

Mazzoleni presents Agostino Bonalumi's "Struttura modulare bianca" at Art Basel Unlimited 2026

ART BASEL BASEL 2026 | Messe Basel, Messeplatz
Unlimited | U22

VIP Preview (by invitation only): Monday 15 June 2026

VIP Days: Tuesday 16 June, Wednesday 17 June 2026

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Bonalumi in his studio with "Struttura modulare bianca", 1970. Courtesy Archivio Bonalumi.

Marking the 40th anniversary of the gallery and in collaboration with Archivio Bonalumi, Mazzoleni is delighted to present *Struttura modulare bianca*, 1970, by Agostino Bonalumi at Art Basel Unlimited 2026.

Conceived in 1970 for the artist's solo room at the 35th Venice Biennale, *Struttura modulare bianca* is a vertical, modular structure that extends into the air through repetition and rhythm, combining serial structure and large-scale sculptural form.

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The monumental work was created during a period of intense interest in **environmental art**, following the landmark exhibition *Lo spazio dell'immagine* (Foligno, 1967), where Bonalumi exhibited alongside artists such as Lucio Fontana, Enrico Castellani, Luciano Fabro, Pino Pascali, Michelangelo Pistoletto, and Paolo Scheggi. This participation marked a turning point in the artist's practice and the viewer's role within the space.

At the **1970 Venice Biennale**, *Struttura modulare bianca* was installed as an environmental work articulated between ground and suspension, comprising 29 fiberglass and nitro modules, each 80x100x70 cm, and marking a fundamental milestone in Bonalumi's spatial and conceptual research. Rather than being conceived as a passive element, the work emerges as an autonomous organism capable of expanding into space. The choice of white serves as a **conceptual device**, eliminating colour as an expressive element, and focusing the attention on the dialectic between fullness and void, light and shadow, presence and suspension. The modularity produces a surprising visual complexity, allowing the work to be experienced and activated through the viewer's movement, which becomes part of the spatial device and sets its geomorphic vibration in motion.

Following its first presentation, the work was exhibited in different configurations, including in Lodi (1972), at the **12th Middelheim Biennale in Antwerp** (1973), and more recently at **Palazzo Reale in Milan** (2018) and at **Mazzoleni in Turin** (2023).

Giovanni and Anna Pia Mazzoleni first encountered Bonalumi's work in 1970, on the occasion of a solo exhibition at Galleria La Bussola in Turin. At the time, they were young collectors and began acquiring his works for their personal collection.

The opportunity to collaborate with the artist first arose in the early 2000s, when the gallery and the artist began a fruitful partnership that developed into a close friendship. This relationship continues to this day: **Mazzoleni represents the artist's estate, while the family oversees the Bonalumi archive.**

AGOSTINO BONALUMI

Born in Vimercate, Milan in 1935, Agostino Bonalumi studied technical design and mechanics and was a self-taught painter, showing his work from a young age.

In 1958, Agostino Bonalumi, Enrico Castellani and Piero Manzoni exhibited at Galleria Pater in Milan, followed by further shows in Rome and Lausanne. The following year Bonalumi and Castellani started making their first three-dimensional canvases, known as extroflexed or shaped canvases, developing the so-called "painting-object". In the 1960s, Bonalumi started developing his personal style and methodological approach with a series of works featuring "extroflexions" of the canvas, gradually refining the dialectic between volume and void, concave and convex. In 1961 at the Kasper Gallery in Lausanne, Bonalumi was one of the founding members of the Nuova Scuola Europea group and in 1965,

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Arturo Schwarz gave Bonalumi a solo show at his gallery in Milan, for which Gillo Dorfles wrote a catalogue essay.

In 1966, he began a long period of collaboration with the Galleria del Naviglio, Milan, which became his exclusive agent and in 1973 published, for Edizioni del Naviglio, a large monograph also edited by Gillo Dorfles. That same year, he was invited to the Venice Biennale with a group of works and, in 1970, with a solo room. He then spent a period of study and work in Mediterranean Africa and the United States, where he debuted with a solo show at the Bonino Gallery, New York. In 1967, he was invited to the São Paulo Biennale and, in 1968, to the Youth Biennale in Paris. In 1967, Bonalumi created his first environmental work, *Blu abitabile*, displayed at the show *Lo spazio dell'immagine* in Foligno. The following year, he presented another large-scale environment work, *Grande Nero*, for a solo show at the Museum am Ostwall in Dortmund. Bonalumi also worked in set design, creating the set and costumes for the ballet *Partita*, with a choreography by Susanna Egri and music by Goffredo Petrassi, performed at the Teatro Romano in Verona in 1970, and for the ballet *Rot*, staged in 1972 at the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome.

In 1979, he presented the environmental work *Dal giallo al bianco e dal bianco al giallo* in the exhibition *Pittura-Ambiente* at Palazzo Reale in Milan and in 1980 he staged a major retrospective at the Palazzo Te in Mantua, which covered his entire career. In 2001, he was awarded the Presidente della Repubblica Prize, which was celebrated with a solo show at the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome in 2002 and in 2003, the Institut Mathildenhöhe in Darmstadt mounted the solo show *Agostino Bonalumi: malerei in der dritten dimension*. Bonalumi never stopped evolving his research and this drove him to complete a cycle of bronze sculptures based on designs developed in the late 1960s. During the last period of his activity, his works were exhibited on a global scale, such as Brussels, Moscow, New York and Singapore. In summer 2013, he collaborated on a major exhibition in London, the opening of which he unfortunately did not live to see. Agostino Bonalumi died in Monza 2013.

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Mazzoleni is one of Italy's leading Modern and Contemporary Art galleries, with spaces in Turin, London and Milan, active for 40 years. The gallery presents museum-quality exhibitions with a focus on Post-War Italian art and collaborates closely with artists' archives, foundations, and leading contemporary artists, giving voice to today's artistic languages. Mazzoleni participates in the main international art fairs – Art Basel (Basel, Miami Beach and Hong Kong) and Frieze – and in Italy at Artissima, Artefiera and Miart. In recent years it has expanded towards new collecting scenes in the East, participating in Frieze Seoul and Art Abu Dhabi. Works from the gallery's collection have been exhibited in major museums and institutions worldwide, including Centre Pompidou and Palais de Tokyo (Paris); Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation (New York); Smithsonian Institution (Washington); State Hermitage Museum (St Petersburg); Tate and the Estorick Collection (London); Chengdu Biennale in China and Gwangju Biennale in South Korea; Museo del Novecento (Florence); GNAM (Rome); MADRE (Naples); Triennale Milano and Palazzo Reale (Milan); and the Venice Biennale.

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