

Press Release

BIANCO NERO COLORE CHIUSO APERTO
[White Black Colour Closed Open]
Accardi, Capogrossi, Reimondo

Mazzoleni, Turin

20 April – 17 June 2023

Private View: Thursday 20 April 2022, 12-8pm

*The dream of a perfect language did not only obsess European culture. The story of the confusion of tongues, and of the attempt to redeem its loss through the rediscovery or invention of a language common to all humanity, can be found in every culture (Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, Blackwell Publishers, 1995)*

Mazzoleni Turin presents *BIANCO NERO COLORE CHIUSO APERTO*. *Accardi, Capogrossi, Reimondo*, an exhibition dedicated to the research on form and language by three artists belonging to different generations. Following dissimilar paths, **Carla Accardi** (1924 - 2014), **Giuseppe Capogrossi** (1900 - 1972) and **David Reimondo** (b. 1973) explore the use of sign elements capable of evoking – or condensing – relevant symbolic meanings and references into tangible objects. In their works, the *sign* takes on meaning not only for the communities and the historical moment for which it was produced, but it rises to universal values, both material and symbolical, surpassing temporal limits.

Carla Accardi was the only woman to sign the *Manifesto Forma 1* in 1947. The origins of her practice reside in the newly unified Italy of 1946, when the art scene was marked by the dispute between figuration and abstraction. The formal/informal dialectic encountered Accardi's private, intimate universe as well as her international inspirations, which spanned French, American, but also Oriental and Egyptian art. The result is a connection between vision and experience that takes the form of sophisticated **intersections of positive and negative**. In her paintings from the 1950s, Accardi reverses the tradition of visual writing by applying white on black instead of black on white, overturning formal and chromatic hierarchies.

In the 1970s, the free movement of the sign – enriched with colour and resulting from complex aesthetic elaborations – was transformed into modules that section the surface of the work, as in *Scacchiera verdeoro* (1974). Here the sinuous interweaving of the lines takes the form of a **narrative chessboard**, where the positive and the negative alternate even more explicitly than before. Starting from the 1980s and during the following decades, the movement of lines and signs returns to be elusive, with fresher chromatic notes alternating with absence of paint and the use of rough canvas (*Fonda Notte*, 1988), or with “gothic”, almost dancing interweaving elements (*Argento su cobalto*, 2005):

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"the transformations of my works are the result of a stream of thought, belonging to my era, which I felt coming to the surface" (Accardi, 1986-87 in Germano Celant, 1997, p. 408).

In the late 1940s, **Giuseppe Capogrossi** – an artist from the previous generation than Carla Accardi – changes the register of his research after an initial figurative and then neo-cubist phase. In January 1950 he exhibits his *Superfici* at the Galleria del Secolo in Rome, in which his **distinctive comb sign** appears for the first time. This unique sign – **a mysterious alphabet of an unknown language** – would become the emblem of all his subsequent production. The sign meets the space of the surface in a dialectic of black and white played out in a rigorous two-dimensionality. The structure of signs remains the same but is freely traced and repeated in different graphic and chromatic combinations, each time characterised by a different rhythm, line, and definition.

After exhibiting in Rome, Capogrossi showcases his works first at the Il Milione gallery in Milan and subsequently at the Cavallino gallery and at the Biennale in Venice, before gaining international recognition from the early 1950s onwards. "*The individual signs refer, especially when arranged in series, to alphabets of languages that we are unable to interpret, even when the aspect of order and sequence is so strong as to evoke the presence of a meaning*" (Roland Penrose, 1957). The sequential pattern of the sign concatenations suggests that of writing or musical scores; the colour intervenes as an element of pause, as in *Surface 127* (1955), to then conquer a large part of the pictorial space and interact with the sign continuum, such as in *Superficie XXX* (1962).

"New languages generate new worlds."

One of the landing points of **David Reimondo's** work is the creation of new languages that tell the complexity of the human thought through the use of symbols. *Etimografia* (2014-2018) is a macro-project featuring 'symbols' created by the artist, which lead to the production of new graphemes and phonemes. Wooden sculptures painted in black printer ink exist in continuous aggregation and disintegration like modular cells that unhinge the "iconographic cages" that belong to us. These "*cultural de-training exercises*" arise from the artistic gesture: Reimondo transforms his hand-made drawings into tools that allows viewers to elude the conditionings of the centuries-old legacies that have formed - and still form - the human being with their language and knowledge.

In the two works *Video calligrafia* (2019) and *Atto di Pensiero* (2017) the symbiosis and duality between sign and nature; body and thought; tangible and immaterial are also explored by Reimondo in his artistic gesture: through the use of different mediums – projected, digitized, but also hand-cut and built with pinpoint precision – the works are powerful experiences that engage the viewer on physical and cognitive levels. The correlation between cognitive and sensory experience reaches its greatest intensity in *La materia del significato* (The Matter of Meaning) (2021). Cotton, polystyrene, paper, feathers, sugar, glass, quartz, coral, gold, wool, fabric, pigment, marble are just some of the elements that make up the 40 symbols that shape the artist's reflection on the individual, creating a symbiosis between thought and formal expression.

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Mazzoleni is a leading Post-War Italian and contemporary art gallery based in London and Turin. With over 35 years of activity, Mazzoleni focuses on a museum-calibre exhibition programme and participates in the main international art fairs, including Art Basel, Frieze, and TEFAF, as well as Artissima, Artefiera and Miart. Most recently, the gallery has expanded its reach towards new art scenes with its participation in Frieze Seoul, Art Abu Dhabi and Art Dubai. The Mazzoleni collection is exhibited in museums and institutions worldwide, such as: the Centre Pompidou and Palais de Tokyo in Paris; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in New York; the Smithsonian Institution in Washington; The State Ermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; Tate and the Estorick Collection in London, as well as Museo del Novecento in Florence, the GNAM in Rome, MADRE Museum in Naples, Triennale Milano and Palazzo Reale in Milan, and the Venice Biennale. Mazzoleni represents the Estate of Agostino Bonalumi.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Exhibition: **BIANCO NERO COLORE CHIUSO APERTO. Accardi, Capogrossi, Reimondo**

Location: Mazzoleni, Turin

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