the static means of representation of the Seventeenth Century, inspiring artists to fill their works with the appearance of movement, so too Fontana sought to push back the boundaries. He had done so with the invention of the hole, which rendered canvas itself obsolete. In *Concetto spaziale* and its fellow *Barocchi*, Fontana has both supplemented and countered that obsolescence through the manipulation of the raw canvas and the contrasting mass of paint that he has so vigorously applied to the pierced surface. This is indeed a Baroque iteration of Spatial Art. Fontana often stated that it was his irrevocable gesture that was the artwork, that the material was incidental - after all, it would doubtless decay over the millennia. In *Concetto spaziale*, he has insured that the range of gestures is all the wider, all the more visceral, his brushwork adding an extra intimacy and immediacy to the traces of his movements over sixty years ago.





Lucio Fontana in his studio. Milan, 1957

Photo: ©Giancolombo.

Artworks: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana / SIAE / DACS, London 2017

alberto
BURR

‘These paintings are impossible to translate; they precede consciousness and remain impassive in the face of cultural conventions and systems of communications. Their message rebounds from the depths of the cavity in which they posit themselves with a force that does not come from this century but, like every complete thing, gravitates around the primordial’

ITALO TOMASSONI





λ 117

ALBERTO
BURRI (1915-1995)

Nero con punti rossi
(*Black with Red Stitches*)

signed, titled and dated 'Burri 57 nero con punti rossi' (on the reverse)

acrylic, thread, Vinavil and fabric collage on canvas

23½ x 39½in. (60 x 100cm.)

Executed in 1957

£800,000-1,200,000

\$1,100,000-1,600,000

€880,000-1,300,000

'Burri enjoys his art like every other true artist. He plays in it: plays with the materials he employs, allows them to play with him, to collaborate in the final expression, even to dictate some of the forms which seem his most personal'

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY

PROVENANCE:

Galleria Blu, Milan.

Galleria Bergamini, Milan.

Anon. sale, Finarte Milan, 8 June 1982, lot 129.

Studio Sant'Andrea, Milan.

Private Collection, Milan (acquired from the above in 1985).

Anon. sale, Christie's London, 15 October 2007, lot 235.

Private Collection, Italy.

Anon. sale, Christie's London, 13 February 2013, lot 49.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Luino, Palazzo Verbania - Civico Centro di Cultura, *Burri & Palazzoli. La Santa Alleanza*, 2001 (illustrated in colour, p. 91). This exhibition later travelled to Milan, Galleria Blu.
New York, Haunch of Venison, *Afro Burri Fontana*, 2012 (illustrated in colour, p. 39).

LITERATURE:

C. Brandi, *Burri*, Rome 1963, no. 51 (illustrated, unpagued).

Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini (ed.), *Burri Contributi al Catalogo Sistematico*, Città di Castello 1990, no. 398 (illustrated in colour, p. 101).

Milan, Fondazione Marconi Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, *Autobiografia di una galleria. Lo Studio Marconi 1965/1992*, 2005 (illustrated in colour, p. 169).

Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini, (ed.), *Burri. Contributi al Catalogo Sistematico*, Città di Castello, 2015, vol. I, no. 638 (illustrated in colour, p. 269); vol. VI, no. i.5755 (illustrated in colour, p. 116).









Alberto Burri, *Grande cretto nero*, 1977. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.
Artwork: © Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collezione Burri, Città di Castello – DACS 2017.
Photo: © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Bertrand Prévost.

With its wealth of textures and techniques, Alberto Burri's *Nero con punti rossi* epitomises the pathfinding artist's unique vision. Against a largely black backdrop, Burri has managed to conjure a vast range of effects, bringing to the fore the nature and appearance of the materials themselves. *Nero con punti rossi* is an historic work dating from 1957, and shares its title with another horizontal work from the previous year which is now in the Collezione Maramotti in Reggio Emilia, where it hangs alongside works by artists as varied as Henry Moore, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Pino Pascali and Francis Bacon. By 1957, when the present picture was made, Burri was gaining increasing recognition for his bold, abstract works, which were being exhibited internationally. Burri was championed by critics including the legendary James Johnson Sweeney, the organiser of a show that took place at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh that year, introducing him to a new American market. Indeed, the following year, he would win third place in Pittsburgh's Carnegie Prize, awarded by a committee that included such diverse figures as Sweeney, Lionello Venturi, Marcel Duchamp and Vincent Price.

As can be seen in *Nero con punti rossi*, Burri had pushed the concept of collage to a new, inscrutable level that was trailblazing for either side of the Atlantic. He was taking elements and materials from the real world, reassembling them to bold effect. He did this through a wide range of techniques that included stitching as well as painting, as is visible here. For Burri, these new forms and configurations were reductive as well as expressive: his compositions were not intended to evoke anything other than themselves, self-sufficient, self-contained and autonomous. The bold rigour of this philosophy was influential for a range of artists, from Robert Rauschenberg, who owned one of his works, to the Arte Povera movement.

Nero con punti rossi perfectly demonstrates the incredible range of effects that Burri could capture in a single work. Despite this picture being almost monochromatic, dominated by black which is off-set by areas of raw canvas, Burri has explored an impressive range of appearances and textures within this deliberately limited palette. There are stitches and folds, pleats and ripples, as well as the rich craquelure that dominates the upper half and is so reminiscent of arid landscapes. Some of the material with which Burri has stitched and bridged the leaves, folds and wounds of the surface has been painted black, blending into the background, while other areas stand out in electric contrast, punctuating the dark, including the thread with flickering traces of red visible—the *punti rossi* of the title. Meanwhile, drips of paint articulate the otherwise-uncoloured sackcloth, which appears to glow warmly against the black. Casting an eye across the surface, the viewer cannot but appreciate the extent to which *Nero con punti rossi* is an exploration of materials, textures and actions.

Some of those actions are not entirely Burri's own: in the cracked section that occupies so much of the upper half, he has deliberately mixed glue into the paint in order to achieve this effect. But of course the cracks themselves are self-determining, even if Burri was able to control their density and appearance to some degree. This notion of a self-generating work of art was something that would come to the fore in Burri's own *Cretti*, a far later series, as well as Manzoni's *Achromes*, which the younger artist began developing in 1957, the year that *Nero con punti rossi* was created. As was the case with the pleats in Manzoni's *Achromes*, Burri carefully managed the parameters of the chance appearance that the craquelure would take in pictures such as *Nero con punti rossi*, finely balancing the amounts of pigment, glue and paint that he used in order to harness the density of the scarring lines that would





Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632. Mauritshuis, The Hague.
Photo: © 2017. Photo Scala, Florence.

appear. He used zinc, a white pigment, for its essentially brittle appearance, its propensity to form these cracks, colouring the mix with black acrylic in works such as this (see E. Braun (ed.), *Alberto Burri: The Trauma of Painting*, exh. cat., New York, 2015, pp. 236–39). Burri's ability to harness these techniques with fine control is shown by the varying densities of craquelure apparent in different parts of the composition, as is clear in the blistering areas below the 'horizon', which swiftly decline from a blistering eruption to a fine gossamer-like area of delicate wrinkles. In these manipulations, Burri was revealing his continued fascination with dark material, as evidenced in his earlier tar paintings, the *Catrame* series, taking his experience from them and distilling it.

While the craquelure may appear self-determining in *Nero con punti rossi*, some of Burri's other actions in creating the painting are more emphatic, and indeed more intimate, as is evidenced by the surface itself. The folds, bunches and stitches all speak eloquently of the artist's own movements, as he brought together the various elements, sometimes bridging tears and cavities with his thread. The use of this technique is a form of anti-painting: in contrast to the machismo of the paint-throwing Action Painters on the other side of the Atlantic at the time, Burri was adopting the mending methods of seamstresses. And crucially, of doctors. After all, Burri's original vocation had been medicine, and it was only during his time as a Prisoner of War in a camp in Hereford, Texas that he abandoned it in favour of painting. The ethos of the healer appears nonetheless to have remained central to Burri. Regardless of their wounded aesthetic, works such as *Nero con punti rossi* are celebrations—and rehabilitations.

Burri destroyed many of his early pictures. However, those that remain reveal an early interest in visual rhythms and composition that echoed through his abstract works, both in oils, and later collage. *Texas*, of 1945, reduced the

'I chose to use poor materials to prove that they could still be useful. The poorness of a medium is not a symbol: it is a device for painting'

A. BURRI

eponymous landscape to only a few red forms. So too did the subsequent abstract paintings, which retained an anchor in the figurative forms. *Nero con punti rossi* does not feature any reference to the outside world, to figuration—yet its visual rhythm, with the progression of forms across the central horizon, nonetheless reveals the extent to which the lessons Burri had learned while a PoW remained central to his later aesthetic. In *Nero con punti rossi*, Burri has created his composition by harnessing areas that channel different effects as they proceed, with differences in colour, in texture and in material each coming to the fore. Thus, flatter areas contrast with the surrounding craquelure, sackcloth glows warmly against the dark backdrop, and the stitches create staccato a punctuation of their own.

Burri's time as a medic for the army in Africa, his captivity and his return to a war-torn Italy are all seen, in retrospect, as the foundations of his aesthetic. The sackcloth, the elevation of the humble into a position of veneration, and the palpable abandonment of figuration, of any reference to the outside world, or of any over-arching programme of creation, all imply a disenchanted vision of the world. Only three years after *Nero con punti rossi* was created, Herbert Read would write of him in terms that touched upon this, reading his works as condemnations: 'Every patch in the sacking, every gaping wound-like hole, the charred edges and rugged cicatrices, reveal the raw sensibility of an artist outraged by the hypocrisy of a society that presumes to speak of beauty, tradition, humanism, justice and other fine virtues, and is at the same time willing to contemplate the mass destruction of the human race' (Herbert Read, quoted in M. Duranti (ed.), *Alberto Burri: Form and Matter*, exh. cat., London, 2011, p. 5). At the same time, in works such as *Nero con punti rossi*, by stitching those materials, by joining together these disparate elements, by salvaging, recontextualising and elevating them, Burri manages to take these potentially negative elements and channel them in such a way as to eke out a sense of life, of positivity and of hope.

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Alberto Burri in New York, 1961.
Photo: Courtesy Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini
Collezione Burri, Città di Castello, Italy.
Unknown photographer.

giovanni
ANSELMO

'Normally a stone lies on the ground. In this case, however, it is suspended high up. Thanks to gravity, the slipknot holds the stone. Paradoxically we can therefore say that the stone remains suspended thanks to gravity. The stone is lighter. Everything becomes lighter when it is moved farther from the centre of the earth'

G. ANSELMO





PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

λ 118

GIOVANNI
ANSELMO (b. 1934)

Senza titolo (Untitled)

granite blocks, steel cord and canvas

89 x 57½ x 27½ in. (226 x 145 x 70 cm.)

Executed in 1984

£150,000–200,000

\$200,000–260,000

€170,000–220,000

'I, the world, things, life, we are situations of energy and the important thing is not to crystallize these situations, but keep them open and alive – like life processes...My works are really the physification (sic) of the force behind an action, of the energy of a situation or event etc. and not its experience in terms of annotated signs, or just still life...I believe it is vital that there exist the most absolute freedom of choice or of use of materials; it thus becomes nonsense to talk of styles, form or antiform'

G. ANSELMO



Michael Heizer, *Levitated Mass*, 2012. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Artwork: © Michael Heizer.

Photo: Ann Cutting / Stockimo / Alamy Stock Photo.

PROVENANCE:

Micheline Szwajcer Gallery, Antwerp.

Acquired from the above by the previous owner

EXHIBITED:

Antwerp, Micheline Szwajcer Gallery, *Giovanni Anselmo*, 1984.

Ghent, S.M.A.K., *Giovanni Anselmo*, 2004–2005.

Ghent, Museumcultuur, *Arte Povera A-Z*, 2015–2016.

Ever since the early 1960s, Giovanni Anselmo has made works that concern themselves with and express the fundamental, elemental and often unseen or invisible forces of nature operating in

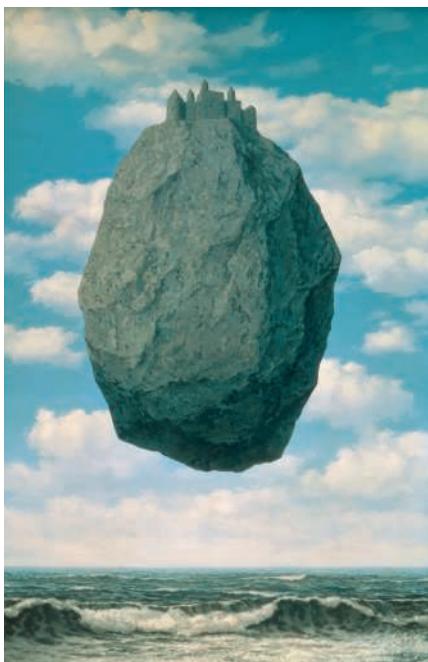








Richard Long, *South Bank Circle*, 1991. Tate Collection, London.
Artwork: © Richard Long. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2017. Photo: © Tate, London 2017. Tate Collection, London.
Artwork: © Richard Long. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2017.
Photo: © Tate, London 2017.



René Magritte, *Le chateau des Pyrénées*, 1959.
Israel Museum, Jerusalem.
Artwork: © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2017.
Photo: © 2017. BI, ADAGP, Paris/Scala, Florence.

the world. Gravity, magnetism, time (the deep time of the physicists), invisibility and infinity are the basic materials and forces which Anselmo both invokes and makes use of in his art. In *Senza titolo* of 1984, the principle force at work is that of gravity. Two granite blocks are suspended in a state of tension, paradox and equilibrium. The work is a development of a famous earlier, untitled work made in 1969 in which Anselmo suspended a single granite block with a cable from a gallery wall. In this earlier work the invisible force of gravity was eloquently made visible by the suspension of the granite block high on the wall. A strong sense of tension and of paradox was also established by the fact that the cable that attached it to the wall made use of a slip knot so that it was the immense weight of the suspended granite block that effectively also held it in place.

In this 1984 extension of the theme, it is also the weight of another granite block - of roughly equal weight and size and held on the other side of the partition wall - that keeps both blocks elevated. Implicit also within all of Anselmo's work is a consideration of its evolutionary existence over a great expanse of time. All Anselmo's work is created with a view to the universal forces functioning throughout the cosmos and of how these forces interact with and determine the unique and specific conditions of the here and now. Within the context of what physicists describe as 'deep time' - i.e. over millions and millions of years - the partition wall that separates this work will disintegrate. The cable that holds the granite blocks will rust and decay, the tension between the two will be broken and, inevitably the granite blocks will fall back to earth. Being made from rough hewn, granite, however - among the most durable and toughest stones on earth - the two granite blocks are likely to remain existing for a long time after their inevitable descent. Monuments, perhaps, of the brief moment in time when Anselmo chose to pair them, suspended above the earth from whence they came. 'I have been making works' Anselmo said, 'using the idea that they are either time, in a broad sense, or infinity, or the invisible, or everything, perhaps simply because I am an earthling and for this reason limited in time, space and specifics.' (Giovanni Anselmo, 'Interview with Mirella Bandini', NAC no 3, Bari, March 1973, p. 4.)



Giovanni Anselmo in his studio, 1969
© Paolo Mussat Sartor, Turin.
Artwork: © Giovanni Anselmo

PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION, MILAN

λ 119

VINCENZO
AGNETTI (1926-1981)

Considera - Trittico (Consider - Tryptic)

signed, inscribed and dated 'Trittico 1970 Vincenzo Agnetti' (on the reverse)

zinc

25¾ x 51¼in. (65 x 130cm.)

Executed in 1970

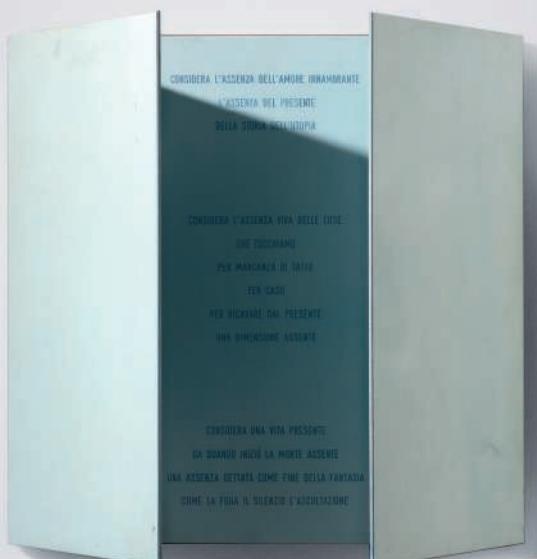
£100,000-150,000

\$140,000-200,000

€110,000-160,000

‘My works act as a signal for propagating what I have accumulated, by which I mean my theoretical and critical research. I write about things from which I call forth my paintings, which, in their turn, provide me with ideas for further research and writing...’

V. AGNETTI



PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Galleria Milano, *Lavoro - Agnetti*, 2008.
Milano, Galleria Matteo Lampertico, *Vincenzo Agnetti*, 2015-2016.
Castelbasso, Fondazione Malvina Menegaz, *Giorgio Morandi - Vincenzo Agnetti. Differenza e ripetizione*, 2016.

LITERATURE:

Quando mi vidi non c'ero - una biografia di Vincenzo Agnetti, exh. cat., Palazzo Reale, Milan 2017, no. 19 (illustrated in colour, p. 260).

This work is registered in the
Archivio Vincenzo Agnetti, Milan,
under no. 0422MDP1969021703011

CONSIDERA L'ASSENZA DELL'AMORE INNAMORANTE
L'ASSENZA DEL PRESENTE
DELLA STORIA DELL'UTOPIA

CONSIDERA L'ASSENZA VIVA DELLE COSE
CHE TOCCHIAMO
PER MANCANZA DI TATTO
PER CASO
PER RICAVARE DAL PRESENTE
UNA DIMENSIONE ASSENTE

CONSIDERA UNA VITA PRESENTE
DA QUANDO INIZIÒ LA MORTE ASSENTE
UNA ASSENZA DETTATA COME FINE DELLA FANTASIA
COME LA FUGA IL SILENZIO L'ASCOLTAZIONE

CONSIDERA L'ASSENZA
L'ASSENZA
DELLA STOR

CONSIDERA CHE VI SONO TROPPI NASCONDIGLI
IN UNO SPAZIO APERTO
E CHE LA TERRA SI ALLONTANA
INSIEME AL RESTO

CONSIDERA UNA ASSENZA GIUSTIFICATA
DALLE TENEBRE
UNA ASSENZA NASCOSTA DALLA CONDIZIONE
DALLA PERMUTAZIONE
DEGLI OBBLIGHI E DEI GUSTI

CONSIDERA L'ASSE
CHE T
PER MANC
PE

PER RICAVAR
UNA DIMEN

CONSIDERA UN
DA QUANDO INIZI
UNA ASSENZA DETTATA
COME LA FUGA IL S

DELL'AMORE INNAMORANTE

DEL PRESENTE

RIA DELL'UTOPIA

ENZA VIVA DELLE COSE

OCCHIAMO

ANZA DI TATTO

R CASO

E DAL PRESENTE

ISIONE ASSENTE

NA VITA PRESENTE

LA MORTE ASSENTE

COME FINE DELLA FANTASIA

ILENZIO L'ASCOLTAZIONE

CONSIDERA L'ASSENZA COME TEMPO E LUOGO
SU TUTTE LE COSE
CHE RIMARRANNO LÀ

CONSIDERA IN QUESTO LUOGO
IN QUESTO OGGETTO DIMENTICANTE
L'ASSENZA VIVA
VIVENDO
L'ASSENZA DEL FUTURO
GIÀ RIPRESO NEI SECOLI DEI SECOLI

Consider that there
are too many hiding
places in an open
space

And that the Earth
is going away
together
with the rest

Consider a justified
absence from
the dark
an absence
hidden from the
circumstance
from the
permutation of
duties and tastes

Consider the absence of loving
love the present's absence of
utopia's history

Consider the vivid absence of
things we touch due to the lack of
tact
by chance
to extract from the present an
absent dimension

Consider a present life from when
the absent death started
an absence dictated as the end of
the fantasy
like the escape the silence the
listening

Consider the
absence as time
and place on all the
things which will
remain there

Consider in this
place
in this forgetting
object the vivid
absence living
the absence of
the future already
reclaimed forever
and ever

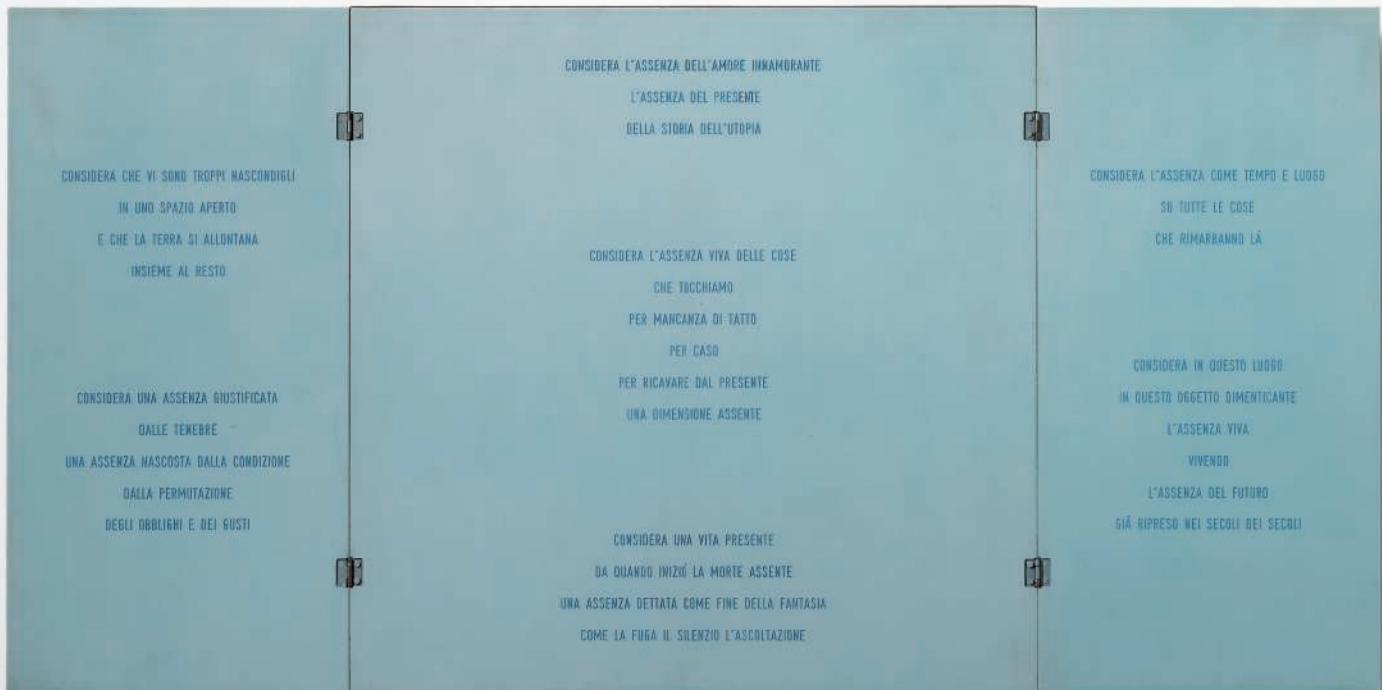
**'Contradictions, paradoxes, tautologies help to cause language
to short-circuit, to stop it from working, so that we may question
ourselves about it'**

V. AGNETTI

At the heart of Vincenzo Agnetti's oeuvre lay his examination of the complex, shifting nature of language, its evolution and ambiguity when placed in different combinations and contexts, and the permeable, ever-changing, endless series of potential meanings which lay behind the words he used. The Milanese conceptualist began his career as a poet before becoming associated with Piero Manzoni and the Azimuth group. His involvement with the Italian avant-garde was interrupted by a voyage to South America in 1962, where he would remain for five years, living in Argentina with his family. While he maintained a correspondence with his colleagues in Italy during this time, Agnetti adopted a principle which he called 'Art-no,' in which he refused to make art, immersing himself in tedious, repetitive, manual labour instead, which he believed would provoke a greater awareness within him of the true freedom of being an artist. Instead, he channelled his creative energies into the obsessive creation of thousands of pages of writing, which he assembled in notebooks and called *Assenza* (Absence). Describing this project, Agnetti wrote: 'Two thousand pages that bring together thoughts, ideas and plans developed between one chance event and the next in South America, Scandinavia, Arabia... These objects are reminders. And yet I will never read these pages again. The texts are so precipitous and relentless that revising and editing them would take me another six years. It's better simply

to review these notebooks from a closer angle. Simply as notebooks: partitive and abstract participation. A solitary reference: a 'here they are' and a 'now they're gone'...' (Agnetti, quoted in G. Agnetti, 'When I Saw Myself I Wasn't There: A Biography of Vincenzo Agnetti,' in M. Meneguzzo (ed.), *Agnetti, a hundred years from now*, exh. cat., Milan, 2017, p. 255).

Upon his return to Milan, Agnetti reached a dramatic turning point in his art, which would determine the trajectory of the rest of his career. He began to integrate his literary experiences, his interest in theatre and his critical writings into his visual art, using fragmented texts and tautological axioms to create enigmatic artworks which challenged the established, accepted systems of language. From his early sculpture *Principia*, to his revolutionary reprogramming of an Olivetti calculator for *La Macchina drogata*, his work delved into the rules and logic of language, revealing the mutable, highly subjective circumstances which determined our understanding of words, phrases and statements. This continued in the publication of his novel, *Obsoleto*, in 1968, which made radical use of textual syntax, punctuation, narrative, content and form to create a highly experimental novel that reads like a stream of consciousness, continually interrupting itself. Perhaps most importantly though, the artist developed his so-called *Assiomi* (Axioms) in



which diagrams, graphs, symbols and circular, looping, often contradictory statements, were engraved into black Bakelite panels. 'From a theoretical assumption I construct a discussion of two or more written pages,' he explained. 'Then, through logical decantation, I use an axiom to sum up the entire content that emerged' (Agnetti, quoted in *ibid*, p. 15). In many cases the *Assiomi* achieve the appearance of tautologies, looping back on themselves to complicate our reading of the original statement, creating phrases that seem to make sense, yet, when examined further, fall apart and become tied up in a complex layering of potential meaning.

It is from this series that the present work, *Considera - Trittico* (*Considera - Tryptic*), evolved. Created in 1970 it builds on the central concept of the *Assiomi* - the presentation of a cryptic, elliptical phrase or statement - and pushed it to new levels of expression. Adopting a dynamic triptych format, Agnetti inscribes three separate panels with a series of seemingly interconnected statements that seem to relate back to one another. Each 'verse' begins with the word 'Considera' (consider), a visual device which tethers each section to the others and suggests a natural progression through the text. The presentation resembles the traditional formatting of a poem, a comparison further emphasised by the light colouring of the zinc, which appears like a blank page upon which the words have been typed or printed, while the hinges connecting the three panels suggests the triptych may be opened (and closed) like a book. An unusual material for Agnetti during this period, his choice of zinc was a clear departure from the black Bakelite surfaces of the *Assiomi*, and perhaps marked the beginning of the artist's explorations into alternative materials, which would lead to the

highly textured surfaces of his *Feltri*. The text itself is wonderfully poetic, folding in on itself like an origami crane, incorporating phrases which dissolve with uncertainty when examined closely. In this way *Considera - Trittico* introduces contradictions, paradoxes and loops to complicate our understanding of the text, challenging our perceptions of the unshakeable, immutable nature of language

In comparison to his contemporaries who were also exploring language at this time, Agnetti always used his own words, statements and poetry in his explorations, rather than borrowing from others. While he was a voracious reader of philosophical treatises and literature, he saw writing as an essential element of his own creative expression, representing the developments of his intricate thought process as he grappled with the complex concepts and problems of his age, and distilled them into profound statements and poems. As Marco Meneguzzo has proclaimed, 'Agnetti's activity was paradigmatic because his use of words, and of statements using them, shows an interpretative richness and an evocative freedom that go far beyond the absolute determinacy, purposely impersonal, of the conceptual statements [of his contemporaries] ... he aimed at establishing a new and radical syntax, not only in the field of art languages, but in that of languages tout court.' (M. Meneguzzo, 'Artists Gather Only Unripe Fruit,' in *ibid*, p. 31). For Agnetti, the hesitation, uncertainty, and insecurity inherent in the comprehension of his texts was key to developing an autonomous, critical way of looking at the world. By interrupting our straight-forward reading of the words, he allows us to query our understanding of the text, attend to our perceptions, and question the rules and logic of the systems we follow.

PROPERTY OF A EUROPEAN LADY

λ 120

MICHELANGELO
PISTOLETTO (B. 1933)

Ficus

signed, titled and dated 'Pistoletto 1965 - ficus -' (on the reverse)

painted tissue paper on polished stainless steel

78¾ x 47½ in. (200 x 120cm.)

Executed in 1965

£300,000-500,000

\$400,000-650,000

€330,000-550,000

'The figures and the décor that are the symptoms of today's strange and new disease of alienation are the raw material, and perhaps the end product, of Pistoletto's art... The décor is that of a gallery, or your own home if you own a Pistoletto, or whatever surroundings the mirror surface happens to reflect. Chances are there will be white walls, modern furniture (Knoll, if the picture is in a gallery) and potted plants. Probably the ubiquitous philodendrum'

JOHN ASHBERRY, 'TALKING OF MICHELANGELO', ARTNEWS SUMMER, 1966



Sigmar Polke, *Two Palm Trees*, 1964. Private collection.
Artwork: © The Estate of Sigmar Polke, Cologne, DACS 2017.

PROVENANCE:

Hudson Art Gallery, Detroit.

Private Collection, Bloomfield Hills.

Anon. sale, Sotheby's New York, 11 May 2006,
lot 528.

Vedovi Gallery, Brussels.

Acquired from the above by the present owner
in 2006.





Installation view of Michelangelo Pistoletto's exhibition at the Walker Arts Center, Philadelphia, 1966.
Artwork: © Michelangelo Pistoletto.

'This youngster named Michelangelo Pistoletto, one cannot say that he is a Pop painter as someone has said, and if someone hasn't said it, better be clear that this guy has nothing to do with Pop because in Turin, as probably in all of Italy, the premises for Pop painting do not exist, there is only this oppressive and invincible weight, no American Coke, no Vermouth Perlino, no vamps, not much use of deodorant, people still sleep in their pyjamas, people still cook pasta, squeeze the tomatoes, people still do all those things. At the Bar Torino on Piazza San Carlo you sit on little baroque chairs to eat lots of gelato but not much "ice-cream."'

E. SOTTSASS JR.

'Pistoletto's work is an apotheosis of the ordinary', wrote Martin Friedman in his introduction to the Walker Art Center's first major show of Pistoletto's work entitled 'Michelangelo Pistoletto: A Reflected World' in April 1966. *Ficus* of 1965 is one of a series of mirror paintings depicting a domestic and commonplace pot-plant that were made in preparation for this landmark exhibition of the artist's work.

'Michelangelo Pistoletto: A Reflected World' comprised entirely of numerous examples of the mirror-paintings that had dominated Pistoletto's art since his famous breakthrough of 1962. Ranging from anonymous portraits and unremarkable images drawn from mundane aspects of daily Italian life,

to pictures of ordinary people demonstrating and marching in protest, the subjects of Pistoletto's mirror-paintings in this exhibition appeared to deliberately provide a contemporary cross-section of average, day-to-day, bourgeois life in 1960s Italy.

Among the mirror paintings that Pistoletto made for this show were three depicting household pot-plants of the kind found in many domestic interiors at the time. These were the 1965 paintings, *Philodendro* (now in the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo), *Autoritratto con pianta* (Self-portrait with a Potted Plant) and *Ficus* (Fig plant) similar to the present work. In addition to these three works, Pistoletto had also placed various real potted plants at various





Installation view of Michelangelo Pistoletto's exhibition at the Walker Arts Center, Philadelphia, 1966.
Artwork: © Michelangelo Pistoletto.

stages throughout the exhibition space, so that their presence was often reflected in many of the other mirror-paintings on view, adding to the whole interior a strange sense of continuity between his paintings' subject-matter and their environment.

Ficus of 1965, therefore, is a work that encapsulates all these concerns within its simple hand-coloured paper image of a fashionable house-plant laid down on a polished stainless-steel reflective surface. A humorous modern take on the still-life tradition in painting, it is also a work that, with its depiction of a single plant in a pot functions as both a decorative addition to an interior - like a pot-plant itself - and as an interactive work that projects such domestic taste and values onto the viewer whose self-image will appear reflected alongside the plant whenever the painting is viewed. As with all of Pistoletto's mirror-paintings, it is, in this way that the work both breaks down traditional artistic barriers and opens itself to the possibility of theatre, one in which the viewer becomes the performer in a stage-set orchestrated by Pistoletto's choice of subject matter; in this case a deliberately common-or-garden Ficus plant. It is this aspect of these works that Pistoletto explores, for example, in the mirror-painting *Autoritratto con pianta* where he depicts an image of himself interacting with the house-plant, using the plinth on

which it stands to tie his shoe-laces. As Pistoletto once pointed out, these paintings were created as works with which to interact. 'The mirror paintings could not live without an audience' he once said. 'They were created and re-created according to the movement and to the interventions they reproduced. The step from the mirror paintings to theatre - everything is theatre - seems simply natural...It is less a matter of involving the audience, of letting it participate, as to act on its freedom and on its imagination, to trigger similar liberation mechanisms in people.'(Michelangelo Pistoletto, interview with G. Boursier, in *Sipario*, Milan, April 1969, 17)

'For centuries we have been projecting ourselves into the fictional space of painting. I thought it was time to have the space project out to us, to once again create space'

M. PISTOLETTO

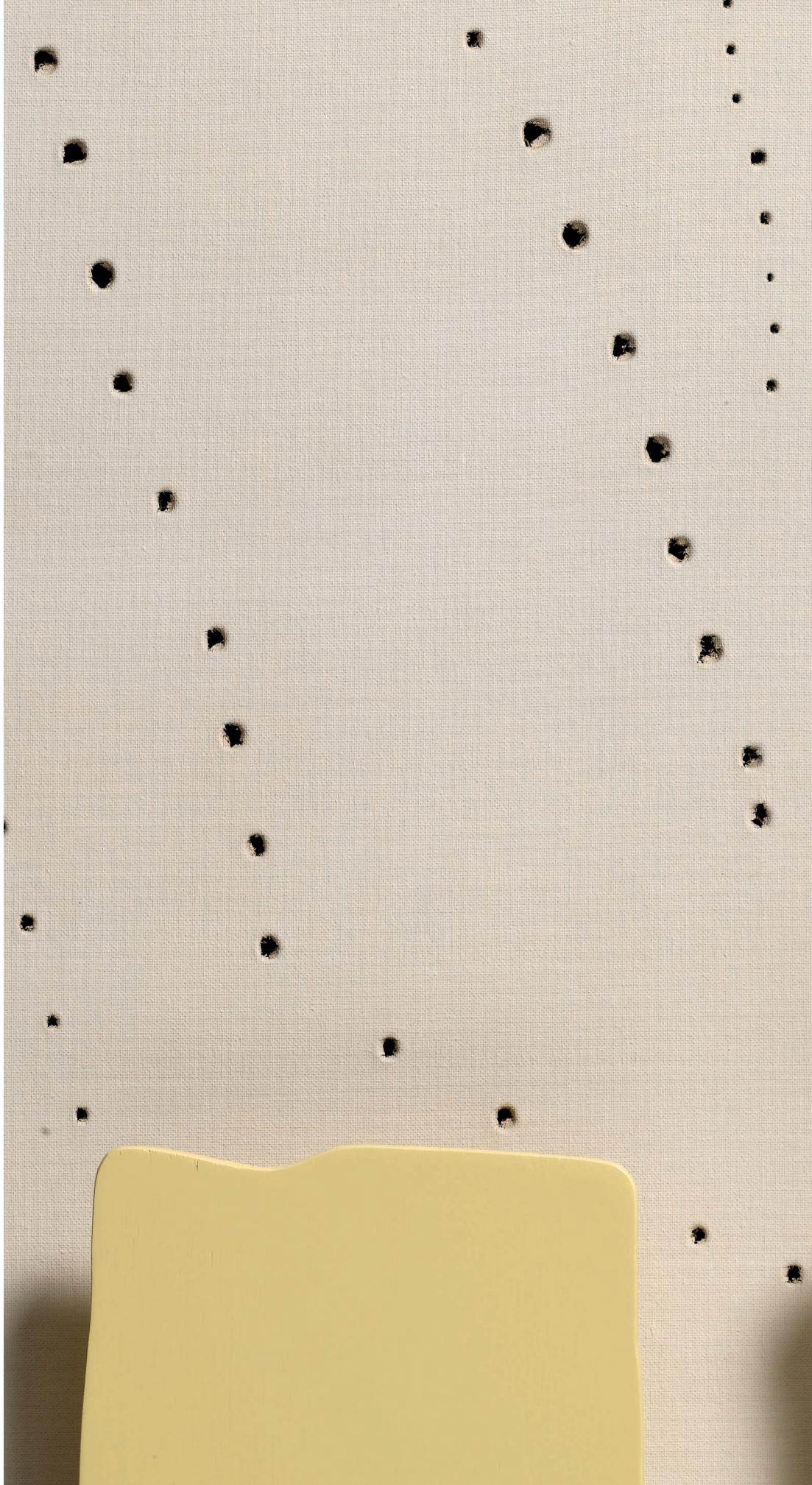


Michelangelo Pistoletto,
© Paolo Mussat Sartor, Turin.

lucio
FONTANA

**'A butterfly in space
excites my imagination:
having freed myself from
retrorockets, I lose myself
in time and begin my
holes'**

L. FONTANA





λ 121

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale, Teatrino

signed and titled 'I. Fontana Concetto Spaziale' (on the reverse)

waterpaint on canvas and lacquered wood

47½ x 43½in. (120 x 110cm.)

Executed in 1965

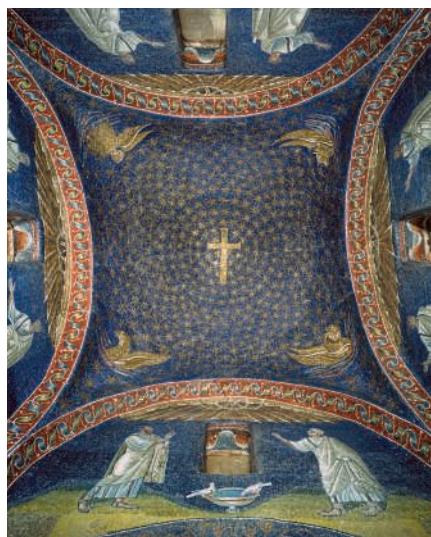
£200,000-300,000

\$270,000-390,000

€220,000-330,000

'The *teatrini* were a type of "realistic Spatialism". Also little bit in the fashion of these Pop Art things... but still in my way. They were forms that Man imagines in space'

LUCIO FONTANA



Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna
Photo: © A. Dagli Orti/Scala, Florence

PROVENANCE:

Iolas Gallery, New York.

M. Karamidinos Collection, Athens.

Anon. sale, Sotheby's London, 30 November 1995,
lot 198.

Private Collection, Switzerland.

Anon. sale, Christie's London, 21 June 2007, lot
241.

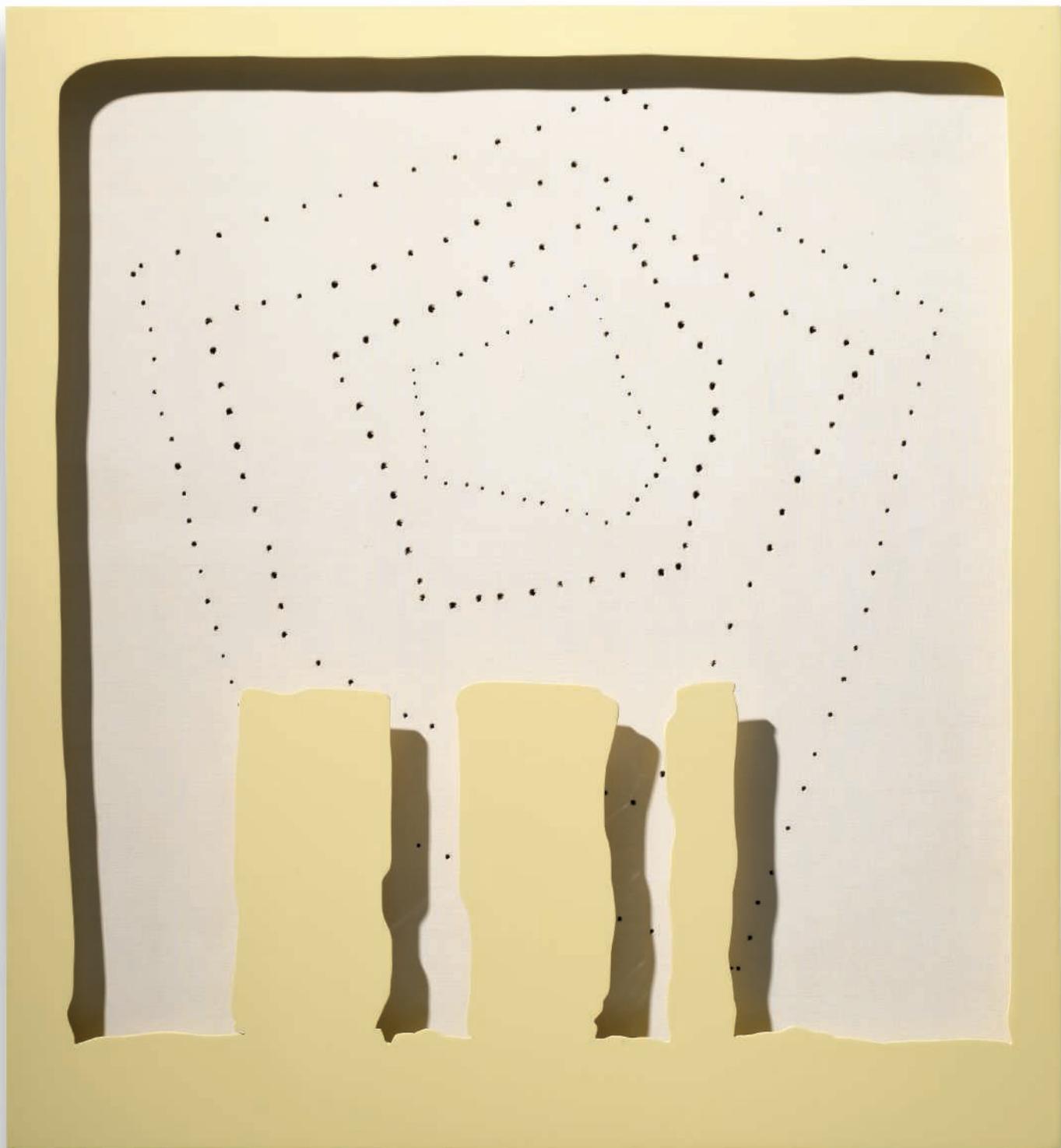
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *Lucio Fontana*, 1972, no. 199
(illustrated, p. 246).

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environnements spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. I, no. 65 TE 30 (illustrated, p. 92); vol. II, no. 65 TE 30 (illustrated, p. 170).
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo Generale*, Milan 1986, vol. II, no. 65 TE 30 (illustrated, p. 597).
E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. II, no. 65 TE 30 (illustrated, p. 784).



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION, PARIS

λ 122

ALBERTO
MAGNELLI (1888-1971)

La persiana verde (The Green Shutter)

signed and dated 'A. Magnelli 1914' (lower right); signed, dated and inscribed 'MAGNELLI "LA PERSIANA VERDE" FIRENZE 1914' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

27½ x 21½in. (70.1 x 55.1cm.)

Painted in Florence in 1914

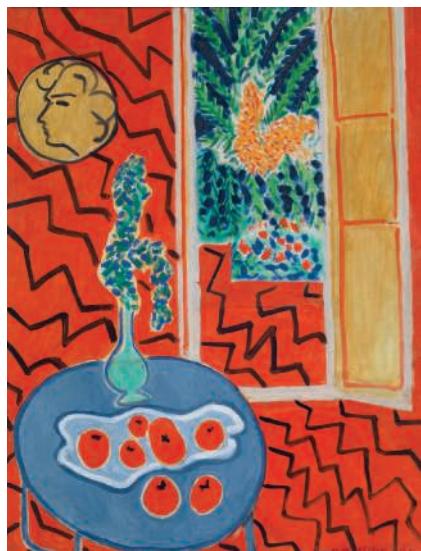
£180,000–250,000

\$240,000–330,000

€200,000–270,000

'I think that a certain amount of colour, not on its own but next to others, glows and shines as if it were breaking up in a divisionist sense. Therefore the coldness that can appear is only valuable if it is separated, and disappears whenever we manage to unite all the colours of painting in the retina, in other words, in the gaze'

A. MAGNELLI



PROVENANCE:

The artist's estate.

Philippe Daverio, Milan.

Private collection, Paris, by whom acquired from the above in the late 1970s.

LITERATURE:

A. Maisonnier, *Alberto Magnelli, L'œuvre peint, catalogue raisonné*, Paris 1975, no. 110, p. 67, (illustrated p. 66).

Henri Matisse, *Red interior: Still Life on a Blue Table*, 1947. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf.

Photo: © Bridgeman Images.

Artwork: © Succession H. Matisse / DACS 2017.





Alberto Magnelli, *L'ovale violet*, 1914. Galleria d'arte moderna, Florence.
Photo: ©BI, ADAGP, Paris/Scala, Florence. Artwork: © DACS 2017.

Painted in 1914, *La persiana verde* emerged during one of the most fruitful and important periods in the artistic career of Alberto Magnelli, as he began to absorb the revolutionary styles of his Italian and French contemporaries and adapt them to his own unique idiom. Executed in bold swathes of vibrant, unmodulated colour, the composition focuses on a typical domestic scene, as a vase of flowers sits alongside a window, its bright red blossoms bathed in light, their crimson forms punctuating the dark interior of the room. The unusual, a-symmetrical nature of the composition, in which the green shutter that gives the title occupies a large portion of the right hand side of the canvas, creates the impression that the scene has been captured in passing, as if the artist has come across the view while out walking and committed it to his memory. The manner in which Magnelli reduces the scene to a series of simplified forms and angular planes prefigures the trailblazing abstraction that he was to develop shortly after, as his painting began to reach new levels of complexity and richness following his exposure to the breakthroughs of the Parisian avant-garde.

It was during the spring of 1914 that Magnelli, who was based in Florence, travelled to Paris for the first time, joining the poet Aldo Palazzeschi on his trip after a fortuitous meeting on the day the writer was set to leave for the French capital. Recalling their encounter, Palazzeschi described the spontaneity of Magnelli's decision: 'In the very first days of March 1914, one morning I was hastily crossing Tornabuoni Street, where I had gone to do some shopping in anticipation of a journey I was undertaking that day. Thus I met the dear Alberto Magnelli, whom I had known since childhood (...) "I am going to Paris. I take the train today, at 3 o'clock." I was indeed going to join my friends Papini and Soffici (...) Carrà was also there, and Boccioni was soon to go. (...) Magnelli looked me straight in the eyes, all beaming, and planting his feet on the ground as if he wanted to glue himself there, he

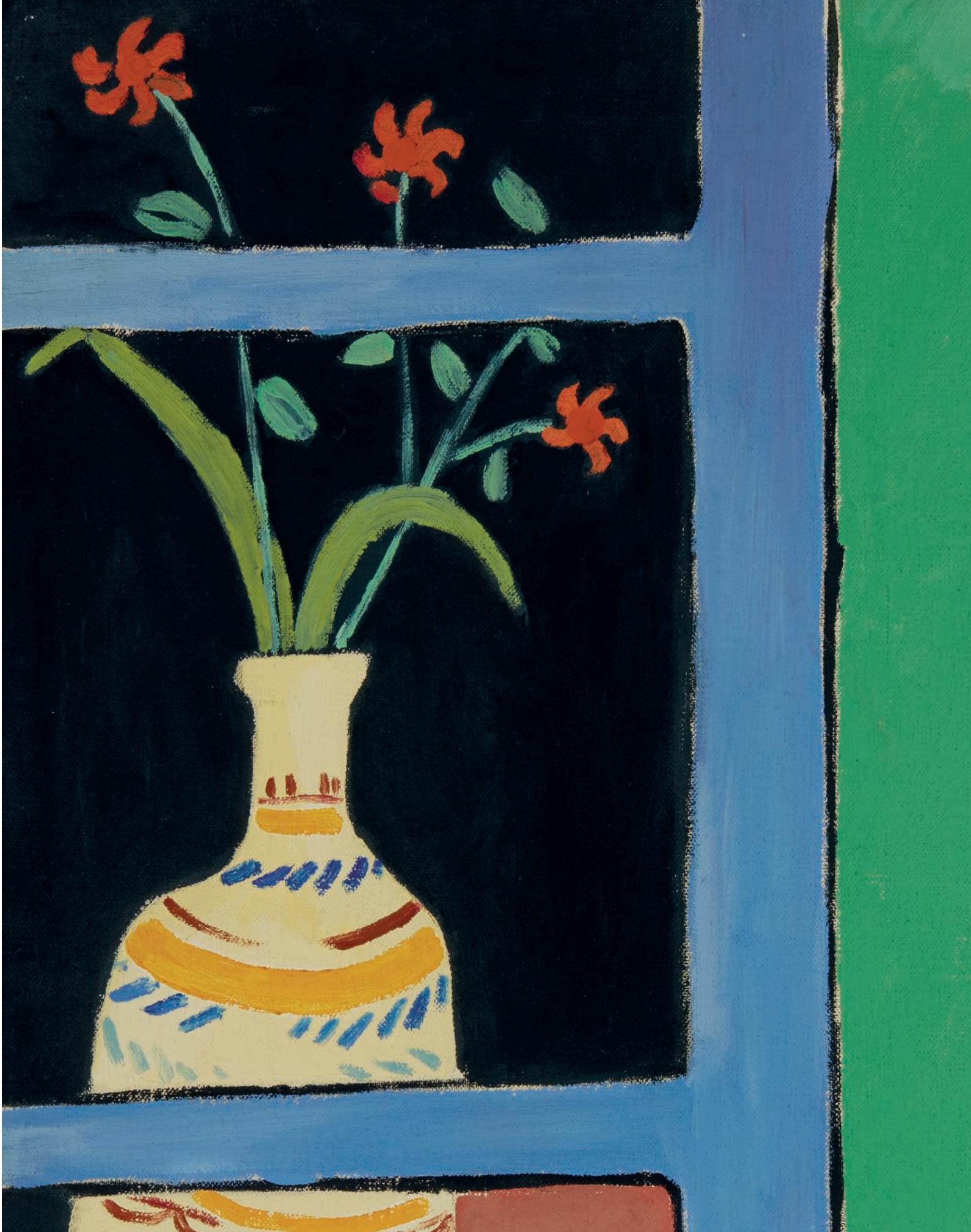
'We were all so impatient to show our presence to the world and to transplant our old country at the heart of the spiritual modern movement'

ALDO PALAZZESCHI

resolutely declared: "I'm coming too." "And how are you going to prepare for this trip? Me, I'm ready." "Do not worry, I'll take care of it. See you at three o'clock at the station." I felt it so resolute that I hastened after him, reminding him "Think of the tuxedo!" Without turning around, as he ran, he nodded his head in agreement' (A. Palazzeschi, quoted in *Magnelli*, exh. cat., Paris, 1989, pp. 173-174).

Magnelli's enthusiasm for Paris was driven in part by his readings of Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger's publication *Du Cubisme* (1912), as well as Guillaume Apollinaire's *Les Peintres Cubistes* (1913), both of which detailed the groundbreaking developments occurring in the city's avant-garde art scene, their black and white reproductions of works by the titans of Cubism inspiring Magnelli to develop a greater sense of geometry within his own painting. Upon arriving in Paris Magnelli and Palazzeschi were immediately absorbed into the lively artistic circles of Montparnasse, finding accommodation on the Rue de la Grande-Chaumière. Surrounded by fellow artists at their new abode, the pair were exposed to some of the greatest thinkers and painters of the period, including Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, Juan Gris and Alexander Archipenko. Magnelli also became closely acquainted with Apollinaire, who became an admirer and advocate of the artist's works. It was through Apollinaire that Magnelli met Henri Matisse, whose emphatic use of colour and approach to form throughout his career exerted an important influence on the young Italian's work. The pair also shared a profound interest in the possibilities of the genre of the still-life, a subject which would continue to occupy Matisse throughout the rest of his career, emerging in later compositions such as *Red Interior: Still Life on a Blue Table* (1947). Magnelli's trips to the Salon des Indépendants, meanwhile, introduced him to the works of Archipenko, Sonia and Robert Delaunay, as well as a number of early examples of Giorgio De Chirico's uniquely poetic paintings, all of which would prove essential to his evolution as an artist.

La persiana verde is one of a series of still-lifes Magnelli created in the immediate aftermath of his visit to Paris, after he had returned to Florence but while his experiences of the French capital were still fresh in his mind. Combining elements of the Futurist, Fauvist and Cubist compositions he had seen on his journey, these works also demonstrate the growing complexity of Magnelli's own personal style, as he absorbed these radical new artistic languages and adapted them to his own techniques. By reducing the objects in *La persiana verde* to almost abstract, geometric forms, Magnelli creates a multi-layered composition that plays with notions of three-dimensional space and perspective, while the vibrancy of his colours and extreme planarity of his forms echo the bold pigments which dominated the work of the Fauves. The six weeks that Magnelli spent in Paris may have been brief but, as is evident from the present composition, they provided him with an incredible amount of inspiration and momentum. Although his plans to move to Paris to pursue his artistic career were derailed by the outbreak of the First World War, which left the artist stranded in his native Florence, the experience allowed Magnelli to forge his own, personal response to the incredible artistic changes of the times and develop an exciting aesthetic all of his own.



λ 123

MARINO
MARINI (1901-1980)

Giochi d'immaginazione
(*Games of the Imagination*)

signed and dated '1951 MARINO' (lower right); signed and dated again

'MARINO MARINI 1951' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

82½ x 51in. (209.5 x 129.5cm.)

Painted in 1949-1951

£400,000-600,000

\$530,000-780,000

€440,000-650,000

'Painting, for me, depends on colour, which takes me further and further away from real form [...] The emotion that colours awake in me, that is to say the contrast of one colour with another, or their relationship, stimulates my imagination much more than does the materialization of the human figure if I have to rely on pictorial means alone'

M. MARINI



Man and horse jumping a fence, 1887.
Photograph by Eadweard J Muybridge.
Photo: Scala Florence/Heritage Images.

PROVENANCE:

Acquired directly from the artist.

Galerie Rosengart, Lucerne.

Willy Macchiati, Milan, by whom acquired from the above in 1961.

Private Collection, Italy.

Anon. sale, Farsettia Prato, 2 December 2006, lot 828.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Rome, Palazzo Venezia, *Mostra di Marino Marini*, 1966, no. 45, p. 38 (illustrated pl. VII, p. 83; with incorrect dimensions and dated '1951').

LITERATURE:

F. Russoli, *Marino Marini: Paintings and Drawings*, London 1965, no. 20, p. 181 (illustrated, p. 70; with incorrect dimensions and dated '1949').

A.M. Hammacher, *Marino Marini: Sculpture, Painting, Drawing*, London 1970, no. 140, p. 321 (illustrated, p. 140; with incorrect dimensions and dated '1951').

H. Read, P. Waldberg & G. di San Lazzaro, *Marino Marini: Complete Works*, Milan 1970, no. 60, p. 400 (illustrated, p. 401; with incorrect dimensions).

G. Ruggeri, *Io sono un etrusco: Marino Marini*, Bologna 1978, p. 19 (titled 'Grande dipinto', dated '1949' and with incorrect dimensions). L. Papi & E. Steingräber, *Marino Marini: Paintings*, Johannesburg 1989, no. 111, p. 293 (illustrated, p. 55; with incorrect dimensions and dated '1949').





Franz Marc, *Der Turm der blauen Pferde*, 1912.
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich.
Photo: © Scala, Florence/bpk, Bildagentur für Kunst,
Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin.

Created between 1949 and 1951, the bright, colourful forms of the riders in Marino Marini's *Giochi d'immaginazione* (*Games of the Imagination*) evoke a sense of playfulness and vitality as they emerge dramatically from the dark background which threatens to envelop them. This composition was conceived during a period in which the theatre and the circus had become central motifs within the Marini's painterly œuvre, a fascination which manifested itself in depictions of parades, dancers and acrobats. He revelled in the inherent spectacle of processions and ceremonies, and sought to translate a sense of this pageantry into his compositions. Indeed, *Giochi d'immaginazione* is imbued with a sense of the illusionary - the imaginary game of the title, most likely played by the group of children who sit astride the horse, provide an insight into the limitless potential of the human mind to dream, imagine and construct scenarios from nothing.

As Marini himself explained, his painterly experiments were intrinsically linked to the evolution of his sculptural projects: 'I have always needed to paint and I never begin a sculpture before having inquired pictorially into its essence' (Marini, quoted in L. Papi, *Marino Marini*, Pistoia, 1979, p. 30). Unlike Marini's sculptures from this period, however, which cast their riders in the perilous position of being unseated by their mount, the figures at the heart of *Giochi d'immaginazione* sit proudly atop the towering, majestic form of their horse, their bodies united with its sculptural, muscular form. Several faces can be seen in the swirl of colour which hovers above the body of the horse, suggesting that a group of people have joined together in this game.

'The taming of the wild horse marked a definite stage in the evolution of human civilization. But such symbolism apart, the horse, by its animal form... is in itself a thing of beauty that naturally appeals to the artist... Marini, in selecting this animal as a subject, is showing a predilection as old as art itself. It is all the more amazing, therefore, that he should have given a new treatment to the subject'

H. READ

The relationship between horse and rider remains imbued with a sense of stability, radiating a calm, classical restraint with no sense of danger or fear, a feeling reflected in the title, which suggests a light-hearted, playful context. There is a distinct focus on the architecture of the horse's form, its towering legs and powerful torso placed front and centre within the composition, its well defined, almost cubist body dominating the composition, as it stands strong and firm, safely ferrying its boisterous riders to their destination.

While painting allowed Marini to explore the forms of his sculptures before committing to their three-dimensional realisation, its place in his creative process is perhaps more important for the freedom it offered him to explore the relationship between form and colour. 'Painting for me depends on colour, which takes me further and further away from real form,' Marini explained. 'The emotions that colour awake in me, that is to say the contrast of one colour with another, or their relationship, stimulates my imagination much more than does the materialization of the human figures if I have to rely on pictorial means alone' (Marini, 'Thoughts of Marino Marini,' in G. di San Lazzaro, *Homage to Marino Marini*, New York, 1975, p. 6). Through his experiments with different pigments, hues and tones in his paintings, Marini began to develop a new appreciation for form and space, for the play of light and shadow, and for the ways in which subtle shifts in texture could affect our perception of the finished work.

While Marini's art remains firmly rooted in the figurative, the sheer energy of the brushwork perhaps reflects the effects of his recent exposure to the New York art world, where he had exhibited for the first time in 1950. This large, vibrant, energetic metropolis came as a revelation to the artist, and its spirit soon permeated his paintings. The increased scale of this work, for example, along with the visceral, sensuous application of paint, echoes the compositions of the Abstract Expressionists, which captivated the New York art critics during this period. Discussing this aspect of his work, Edward Trier has written: 'If Marini [...] combines coloured geometrical shapes with the graphic diagram of a rider, or simply invents a non-figurative "composition" out of interlocking areas of colour, his handwriting nevertheless remains unmistakable even in abstraction. It is the same tension between static and dynamic, between architectonically firm and mobile dancing forms, that raises the bold, confidently placed areas of colour above the level of decoration to that of expression' (E. Trier, *The Sculpture of Marino Marini*, London, 1961, p. 22). Indeed, while Marini may have been inspired by the works he encountered in New York, absorbing a certain sense of atmosphere and approach to materials from the Abstract Expressionists, Marini's aesthetic remained distinctly individual and personal.



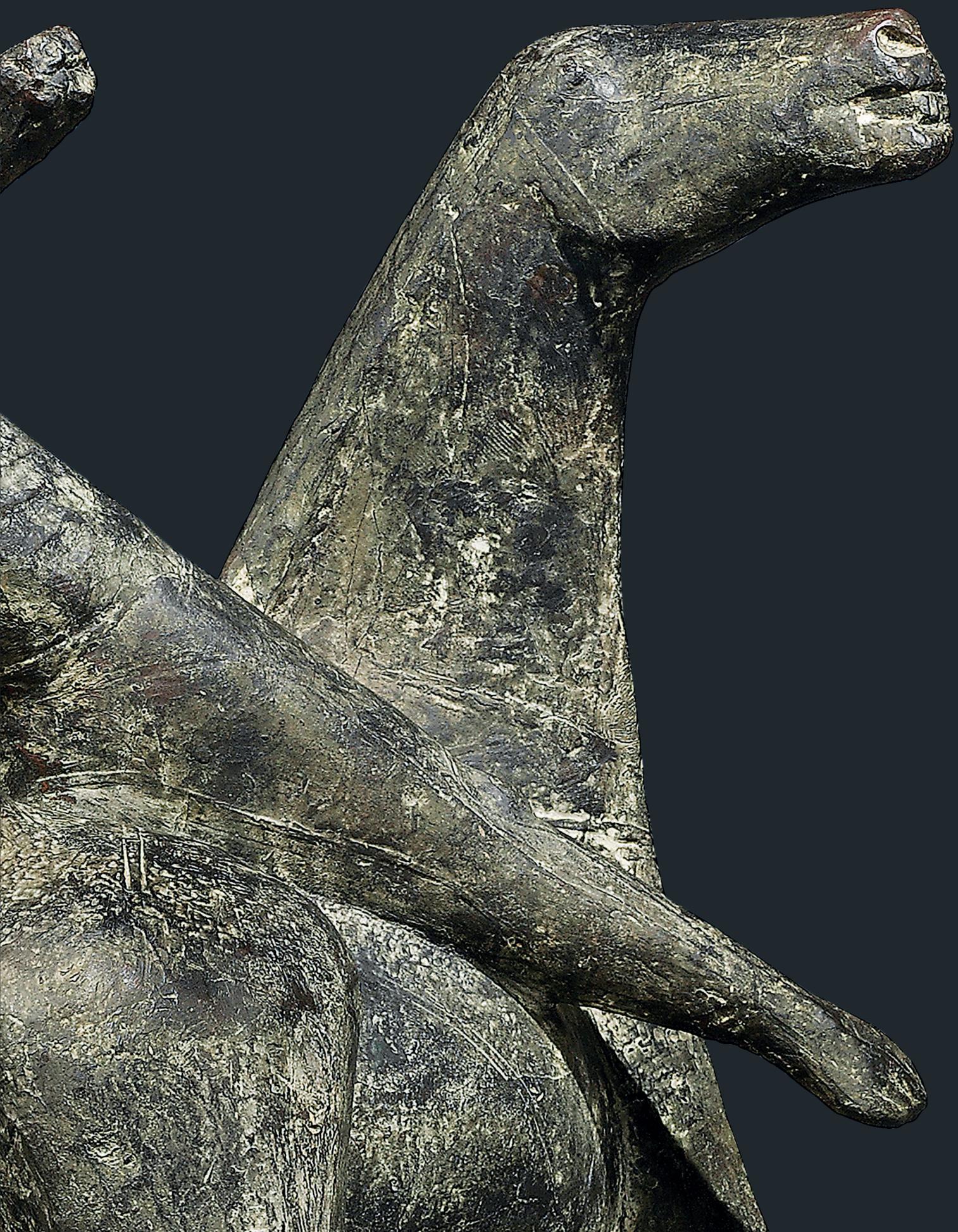
Marino Marini in his studio, 1965.
Photographer unknown.

marino
MARINI



'My own work has followed a general trend in its evolution, from representing a horse as part of the fauna of the objective world to suggesting a visionary monster arisen from a subjective bestiary'

M. MARINI



PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF BRUNO MASI

λ 124

MARINO
MARINI (1901-1980)

Cavaliere (Rider)

stamped with the initials 'M.M' (on the top of the base)

bronze with dark brown patina with green undertones

Height: 39¾in. (101cm.)

Conceived in plaster in 1952 and cast in bronze in an edition of eight;
this example cast by 1976

£2,000,000-3,000,000

\$2,700,000-3,900,000

€2,200,000-3,300,000

**'The horseman and the horse, in my latest works, have become
strange fossils, symbols of a vanished world, or rather of a work
which, I feel, is destined to vanish forever'**

M. MARINI

PROVENANCE:

Bruno Masi, by whom acquired directly from the artist in November 1976, and thence by descent to the present owner.

LITERATURE:

H. Fuchs, *Marino Marini: Il Miracolo*, Stuttgart 1961 (another cast illustrated, pl. 8; dated '1953').

E. Trier, *The Sculpture of Marino Marini*, London & Stuttgart 1961 (another cast illustrated, pp. 71-73).

Mostra di Marino Marini, exh. cat., Palazzo Venezia, Rome 1966, no. 53, p. 39 (another cast illustrated fig. 33; with incorrect edition size).

A.M. Hammacher, *Marino Marini: Sculpture, Painting, Drawing*, London 1970, no. 174, pp. 174, 322 (detail of another cast illustrated, p. 175; with incorrect edition size).

H. Read, P. Waldberg & G. di San Lazzaro, *Marino Marini: Complete Works*, Milan 1970, no. 296, p. 367 (another cast illustrated, p. 368).

C. Pirovano, *Marino Marini scultore*, Milan 1972, no. 298 (another cast illustrated, p. 164).

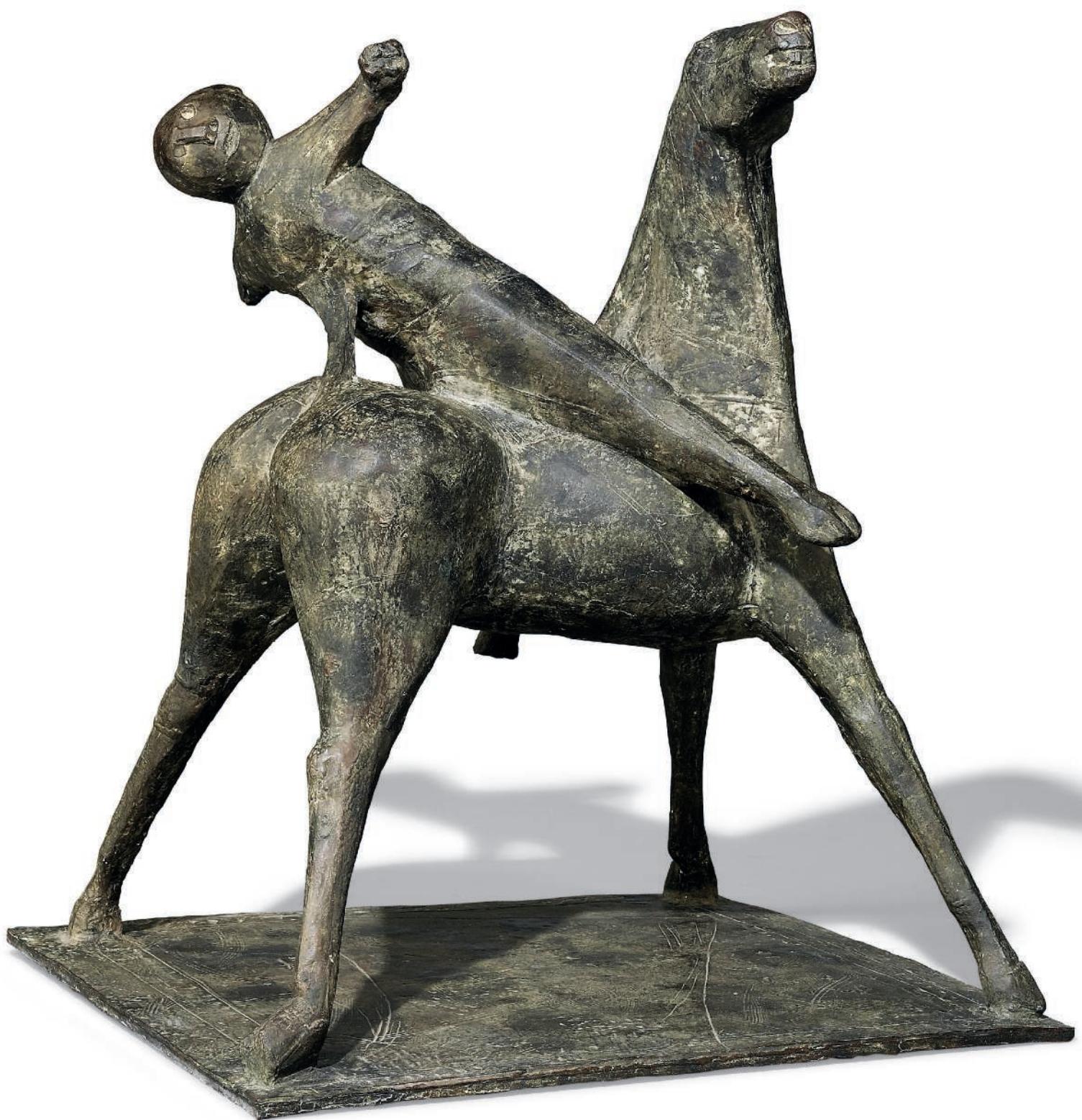
Marino Marini, exh. cat., National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo 1978, no. 56, p. 110 (another cast illustrated on the cover and p. 110).

S. Hunter, *Marino Marini: The Sculpture*, New York 1993, p. 67 (details of another cast illustrated on the frontispiece; illustrated, pp. 66-70).

Marino Marini Mitografia: sculture e dipinti, 1939-1966, exh. cat., Galleria dello Scudo, Verona 1994, no. 20, p. 78 (another cast illustrated on the cover and pp. 79, 81).

M. Meneguzzo, *Marino Marini: Cavalli e cavalieri*, Milan 1997, no. 74 (another cast illustrated, p. 224). Fondazione Marino Marini (ed.), *Marino Marini: Catalogue Raisonné of the Sculptures*, Milan 1998, no. 375b, p. 263 (another cast illustrated, p. 262).

The Marino Marini Foundation has confirmed the authenticity of this work.





Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.

Photo: © Art Resource/Scala, Florence/John Bigelow Taylor.

Artwork: © Succession Picasso/DACS, London 2017.

'Developments in the post-war world soon began to disappoint me, and I no longer felt any such faith in the future. On the contrary, I then tried to express, in each one of my subsequent equestrian figures, a greater anxiety and a more devastating despair...'

M. MARINI

Conceived in 1952, *Cavaliere (Rider)* explores one of Marino Marini's most iconic themes – the precarious relationship of a rider and his horse, captured in the moment the rider loses his hold and the power balance between the two shifts dramatically in favour of the beast. This impressive, striking sculpture evokes the spirit of crisis and climax that came to dominate Marini's œuvre following the end of the Second World War, as the realities of life after the conflict and the threat of a nuclear war extinguished, the hope the artist had originally felt in the immediate aftermath of the cessation of hostilities. Cast in bronze and subsequently hand chiselled by the artist, *Cavaliere* exudes a raw and expressive intensity, as the bared teeth of the horse and the panicked expression of the rider powerfully evoke a sense of anguish and despair.

The rider being thrown by its horse was a new and dramatic development in Marini's art which emerged during the second half of the 1940s – only a few years earlier, the artist's riders had sat proudly and steady upon their steeds, joined in a mystic union with their horse that spoke of tradition and stability, a model of heroism and authority. Marini's first studio in Monza was located near a large livery stable, and offered the young artist ample opportunity to study, draw and model the forms of the horses which lived there. It was through these experiences that Marini first mastered the curves and contours of his equine models, creating classically inclined, volumetric forms that harkened back to the sculptures of antiquity. Inspired by the rich historical and cultural landscape of his birthplace, Pistoia, Marini embraced

the art of the Etruscans, whose paired-back, essential modelling of forms left an indelible mark on his artistic imagination. Describing this connection with the ancient art of his homeland, Marini explained: 'My identity was born there, in that region. Those are my grandfathers. It's a civilization that still today surfaces on the ground, something that still feeds those who are alive. I feel extremely attached to my land, to this folk, archaic feeling so alive and intelligent. It's in my blood, I cannot get rid of it' (Marini, quoted in M. de Micheli, 'Una scultura fra natura e storia', pp. 13-22, in *Marino Marini, sculture, pitture, disegni dal 1914 al 1977*, exh. cat., Venice, 1983, p. 16).

The horse and rider had still been a traditional sight during Marini's childhood, widely used in transport, farming and industry. However, as the century progressed, the animals were rendered obsolete by developments in modern technology and swiftly disappeared from these roles. For Marini, the theme was a fundamental symbol of life in the modern age: 'The entire history of humanity and of nature exists within the figure of the horse and rider, in every era. As a child, I observed these beings, man and horse, and they were a question mark to me. In the beginning there was a 'harmony' between them, but in the end, in contrast to this unity, the world of the car arrived, a world which captured it in a dramatic, but no less vital and vitalising manner' (Marini, quoted in L. Papi, *Centro di documentazione dell'opera di Marino Marini*, Livorno, 1979, pp. 29-30). In response to this decline, Marini's sculptures began to symbolise the breakdown of this ancient tradition, illustrating this rupture in the bond between man and





Side relief of a stone cippus, 6th-5th Century BC.

Museo Civico Archeologico, Sarteano.

©Photo Scala, Florence - courtesy of the Ministero Beni e Att. Culturali e del Turismo.

horse in ever more dramatic and disturbing ways. Whereas previously, his horses had been strong, but manageable creatures, accompanied by equally impressive riders, in the post-war period they became increasingly agitated and wild, their forms imbued with an intense energy, their relationship with man marked by discord and tension. As the artist explained, 'By the end of the war, realism gave way to the tragic spirit' (Marini, quoted in *Marino Marini: The Sculpture*, New York, 1993, p. 196).

In *Cavaliere*, we witness a crucial moment in the evolution of the theme, as the horse appears to turn against its rider. The rider is infected with a distinct sense of distress, the extreme extension of his limbs capturing the terror he feels as his balance is compromised. He clings precariously to the horse's back with both legs, flinging his arms straight out in a desperate attempt to stay upright. The taut architectonic positioning of the horse, meanwhile, suggests that it has stopped mid-gallop, and that it is the force of this sudden stoppage that has caused the rider to become unseated. With its legs elongated and fully outstretched, splayed in front of its body in an almost pyramidal form, there is a clear parallel between the rigid, taut tension of the horse's body and that of his rider, both of them fully extending their limbs as they fight for control. Echoing the scream of the dying equine figure at the heart of Picasso's *Guernica*, Marini's horse twists its neck back towards the rider, baring its teeth and flaring its nostrils, perhaps preparing to howl in agony, anger or resistance. The rider, his head thrown back, his eyes tossed skywards, suddenly becomes helpless, completely at the mercy of the horse and the laws of gravity. Transformed from the master of the beast to the helpless, imperiled passenger, unable to save himself from an inevitable fall, the rider comes to symbolise what Marini felt was the fate of mankind in the troubled post-war era.

Discussing this shift in his approach to the subject of the *Cavaliere*, Marini explained: 'My equestrian figures are symbols of the anguish that I feel when I survey contemporary events. Little by little, my horses become more restless, their riders less able to control them. Man and beast are both overcome by a catastrophe similar to those that struck Sodom and Pompeii. Far from being heroic, my works of the last twelve years seek to be tragic' (Marini, quoted in E. Roditi, *Dialogues: Conversations with European Artists at*

Mid-Century, San Francisco, 1990, p. 88). In *Cavaliere*, Marini communicates these feelings with an extraordinary sense of dramatic power - the extreme tension that fills his figures seems to radiate from their bodies, overwhelming the viewer with an intense sense of unease. As he continued to explore the theme throughout the 1950s, the actions of the horses and riders became gradually more perilous, more anguished, their forms increasingly angular and stylized, their features distorted in unfiltered expressions of fear and terror. However, rather than mere monuments to the end of world, Marini believed his sculptures could prompt those who encountered them to a new understanding of the world around them, increasing their awareness of the potential peril of the situation which had been created by the rise of nuclear weapons. Through this heightened awareness, the artist hoped to unite his viewers in a common search for change. By transforming the heroic image of the horse and rider into an expression of fear, danger, and helplessness, Marini succeeded in turning a seemingly obsolete image into a compelling, powerful symbol of the bewildering disquiet of life in the aftermath of the Second World War.

The bronze surface of *Cavaliere* is wrought with the intricate marks of the artist's tools, a delicate interplay of faint lines, grooves, sections of hatching, and incisions that fill the sculpture with a sense of texture, and a raw and expressive energy. Enlivening the surface of the bronze, these marks attest to Marini's complex and unusual artistic process - the artist often continued to work on his sculptures for an extended period after their original casting, attacking the surface of the bronze with his chisel to add a new sense of texture, light and shade to his forms. These marks, along with rich patinas applied to the metal, create the suggestion of an aged, worn material which has survived across centuries, an intriguing counterpoint to the streamlined aesthetic of modern machine-made goods and a reference to the Etruscan and Roman sculptures of Marini's homeland.

The present cast of *Cavaliere* is a recent discovery, previously unknown to scholars of Marini's work. Bruno Masi, a close friend and important supporter of the artist, acquired the sculpture directly from Marini in 1976. The work has since remained in the same family, and appears today for the first time on the market.



Alternate view of the present lot.

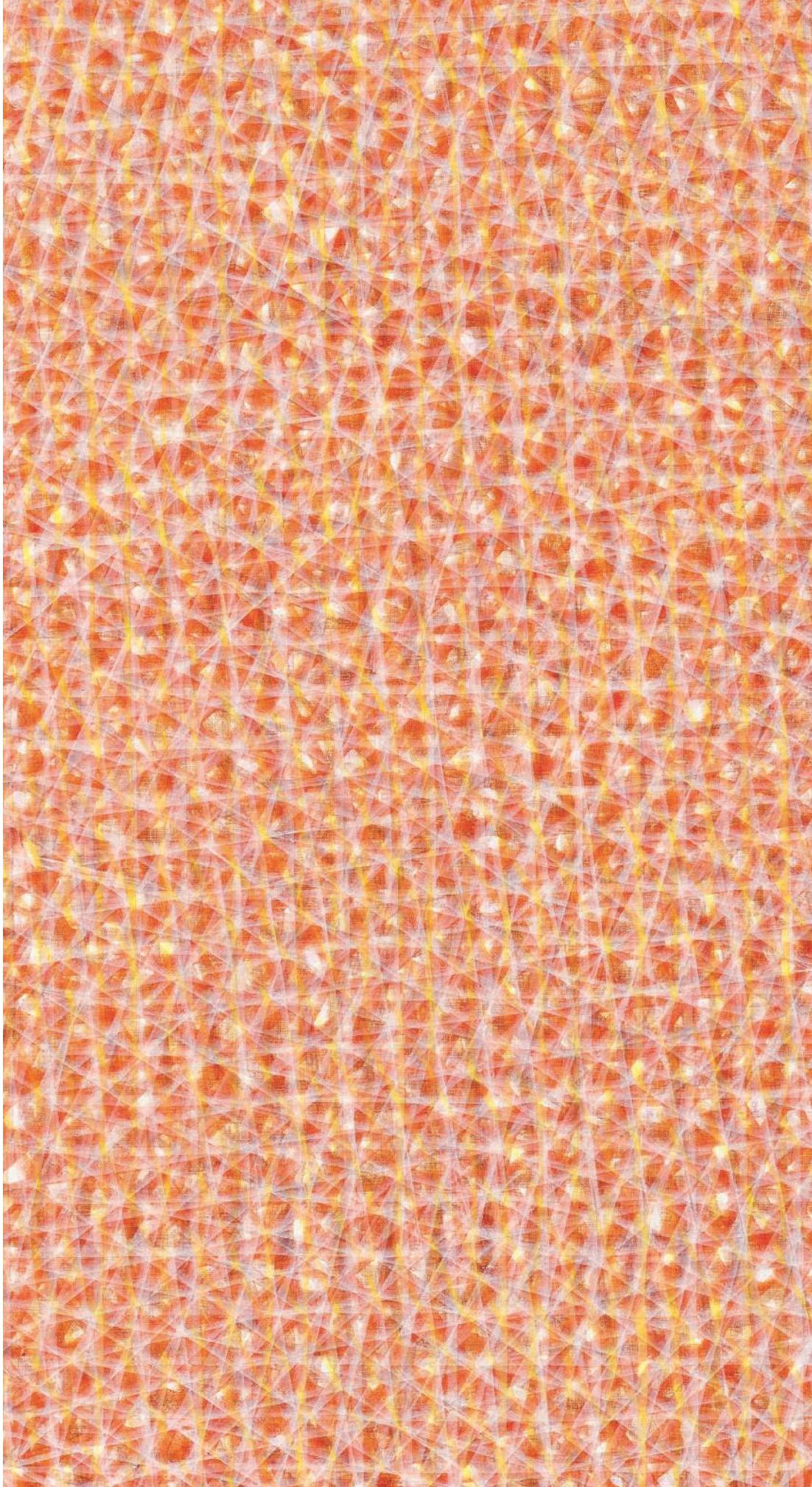


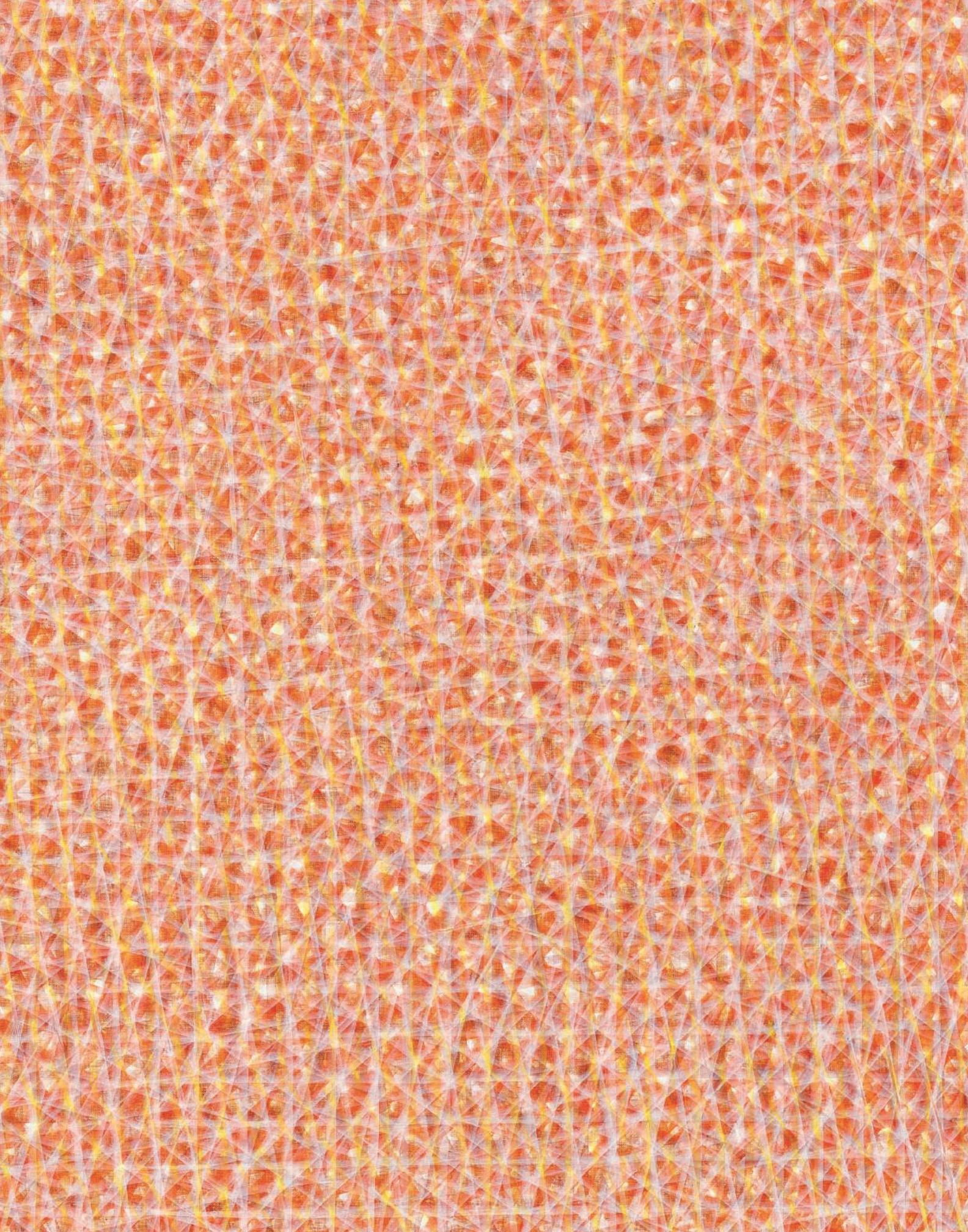
Il cavaliere Marino Marini on his horse, 1852.
Photograph by Herbert List.
Photo: © Herbert List/Magnum Photos.
Artwork: © DACS 2017.

piero
DORAZIO

"The surface of a canvas is a surface of two dimensions, and from that surface we make an optical phenomenon, we create an image that produces in the observer a sensation, an emotion, from all of which arises successively a problem, a reasoning, a thought, an idea, let us say in fact a mode of thought and of the spirit; if we do that, then we are in presence of art'

P. DORAZIO AND G. TURCATO





λ* 125

PIERO
DORAZIO (1927-2005)

Il Rosso di Sotto (The Red Beneath)

signed, titled and dated 'Piero Dorazio Il Rosso di Sotto 1961' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

31½ x 39½in. (81 x 100cm.)

Painted in 1961

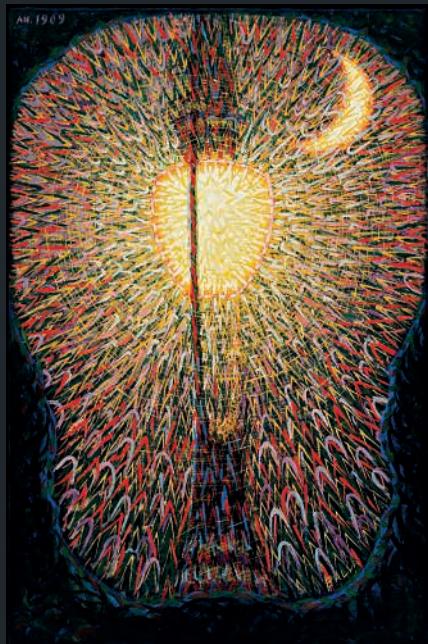
£100,000-150,000

\$140,000-200,000

€110,000-160,000

'Pictorial experience is by its nature tied to the perception of space through the sensation of 'colour' (light) and 'form' (drawing and composition), which introduce in the observer the special characteristics as well as the formal and chromatic physiognomy of the image'

P. DORAZIO



Giacomo Balla, *Street Light*, 1909. Hillman Periodicals Fund. Acc. n.: 7.1954.
The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York.
Artwork: © DACS 2017. Photo: © 2017. Digital image,
The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence.

PROVENANCE:

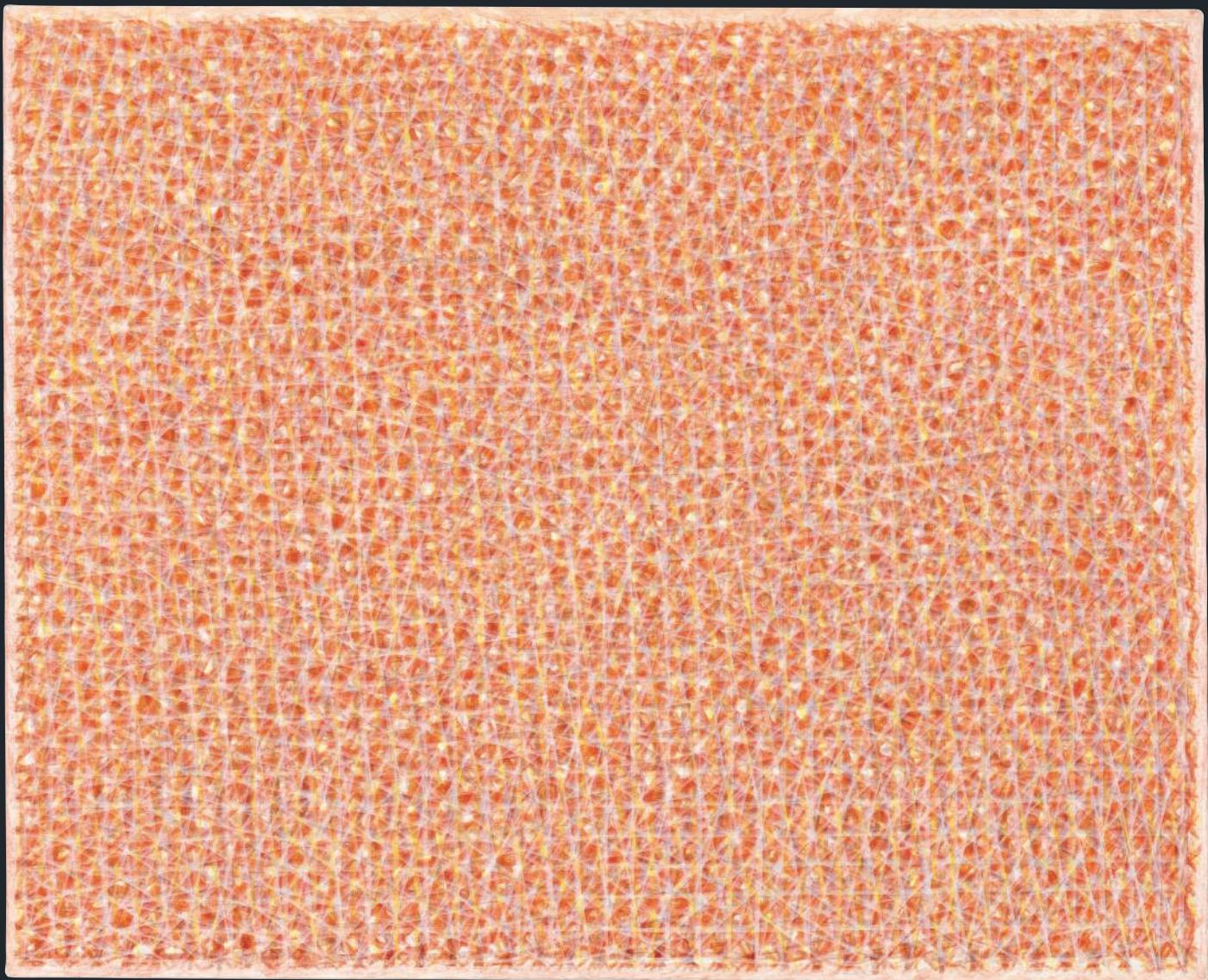
Vismara Arte Contemporanea, Milan.
Galerie Springer, Berlin.
Private Collection, New York.
Acquired from the above by the present owner.

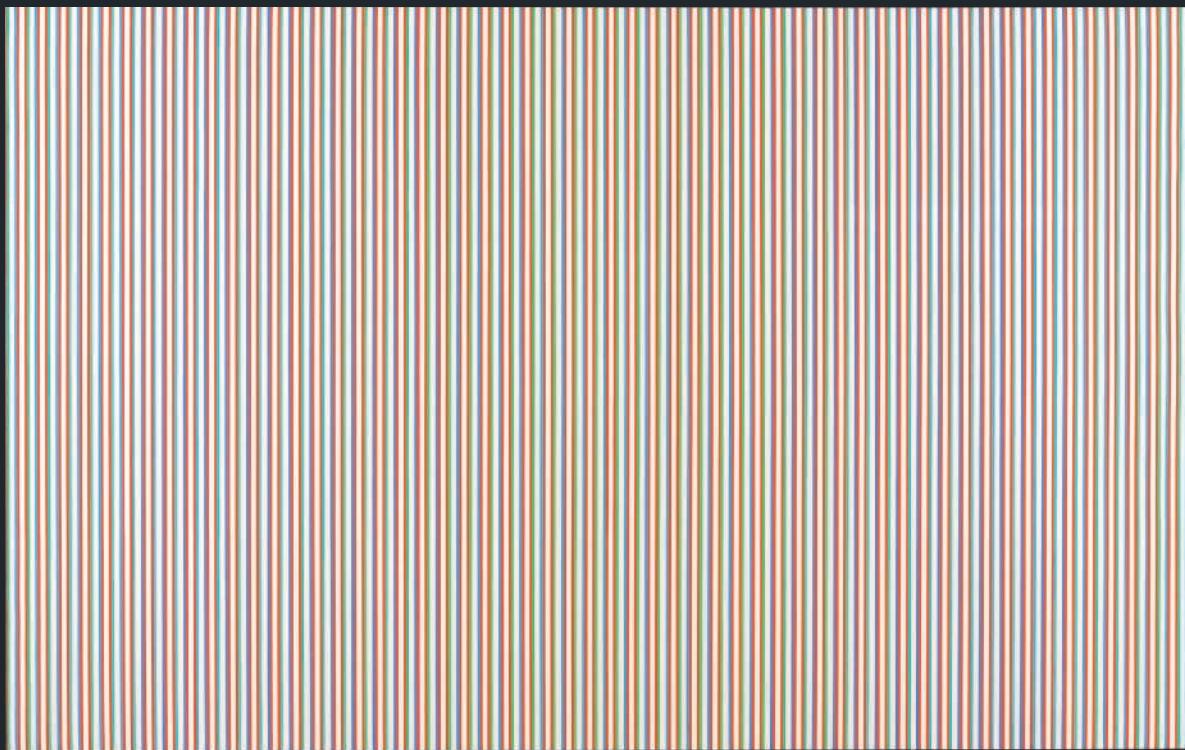
EXHIBITED:

Florence, Galleria Quadrante, *Piero Dorazio*, 1962
(illustrated, unpaged).
Milan, Galleria dell'Ariete, *Piero Dorazio*, 1962.
Zurich, Galerie Suzanne Bollag, *Piero Dorazio*, 1962 (illustrated, unpaged).
New York, Moeller Fine Art, *Zero in Vibration – Vibration in Zero*, 2014-2015.

LITERATURE:

G. Ungaretti, *Piero Dorazio*, St. Gallen 1976, no. 16
(illustrated, p. 53).
M. Volpi Orlandini, *Dorazio*, Venice 1977, no. 503
(illustrated, unpaged).





Bridget Riley, *Late Morning*, 1967-8. Tate Britain, London.
Artwork: © Bridget Riley 2017. All rights reserved.
Photo: © Tate, London 2017.

'I would like not to reproduce but to reinvent the structure of light in a way pertinent to painting rather than to optics'

P. DORAZIO

For Piero Dorazio, the genius of the Futurists remained the bench-mark for Italian artists working in the Post-War period. He had rediscovered the art of Giacomo Balla following the Second World War, and actively sought out the renowned painter in Rome in 1950. Recalling their first meeting, Dorazio wrote: 'It so happened that, one day in March of that year [1950], while out walking with the sculptor Edgardo Mannucci, as the first lukewarm sun caressed Rome, we noticed a little white-haired man seated on a small wall of the garden behind Castel Sant'Angelo. Tugging on my jacket, Mannucci told me: "Look! See there, he's Balla!" And so we approached to greet the Master painter.... Thereafter, we went visiting him several times at his "Futurist Home", located in Via Oslavia. With the help of his daughters, we looked for the paintings of his "heroic" years and we found there a lot of them, rolled up into packages and stored on a mezzanine in the kitchen. We opened them, and what a surprise! His forgotten Futurist masterpieces were there: "Compenetrazione iridescente", "Mercurio passa davanti al sole", "Velocità d'automobile più luce più rumori", "Pessimismo-ottimismo". (Dorazio, 'Tre foglie d'oro per le figlie di Balla,' in *Rigando Dritto: Piero Dorazio Scritti 1945 - 2004*, ed. M. Mattioli, Milan, 2005, p. 139). He visited the artist's

studio often, studying his paintings and sketchbooks first hand, discussing the theories, techniques and history of the Futurist movement with Balla and developing a close relationship with the painter and his family. These experiences left an indelible impression on Dorazio, and he remained a devoted follower and supporter of Balla for the rest of his life.

Painted in 1961, *Il Rosso di Sotto* echoes the dynamism of Balla's Futurist compositions, as Dorazio uses an abstract interplay of lines to explore the perceptual phenomenon of light. Using red as a base pigment, the artist layers a seemingly infinite series of delicate, thin lines over one another to create an intricate web of overlapping ribbons of pure colour. The result is a kaleidoscopic, vibrating mass of lines, which appears to oscillate before the viewer, the bars of colour shifting and moving before the eye, vibrating towards and away from the front of the canvas as they overlap and converge on one another. Modulating the density and thickness of the lines and gradually altering their orientation to one another, Dorazio plays with the sensations of vision, imbuing his abstract composition with a sense of life and velocity.



Piero Dorazio in his studio, Rome, 1959.
Artworks: © DACS 2017.
Unknown photographer.

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(Lots 126-130)



PROPERTY OF AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

λ 126

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Testa di Medusa (Head of Medusa)

signed 'I. Fontana' (on the base); incised with the artist's initials and date

'48/L.F.' (on the underside)

glazed ceramic

10 1/2 x 14 1/2 x 12 1/2 (27.5 x 36.5 x 32 cm.)

Executed in 1948

£250,000-350,000

\$330,000-460,000

€280,000-380,000

'I think Matter is important to the evolution of art, but the artist must control it, it is what the artist uses for his new creation, but the important thing, the most important thing is the Idea...'

L. FONTANA



PROVENANCE:

G. Tirroni Collection, Genoa.

D. Pantergnani Collection, Padua.

Amadeo Porro Arte, Milan.

Acquired from the above by the present owner
in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Amedeo Porro arte moderna e
contemporanea, *Carriera "barocca" di Fontana*,
2004-2005 (illustrated in colour, p. 385).

Mantova, Palazzo Ducale, *Segni di Fontana
scultore*, 2007, no. 51 (illustrated in colour, p. 175).
This exhibition later travelled to Rome, Galleria
Nazionale d'arte moderna.

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di
sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. I,
no. 48 SC 20 (illustrated, p. 213).

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Medusa*, 1598.

Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Photo: Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy /
Bridgeman Images.





Willem de Kooning, *Head #3*, 1973. Art Institute of Chicago.
Artwork: © 2017 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York and DACS, London.
Photo: © 2017. The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY/ Scala, Florence.

Executed in 1948, *Testa di Medusa* emerged during a period of intense experimentation in Lucio Fontana's career. Fontana had spent most of the Second World War in Argentina, where the seeds of the Spatial Movement had been sown. This was an art of movement, of dynamism, which would eventually lead the artist to break away from figuration and embrace a futuristic simplicity of forms. 'Man is tired of the forms of painting and sculpture,' he declared in the *Manifesto Blanco*, a treatise penned in conjunction with a group of avant-garde artists in 1946, for whom Fontana was something of a figure head. 'The oppressive repetitions show that these arts have stagnated in values that are extraneous to our civilization, and have no possibility of development in the future... we abandon the practice of all the forms of known art, we commence the development of an art based on the unity of time and space' (*Manifesto Blanco*, 1946, in E. Crispolti and R. Siligato (eds.), *Lucio Fontana*, exh. cat., Rome, 1998, p. 116). Fontana envisioned an art which truly reflected the modern epoch in which he was living, one which embodied the speed and energy of a world governed by machines, where rockets had attained speeds hitherto inconceivable and space travel was rapidly becoming a possibility. He returned to Milan in 1947 with a radical new artistic outlook, entering a critical phase of creativity which would lay the foundations for the future evolution of his art. Sculptures such as *Testa di Medusa* may thus be seen as important transitional works, representing the earliest manifestations of Spatialism in Fontana's art, as he began to experiment fully with the concepts and theories that were then absorbing his artistic thinking.

'[the] Baroque was a leap ahead...it represented space with a magnificence that is still unsurpassed and added the notion of time to the plastic arts. The figures seemed to abandon the flat surface and continue the represented movements in space'

L. FONTANA

Elegantly combining the Art Deco aesthetics of his pre-war works with the burgeoning character of his revolutionary Spatialist theories, the Medusa of the title appears in a whorl of movement, her hair filled with a vivid sense of swirling motion as its tendrils snake outwards into space. The manner in which the serpentine fronds spiral from the bulk of the head appears reminiscent of images of the Milky Way or anthropomorphic depictions of the sun, their twirling forms stretching into the immediate space of the sculptor, introducing a deeper dialogue between the sculpted head and its surroundings. Echoing the iconography of ancient mosaics, sculptures and frescoes that surrounded the artist in Italy, Fontana's Medusa stares defiantly out at the viewer, her face contorted in a wail of pain as she falls victim to the cunning trickery of the heroic demi-god, Perseus. Yet, there may be some degree of knowing irony on Fontana's part in his choice of subject matter, as he imbues Medusa, a monster famous for her ability to petrify anyone foolish enough to look at her, with such an energetic sense of life and movement.

One of the most striking aspects of *Testa di Medusa* is the rich sense of materiality in the sculpture, emphasised in the miniature peaks and troughs of the highly-articulated surface, which trace the movements of the artist's hands as they moved across the material, shaping and modelling the wet clay to create the dramatic form of his fearsome gorgon. After years of painstaking labour working in marble and bronze, Fontana had moved decisively away from these traditional materials in the 1930s, preferring to use plaster and clay as they allowed him to rapidly mould shapes into being in a more direct manner. Fontana greatly appreciated the ease and immediacy afforded by these malleable media, as well as the greater sense of tactility they instilled in his works. As Fontana explained, 'People called my ceramics primeval. The material looked as if it had been hit by an earthquake, yet it was motionless' (Lucio Fontana, 'La mia ceramica,' in *Tempo*, 21 September 1939). They also allowed him to explore the nature and meaning of the artistic gesture, a concept which would remain central to his art throughout the rest of his life.

In this way, the gestural, dynamic and dramatic rendering of the sculpture highlights one of the central influences which underpinned Fontana's Spatialist theories at this time: the art of the Baroque. For Fontana, the way in which Baroque artists represented expressive movement through space – concepts central to his own Spatialist programme – was unparalleled. Their techniques and approach to forms fascinated him throughout his career, and the heightened sensuality and sumptuousness of many of his works can be traced back to their examples. His passion for the art of this period is evidenced most clearly in the development of his *barocchi*, a series that Fontana began in the mid-1950s. Vigorously modelled in bold, multifaceted relief, *Testa di Medusa* comes alive under Fontana's touch, the animated play of light and shadow across its surface beautifully illustrating how the artist used the central tenets of the Baroque aesthetic to forge his own unique, abstract vision.



Lucio Fontana in his ceramics studio.
Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.
Unknown photographer.

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λ 127

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale

incised with the artist's signature and date 'I. Fontana 59' (lower centre)

painted terracotta

12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (32.6 x 45.5cm.)

Executed in 1959

£60,000-80,000

\$79,000-100,000

€66,000-87,000

**'Man is tired of the forms of painting and
sculpture. The oppressive repetitions
show that these arts have stagnated
in values that are extraneous to our
civilization, and have no possibility of
development in the future'**

L. FONTANA

PROVENANCE:

Erna & Curt Burgauner Collection, Küsnacht.

Kunstmuseum, St. Gallen.

Private Collection.

Anon. sale, Sotheby's Milan, 24 May 2006,

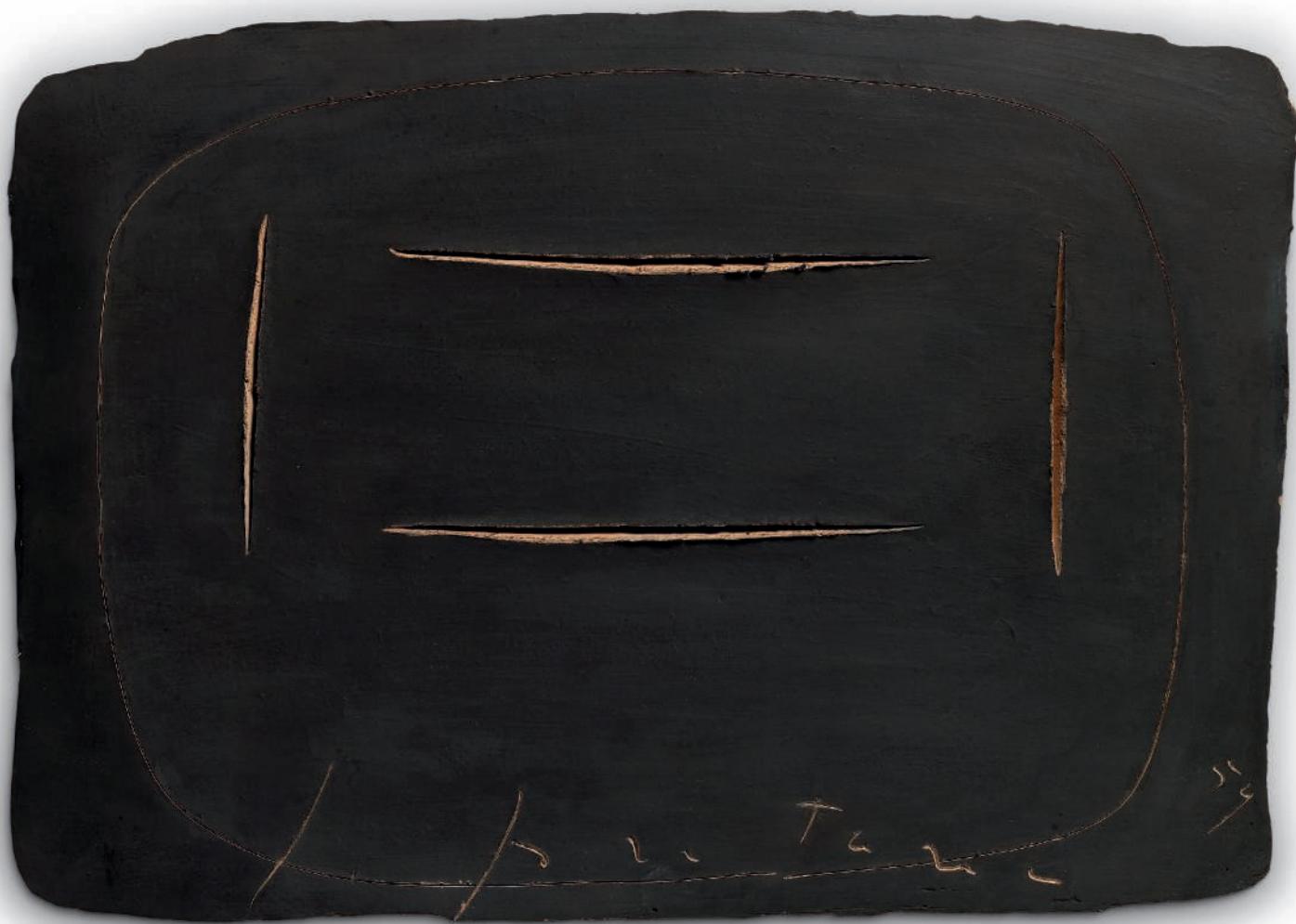
lot 343.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

This work is registered in the Archivio Lucio

Fontana, Milan, under no. 1900/151, and is

accompanied by a certificate of authenticity.



PROPERTY OF AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

λ 128

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale

signed 'l. fontana' (lower right); signed, titled and dated 'l. fontana Concetto Spaziale 1953' (on the reverse)

oil and coloured glass stones on canvas

8½ x 13in. (21.5 x 33cm.)

Executed in 1953

£300,000-500,000

\$400,000-650,000

€330,000-550,000

'If any of my discoveries are important, the 'hole' is. By 'hole' I meant going outside the limitations of a picture frame and being free in one's conception of art. A formula like 1+1=2. I did not make holes in order to wreck the picture. On the contrary, I made holes in order to find something else...'

L. FONTANA



Aerial view of the standing stones of Callanish.

PROVENANCE:

E. Nathan Rogers Collection, Milan.

Barbiano di Belgiojoso Collection, Milan.

Studio Gian Ferrari, Milan.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2006.

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. I, no. 53 P 36 (illustrated, p. 263).







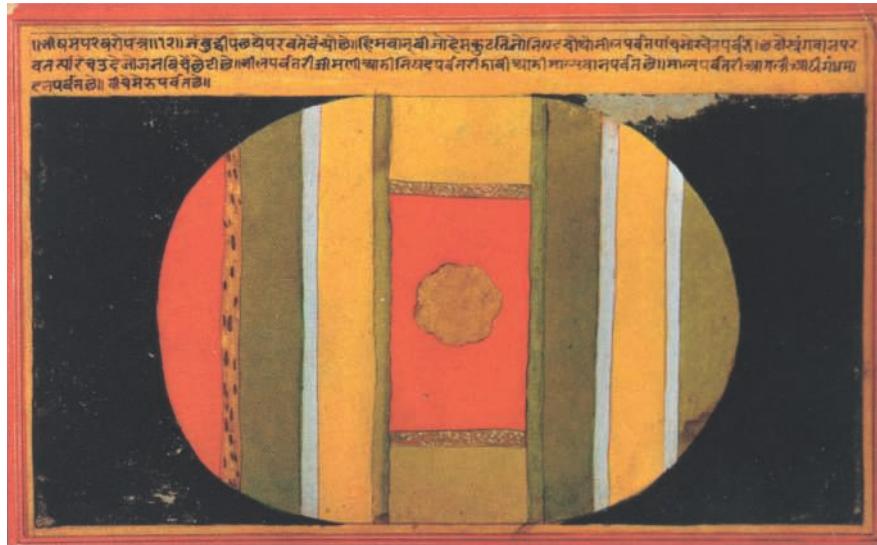
In Lucio Fontana's *Concetto spaziale*, a progression of gleaming glass 'stones' forms a progression across a red canvas that has been punctured by a ring of small holes. *Concetto spaziale* was created in 1953 and forms part of the group of works known as the *Pietri*. These were works in which Fontana explored deceptively complex interactions of space and light, echoing on a more domestic scale the monumental architectural projects that also occupied him for so much of his career. It is only fitting that *Concetto spaziale* was formerly in the collection of his friend, the prominent Milanese architect Ernesto Nathan Rogers.

By the time that *Concetto spaziale* was created in 1953, Fontana had become one of the fulcrums of Italian cultural life. He had returned from his native Argentina, where he had spent most of the years of the Second World War, reinvigorated, filled with new ideas surrounding the concept of 'Spatial Art.' Using his new-found positivity, his love of technology and his embrace of the future, Fontana helped spearhead some of the initiatives that saw Milan leap into a pole position in the worlds of art, architecture and design. This would result in some of Fontana's large-scale projects—for instance the ceilings that often incorporated electric light, piercings and mouldings, resulting in complex interplays of light and matter. These are the same factors that drive *Concetto spaziale*: the coloured glass that articulates the red surface creates a play of shadows and reflections that contrasts with the voids punched into the canvas itself, emphasising the three-dimensionality of the work, but also its ability to change. After all, a shift in the light or the movement of a viewer can alter the way that light falls and bounces off the work.

Fontana had already been piercing the picture surface in his works since the late 1940s, challenging received notions of the supposedly flat picture plane. The addition of glass elements was an innovation that Fontana had introduced only two years before *Concetto spaziale* was made. Within a short time, Fontana appeared to have a system, even down to supply: Pia Gottschaller mentions two slightly discrepant accounts of sources of glass from Murano (see P. Gottschaller, *Lucio Fontana: The Artist's Materials*, Los Angeles, 2012, p. 38). Fontana would be sent bulk packages of fragments and off-cuts of clear and coloured glass, some of which remained unused in his studio. Photographs show that Fontana would sometimes use a hammer to break these pieces of glass down into smaller fragments for incorporation in his works (see *ibid.*, p. 39).

The interplay between the space of the hole, the opacity of the red canvas and the translucent gleam of the glass, results in a dynamic appearance that is only heightened by the elegance of the composition. In *Concetto spaziale*, Fontana has heightened the contrast between the elements by separating and juxtaposing them—with the horizon-like sequence of glass 'stones' and the ovoid group of holes. There is a hint at figuration, as though this were perhaps an island, or even a constellation, with worlds hanging among the stars. In both this tantalisingly-inscrutable iconography and its use of glass, *Concetto spaziale* prefigures the 1961 series of 'Venice' pictures that Fontana created, in which this iconography exploded in large square canvases often decorated with metallic paint.

Fontana was fascinated by the concepts of rockets, space flight, and they appear to have informed the pared-back aesthetic that drives this picture. When he discussed the 'Spatial Art' that he had pioneered, its references to Space were both the tiny slivers of it captured within the holes in the canvases of works such as *Concetto spaziale* and also the vast expanse of the cosmos itself. For Fontana, 'Spatial Art' had a conceptual dimension—it was the ephemeral gesture by which he ruptured the canvas that was the artwork, in a sense, or indeed that new sliver of space itself. In 1947, Fontana signed the first *Spatial*



Fertilised World Egg, Rajasthan, 18th Century.

'I was born in Rosario de Santa Fe sul Paraná, my father was a good sculptor, I wanted to be a sculptor, I would have liked to be a painter, too, like my grandfather, but I realised that these specific art terms are not for me and I felt like a Spatial artist. That's exactly it'

L. FONTANA

Manifesto, which he had largely written. 'We plan to separate art from matter, to separate the sense of the eternal from the concern with the immortal,' it declared. 'And it doesn't matter to us if a gesture, once accomplished, lives for a second or a millennium, for we are convinced that, having accomplished it, it is eternal' (Signed by Fontana, G. Kaisserlian, B. Joppolo, M. Milani, reproduced in E. Crispolti & R. Siligato, ed., *Lucio Fontana*, exh.cat., Rome, 1998, pp. 117-18). This is the driver behind *Concetto spaziale* and its fellow works: the creation itself, the almost ritualistic moment in which Fontana pierced the canvas or indeed smashed glass and then attached it, cannot be undone, but becomes a part of eternity.

The history of *Concetto spaziale* is itself tied to that first *Spatial Manifesto*. In 1947, its appearance was recounted in the magazine *Tempo*: 'The sculptor Lucio Fontana is launching the Spatial Manifesto in Italy. At a meeting held at the studio of the architect Rogers, chaired by the painter Cesetti, the discussions went on until dawn. It is about an art that will be transmitted in the ether' ('Arte nelle nuvole', *Tempo*, 6-133 December 1947, p. 23, reproduced in A. White, *Lucio Fontana: Between Utopia and Kitsch*, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, 2011, pp. 136-37). By that time, Fontana had collaborated with Rogers, the former owner of *Concetto spaziale*, on a number of occasions. In 1933, Fontana had worked with BBPR, the architecture firm founded by Rogers and his colleagues Gian Luigi Banfi, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgioioso and Enrico Peressutti, to design the *Casa del Sabato per gli Sposi*, which they showed at the 5th Milan Triennale. In 1937, Fontana collaborated with them again, creating four large sculptures for the pavilion dedicated to Italian shipping at the Exposition Universelle in Paris—the same event in which Pablo Picasso presented *Guernica*. Rogers had also written several times about Fontana's ceramics and their place within the domestic and design realms.

In the 1940s, Fontana had reconnected with Rogers in order to help reinvigorate Milan and Italy in the wake of the Second World War. By the time he created *Concetto spaziale*, then, they had known each other for a long time. Rogers was a hugely influential architect—he even helped to inspire his young Italian-born cousin Richard Rogers, now Lord Rogers of Riverside, to choose that vocation. Rogers' influence was repeatedly apparent in the post-war era in particular: as well as teaching, he was editor of *Domus* magazine, and later of *Casabella*.

Rogers had returned to Italy after being interned in Switzerland during the Second World War and become a beacon of hope and positivity, trying to use his influence to reconstruct Milan in a viable way that embraced elements of tradition but also espoused modernity and anticipated the future. Fontana had been working with BBPR the year before *Concetto spaziale* was created, on plans for an unrealised monument to the engineer and inventor Camillo Olivetti, founder of the company that bears his name. Rogers and Fontana would both feature in an anthology exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1954, *The Modern Movement in Italy: Architecture and Design*. A few years before that, in 1951, they had both been among the high-profile speakers at the important conference, the *Primo Convegno Internazionale sulla Proporzione nelle Arti*, alongside such varied figures as Le Corbusier, Max Bill and Rudolf Wittkower. This was an event in which various speakers proposed a return to order of a new kind, intending to base design on an understanding of proportions that owed much to the Renaissance. Fontana's own sense of underlying order is in evidence in the rigorous proportions of *Concetto spaziale*, a picture which thus dates from, and provides an insight into, a period of renewed and frequent contact between these titans of post-war Italy.



Lucio Fontana creating buchi, 1964.

Photo: © Ugo Mulas Heirs. All rights reserved.

Artwork: © Fondazione Lucio Fontana/SIAE/DACS, London 2017.

PROPERTY OF AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

λ 129

LUCIO
FONTANA (1899-1968)

Nudo in piedi (Nude Standing)

incised with the artist's signature and date 'L. Fontana 36' (on the base)

painted plaster and wax

22 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (58 x 18.5 x 20cm.)

Executed in 1936

£100,000-150,000

\$140,000-200,000

€110,000-160,000

'My plastic form is never alien from colour. My sculptures are always polychromatic. Colour and form make up an indissoluble bond, stemming from the same need'

L. FONTANA

PROVENANCE:

Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta, Milan.

Studio Gian Ferrari, Milan.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2004.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Fondazione Lucio Fontana, *Centenario di Lucio Fontana*, 1999 (illustrated in colour, p. 101).

LITERATURE:

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogue raisonné des peintures, sculptures et environments spatiaux*, Brussels 1974, vol. II, no. 36 SC 3 (illustrated, p. 17).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo generale*, Milan 1986, vol. I, no. 36 SC 3 (illustrated, p. 67).

E. Crispolti, *Fontana*, Milan 1999, no. 47 (illustrated in colour, p. 116).

E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana. Catalogo ragionato di sculture, dipinti, ambientazioni*, Milan 2006, vol. I, no. 36 SC 3 (illustrated, p. 165).



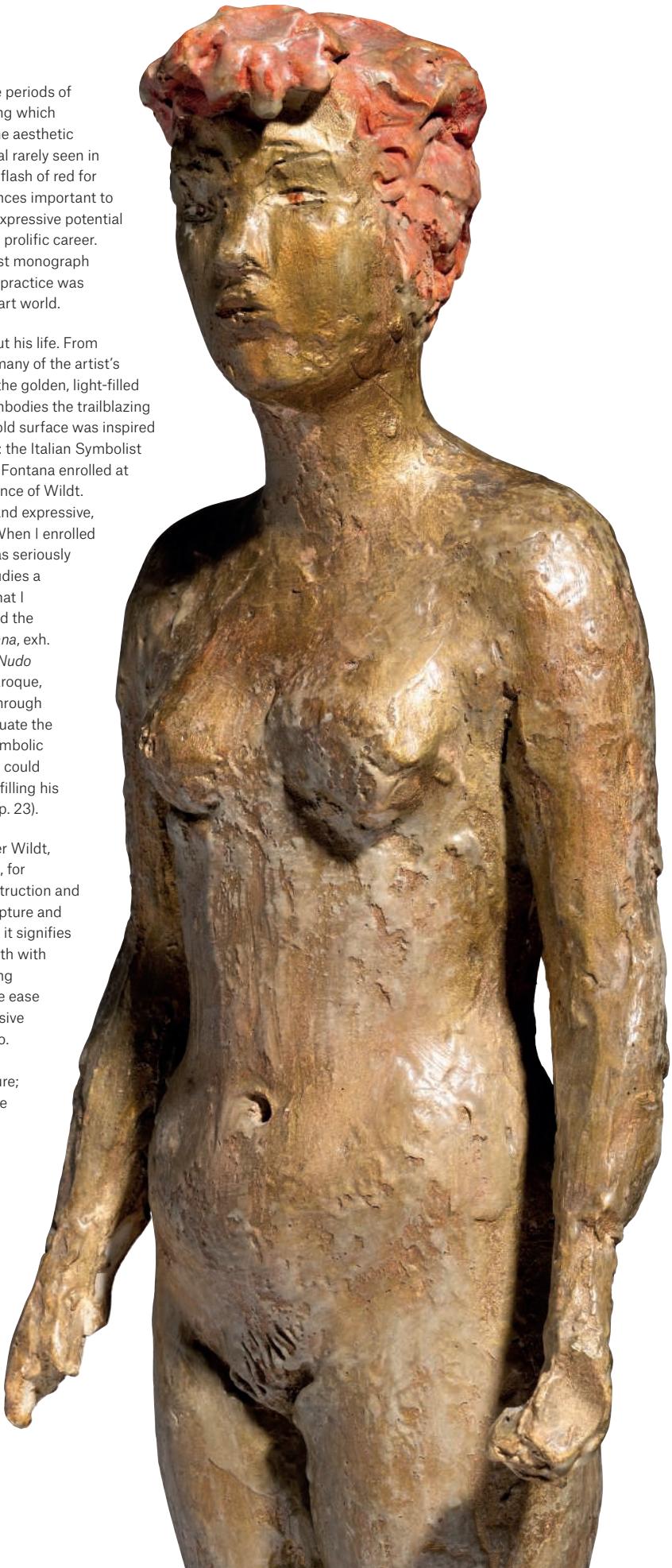
Executed in 1936, during one of the most experimental and formative periods of the artist's early career, Lucio Fontana's *Nudo* dates from a time during which he was exploring both figurative and abstract sculpture, examining the aesthetic potentials of these two styles. Covered with a layer of wax – a material rarely seen in Fontana's oeuvre – and coloured with a luxuriant shade of gold and a flash of red for the figure's hair, this work demonstrates not only the variety of influences important to Fontana at this time, but also his abiding and lifelong interest in the expressive potential of materials, a concept that would guide him throughout his long and prolific career. 1936 was in many ways a breakthrough year in the artist's life: the first monograph on the artist was published at this time, and his innovative sculptural practice was becoming increasingly renowned within the Milanese contemporary art world.

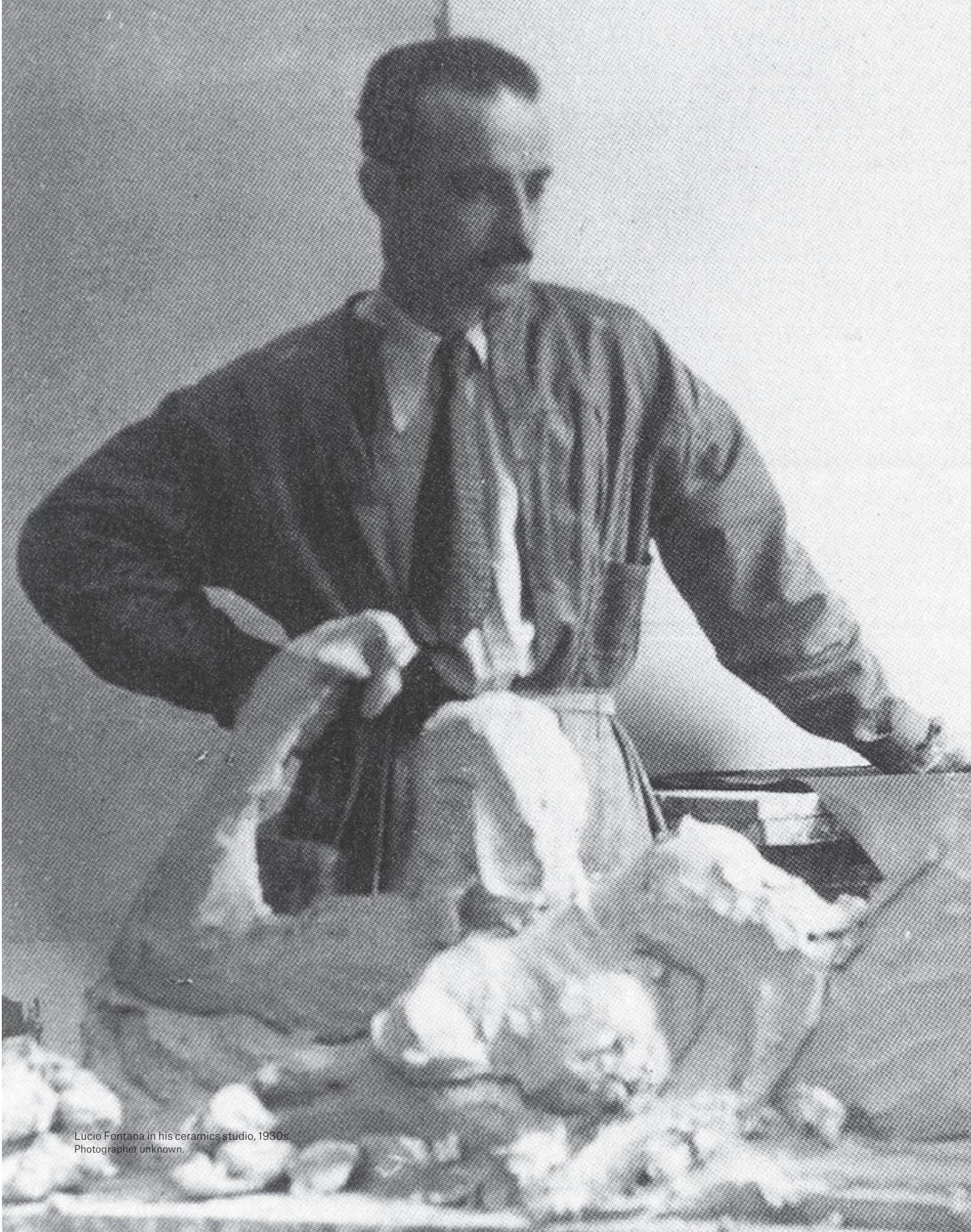
Gold would remain a central component of Fontana's work throughout his life. From the dazzling, Baroque and Byzantine-inspired gold pigment used in many of the artist's famed *Venezie*, to the sleek, astral or futuristic visions conjured with the golden, light-filled surfaces in many of the artist's *Attese*, this evocative metallic tone embodies the trailblazing and innovative nature of Fontana's oeuvre. In the present work, the gold surface was inspired by one of the most important influences on Fontana's early sculpture: the Italian Symbolist sculptor, Adolfo Wildt. On his return to Milan from Argentina in 1927, Fontana enrolled at the Brera Academy, where he studied for three years under the guidance of Wildt. Having worked in the Viennese Secessionist style, Wildt's dramatic and expressive, statuesque marble and gilded busts enthralled the young Fontana. 'When I enrolled in the Academy', Fontana recalled, 'I was twenty-seven. Because I was seriously looking for a radically new way of proceeding, I wanted to give my studies a classical foundation. My guide was a great master, Wildt... I believe that I took possession of his art, to such effect, in fact, that I was considered the best student of my year' (Fontana, quoted in S. Whitfield, *Lucio Fontana*, exh. cat., London, 1999-2000, p. 20). With the addition of the gold chalk, *Nudo* undoubtedly conjures not only the expressive, exuberant art of the Baroque, but also demonstrates the Secessionist influence of Gustav Klimt. Through covering the nude figure with this colour, Fontana was able to accentuate the dynamic, textured surface of *Nudo*, moving beyond the decorative, symbolic qualities of the metallic pigment to explore how this chromatic shade could heighten the figure's presence within space, and at the same time fulfilling his desire to create 'living sculpture like jewels' (Fontana, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 23).

While deriving from the lessons he had absorbed from studying under Wildt, *Nudo* nevertheless represents Fontana's rebellious and radical streak, for though classical in its subject and overall execution, its material construction and textured surface defied the classicising tendencies of traditional sculpture and the prevailing Novecento art movement of the time. Executed in wax, it signifies the artist's rejection of the many years training he had undertaken both with Wildt and previously with his sculptor father. After years of painstaking labour working in marble and bronze, Fontana greatly appreciated the ease and immediacy afforded by a malleable medium, relishing the expressive malleability of wax, as seen particularly in the work of Medardo Rosso. Wax, as well as plaster and clay allowed him to rapidly mould shapes into being and to explore the nature and meaning of the artistic gesture; concepts that would become intrinsic to Spatialism, the movement he founded in 1947 and continued to explore for the rest of his life.

'I was born in Rosario de Santa Fe sul Paraná, my father was a good sculptor, I wanted to be a sculptor, I would have liked to be a painter, too, like my grandfather, but I realised that these specific art terms are not for me and I felt like a Spatial artist'

L. FONTANA





Lucio Fontana in his ceramics studio, 1930s.
Photographer unknown.

ettore
SPALLETTI

‘Yes, the colour, as it shifts, occupies the space and we enter. The frame that delimited the space is no longer there. Taking it away, the colour takes on the space and invades the space. And when this happens, it’s miraculous’

E. SPALLETTI



PROPERTY OF AN IMPORTANT EUROPEAN COLLECTOR

λ 130

ETTORE
SPALLETTI (b. 1940)

Girandola giallo (Yellow Pinwheel)

signed, titled, inscribed and dated '5 'GIRANDOLA GIALLO'

Ettore Spalletti 2006' (on the reverse)

pigment on board

59 x 59 x 1½in. (150 x 150 x 4cm.)

Executed in 2006

£70,000–100,000

\$92,000–130,000

€77,000–110,000

PROVENANCE:

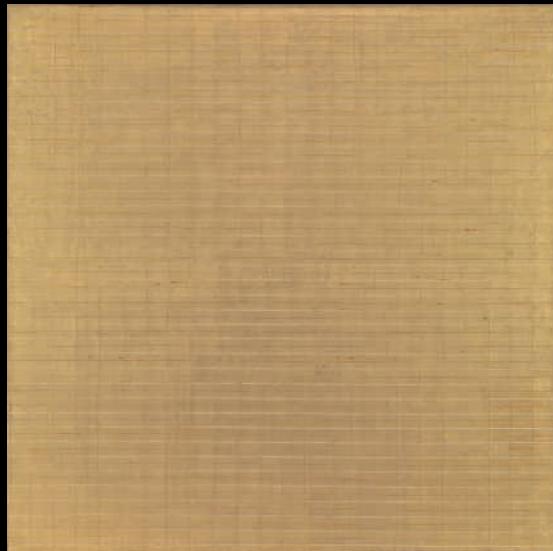
Oredaria Arti Contemporanee, Rome.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

The work is accompanied by a certificate signed
by the artist.

'When you go out on a sunny day, it
seems you have it at your hand'

E. SPALLETTI



Agnes Martin, *Friendship*, 1963. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Artwork © 2017. Agnes Martin / DACS.

Photo: The Museum of Modern Art, New York / Scala, Florence.



‘Yes, the colour, as it shifts, occupies the space and we enter. The frame that delimited the space is no longer there. Taking it away, the colour takes on the space and invades the space. And when this happens, it’s miraculous’

E. SPALLETTI

Emanating an hypnotising aura of luminous warmth, *Girandola giallo* is an example of Ettore Spalletti’s monochromatic painting. Executed in 2006, the work continues to explore a philosophy that has guided the artist throughout his career. Born in 1940, in Cappelle sul Tavo, near Pescara, Spalletti continued to work there throughout his life. The location - although seemingly remote - allowed the artist to meet the Arte Povera group in the 1970s. Jannis Kounellis was a neighbour and Joseph Beuys lived in Pescara for a while. The proximity spurred the artist to interrogate his own artistic outlook. ‘Those were the years of black and white and the colours were those only of the common materials employed’, Spalletti remembers, ‘I myself didn’t know what my colour was like or where I belonged. The only things I knew was that I loved colour’ (E. Spalletti, quoted in C. Turner, ‘How do you capture a colour? Interview with Ettore Spalletti’, *Apollo*, May 2016). And indeed, Spalletti’s art is to be found at the crossroad between ideas that flourished with Arte Povera, and a conception of colour that echoes the revolution of Minimalism, while remaining at the same time, unique to the artist himself.

Embracing the power of the monochrome, *Girandola giallo* seems to return to ideas that had first overwhelmed the art world with the advent of Minimalism. Cleansed from any visible trace of the artist’s presence, the work presents itself as a whole, a self-evident entity freed from any external reference. The thickness of the support, moreover, detaches the painting from the wall, introducing an idea of width which places *Girandola giallo* into the realm of objects, instead of that of surfaces. This idea of the work of art as an independent entity, drawing its power from the physicality of its material, is close to the ideals that had guided Minimalism. Yet, with Spalletti, much of this dimension is expressed through colour. The artist spoke of the ‘genetic affinity of colours’ with a ‘round whole, in which the perimeters unite’, attributing to pure colour ideas of continuous finiteness, integrity and wholeness proper to a sphere (Spalletti, quoted in G. Celant, *Ettore Spalletti. The paradise of the sublime: sculpture and drawings*, exh. cat., Bristol, 1994, p.49). Within this conception, the idea of space is introduced in the monochrome painting, whose surface appears to have gained a metaphysical depth superior to any trick of linear perspective. More than

that, it is a conception of space that extends to the room inhabited by the painting. ‘Inside the rooms, the floor, the ceiling, the walls are white’, explains Spalletti. ‘The paintings bestow colour to the whiteness (...) The intensity of the light diffuses the pigments inside the space of the room, which becomes a transparent volume of colour. I wanted to have the feeling of being immersed in the colour’ (Spalletti, quoted in C. Turner, *Ibid.*).

Yet, despite their affinity to Minimalism, works such as *Girandola giallo* are also nourished by ideas that had crystallised in the works of the Arte Povera group. Devoted to prime materials and their phenomenology in time and space, Arte Povera brought into art an experiential approach to matter. The interaction with the environment, the effect of time on the work and the chemical and physical dynamics created between materials, all became important components of the Arte Povera aesthetics. Although seemingly impersonal, monochrome paintings such as *Girandola giallo* do express some of these ideas, mostly due to the specific working methods adopted by Spalletti. They are indeed born out of a patient and continuous method of layering. The artist explains: ‘I prepare an impasto which contains pigments and chalk. I spread a thin layer of colour each day, almost at the same time [because of the consistency of light], for 15 days or more, depending on the thickness I want to get. In this time you can’t see the final colour, only at the end, when the pigments are dispersed on the surface through abrasion, you discover a totally different colour’ (Spalletti, quoted in Turner, *Ibid.*). The intense chromatic aura of paintings such as *Girandola giallo* is thus due to this slow process of sedimentation through which colour itself is transformed and condensed. One final, unifying gesture, in fact, brings to the surface the density of all the layers, now sublimated into a one glowing shimmer of colour.

It is within the context of these two tendencies, Minimalism and Arte Povera, that Spalletti’s work should be appreciated. As Germano Celant has written: ‘[Spalletti] interrogates himself about the density of primary and elementary forms of volumes and surfaces, while never forgetting the thickening and fluidity, the transparency and elasticity of materials. He therefore tried to place himself on the contact and tangent point between two artistic hemispheres. On the horizon’ (Spalletti, quoted in Celant, *Ibid.*, p. 17). ~CP~

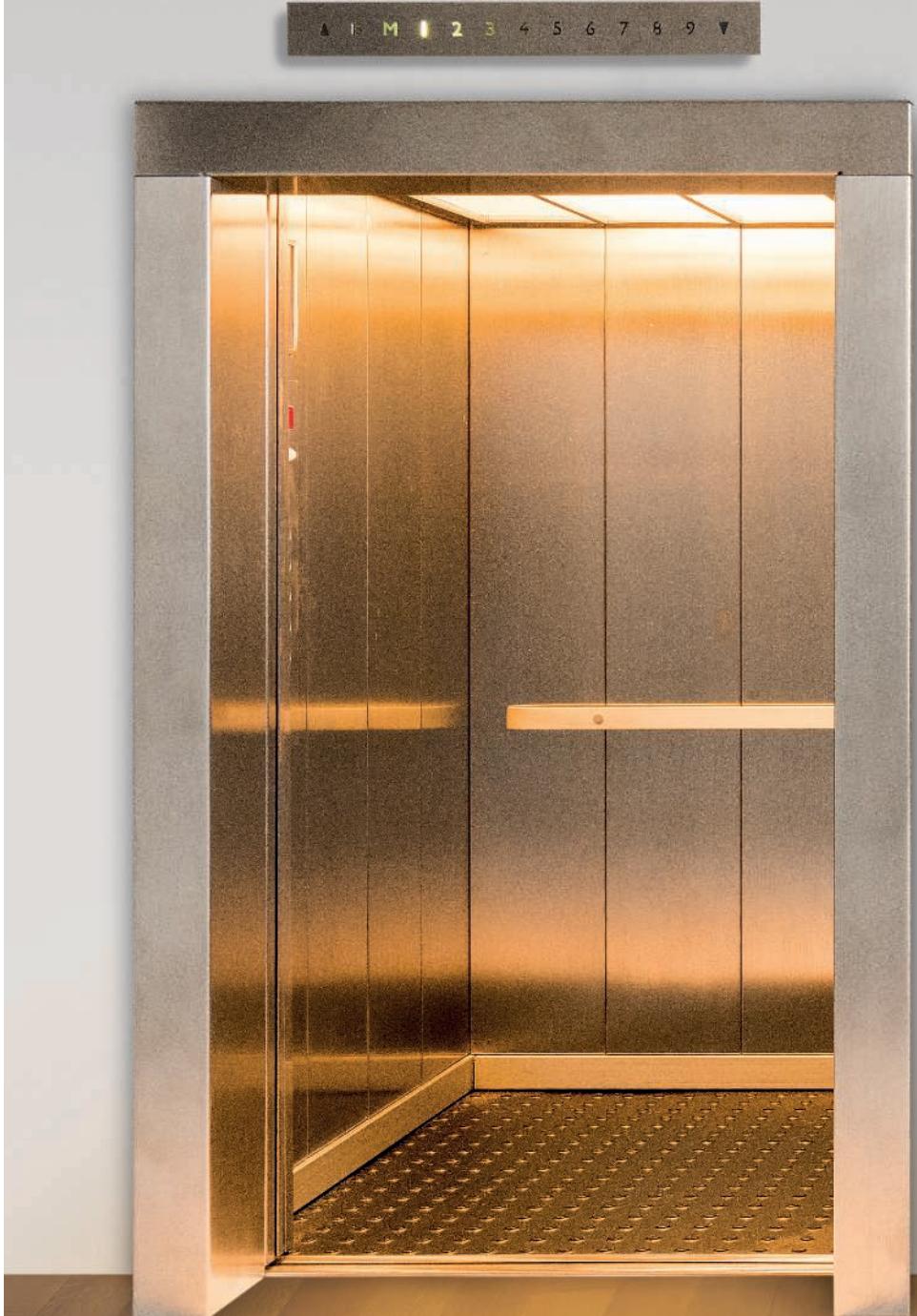


Ettore Spalletti in his studio.
Photo: courtesy Spalletti studio.
© Ettore Spalletti

maurizio
CATTELAN

'I'm really seduced by images that already belong to everybody, very public, basic images, things that have an international language. The more you go basic, the more you are close to icons'

M. CATTELAN



▲ B M 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ▼



PROPERTY OF A DISTINGUISHED ITALIAN COLLECTOR

λ 131

MAURIZIO
CATTELAN (b. 1960)

Untitled

stainless steel, wood, electric motor, light, bell and computer

elevators: 13¾ x 22 ¾ in. (34.9 x 59.3 cm.)

overall: 23½ x 33 ½ x 18 ¾ in. (59.8 x 85.4 x 47.9 cm.)

Executed in 2001, this work is from an edition of ten plus two artist's proofs

£500,000-700,000

\$660,000-910,000

€550,000-760,000

'I'm interested in reality, the one we see every day: a thought, something you saw on TV or read in the papers, something that left an impression while surfing on the Web. Images have the strength to summarize the present and perhaps to transform it into an anticipation of the future. Perhaps my work is just a magnifying lens that allows you to see the hidden details of reality'

M. CATTELAN



Illustration from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, 1891, by Sir John Tenniel.
Photo: The Stapleton Collection / Bridgeman Images.

PROVENANCE:

Massimo de Carlo, Milan.

Private Collection, USA.

Anon. sale, Christie's London, 21 June 2007,
lot 558.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Yokohama, Pacifico Yokohama Exhibition Hall,
International Triennale of Contemporary Art:
Mega Wave - Towards a New Synthesis, 2001,
p. 390 (another from the edition exhibited).

Paris, Galerie Perrotin, on permanent exhibition,
2001-2015 (another from the edition exhibited).

New York, Marianne Boesky Gallery and
Friedrich Petzel Gallery, *Penetration*, 2002
(another from the edition exhibited).

New York, The FLAG Art Foundation, *Size
DOES Matter*, 2010, p. 83 (another from the
edition exhibited, illustrated in colour, pp. 12-13).

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Human
Nature: Contemporary Art from the Collection*, 2011
(another from the edition exhibited).

New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
Maurizio Cattelan: All, 2011-2012, no. 85, p. 249
(another from edition exhibited, illustrated in
colour, p. 228).

Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, *Lifelike*, 2012-
2013, no. 76, p. 184 (another from the edition
exhibited, illustrated in colour, p. 154).

LITERATURE:

F. Richard, 'Marianne Boesky Gallery and Friedrich
Petzel Gallery - Reviews - Penetration', in *Artforum*,
vol. 41, no. 2, October 2002, p. 154.

F. Bonami, N. Spector, B. Vanderlinden and M. Gioni
(eds.), *Maurizio Cattelan*, London 2003 (another
from the edition illustrated in colour, p. 176-177).

M. Dailey, 'Peter Norton: Collecting with a
Conscience' in *Guggenheim Magazine*, Winter
2004.







‘...art is a collision of different
systems and levels of reality...’

M. CATTELAN





Maurizio Cattelan, *Bidibidobidiboo*, 1995.
Artwork: © Maurizio Cattelan. Photo: Mirco Toniolo. © 2017. AGF/Scala, Florence.



Richard Hamilton, *Lobby*, 1985-7. Private Collection.
Artwork: © R. Hamilton. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2017.

Focusing a critical eye on one of the most fundamental, and yet often overlooked, elements of our contemporary experience – the daily elevator rides that transport us to and from the upper levels of high rise buildings – Maurizio Cattelan's *Untitled* transforms an anonymous, mundane vehicle of transit into a surreal, playful sculpture. Created in 2001, this work presents the viewer with a meticulously constructed miniature elevator bank, a common feature of office and apartment blocks throughout the world. From the sleek chrome doors and mirrored interiors, to their fluorescent lighting systems, 'authentic' sounds and functioning controls, the artist meticulously recreates each feature to the smallest detail. Installed directly into a wall, the ankle-high work transforms the quotidian corporate lobby into a toy-like sculptural intervention, introducing a distinct strangeness and absurdity to

the space it inhabits, undercutting the familiarity of the elevator with an inherent sense of the impossible.

Recalling the worlds of fairytales and cartoon characters, the fantastic realms of Tom Thumb, Lewis Carroll, and Tom and Jerry, the miniature elevators demonstrate the imaginative potential of lending familiar objects a strange surrealism through a basic, but dramatic, shift in scale – a device Cattelan employs in several artworks. While the elevator chambers do not in fact function behind the wall, sound effects convey a sense that the elevator is fully operational, their never-ending chiming and whirring suggesting an unseen movement through the wall. Through his miniature recreation of the elevator, Cattelan invites us to suspend our disbelief, begging us to imagine the mouse or the 'mini-me' who might use such a fictitious contraption. Like *Untitled* (2000), which features a small arched hole in a wall, complete with a door, a porch light, a bin and the sounds of a domestic argument emanating from within, the elevators raise the incredible possibility of another world existing just out of sight, a universe of Lilliputian characters hiding behind the walls. The movements of the lift and the imagined realms to which it travels, invoke hidden realities, hidden meanings just beyond the viewer's reach. As the chime sounds and its doors whoosh open, the elevator seems to offer us access to this miniature, fantastical world, perhaps a route to where Cattelan's deckchair-lounging taxidermied mice (*Untitled*, 1997) spend their days, or the building where his suicidal squirrel sits slumped over its kitchen table (*Bidibidobidiboo*, 1996).

Key to achieving this sense of the surreal is the combination of the intense familiarity of the miniature elevator, which Cattelan realises through his careful attention to detail, and the oddity of its scale. In an interview with Nancy Spector, the artist explained that it was often everyday experiences, the environments he found himself in, the events he witnessed, which inspired his artistic creations: 'I'm always borrowing pieces – crumbs really – of everyday reality...' (Cattelan, 'Interview with Nancy Spector,' in F. Bonami, N. Spector, B. Vanderlinden, M. Gioni, *Maurizio Cattelan*, New York, 2005, p. 17). By delving into the world of lived experience for his subject matter, Cattelan manages to create

something at once identifiable and commonplace, and yet almost ridiculously strange in its appearance. Using the miniature scale to disrupt our traditional experience of the elevator, *Untitled* challenges our understanding of not only the sculpture, but also the very space we inhabit. By pressing the button in the centre of the two elevator doors, the viewer becomes part of a surreal theatrical mise-en-scène of the artist's making – the simple action of 'calling the lift' causes us to become an integral proponent in the realisation of the artwork, while also underscoring the absurdity of the situation, as we remain unable to enter the carriage and gain access to these other worlds beyond the wall. Infused with a distinctly playful air, Cattelan re-infuses the elevator with a childlike wonder and whimsy, whilst also creating a sense of the absurd and the uncanny, as these 'other worlds' remain beyond our reach.

ELEVATOR
INSPECTION
CERTIFICATE
ON FILE
IN BUILDING
OFFICE

NO SMOKING
CAR NO. 2

1

2



7 8 9

4 5 6

1 2 3

B M 0



EMERGENCY
SERVICE

FORCED
DOWNS

CAPACITY 1600 LBS.



Maurizio Cattelan at Grumpy's Cafe in
Chelsea district of New York City
Photo: Christopher Anderson. © Christopher
Anderson/Magnum Photos.

CONDITIONS OF SALE • BUYING AT CHRISTIE'S

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(ii) for corporate clients: Your Certificate of Incorporation or equivalent documents showing your name and registered address together with documentary proof of directors and beneficial owners; and

(iii) for trusts, partnerships, offshore companies and other business structures, please contact us in advance to discuss our requirements.

(b) We may also ask you to give us a financial reference and/or a deposit as a condition of allowing you to bid. For help, please contact our Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

2 RETURNING BIDDERS

We may at our option ask you for current identification as described in paragraph B1(a) above, a financial reference or a deposit as a condition of allowing you to bid. If you have not bought anything from any of our salerooms in the last two years or if you want to spend more than on previous occasions, please contact our Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

3 IF YOU FAIL TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT DOCUMENTS

If in our opinion you do not satisfy our bidder identification and registration procedures including, but not limited to completing any anti-money laundering and/or anti-terrorism financing checks we may require to our satisfaction, we may refuse to register you to bid; and if you make a successful bid, we may cancel the contract for sale between you and the seller.

4 BIDDING ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER PERSON

(a) As **authorised bidder**. If you are bidding on behalf of another person, that person will need to complete the registration requirements above before you can bid, and supply a signed letter authorising you to bid for him/her.

(b) As **agent for an undisclosed principal**: If you are bidding as an agent for an undisclosed principal (the ultimate buyer(s)), you accept personal liability to pay the **purchase price** and all other sums due. Further, you warrant that:

(i) you have conducted appropriate customer due diligence on the ultimate buyer(s) of the lot(s) in accordance with any and all applicable anti-money laundering and sanctions laws, consent to us relying on this due diligence, and you will retain for a period of not less than five years the documentation and records evidencing the due diligence;

(ii) you will make such documentation and records evidencing your due diligence promptly available for immediate inspection by an independent third-party auditor upon our written request to do so. We will not disclose such documentation and records to any third-parties unless (1) it is already in the public domain, (2) it is required to be disclosed by law, or (3) it is in accordance with anti-money laundering laws;

(iii) the arrangements between you and the ultimate buyer(s) are not designed to facilitate tax crimes;

(iv) you do not know, and have no reason to suspect, that the funds used for settlement are connected with, the proceeds of any criminal activity or that the ultimate buyer(s) are under investigation, charged with or convicted of money laundering, terrorist activities or other money laundering predicate crimes.

A bidder accepts personal liability to pay the **purchase price** and all other sums due unless it has been agreed in writing with Christie's before commencement of the auction that the bidder is acting as an agent on behalf of a named third party acceptable to Christie's and that Christie's will only seek payment from the named third party.

5 BIDDING IN PERSON

If you wish to bid in the saleroom you must register for a numbered bidding paddle at least 30 minutes before the auction. You may register online at www.christies.com or in person. For help, please contact the Credit Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060.

6 BIDDING SERVICES

The bidding services described below are a free service offered as a convenience to our clients and Christie's is not responsible for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in providing these services.

(a) Phone Bids

Your request for this service must be made no later than 24 hours prior to the auction. We will accept bids by telephone for lots only if our staff are available to take the bids. If you need to bid in a language other than in English, you must arrange this well before the auction. We may record telephone bids. By bidding on the telephone, you are agreeing to us recording your conversations. You also agree that your telephone bids are governed by these Conditions of Sale.

(b) Internet Bids on Christie's Live™

For certain auctions we will accept bids over the Internet. Please visit www.christies.com/livebidding and click on the 'Bid Live' icon to see details of how to watch, hear and bid at the auction from your computer. As well as these Conditions of Sale, internet bids are governed by the Christie's LIVE™ terms of use which are available on www.christies.com.

(c) Written Bids

You can find a Written Bid Form at the back of our catalogues, at any Christie's office or by choosing the sale and viewing the **lots** online at www.christies.com. We must receive your completed Written Bid Form at least 24 hours before the auction. Bids must be placed in the currency of the saleroom. The auctioneer will take reasonable steps to carry out written bids at the lowest possible price, taking into account the **reserve**. If you make a written bid on a **lot** which does not have a **reserve** and there is no higher bid than yours, we will bid on your behalf at around 50% of the **low estimate** or, if lower, the amount of your bid. If we receive written bids on a **lot** for identical amounts, and at the auction these are the highest bids on the **lot**, we will sell the **lot** to the bidder whose written bid we received first.

C AT THE SALE

1 WHO CAN ENTER THE AUCTION

We may, at our option, refuse admission to our premises or decline to permit participation in any auction or to reject any bid.

2 RESERVES

Unless otherwise indicated, all lots are subject to a **reserve**. We identify **lots** that are offered without **reserve** with the symbol • next to the **lot** number. The **reserve** cannot be more than the **lot's low estimate**.

3 AUCTIONEER'S DISCRETION

The auctioneer can at his sole option:

- (a) refuse any bid;
- (b) move the bidding backwards or forwards in any way he or she may decide, or change the order of the **lots**;
- (c) withdraw any **lot**;
- (d) divide any **lot** or combine any two or more **lots**;
- (e) reopen or continue the bidding even after the hammer has fallen; and
- (f) in the case of error or dispute and whether during or after the auction, to continue the bidding, determine the successful bidder, cancel the sale of the **lot**, or reoffer and resell any **lot**. If any dispute relating to bidding arises during or after the auction, the auctioneer's decision in exercise of this option is final.

4 BIDDING

The auctioneer accepts bids from:

- (a) bidders in the saleroom;
- (b) telephone bidders, and internet bidders through 'Christie's LIVE™' (as shown above in Section B6); and
- (c) written bids (also known as absentee bids or commission bids) left with us by a bidder before the auction.

5 BIDDING ON BEHALF OF THE SELLER

The auctioneer may, at his or her sole option, bid on behalf of the seller up to but not including the amount of the **reserve** either by making consecutive bids or by making bids in response to other bidders. The auctioneer will not identify these as bids made on behalf of the seller and will not make any bid on behalf of the seller at or above the **reserve**. If **lots** are offered without **reserve**, the auctioneer will generally decide to open the bidding at 50% of the **low estimate** for the **lot**. If no bid is made at that level, the auctioneer may decide to go backwards at his or her sole option until a bid is made, and then continue up from that amount. In the event that there are no bids on a **lot**, the auctioneer may deem such **lot** unsold.

6 BID INCREMENTS

Bidding generally starts below the **low estimate** and increases in steps (bid increments). The auctioneer will decide at his or her sole option where the bidding should start and the bid increments. The usual bid increments are shown for guidance only on the Written Bid Form at the back of this catalogue.

7 CURRENCY CONVERTER

The saleroom video screens (and Christies LIVE™) may show bids in some other major currencies as well as sterling. Any conversion is for guidance only and we cannot be bound by any rate of exchange used. Christie's is not responsible for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in providing these services.

8 SUCCESSFUL BIDS

Unless the auctioneer decides to use his or her discretion as set out in paragraph C3 above, when the auctioneer's hammer strikes, we have accepted the last bid. This means a contract for sale has been formed between the seller and the successful bidder. We will issue an invoice only to the registered bidder who made the successful bid. While we send out invoices by post and/or email after the auction, we do not accept responsibility for telling you whether or not your bid was successful. If you have bid by written bid, you should contact us by telephone or in person as soon as possible after the auction to get details of the outcome of your bid to avoid having to pay unnecessary storage charges.

9 LOCAL BIDDING LAWS

You agree that when bidding in any of our sales that you will strictly comply with all local laws and regulations in force at the time of the sale for the relevant sale site.

D THE BUYER'S PREMIUM, TAXES AND ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

1 THE BUYER'S PREMIUM

In addition to the **hammer price**, the successful bidder agrees to pay us a **buyer's premium** on the **hammer price** of each **lot** sold. On all **lots** we charge 25% of the **hammer price** up to and including £175,000, 20% on that part of the **hammer price** over £175,000 up to and including £3,000,000, and 12.5% of that part of the **hammer price** above £3,000,000.

2 TAXES

The successful bidder is responsible for any applicable tax including any VAT, sales or compensating use tax or equivalent tax wherever such taxes may arise on the **hammer price** and the **buyer's premium**. It is the buyer's responsibility to ascertain and pay all taxes due. You can find details of how VAT and VAT reclaims are dealt with on the section of the catalogue headed 'VAT Symbols and Explanation'. VAT charges and refunds depend on the particular circumstances of the buyer so this section, which is not exhaustive, should be used only as a general guide. In all circumstances EU and UK law takes precedence. If you have any questions about VAT, please contact Christie's VAT Department on +44 (0)20 7389 9060 (email: VAT_London@christies.com, fax: +44 (0)20 3219 6076). Christie's recommends you obtain your own independent tax advice.

For **lots** Christie's ships to the United States, a state sales or use tax may be due on the **hammer price**, **buyer's premium** and shipping costs on the **lot**, regardless of the nationality or citizenship of the purchaser. Christie's is currently required to collect sales tax for **lots** it ships to the state of New York. The applicable sales tax rate will be determined based upon the state, county, or locale to which the **lot** will be shipped. Successful bidders claiming an exemption from sales tax must provide appropriate documentation to Christie's prior to the release of the **lot**. For shipments to those states for which Christie's is not required to collect sales tax, a successful bidder may be required to remit use tax to that state's taxing authorities. Christie's recommends you obtain your own independent tax advice with further questions.

3 ARTIST'S RESALE ROYALTY

In certain countries, local laws entitle the artist or the artist's estate to a royalty known as 'artist's resale right' when any **lot** created by the artist is sold. We identify these **lots** with the symbol **λ** next to the **lot** number. If these laws apply to a **lot**, you must pay us an extra amount equal to the royalty. We will pay the royalty to the appropriate authority on the seller's behalf.

The artist's resale royalty applies if the **hammer price** of the **lot** is 1,000 euro or more. The total royalty for any **lot** cannot be more than 12,500 euro. We will work out the amount owed as follows:

Royalty for the portion of the hammer price (in euros)

4% up to 50,000

3% between 50,000.01 and 200,000

1% between 200,000.01 and 350,000

0.50% between 350,000.01 and 500,000

over 500,000, the lower of 0.25% and 12,500 euro.

We will work out the artist's resale royalty using the euro to sterling rate of exchange of the European Central Bank on the day of the auction.

E WARRANTIES

1 SELLER'S WARRANTIES

For each **lot**, the seller gives a **warranty** that the seller:

(a) is the owner of the **lot** or a joint owner of the **lot** acting with the permission of the other co-owners or, if the seller is not the owner or a joint owner of the **lot**, has the permission of the owner to sell the **lot**, or the right to do so in law; and

(b) has the right to transfer ownership of the **lot** to the buyer without any restrictions or claims by anyone else.

If either of the above **warranties** are incorrect, the seller shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** (as defined in paragraph F1(a) below) paid by you to us. The seller will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, expected savings, loss of opportunity or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses. The seller gives no **warranty** in relation to any **lot** other than as set out above and, as far as the seller is allowed by law, all **warranties** from the seller to you, and all other obligations upon the seller which may be added to this agreement by law, are excluded.

2 OUR AUTHENTICITY WARRANTY

We warrant, subject to the terms below, that the **lots** in our sales are authentic (our **'authenticity warranty'**). If, within five years of the date of the auction, you satisfy us that your **lot** is not **authentic**, subject to the terms below, we will refund the **purchase price** paid by you. The meaning of **authentic** can be found in the glossary at the end of these Conditions of Sale. The terms of the **authenticity warranty** are as follows:

(a) It will be honoured for a period of five years from the date of the auction. After such time, we will not be obligated to honour the **authenticity warranty**.

(b) It is given only for information shown in **UPPERCASE type** in the first line of the **catalogue description** (the **'Heading'**). It does not apply to any information other than in the **Heading** even if shown in **UPPERCASE type**.

(c) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply to any **Heading** or part of a **Heading** which is **qualified**. **Qualified** means limited by a clarification in a **lot's catalogue description** or by the use in a **Heading** of one of the terms listed in the section titled **Qualified Headings** on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'. For example, use of the term 'ATTRIBUTED TO...' in a **Heading** means that the **lot** is in Christie's opinion probably a work by

the named artist but no **warranty** is provided that the **lot** is the work of the named artist. Please read the full list of **Qualified Headings** and a **lot's full catalogue description** before bidding.

(d) The **authenticity warranty** applies to the **Heading** as amended by any **Saleroom Notice**.

(e) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply where scholarship has developed since the auction leading to a change in generally accepted opinion. Further, it does not apply if the **Heading** either matched the generally accepted opinion of experts at the date of the sale or drew attention to any conflict of opinion.

(f) The **authenticity warranty** does not apply if the **lot** can only be shown not to be **authentic** by a scientific process which, on the date we published the catalogue, was not available or generally accepted for use, or which was unreasonably expensive or impractical, or which was likely to have damaged the **lot**.

(g) The benefit of the **authenticity warranty** is only available to the original buyer shown on the invoice for the **lot** issued at the time of the sale and only if the original buyer has owned the **lot** continuously between the date of the auction and the date of claim. It may not be transferred to anyone else.

(h) In order to claim under the **authenticity warranty** you must:

(i) give us written details, including full supporting evidence, of any claim within five years of the date of the auction;

(ii) at Christie's option, we may require you to provide the written opinions of two recognised experts in the field of the **lot** mutually agreed by you and us in advance confirming that the **lot** is not **authentic**. If we have any doubts, we reserve the right to obtain additional opinions at our expense; and

(iii) return the **lot** at your expense to the saleroom from which you bought it in the **condition** it was in at the time of sale.

(i) Your only right under this **authenticity warranty** is to cancel the sale and receive a refund of the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not, in any circumstances, be required to pay you more than the **purchase price** nor will we be liable for any loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, **other damages** or expenses.

(j) **Books**. Where the **lot** is a book, we give an additional **warranty** for 14 days from the date of the sale that if on collection any **lot** is defective in text or illustration, we will refund your **purchase price**, subject to the following terms:

(a) This additional **warranty** does not apply to:

(i) the absence of blanks, half titles, tissue guards or advertisements, damage in respect of bindings, stains, spotting, marginal tears or other defects not affecting completeness of the text or illustration;

(ii) drawings, autographs, letters or manuscripts, signed photographs, music, atlases, maps or periodicals;

(iii) books not identified by title;

(iv) **lots** sold without a printed **estimate**;

(v) books which are described in the catalogue as sold not subject to return; or

(vi) defects stated in any **condition** report or announced at the time of sale.

(b) To make a claim under this paragraph you must give written details of the defect and return the **lot** to the sale room at which you bought it in the **same condition** as at the time of sale, within 14 days of the date of the sale.

(c) **South East Asian Modern and Contemporary Art and Chinese Calligraphy and Painting**.

In these categories, the **authenticity warranty** does not apply because current scholarship does not permit the making of definitive statements. Christie's does, however, agree to cancel a sale in either of these two categories of art where it has been proven the **lot** is a forgery. Christie's will refund to the original buyer the **purchase price** in accordance with the terms of Christie's **authenticity warranty** provided that the original buyer notifies us with full supporting evidence documenting the forgery claim within twelve (12) months of the date of the auction. Such evidence must be satisfactory to us that the **lot** is a forgery in accordance with paragraph E2(h)(ii) above and the **lot** must be returned to us in accordance with E2(h)(ii) above. Paragraphs E2(b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g) and (i) also apply to a claim under these categories.

F PAYMENT

1 HOW TO PAY

(a) Immediately following the auction, you must pay the **purchase price** being:

(i) the **hammer price**; and

(ii) the **buyer's premium**; and

(iii) any amounts due under section D3 above; and

(iv) any duties, goods, sales, use, compensating or service tax or VAT. Payment is due no later than by the end of the seventh calendar day following the date of the auction (the **'due date'**).

(b) We will only accept payment from the registered bidder. Once issued, we cannot change the buyer's name on an invoice or re-issue the invoice in a different name. You must pay immediately even if you want to export the **lot** and you need an export licence.

(c) You must pay for **lots** bought at Christie's in the United Kingdom in the currency stated on the invoice in one of the following ways:

(i) **Wire transfer**

You must make payments to:

Lloyds Bank Plc, City Office, PO Box 217, 72 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BT. Account number: 00172710, sort code: 30-00-02 Swift code: LOYDGB2LCTY, IBAN (international bank account number): GB81 LOYD 3000 0200 1727 10.

(ii) **Credit Card**.

We accept most major credit cards subject to certain conditions. You may make payment via credit card in person. You may also make a 'cardholder not present' (CNP) payment by calling Christie's Post-Sale Services Department on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or for some sales, by logging into your MyChristie's account by going to: www.christies.com/mychristies. Details of the conditions and restrictions applicable to credit card payments are available from our Post-Sale Services Department, whose details are set out in paragraph (e) below.

If you pay for your purchase using a credit card issued outside the region of the sale, depending on the type of credit card and account you hold, the payment may incur a cross-border transaction fee. If you think this may apply to you, please check with your credit card issuer before making the payment. We reserve the right to charge you any transaction or processing fees which we incur when processing your payment.

Please note that for sales that permit online payment, certain transactions will be ineligible for credit card payment.

(iii) **Cash**

We accept cash subject to a maximum of £5,000 per buyer per year at our Cashier's Department Department only (subject to conditions).

(iv) **Banker's draft**

You must make these payable to Christie's and there may be conditions.

(v) **Cheque**

You must make cheques payable to Christie's. Cheques must be from accounts in pounds sterling from a United Kingdom bank.

(d) You must quote the sale number, lot number(s), your invoice number and Christie's client account number when making a payment. All payments sent by post must be sent to: Christie's, Cashiers Department, 8 King Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6QT.

(e) For more information please contact our Post-Sale Service Department by phone on +44 (0)20 7752 3200 or fax on +44 (0)20 752 3300.

2 TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP TO YOU

You will not own the **lot** and ownership of the **lot** will not pass to you until we have received full and clear payment of the **purchase price**, even in circumstances where we have released the **lot** to the buyer.

3 TRANSFERRING RISK TO YOU

The risk in and responsibility for the **lot** will transfer to you from whichever is the earlier of the following:

(a) When you collect the **lot**; or

(b) At the end of the 30th day following the date of the auction or, if earlier, the date the **lot** is taken into care by a third party warehouse as set out on the page headed 'Storage and Collection', unless we have agreed otherwise with you in writing.

4 WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DO NOT PAY

(a) If you fail to pay us the **purchase price** in full by the **'due date'**, we will be entitled to do one or more of the following (as well as enforce our rights under paragraph F5 and any other rights or remedies we have by law):

(i) to charge interest from the **'due date'** at a rate of 5% a year above the UK Lloyds Bank base rate from time to time on the unpaid amount due;

(ii) we can cancel the sale of the **lot**. If we do this, we may sell the **lot** again, publicly or privately on such terms we shall think necessary or appropriate, in which case you must pay us any shortfall between the **purchase price** and the proceeds from the resale. You must also pay all costs, expenses, losses, damages and legal fees we have to pay or may suffer and any shortfall in the seller's commission on the resale;

(iii) we can pay the seller an amount up to the net proceeds payable in respect of the amount bid by your default in which case you acknowledge and understand that Christie's will have all of the rights of the seller to pursue you for such amounts;

(iv) we can hold you legally responsible for the **purchase price** and may begin legal proceedings to recover it together with other losses, interest, legal fees and costs as far as we are allowed by law;

(v) we can take what you owe us from any amounts which we or any company in the **Christie's Group** may owe you (including any deposit or other part-payment which you have paid to us);

(vi) we can, at our option, reveal your identity and contact details to the seller;

(vi) we can reject at any future auction any bids made by or on behalf of the buyer or to obtain a deposit from the buyer before accepting any bids;

(vii) to exercise all the rights and remedies of a person holding security over any property in our possession owned by you, whether by way of pledge, security interest or in any other way as permitted by the law of the place where such property is located. You will be deemed to have granted such security to us and we may retain such property as collateral security for your obligations to us; and

(viii) we can take any other action we see necessary or appropriate.

(b) If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, we can use any amount you do pay, including any deposit or other part-payment you have made to us, or which we owe you, to pay off any amount you owe to us or another **Christie's Group** company for any transaction.

(c) If you make payment in full after the **'due date'**, and we choose to accept such payment we may charge you storage and transport costs from the date that is 30 calendar days following the auction in accordance with paragraphs Gd(i) and (ii). In such circumstances paragraph Gd(iv) shall apply.

5 KEEPING YOUR PROPERTY

If you owe money to us or to another **Christie's Group** company, as well as the rights set out in F4 above, we can use or deal with any of your property we hold or which is held by another **Christie's Group** company in any way we are allowed to by law. We will only release your property to you after you pay us or the relevant **Christie's Group** company in full for what you owe. However, if we choose, we can also sell your property in any way we think appropriate. We will use the proceeds of the sale against any amounts you owe us and we will pay any amount left from that sale to you. If there is a shortfall, you must pay us any difference between the amount we have received from the sale and the amount you owe us.

G COLLECTION AND STORAGE

(a) We ask that you collect purchased **lots** promptly following the auction (but note that you may not collect any lot until you have made full and clear payment of all amounts due to us).

(b) Information on collecting **lots** is set out on the storage and collection page and on an information sheet which you can get from the bidder registration staff or Christie's Post-Sale Services Department on +44 (0)20 7752 3200.

(c) If you do not collect any **lot** promptly following the auction we can, at our option, remove the **lot** to another Christie's location or an affiliate or third party warehouse.

(d) If you do not collect a **lot** by the end of the 30th day following the date of the auction, unless otherwise agreed in writing:

- (i) we will charge you storage costs from that date.
- (ii) we can at our option move the **lot** to or within an affiliate or third party warehouse and charge you transport costs and administration fees for doing so.
- (iii) we may sell the **lot** in any commercially reasonable way we think appropriate.
- (iv) the storage terms which can be found at christies.com/storage shall apply.

(v) Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit our rights under paragraph F4.

H TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

1 TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

We will enclose a transport and shipping form with each invoice sent to you. You must make all transport and shipping arrangements. However, we can arrange to pack, transport and ship your property if you ask us to and pay the costs of doing so. We recommend that you ask us for an **estimate**, especially for any large items or items of high value that need professional packing before you bid. We may also suggest other handlers, packers, transporters or experts if you ask us to do so. For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at artransport.london@christies.com. We will take reasonable care when we are handling, packing, transporting and shipping a **lot**. However, if we recommend another company for any of these purposes, we are not responsible for their acts, failure to act or neglect.

2 EXPORT AND IMPORT

Any **lot** sold at auction may be affected by laws on exports from the country in which it is sold and the import restrictions of other countries. Many countries require a declaration of export for property leaving the country and/or an import declaration on entry of property into the country. Local laws may prevent you from importing a **lot** or may prevent you selling a **lot** in the country you import it into. (a) You alone are responsible for getting advice about and meeting the requirements of any laws or regulations which apply to exporting or importing any **lot** prior to bidding. If you are refused a licence or there is a delay in getting one, you must still pay us in full for the **lot**. We may be able to help you apply for the appropriate licences if you ask us to and pay our fee for doing so. However, we cannot guarantee that you will get one.

For more information, please contact Christie's Art Transport Department on +44 (0)20 7839 9060. See the information set out at www.christies.com/shipping or contact us at artransport_london@christies.com.

(b) Lots made of protected species

Lots made of or including (regardless of the percentage) endangered and other protected species of wildlife are marked with the symbol ~ in the catalogue. This material includes, among other things, ivory, tortoiseshell, crocodile skin, rhinoceros horn, whalebone, certain species of coral, and Brazilian rosewood. You should check the relevant customs laws and regulations before bidding on any **lot** containing wildlife material if you plan to import the **lot** into another country. Several countries refuse to allow you to import property containing these materials, and some other countries require a licence from the relevant regulatory agencies in the countries of exportation as well as importation. In some cases, the **lot** can only be shipped with an independent scientific confirmation of species and/or age and you will need to obtain these at your own cost. If a **lot** contains elephant ivory, or any other wildlife material that could be confused with elephant ivory (for example, mammoth ivory, walrus ivory, helmeted hornbill ivory), please see further important information in paragraph (c) if you are proposing to import the **lot** into the USA. We will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price** if your **lot** may not be exported, imported or it is seized for any reason by a government authority. It is your responsibility to determine and satisfy the requirements of any applicable laws or regulations relating to the export or import of property containing such protected or regulated material.

(c) US import ban on African elephant ivory

The USA prohibits the import of ivory from the African elephant. Any **lot** containing elephant ivory or other wildlife material that could be easily confused with elephant ivory (for example, mammoth ivory, walrus ivory, helmeted hornbill ivory) can only be imported into the US with results of a rigorous scientific test acceptable to Fish & Wildlife, which confirms that the material is not African elephant ivory. Where we have conducted such rigorous scientific testing on a **lot** prior to sale, we will make this clear in the lot description. In all other cases, we cannot confirm whether a **lot** contains African elephant ivory, and you will buy that **lot** at your own risk and be responsible for any scientific test or other reports required for import into the USA at your own cost. If such scientific test is inconclusive or confirms the material is from the African elephant, we will not be obliged to cancel your purchase and refund the **purchase price**.

(d) Lots of Iranian origin

Some countries prohibit or restrict the purchase and/or import of Iranian-origin 'works of conventional craftsmanship' (works that are not by a recognised artist and/or that have a function, for example: bowls, ewers, tiles, ornamental boxes). For example, the USA prohibits the import of this type of property and its purchase by US persons (wherever located). Other countries, such as Canada, only permit the import of this property in certain circumstances. As a convenience to buyers, Christie's indicates under the title of a **lot** if the **lot** originates from Iran (Persia). It is your responsibility to ensure you do not bid on or import a **lot** in contravention of the sanctions or trade embargoes that apply to you.

(e) Gold

Gold of less than 18ct does not qualify in all countries as 'gold' and may be refused import into those countries as 'gold'.

(f) Jewellery over 50 years old

Under current laws, jewellery over 50 years old which is worth £39,219 or more will require an export licence which we can apply for on your behalf. It may take up to eight weeks to obtain the export jewellery licence.

(g) Watches

Many of the watches offered for sale in this catalogue are pictured with straps made of endangered or protected animal materials such as alligator or crocodile. These lots are marked with the symbol V in the catalogue. These endangered species straps are shown for display purposes only and are not for sale. Christie's will remove and retain the strap prior to shipment from the sale site. At some sale sites, Christie's may, at its discretion, make the displayed endangered species strap available to the buyer of the **lot** free of charge if collected in person from the sale site within one year of the date of the sale. Please check with the department for details on a particular **lot**. For all symbols and other markings referred to in paragraph H2, please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you, but we do not accept liability for errors or for failing to mark **lots**.

I OUR LIABILITY TO YOU

(a) We give no **warranty** in relation to any statement made, or information given, by us or our representatives or employees, about any **lot** other than as set out in the **authenticity warranty** and, as far as we are allowed by law, all **warranties** and other terms which may be added to this agreement by law are excluded. The seller's **warranties** contained in paragraph E1 are their own and we do not have any liability to you in relation to those **warranties**.

(b) (i) We are not responsible to you for any reason (whether for breaking this agreement or any other matter relating to your purchase of, or bid for, any **lot**) other than in the event of fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation by us or other than as expressly set out in these Conditions of Sale; or

(ii) We do not give any representation, **warranty** or guarantee or assume any liability of any kind in respect of any **lot** with regard to merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, description, size, quality, condition, attribution, authenticity, rarity, importance, medium, provenance, exhibition history, literature, or historical relevance. Except as required by local law, any **warranty** of any kind is excluded by this paragraph.

(c) In particular, please be aware that our written and telephone bidding services, Christie's LIVE™, **condition** reports, currency converter and saleroom video screens are free services and we are not responsible to you for any error (human or otherwise), omission or breakdown in these services.

(d) We have no responsibility to any person other than a buyer in connection with the purchase of any **lot**.

(e) If, in spite of the terms in paragraphs (a) to (d) or E2(i) above, we are found to be liable to you for any reason, we shall not have to pay more than the **purchase price** paid by you to us. We will not be responsible to you for any reason for loss of profits or business, loss of opportunity or value, expected savings or interest, costs, damages, or expenses.

J OTHER TERMS

1 OUR ABILITY TO CANCEL

In addition to the other rights of cancellation contained in this agreement, we can cancel a sale of a **lot** if we reasonably believe that completing the transaction is, or may be, unlawful or that the sale places us or the seller under any liability to anyone else or may damage our reputation.

2 RECORDINGS

We may videotape and record proceedings at any auction. We will keep any personal information confidential, except to the extent disclosure is required by law. However, we may, through this process, use or share these recordings with another **Christie's Group** company and marketing partners to analyse our customers and to help us to tailor our services for buyers. If you do not want to be videotaped, you may make arrangements to make a telephone or written bid or bid on Christie's LIVE™ instead. Unless we agree otherwise in writing, you may not videotape or record proceedings at any auction.

3 COPYRIGHT

We own the copyright in all images, illustrations and written material produced by or for us relating to a **lot** (including the contents of our catalogues unless otherwise noted in the catalogue). You cannot use them without our prior written permission. We do not offer any guarantee that you will gain any copyright or other reproduction rights to the **lot**.

4 ENFORCING THIS AGREEMENT

If a court finds that any part of this agreement is not valid or is illegal or impossible to enforce, that part of the agreement will be treated as being deleted and the rest of this agreement will not be affected.

5 TRANSFERRING YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

You may not grant a security over or transfer your rights or responsibilities under these terms on the contract of sale with the buyer unless we have given our written permission. This agreement will be binding on your successors or estate and anyone who takes over your rights and responsibilities.

6 TRANSLATIONS

If we have provided a translation of this agreement, we will use this original version in deciding any issues or disputes which arise under this agreement.

7 PERSONAL INFORMATION

We will hold and process your personal information and may pass it to another **Christie's Group** company for use as described in, and in line with, our privacy policy at www.christies.com.

8 WAIVER

No failure or delay to exercise any right or remedy provided under these Conditions of Sale shall constitute a waiver of that or any other right or remedy, nor shall it prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy. No single or partial exercise of such right or remedy shall prevent or restrict the further exercise of that or any other right or remedy.

9 LAW AND DISPUTES

This agreement, and any non-contractual obligations arising out of or in connection with this agreement, or any other rights you may have relating to the purchase of a **lot** will be governed by the laws of England and Wales. Before we or you start any court proceedings (except in the limited circumstances where the dispute, controversy or claim is related to proceedings brought by someone else and this dispute could be joined to those proceedings), we agree we will each try to settle the dispute by mediation following the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) Model Mediation Procedure. We will use a mediator affiliated with CEDR who we and you agree to. If the dispute is not settled by mediation, you agree for our benefit that the dispute will be referred to and dealt with exclusively in the courts of England and Wales. However, we will have the right to bring proceedings against you in any other court.

10 RECORDING ON WWW.CHRISTIES.COM

Details of all **lots** sold by us, including **catalogue descriptions** and prices, may be reported on www.christies.com. Sales totals are **hammer price plus buyer's premium** and do not reflect costs, financing fees, or application of buyer's or seller's credits. We regret that we cannot agree to requests to remove these details from www.christies.com.

K GLOSSARY

authentic: a genuine example, rather than a copy or forgery of:

(i) the work of a particular artist, author or manufacturer, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as the work of that artist, author or manufacturer;

(ii) a work created within a particular period or culture, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as a work created during that period or culture;

(iii) a work for a particular origin source if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as being of that origin or source; or

(iv) in the case of gems, a work which is made of a particular material, if the **lot** is described in the **Heading** as being made of that material.

authenticity warranty: the guarantee we give in this agreement that a **lot** is **authentic** as set out in section E2 of this agreement.

buyer's premium: the charge the buyer pays us along with the **hammer price**.

catalogue description: the description of a **lot** in the catalogue for the auction, as amended by any saleroom notice.

Christie's Group: Christie's International Plc, its subsidiaries and other companies within its corporate group.

condition: the physical **condition** of a **lot**.

due date: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).

estimate: the price range included in the catalogue or any saleroom notice within which we believe a **lot** may sell. **Low estimate** means the lower figure in the range and **high estimate** means the higher figure. The **mid estimate** is the midpoint between the two.

hammer price: the amount of the highest bid the auctioneer accepts for the sale of a **lot**.

Heading: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2.

lot: an item to be offered at auction (or two or more items to be offered at auction as a group).

other damages: any special, consequential, incidental or indirect damages of any kind or any damages which fall within the meaning of 'special', 'incidental' or 'consequential' under local law.

purchase price: has the meaning given to it in paragraph F1(a).

provenance: the ownership history of a **lot**.

qualified: has the meaning given to it in paragraph E2 and **Qualified Headings** means the section headed **Qualified Headings** on the page of the catalogue headed 'Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice'.

reserve: the confidential amount below which we will not sell a **lot**.

saleroom notice: a written notice posted next to the **lot** in the saleroom and on www.christies.com, which is also read to prospective telephone bidders and notified to clients who have left commission bids, or an announcement made by the auctioneer either at the beginning of the sale, or before a particular **lot** is auctioned.

UPPER CASE type: means having all capital letters.

warranty: a statement or representation in which the person making it guarantees that the facts set out in it are correct.

VAT SYMBOLS AND EXPLANATION

You can find a glossary explaining the meanings of words coloured in bold on this page at the end of the section of the catalogue headed 'Conditions of Sale' VAT payable

Symbol	
No Symbol	We will use the VAT Margin Scheme. No VAT will be charged on the hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
†	We will invoice under standard VAT rules and VAT will be charged at 20% on both the hammer price and buyer's premium and shown separately on our invoice.
θ	For qualifying books only, no VAT is payable on the hammer price or the buyer's premium .
*	These lots have been imported from outside the EU for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Import VAT is payable at 5% on the hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
Ω	These lots have been imported from outside the EU for sale and placed under the Temporary Admission regime. Customs Duty as applicable will be added to the hammer price and Import VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty Inclusive hammer price . VAT at 20% will be added to the buyer's premium but will not be shown separately on our invoice.
α	The VAT treatment will depend on whether you have registered to bid with an EU or non-EU address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you register to bid with an address within the EU you will be invoiced under the VAT Margin Scheme (see No Symbol above). If you register to bid with an address outside of the EU you will be invoiced under standard VAT rules (see * symbol above)
‡	For wine offered 'in bond' only. If you choose to buy the wine in bond no Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the hammer . If you choose to buy the wine out of bond Excise Duty as applicable will be added to the hammer price and Clearance VAT at 20% will be charged on the Duty inclusive hammer price . Whether you buy the wine in bond or out of bond, 20% VAT will be added to the buyer's premium and shown on the invoice.

VAT refunds: what can I reclaim?

If you are:

A non VAT registered UK or EU buyer		No VAT refund is possible
UK VAT registered buyer	No symbol and α	The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded. However, on request we can re-invoice you outside of the VAT Margin Scheme under normal UK VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a * symbol). Subject to HMRC's rules, you can then reclaim the VAT charged through your own VAT return.
	* and Ω	Subject to HMRC's rules, you can reclaim the Import VAT charged on the hammer price through your own VAT return when you are in receipt of a C79 form issued by HMRC. The VAT amount in the buyer's premium is invoiced under Margin Scheme rules so cannot normally be claimed back. However, if you request to be re-invoiced outside of the Margin Scheme under standard VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a * symbol) then, subject to HMRC's rules, you can reclaim the VAT charged through your own VAT return.
EU VAT registered buyer	No Symbol and α	The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded. However, on request we can re-invoice you outside of the VAT Margin Scheme under normal UK VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a * symbol). See below for the rules that would then apply.
	†	If you provide us with your EU VAT number we will not charge VAT on the buyer's premium . We will also refund the VAT on the hammer price if you ship the lot from the UK and provide us with proof of shipping, within three months of collection.
	* and Ω	The VAT amount on the hammer and in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded. However, on request we can re-invoice you outside of the VAT Margin Scheme under normal UK VAT rules (as if the lot had been sold with a * symbol). See above for the rules that would then apply.
Non EU buyer		If you meet ALL of the conditions in notes 1 to 3 below we will refund the following tax charges:
	No Symbol	We will refund the VAT amount in the buyer's premium .
	† and α	We will refund the VAT charged on the hammer price. VAT on the buyer's premium can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	‡ (wine only)	No Excise Duty or Clearance VAT will be charged on the hammer price providing you export the wine while 'in bond' directly outside the EU using an Excise authorised shipper. VAT on the buyer's premium can only be refunded if you are an overseas business. The VAT amount in the buyer's premium cannot be refunded to non-trade clients.
	* and Ω	We will refund the Import VAT charged on the hammer price and the VAT amount in the buyer's premium .

1. We **CANNOT** offer refunds of VAT amounts or Import VAT to buyers who do not meet all applicable conditions in full. If you are unsure whether you will be entitled to a refund, please contact Client Services at the address below **before you bid**.
2. No VAT amounts or Import VAT will be refunded where the total refund is under £100.

3. In order to receive a refund of VAT amounts/Import VAT (as applicable) non-EU buyers must:
(a) have registered to bid with an address outside of the EU; and
(b) provide immediate proof of correct export out of the EU within the required time frames of: 30 days via a 'controlled export' for * and Ω lots. All other lots must be exported within three months of collection.

4. Details of the documents which you must provide to us to show satisfactory proof of export/shipping are available from our VAT team at the address below. We charge a processing fee of £35.00 per invoice to check shipping/export documents. We will waive this processing fee if you appoint Christie's Shipping Department to arrange your export/shipping.

5. If you appoint Christie's Art Transport or one of our authorised shippers to arrange your export/shipping we will issue you with an export invoice with the applicable VAT or duties cancelled as outlined above. If you later cancel or change the shipment in a manner that infringes the rules outlined above we will issue a revised invoice charging you all applicable taxes/charges.

6. If you ask us to re-invoice you under normal UK VAT rules (as if the **lot** had been sold with a † symbol) instead of under the Margin Scheme the **lot** may become ineligible to be resold using the Margin Schemes. **Movement within the EU must be within 3 months from the date of sale.** You should take professional advice if you are unsure how this may affect you.

7. All re-invoicing requests must be received within four years from the date of sale.
If you have any questions about VAT refunds please contact Christie's Client Services on info@christies.com
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2886.
Fax: +44 (0)20 7389 1611.

SYMBOLS USED IN THIS CATALOGUE

The meaning of words coloured in **bold** in this section can be found at the end of the section of the catalogue headed 'Conditions of Sale'.

○

Christie's has a direct financial interest in the lot. See Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice.

△

Owned by Christie's or another **Christie's Group** company in whole or part. See Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice.

◆

Christie's has a direct financial interest in the **lot** and has funded all or part of our interest with the help of someone else. See Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice.

Please note that **lots** are marked as a convenience to you and we shall not be liable for any errors in, or failure to, mark a **lot**.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

CHRISTIE'S INTEREST IN PROPERTY CONSIGNMENT FOR AUCTION

△ **Property Owned in part or in full by Christie's**
From time to time, Christie's may offer a **lot** which it owns in whole or in part. Such property is identified in the catalogue with the symbol △ next to its **lot** number.

◦ **Minimum Price Guarantees**

On occasion, Christie's has a direct financial interest in the outcome of the sale of certain lots consigned for sale. This will usually be where it has guaranteed to the Seller that whatever the outcome of the auction, the Seller will receive a minimum sale price for the work. This is known as a minimum price guarantee. Where Christie's holds such financial interest we identify such **lots** with the symbol ◦ next to the **lot** number.

◆ **Third Party Guarantees/Irrevocable bids**

Where Christie's has provided a Minimum Price Guarantee it is at risk of making a loss, which can be significant, if the **lot** fails to sell. Christie's therefore sometimes chooses to share that risk with a third party. In such cases the third party agrees prior to the auction to place an irrevocable written bid on the **lot**. The third party is therefore committed to bidding on the **lot** and, even if there are no other bids, buying the **lot** at the level of the written bid unless there are any higher bids. In doing so, the third party takes on all or part of the risk of the **lot** not being sold. If the **lot** is not sold, the third party may incur a loss. **Lots** which are subject to a third party guarantee arrangement are identified in the catalogue with the symbol ◆.

The third party will be remunerated in exchange for accepting this risk based on a fixed fee if the third party is the successful bidder or on the final hammer price in the event that the third party is not the successful bidder. The third party may also bid for the **lot** above the written bid. Where it does so, and is the successful bidder, the fixed fee for taking on the guarantee risk may be netted against the final **purchase price**.

Third party guarantors are required by us to disclose to anyone they are advising their financial interest in any **lots** they are guaranteeing. However, for the avoidance of any doubt, if you are advised by or bidding through an agent on a **lot** identified as being subject to a third party guarantee you should always ask your agent to confirm whether or not he or she has a financial interest in relation to the **lot**.

λ

Artist's Resale Right. See Section D3 of the Conditions of Sale.

•

Lot offered without **reserve** which will be sold to the highest bidder regardless of the pre-sale estimate in the catalogue.

~

Lot incorporates material from endangered species which could result in export restrictions. See Section H2(b) of the Conditions of Sale.

Ψ

Lot incorporates material from endangered species which is shown for display purposes only and is not for sale. See Section H2(g) of the Conditions of Sale.

?, *, Ω, α, #, †

See VAT Symbols and Explanation.

■

See Storage and Collection Page.

Other Arrangements

Christie's may enter into other arrangements not involving bids. These include arrangements where Christie's has given the Seller an Advance on the proceeds of sale of the **lot** or where Christie's has shared the risk of a guarantee with a partner without the partner being required to place an irrevocable written bid or otherwise participating in the bidding on the **lot**. Because such arrangements are unrelated to the bidding process they are not marked with a symbol in the catalogue.

Bidding by parties with an interest

In any case where a party has a financial interest in a **lot** and intends to bid on it we will make a saleroom announcement to ensure that all bidders are aware of this. Such financial interests can include where beneficiaries of an Estate have reserved the right to bid on a **lot** consigned by the Estate or where a partner in a risk-sharing arrangement has reserved the right to bid on a **lot** and/or notified us of their intention to bid.

Please see <http://www.christies.com/> financial-interest/ for a more detailed explanation of minimum price guarantees and third party financing arrangements.

Where Christie's has an ownership or financial interest in every **lot** in the catalogue, Christie's will not designate each **lot** with a symbol, but will state its interest in the front of the catalogue.

EXPLANATION OF CATALOGUING PRACTICE

FOR PICTURES, DRAWINGS, PRINTS AND MINIATURES

Terms used in this catalogue have the meanings ascribed to them below. Please note that all statements in this catalogue as to authorship are made subject to the provisions of the Conditions of Sale and Limited Warranty. Buyers are advised to inspect the property themselves. Written condition reports are usually available on request.

Name(s) or Recognised Designation of an Artist without any Qualification

In Christie's opinion a work by the artist.

*"Attributed to ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion probably a work by the artist in whole or in part.

*"Studio of ..."/"Workshop of ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion a work executed in the studio or workshop of the artist, possibly under his supervision.

*"Circle of ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion a work of the period of the artist and showing his influence.

*"Follower of ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion a work executed in the artist's style but not necessarily by a pupil.

*"Manner of ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion a work executed in the artist's style but of a later date.

*"After ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion a copy (of any date) of a work of the artist.

"Signed ..."/"Dated ..."/

"Inscribed ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion the work has been signed/inscribed by the artist.

"With signature ..."/"With date ..."/

"With inscription ..."

In Christie's qualified opinion the signature/date/inscription appears to be by a hand other than that of the artist.

The date given for Old Master, Modern and Contemporary Prints is the date (or approximate date when prefixed with 'circa') on which the matrix was worked and not necessarily the date when the impression was printed or published.

*This term and its definition in this Explanation of Cataloguing Practice are a qualified statement as to authorship. While the use of this term is based upon careful study and represents the opinion of specialists, Christie's and the consignor assume no risk, liability and responsibility for the authenticity of authorship of any lot in this catalogue described by this term, and the Limited Warranty shall not be available with respect to lots described using this term.

POST 1950 FURNITURE

All items of post-1950 furniture included in this sale are items either not originally supplied for use in a private home or now offered solely as works of art. These items may not comply with the provisions of the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 and 1993, the 'Regulations'). Accordingly, these items should not be used as furniture in your home in their current condition. If you do intend to use such items for this purpose, you must first ensure that they are reupholstered, restuffed and/or recovered (as appropriate) in order that they comply with the provisions of the Regulations.

STORAGE AND COLLECTION

STORAGE AND COLLECTION

Please note that at our discretion some lots may be moved immediately after the sale to our storage facility at Momart Logistics Warehouse: Units 9-12, E10 Enterprise Park, Argall Way, Leyton, London E10 7DQ. At King Street lots are available for collection on any weekday, 9.00 am to 4.30 pm. Collection from Momart is strictly by appointment only. We advise that you inform the sale administrator at least 48 hours in advance of collection so that they can arrange with Momart. However, if you need to contact Momart directly: Tel: +44 (0)20 7426 3000 email: pcandauctionteam@momart.co.uk.

PAYMENT

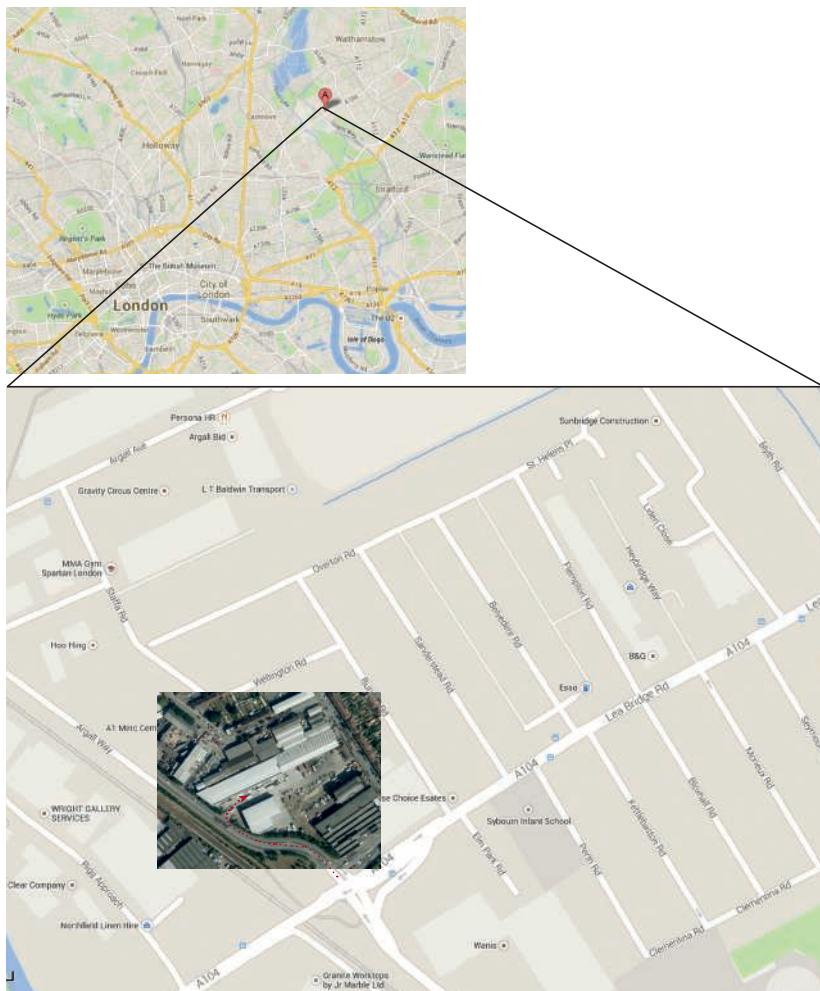
Storage charges may be paid in advance or at the time of collection from King Street. Lots may only be released from Momart on production of the 'Collection Order' from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1Y 6QT. The removal and/or storage by Momart of any lots will be subject to their standard Conditions of Business, copies of which are available from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1Y 6QT. Lots will not be released until all outstanding charges due to Christie's are settled.

STORAGE CHARGES

CHARGES PER LOT	LARGE OBJECTS/PICTURES	SMALL OBJECTS/PICTURES
1-28 days after the auction	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
29th day onwards: Storage per day	£5.00	£2.50

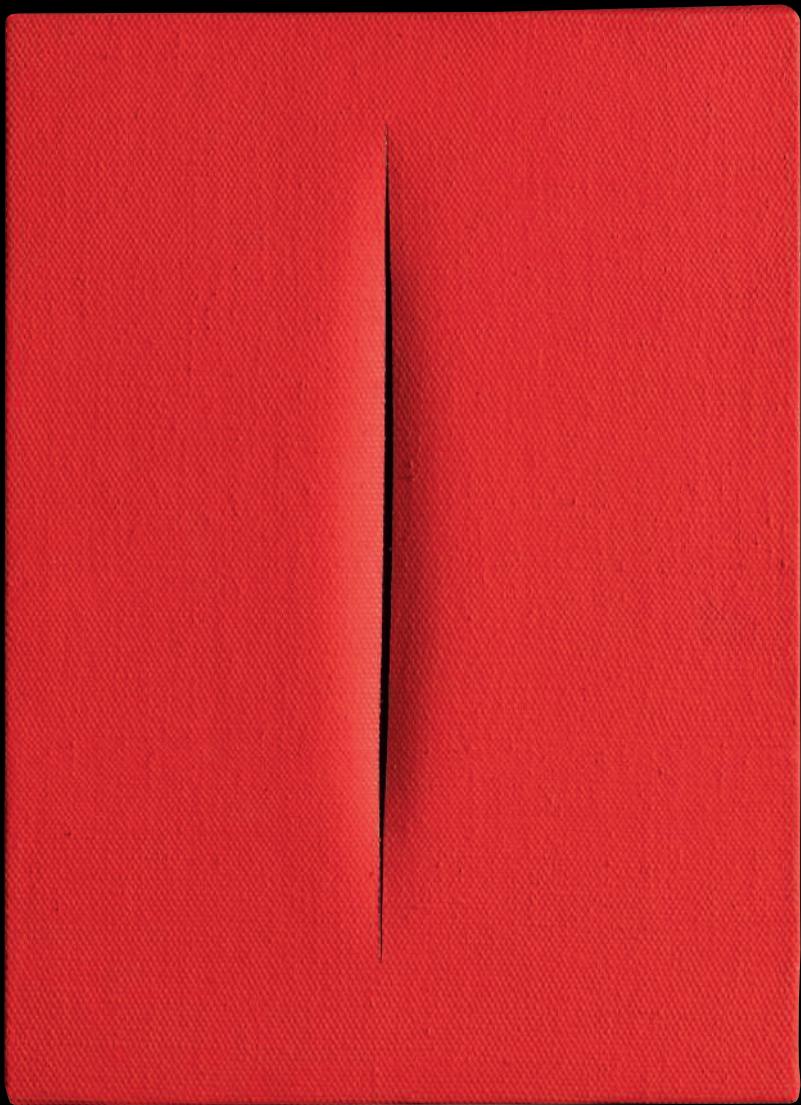
All charges exclusive of VAT.

Storage will be free of charge until 5.00 pm on the 28th day following the auction. Thereafter the charges set out above will be payable.



MOMART
Moved by Art

Units 9-12, E10 Enterprise Park,
Argall Way, Leyton,
London E10 7DQ
tel: +44 (0)20 7426 3000
email: pcandauctionteam@momart.co.uk



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED EUROPEAN COLLECTION

LUCIO FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto Spaziale, Attesa

waterpaint on canvas

13 x 9½in. (33 x 24cm.)

Executed in 1967

£400,000-600,000

UP CLOSE

AN EVENING AUCTION OF
MASTERPIECES ON A SMALL SCALE

London, King Street, 3 October 2017

VIEWING

26 September – 3 October 2017

8 King Street

London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Alessandro Diotallevi

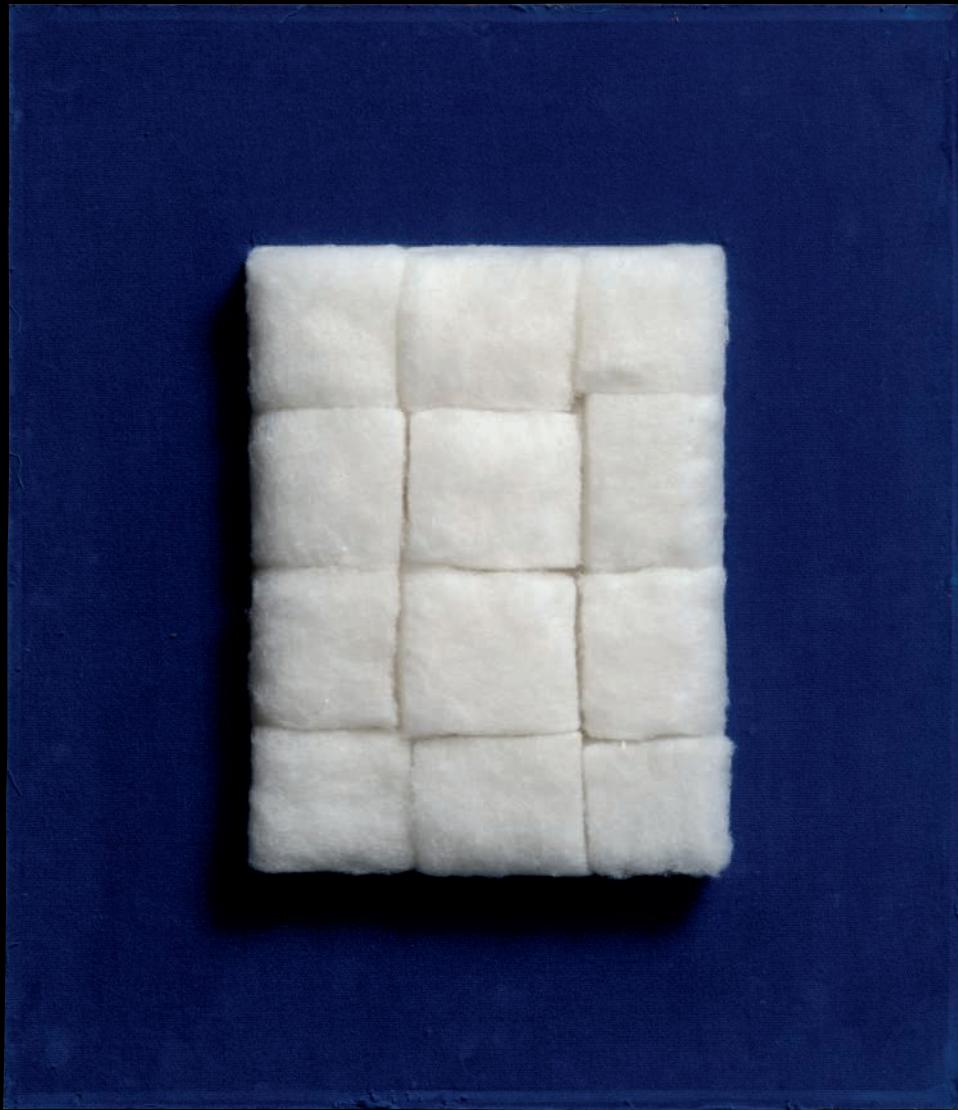
adiotallevi@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7389 2954

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price. See Section D
of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue



CHRISTIE'S



PROPERTY FROM A DISTINGUISHED EUROPEAN COLLECTION
PIERO MANZONI (1933-1963)

Achrome

cotton-wool squares

overall: 15 1/8 x 13in. (38.4 x 33.2cm.)

cotton: 8 x 6in. (20.4 x 15.3cm.)

Executed circa 1960

£120,000-180,000

UP CLOSE

AN EVENING AUCTION OF
MASTERPIECES ON A SMALL SCALE

London, King Street, 3 October 2017

VIEWING

26 September - 3 October 2017

8 King Street

London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Alessandro Diotallevi

adiotallevi@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7389 2954

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price. See Section D
of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue



CHRISTIE'S



ROBERT RYMAN (B. 1930)

United

oil on canvas with black oxide bolts and fasteners

canvas: 53½ x 53½in. (135 x 135cm.)

overall: 55¾ x 53½in. (141.3 x 135cm.)

Painted in 1976

£1,800,000–2,500,000

POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART
EVENING AUCTION

London, King Street, 6 October 2017

VIEWING

30 September – 6 October 2017

8 King Street

London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Katharine Arnold

karnold@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7389 2024

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price. See Section D
of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

CHRISTIE'S



GÜNTHER UECKER (B. 1930)

Riss (1) (Rupture (1))

bond, plaster and nails on canvas laid on board

118 1/8 x 24 x 6 1/4in. (300.7 x 61 x 16cm.)

Executed in 2000

GÜNTHER UECKER (B. 1930)

Riss (2) (Rupture (2))

bond, plaster and nails on canvas laid on board

118 1/8 x 24 x 6 1/4in. (300.7 x 61 x 16cm.)

Executed in 2000

ABOUT THE LINE

AN EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE POWER
OF THE LINE IN 20TH AND 21ST CENTURY ART

EXHIBITION

28 September - 24 November 2017

Christie's Mayfair

103 New Bond Street

London W1S 1ST

CONTACT

Cristian Albu

calbu@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7752 3006

ABOUT
THE
LINE

CHRISTIE'S



LUCIO FONTANA (1899-1968)

Concetto spaziale

oil on canvas

28¾ x 23½in. (73 x 60cm.)

Executed in 1962

£180,000-250,000

POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART

DAY AUCTION

London, King Street, 7 October 2017

VIEWING

30 September – 6 October 2017

8 King Street

London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Zoë Klemme

zklemme@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7389 2249

Alexandra Werner

awerner@christies.com

+44 (0) 20 7389 2713

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price. See Section D
of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

CHRISTIE'S



GIO PONTI (1891-1979)
A RARE AND IMPORTANT LOW TABLE
curly maple veneer, walnut, painted wood, glass top
Circa 1953
£80,000-120,000

**MASTERPIECES OF
DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY**
London, King Street, 3 October 2017

VIEWING
26 September – 3 October 2017
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT
Simon Andrews
sandrews@christies.com
+44 (0) 20 7752 3380

Other fees apply in addition to the hammer price. See Section D
of our Conditions of Sale at the back of the Auction Catalogue

**MASTERPIECES
of DESIGN
and PHOTOGRAPHY**

CHRISTIE'S



GIO PONTI (1891-1979)
A RARE SET OF THREE MODULAR COFFEE TABLES
executed by Giordano Chiesa, marble, tubular brass
Circa 1945
Estimate £30,000- £40,000

DESIGN

London, King Street, 18 October 2017

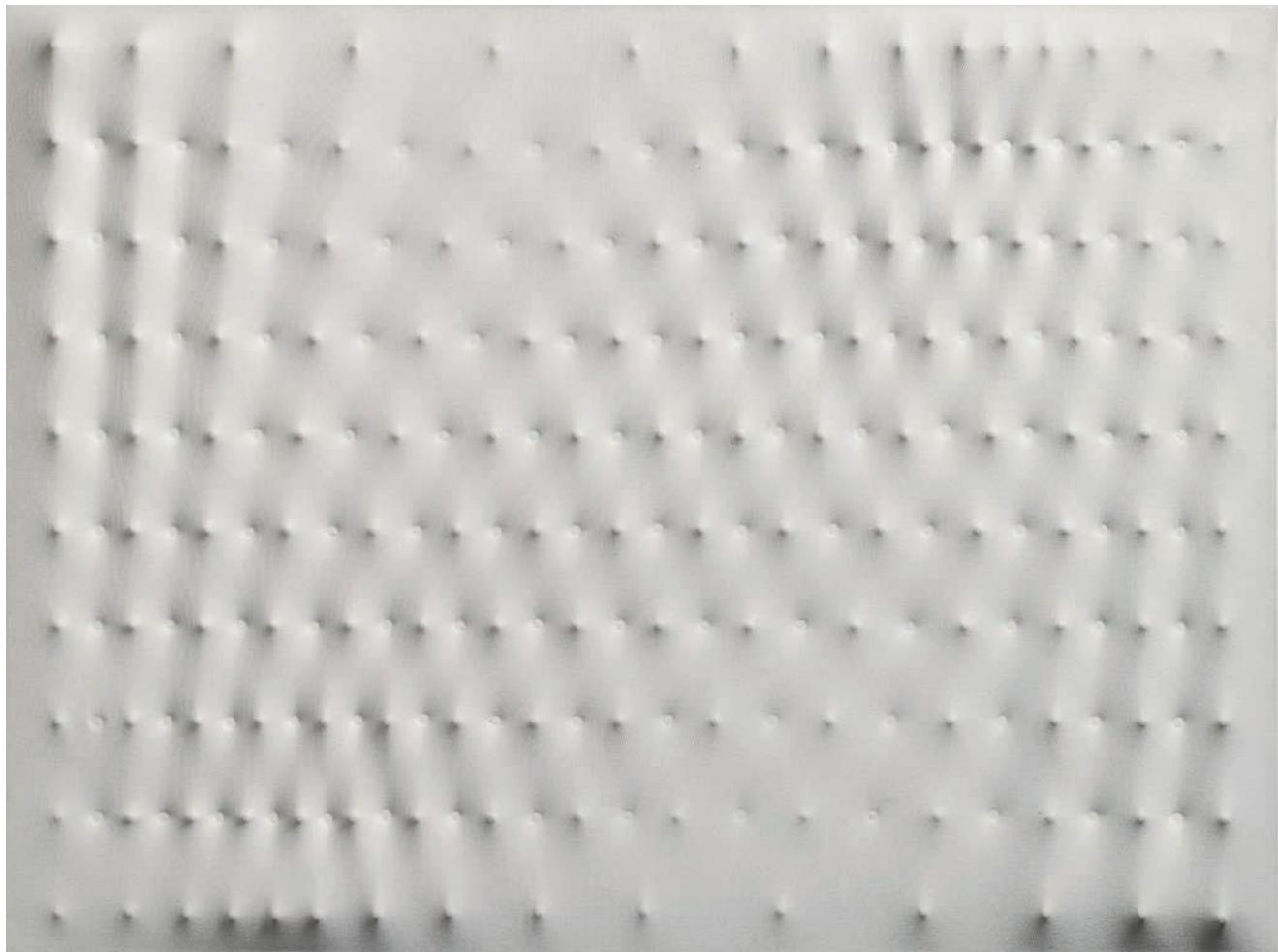
VIEWING

13 – 17 October 2017
8 King Street
London SW1Y 6QT

CONTACT

Raffaella Goffredi
rgoffredi@christies.com
+44 (0) 20 7752 3015

CHRISTIE'S



ENRICO CASTELLANI (B. 1930)

Superficie bianca

acrylic on canvas

60x80cm

Executed in 1981

€150,000-200,000

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VOG

INDEX

A

Agnetti, V 104, 119
Angeli, F 102
Anselmo, G 118

B

Boetti, A 103, 109
Burri, A 112, 115, 117

C

Cattelan, M 131

D

Dorazio, P 125

F

Fontana, L 106, 111, 113-114, 116, 121, 1

M

Magnelli, A 122
Marini, M 123-124
Melotti, F 107

P

Pistoletto, M 108, 120

S

Scarpitta, S 105
Schifano, M 101
Spallotti, E 130

U

Uncini, G 110



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