

GALLERIA ENRICO ASTUNI

Bologna

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PoliArte (L'Arte delle Arti)

Gabriele Basilico, Alberto Garutti, Ugo La Pietra, Corrado Levi, Alessandro Mendini

Curated by
Giacinto Di Pietrantonio

27 July – 8 September 2019

Location

Palazzo Bracci-Pagani, Corso G. Matteotti 97, Fano

Press Conference Thursday 25 July 12am

Palazzo Bracci-Pagani

Opening Saturday 27 luglio 7pm

Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Fano - Sala di rappresentanza, Via Montevecchio n.114, Fano

Saturday July 27th at 7 pm will open in Fano at Palazzo Bracci-Pagani the exhibition *PoliArte (L'Arte delle Arti)*. The exhibition curated by Giacinto di Pietrantonio is organized by Galleria Enrico Astuni Bologna with the support of Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Fano - Sistema Museale di Palazzo Bracci Pagani; Comune di Fano Assessorato Cultura e Beni Culturali e Accademi degli Scomposti e Accademia Vitruvio Fanum; Generali.

As the curator writes, this is an exhibition of five artists linked by the fact that they all studied architecture at the *Polytechnic* University in the *metro-polis* of Milan, but with only the partial intention, or none at all, to follow a career in architecture. For various reasons, two of them have apparently never practised architecture (Basilico, Garutti), while the other three (La Pietra, Levi and Mendini) have done so in such an unorthodox manner that they, like Garutti and Basilico, cannot be described simply as architects but rather as *polyvalent* artists, which is precisely the capacity they assume in this *polymorphic* exhibition. As a consequence, the exhibition can also be considered a reflection on the status of the arts, which in Italy, especially in the past, was frequently *polymorphic*, in other words free from the restrictions of specialisation that have become customary in contemporary art. Viewed through *polyfocal* lenses, it is clear that all five are inheritors of the Renaissance, a time when artists engaged in a range of arts and were therefore *polychrome*, *polymorphic*, *polycentric*, *poly-Italic*, and so forth. This approach has never been entirely abandoned and was indeed exemplified by the *Dioscuri* of the Italian art world – the de Chirico-Savinio brothers – with the former, Giorgio, the *Pictor Optimus*, concentrating on painting, while the latter, Alberto, pursued artistic, musical, literary and critical *poly-creativity*. A similar case was true of the two artists Balla and Depero, who proposed the *poly-totality* of the *Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe*. This *polyvalent* and *polytechnic* tradition also embraces opposing architects such as Le Corbusier, the modernist “starchitect” who also

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painted, and the neoclassical Gio Ponti, who placed visual art at the centre of his architectural approach. Moreover, it should be noted that in the *metro-polis* of Milan, art is both viewed through, and related to architecture, namely space and the environment. Not by chance this leads us to Lucio Fontana, the master of Spatialism who offered his art to serve the Arts and therefore our existence. It is on this relationship between Art and the Arts, Art and Life, or the Arts and Lives that we intend to focus through the work of Basilico, Garutti, La Pietra, Levi and Mendini, who, with their *poly-artistic* ability, give us art, life and the world.

The **press conference** take place on **Thursday 25 July, 12am** at **Palazzo Bracci-Pagani**, Corso G. Matteotti 97, Fano.

The **opening** take place on **Saturday 27 luglio 7 pm** at **Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Fano - Sala di rappresentanza**, Via Montevecchio n.114, Fano. An exhibition visit will follow at **Palazzo Bracci-Pagani**, Corso G. Matteotti 97, Fano.

Speakers: exhibition curator Giacinto di Pietrantonio; Gallery director Mr. Enrico Astuni; Mayor Massimo Seri; President of the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Fano Dott. Giorgio Gagnola; President of the Accademia degli Scomposti Avv. Luciano Filippo Bracci; President of the Accademia Vitruvio Fanum Dott. Luciano Roberti; art historian and curator Fabio Cavallucci; critic and contemporary art theorist Marco Senaldi; architect and researcher Beppe Finessi.

PoliArte (L'Arte delle Arti)

Gabriele Basilico, Alberto Garutti, Ugo La Pietra, Corrado Levi, Alessandro Mendini

27.07 – 08.09 2019

Location and Opening Hours

Palazzo Bracci-Pagani, Corso G. Matteotti 97, Fano

From Tuesday to Sunday 21-24

Short biographies

Gabriele Basilico (Milan 1944–2013) was one of Italy's most famous photographers.

After graduating in architecture in 1973, Basilico undertook the continuous work of documenting the city and urban landscape. His first photographic project was *Milano, ritratti di fabbriche 1978-80* [Milan: Portraits of Factories 1978-80], a substantial body of work with the Milanese industrial suburbs as its subject. With his project *Bord de mer* (1984-85), he was the only Italian to take part in Mission Photographique de la DATAR, the extensive French government mandate that entrusted an international group of photographers to document the transformation of the French landscape. Over the years, Basilico's photography explored a range of cities, among them Milan, Beirut, Rio de Janeiro, Jerusalem, Moscow, Istanbul, New York, Shanghai and San Francisco. In 1991 he took part in the mission to photograph Beirut, devastated by fifteen years of civil war. During his life Gabriele Basilico produced and participated in numerous documentary projects in Italy and abroad, which prompted various exhibitions and books. His work goes well beyond the boundaries of mere documentary photography and is an obligatory point of reference for the fields of photography and urban planning today.

Alberto Garutti (Galbiate, Lecco, 1948) lives and works in Milan.

One of the most important Italian artists on the contemporary scene, Garutti began exhibiting his work in 1974 and since the latter half of the 1970s has explored the narrative, immaterial dimension of an artwork. In the course of his career his work has shown an increasing attention to the relationship between the production of objects and their interaction with public space. Not only is Garutti the creator of some of the most effective public art projects in Italy and Europe, he is also the interpreter of a still little-known period of Italian art, which from the late 1970s on has revisited the previous generation's conceptual and figurative matrix, but in an autonomous, lateral manner. In this way he has been able to relate these earlier experiences

to the currents of subsequent decades, marked by the impact of relational, multi-authored and self-generated forms of art. Garutti has exhibited in many Italian and international galleries and has also taken part in numerous group exhibitions in public spaces, exploring the relationship between art, city and landscape. These include *Arte all'Arte* (2000 and 2005 editions), and *Luna Park* at Villa Manin, Codroipo (2005), curated by Francesco Bonami. In 2012 a public work commissioned by Hines Italia was inaugurated in Piazza Gae Aulenti in the Porta Nuova district of Milan. In the same year a first retrospective of his work was held at the PAC (Pavilion of Contemporary Art) in Milan, curated by Paola Nicolin and Hans Ulrich Obrist.

Ugo La Pietra (Bussi sul Tirino, Pescara, 1938) lives and works in Milan.

La Pietra is an artist, architect, designer and musician whose work since 1962 has focused on clarifying and defining the relationship between individuals and their environment. At the start of this process he developed tools of knowledge (models of understanding) aimed at transforming the traditional “artwork-spectator” relationship. He has worked inside and outside specific disciplines, always describing himself as a “researcher in the visual arts”, an anomalous and non-mainstream artist and therefore difficult to classify. His work since 1960 has crossed a variety of artistic currents: abstraction, conceptual and environmental art, social art, narrative art, artist cinema, new writing, extra media, neo-eclecticism, architecture and radical design. He has communicated and disseminated his thoughts and experiences through intensive didactic and editorial activity. He has promoted research groups (Gruppo del Cenobio, Gruppo La Lepre Lunare, Global Tools, Cooperativa Maroncelli, Fabbrica di Comunicazione, Libero Laboratorio) and exhibition activities involving a large number of individuals, among them artists, architects and designers. Ugo La Pietra has held more than 900 solo and group exhibitions. He participated in the Venice Biennale in 1970, 1978 and 1980, and in the Milan Triennale in 1968, 1972, 1979-80-81, 1993, 1996 and 2007. He has also exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Museum of Contemporary Craft in New York, Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara, and many other venues.

Corrado Levi, born in Turin, lives and works in Milan.

Artist, architect, writer, poet and critic, Corrado Levi has always been considered a multifaceted, multidisciplinary figure in Italian art and culture, assuming many roles with great skill. In the 1980s Levi made his mark as an influential promoter of culture, curating a number of exhibitions hosted in the Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea. Since then, both his own solo exhibitions and the group shows he curates are events that consistently arouse curiosity and interest not only in art but also in fashion, design and communication, due to the constantly innovative artistic and cultural context they present. A tireless experimenter, for many years Levi has been running a design laboratory for the Milan Faculty of Architecture, as well as making art and designing architecture. Corrado Levi's multiform work embodies recurring references and evocations of the words and images of other artists in the form of tributes, dedications, quotations and interpretations, directed by his passion and desire to deconstruct rules and signs with lightness and irony. In his most recent work, Corrado Levi's distinctive style emerges in both the essential lines of the figures immersed in the white canvas and in the site-specific installation, where the object loses its function and is exposed to new interpretations.

Alessandro Mendini (Milan, 1931 - 2019) has pursued a distinguished career for over forty years, embracing design, architecture and art; he is also a renowned international architect, designer and critic. His activities have ranged from the creation of objects, furniture, environments, paintings, installations and architecture, to a substantial body of theoretical work produced with the famous Studio Alchimia, and with his brother Francesco, also an architect. The definition of several theoretical concepts concerning historical design phenomena and movements – among them “postmodern design” and “re-design” – are associated with Mendini, whose contribution since the 1970s has been crucial for the quality of its expression and

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critical analysis. Alessandro Mendini was the director of *Casabella* (1970–1976) and of *Domus* (1980–1985 and 2010–2011). He also founded the magazines *Modo* (1977) and *Olo* (1988). In addition to aspects relating to architecture, he has also designed collections of furniture and objects, among them the famous *Proust Armchair* (1978). He is also known for his installations and re-designs, demonstrating a multifaceted career and a distinctive, interdisciplinary approach to design. Together with his brother Francesco, in 1989 he opened the Atelier Mendini in Milan, which designed the Alessi premises in Omegna, the new Olympic swimming pool in Trieste, a number of underground stations, and was responsible for the restoration of Villa Comunale in Naples. Together with Francesco Mendini, he has also taken part in several editions of the Venice Biennale.