

Press Release

**Lucio Fontana | Enrico Baj | Piero Manzoni**  
**Curated by Gaspare Luigi Marcone**

Viewing Room: 10 November -19 December 2020

Mazzoleni is delighted to launch the first edition of its online Viewing Room with the Turin group exhibition curated by Gaspare Luigi Marcone **Lucio Fontana | Enrico Baj | Piero Manzoni** on 10 November 2020. The viewing room brings together three undisputed masters of Post-War Italian Art, **Lucio Fontana** (1899-1968), **Enrico Baj** (1924-2003), and **Piero Manzoni** (1933-1963).

The presentation will be a homage to 1958, an important year in which the differing research of all three artists was displayed and published together. The exhibition is accompanied by the book by Marcone *Fontana Baj Manzoni 1958 – 2018*, published by Carlo Cambi editore, 2018.

In 1958, two exhibitions were presented in Italy under the title *Fontana Baj Manzoni*, both accompanied by a critical text by Luciano Anceschi. The first was held at the Galleria Bergamo in the city of Bergamo from the 4th to the 17th of January, the second at the Galleria del Circolo di Cultura in Bologna from the 23rd of March to the 8th of April that year. Almost certainly the Bologna exhibition was the first time in which **Manzoni** presented his new 'white works', subsequently entitled *Achromes*. Along with its importance to Manzoni's career, 1958 was also a very significant year for **Fontana's** research. Following the invention of the "holes" in 1949, the founder of Spatialism began to work on his first *Concetto spaziale Attese* featuring "cuts" in the canvas and in 1958 a room was devoted to his work at the Venice Biennale with an overview of his revolutionary approach. The September of that year saw the publication of the third issue of the "nuclear" periodical *Il Gesto* edited by **Baj**, Manzoni and Sergio Dangelo. The cover of the magazine, conceived by Fontana, was riddled with a series of "holes" while reproduced inside were the latest works by contemporary artists and poets (Gillo Dorfles, Jean Dubuffet, Marcel Duchamp, Asger Jorn and others).

The works on display will examine this key moment in art history with pieces from 1958 as well from before and after this date in order to shed light on the paths followed by the artists. Focussing on their use of radical new methods and experimentation with materials that eventually defined their 'signature' work, the show will traverse art movements such as Spatialism and Nuclear Art. The presentation will reflect the dynamic exchange of avant-garde ideas brought about by rapid technological and cultural transformation in Italy during this period.

One of the most innovative artists of the twentieth century, **Lucio Fontana** was the founder of Spatialism – he began puncturing holes in the surface of his work to investigate space beyond a flat surface. The presentation will feature a striking *Concetto Spaziale. Barocco*, 1956, oil, holes, mixed media and glitter on canvas and a terra cotta *Concetto Spaziale* from 1957 that exemplifies the artist's passion for interrogating space with a forceful manipulation of surface and matter. This important piece provides the viewer with a fascinating insight into the development of his artistic research.

Also on display will be major works by **Enrico Baj**, artist, writer and co-founder of the Nuclear Art Movement with Sergio Dangelo. As an author, he was a leading promoter of the avant-garde and responsible for publishing the 'nuclear' periodicals and manifestos. His vivid paintings, collages and outspoken writings challenged artistic and political orthodoxies. Like Fontana and Manzoni, Baj also pursued an approach 'beyond painting', using fabric, buttons and decorative objects to create his work. He will be represented by several pieces, including *Peinture nucléaire*, 1952, and *Testa Montagna*, 1958, major examples of his pioneering ideas and artistic practice.

The presentation will include one of **Piero Manzoni's** formative works – close to the aesthetics of the Nuclear Art Movement – *Untitled*, 1956, oil and tar on canvas and an *Achrome* in stitched canvas and mixed media from 1960. Manzoni's personal curiosity, collaboration and frequent trips around Europe became critical in defining this new geography of art. After experimenting with spreading gesso on canvas (1957-1958), Manzoni decided to work with kaolin, a material used in the production of ceramics, into which he would dip the canvas, which when mounted onto a frame and dried would assumed the puckered quality used to create his *Achromes*. Following these experiments, Manzoni continued to produce *Achromes* with very different materials – including sewn cloth, polystyrene and phosphorescent paint – in parallel with other radical works (*Linee*, 1959, *Fiato d'artista*, 1960, *Basi magiche*, 1961, *Merda d'artista*, 1961), redefining the concept of art.

### **Mazzoleni**

Mazzoleni was founded in Turin in 1986 by Giovanni and Anna Pia Mazzoleni, as a natural evolution of their private collection started in the 1950s. The historic Turin space, which occupies three floors of Palazzo Panizza, overlooking the city-centre Piazza Solferino, has since 2014 been flanked by the London gallery in Mayfair. Over the past three decades Mazzoleni has organised solo and group exhibitions of more than 200 prominent Italian and international artists from across the 20th century with an exhibition programme focused on museum-calibre Italian art from the Post-War period and recently the contemporary panorama, working in close collaboration with artists' estates and foundations. All exhibitions are accompanied by fully illustrated monographs, with authoritative critical texts. Under the leadership of Davide and Luigi Mazzoleni, in recent years Mazzoleni has intensified its international activities, participating in numerous art fairs, including Art Basel (Basel, Miami and Hong Kong), Frieze Masters (London), TEFAF (Maastricht and New York) and FIAC (Parigi).

#### Notes to Editors

Viewing Room: **Lucio Fontana | Enrico Baj | Piero Manzoni**

Date: 10 November – 19 December 2020

Press Enquiries: Jose Graci (Mazzoleni London)  
Mobile: (+44) (0)7437449259  
Email: [jose@mazzoleniart.com](mailto:jose@mazzoleniart.com)

Press Enquiries: Alessia Maiuri (Mazzoleni Torino)  
Mobile: (+39) 3398251601  
Email: [amaiuri@mazzoleniart.com](mailto:amaiuri@mazzoleniart.com)

Website: [www.mazzoleniart.com](http://www.mazzoleniart.com)

Follow us on [Instagram](#) e [Facebook](#)