



CORTESI GALLERY

SPAZIO TOTALE: Art in its purest form

from Lucio Fontana to Günther Uecker

26 September – 13 November 2024

Cortesi Gallery, Via Nassa 62, Lugano

Cortesi Gallery opens the new exhibition SPAZIO TOTALE, offering a journey through the main artistic movements of the second half of the twentieth century. This period, marked by searching for new ideas and breaking traditional artistic forms, explores a vision of art free and devoid of expressive limits.

The exhibition celebrates the expressive purity of white and its materiality, providing visitors with a deep exploration of art through total abstraction. The show's focus is the power of the monochrome surface and the artists who have explored various techniques, materials, textures, and forms, uniquely highlighting responsiveness to light and shadow.

The legacy of informal art, where gesture becomes an expression of the artist's emotion and the spatial revolution by Lucio Fontana, lead us to reflect on the possibility of representing non-figurative painting. At the same time, the viewer's personal and collective memory, in the act of observation, leads to the search for an imaginative meaning recognizable in the previous experience. From here, the true revolution: the ability to activate a vision that goes beyond recognition, focusing on the essence of form and matter. SPAZIO TOTALE aims to guide the visitor towards a free, authentic and direct experience, introducing an immediate encounter with the very essence of the work.

In this perspective, the exhibition offers a selection of works by Italian and International artists who have been able to interpret the theme of non-representation painting in an original and personal way, offering an experience where there is nothing more to say: there is just to be, just to live.

Thus, Agostino Bonalumi and Enrico Castellani undertake the path opened by the master of spatialism, developing an in-depth investigation into the two-dimensionality of the canvas and exploring its multiple spatial variations. Castellani, with his predilection for white, embodies the absence of colour and emotion, further radicalising the concept of space introduced by Lucio Fontana.

At the same time, Gruppo T, represented by Gianni Colombo and Grazia Varisco, develops research focused on programmed and kinetic art that explores optical phenomena and perceptual dynamics. Their pieces actively engage the viewer, creating works that emerge from the variation of the image over time.

On an international level, the ZERO group, with artists such as Heinz Mack, Günther Uecker, Herman de Vries and Gerhard von Graevenitz, proclaim the beginning of a new era. This democratic and impersonal art expresses itself through light and movement, using everyday materials to create an anti-pictorial artistic experience accessible to all.



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The exhibition is also enriched with the work of Gianfranco Pardi, an artist who finds it difficult to categorised into a pre-established movement but who shares an interest in materiality and form. His *Architectures* explore the balance between chromatic backgrounds and steel rods, proposing an immediate art in which the formal aspects are the structural components that become aesthetic elements of the work.

On the traditional painting front, a canvas with a classic format by Giuseppe Santomaso has been selected. The Venetian artist, spiritual heir of abstract expressionism and informal art, dedicates part of his career to exploring the potential of matter rather than gesture. Thus, starting from the Seventies, but more copiously in the Eighties, he experimented with the formal representation of the materiality of Venetian architecture, favouring a pragmatic painting where the representation of the subject lives independently of the titling. The reference to the study of form and matter becomes more explicit and structured.

The journey ends with the choice to present a rare fibreglass sculpture by Arnaldo Pomodoro made available for the occasion by the Arnaldo Pomodoro Foundation. In this innovative material, the artist finds great possibilities for expression. The work explores the relationship that the Maestro has always sought with writing. The reference and the meaning contain a story, a thought that alludes to modern communication. A world of reading possibilities that act as a medium for a universal message transmitted through the simplicity and purity of the material. The interaction introduces a symbolic moment of anthropological memory, where the technological joins the archaic element.

In an era in which art seeks the exceptional nature of emotion, SPAZIO TOTALE returns to pragmatism, offering a physical and concrete reality ready to be experienced in its immediacy. The artists selected for the exhibition invite us to explore the essence of their works not for what they represent but for what they are: a study of materials, forms, and the dynamics of perception, a detail of a broader and more complex composition.