

Arnaldo Pomodoro: il movimento possibile

In collaboration with Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro

22 March – 28 June 2024

Cortesi Gallery, Via Morigi 8, 20123 Milan

At its Milanese site in Palazzo Morigi, the Cortesi Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition **Arnaldo Pomodoro: il movimento possibile**, curated by Alberto Salvadori, realized in collaboration with the Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro. The exhibition is a fascinating incursion into the extraordinary career of one of the most significant artists of our time, through an itinerary exploring less well-known aspects of the sculptor's work. Both the bronze sculptures representing the elementary forms of geometric solids and works with various formats and materials are present in the exhibition, the latter enabling Pomodoro's research to be examined in constant relations starting from the micro-dimension, from the planning and realization of the first jewellery items, to interventions of an architectural and landscaping nature.

The exhibition offers the public a unique opportunity to explore the beginnings and the most important stages of the artist's career, for the first time presenting a group of previously unseen works realized starting from the second half of the 1950s.

Since the very beginnings of his career, Arnaldo Pomodoro has always been present at the development of the artistic research and movements of his own time, perfectly capturing its *Zeitgeist*. Those years were in fact characterized by his enthusiastic, intense, and prolific stamina, by meetings, travels and acts of co-operation. His first trip to the United States in 1959 proved to be a fundamental moment during which Pomodoro realized that innovation was permeating the artistic scene of the West Coast, with reference to Los Angeles and San Francisco, which a few years later would become the central pole of his activities.

The result of this insight can be clearly seen in the wall-mounted works full of internal energy - which rework languages close to him, such as the informal or the intrinsic gesture in Burri's matterism - also through the use of and experimentation with materials that are heterodox to the tradition.

The exhibition offers visitors the possibility of understanding how Pomodoro is able to find himself at ease in any context of forms and dimensions. From the two-dimensionality of wall-mounted works such as *Presenza interrotta* and *Mondana e la sua ombra* to the three-dimensionality of *Colonne del viaggiatore*, including jewellery and ornaments, to landscaping interventions such as the *Progetto per il nuovo cimitero di Urbino*.

The exhibition itinerary also gives an account of friendships and collaborations with poets such as Paolo Volponi, Attilio Bertolucci and Emilio Villa, thanks to extraordinary artist books that show how much narration and writing have always been at the heart of his research and his work. Also presented in the exhibition are two experimental films that came about from the artist's urgent desire to express his thought and artistic work: *Arnaldo Pomodoro makes a sphere* (1968) made at Stanford by filmmaker Joe Green, and *Shaping negation* (1970) realized in collaboration with Francesco Leonetti and Ugo Mulas.

The exhibition project is intended to underline the figure of Arnaldo Pomodoro as an artist with a Renaissance spirit, open to and taking part in his contemporary world and its Promethean transformations. *Arnaldo Pomodoro: possible movement* offers the opportunity to go on a fascinating journey through an extraordinary career, always in movement and continually evolving, celebrating the work of one of the greatest sculptors of our time.



Arnaldo Pomodoro was born in Morciano di Romagna in 1926 and spent his childhood in Pesaro. He has lived and worked in Milan since 1954.

In the 1950s Pomodoro's production was distinguished for its creation of high-reliefs characterized by an unusual sculptural "writing", unique and recognizable, variously interpreted by the most important critics of the time.

In the early 1960s, on the other hand, he moved into three-dimensional work and focused his research on the geometric form: spheres, disks, pyramids, cones, columns, cubes – all made of polished bronze – are lacerated, corroded, deeply hollowed, with the intention of destroying their perfection and discovering the mystery concealed inside them. The formal placing together of the polished perfection of their volumes and the chaotic complexity of their interiors became a constant in Pomodoro's production.

In 1966 a sphere measuring three and a half metres in diameter was commissioned from him for the Expo in Montreal. Today positioned outside Palazzo della Farnesina in Rome, it marks his passage towards monumental sculpture. This was the first of numerous works by the artist to be sited in public spaces of symbolic importance: in many city squares (Milan, Copenhagen, Brisbane, Los Angeles, Darmstadt), outside Trinity College in Dublin, at Mills College in California, in the Cortile della Pigna at the Vatican Museums, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, in the PepsiCo sculpture park in Purchase, and in those of the Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, just outside New York City.

Arnaldo Pomodoro has created many environmental works, ranging from the *Progetto per il Nuovo Cimitero di Urbino* in 1973, dug into a hill in Urbino, which was actually never realized due to local issues and disagreements, to *Moto terreno solare*, a long concrete mural for The Symposium of Minoa in Marsala, as well as the Sala d'Armi for the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan, the *Ingresso nel labirinto* environment, devoted to the epic of Gilgamesh, which he completed in 2011, and *Carapace*, the wine cellar in Bevagna realized for the Lunelli family.

Since the beginning of his activities, Pomodoro has devoted his energies to set design, creating "spectacular machines" for numerous theatrical works, from Greek tragedy to melodrama, from contemporary theatre to music. To reaffirm his commitment to and his deep fascination for the theme of narration and writing, the artist has been open to numerous collaborations with poets and scholars resulting in the creation of extraordinary artist books. He has also engaged in designing precious jewellery items, which have been immortalized by some of the most important contemporary photographers.

Memorable anthological exhibitions have consolidated his reputation as one of the most significant artists of our time. His touring exhibitions have travelled around Europe, the USA, Australia and Japan.

He has taught in the art departments of a number of US universities: Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley, Mills College.

He has been the recipient of numerous prestigious awards: the Sculpture Prizes at the Biennials of São Paulo (1963) and Venice (1964); the Imperial Praemium for Sculpture of the Japan Art Association in 1990 and the Lifetime Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Award from the International Sculpture Center in San Francisco (2008).