



Biography

Franco Grignani was born in 1908 in Pieve Porto Morone, in the province of Pavia. Already when he was eighteen and nineteen he was taking part in the events of the second generation of Futurists. He was frequently published in the single-editions of *Il Torchio addominale*, edited by the students' association of Pavia University. In 1933, with his work *Introspezione*, Grignani was among the two hundred exhibitors in the *Grande Mostra Nazionale Futurista* in Rome, together with artists co-opted by Marinetti.

In 1934, in the Le Tre Arti gallery, in Foro Bonaparte, Milan, he took part in the show *Scelta Futuristi Venticinquenni*, subtitled *Omaggio dei Futuristi Venticinquenni al Venticinquennio del Futurismo*. Almost all his paintings from this period have been lost. From 1935 onwards he abandoned any figurative references and devoted himself to experimentation, also with the use of photography which allowed him further developments: all researches that led him to appreciate Abstractionist and Constructivist avant-garde ideas. Having abandoned his studies in the faculty of mathematics, in 1929 he decided to move to Turin where he studied architecture; having completed his studies he moved to Milan where he devoted himself, as an "experimental studio", to designing exhibition areas and graphic design without, however, forgetting his art researches. In all these activities he pinpointed problems common to visual communication.

He was called up by the army at the beginning of the Second World War and, as an officer, he was entrusted with overseeing a course of aeroplane watching, and this experience channelled his future activities towards experiments in visual analysis. In 1942 he married Jeanne Michot who for years was to effectively back him up in the realisation of important advertising campaigns: for Pirelli, Montecatini, Zignago, Necchi, and many others.

At the end of the war, he returned to his activity as a graphic designer, while also devoting time and attention to his art experiments in which he inquired into aspects of texture, sub-perception, blurring, distortion, moiré and induction (1949 and the early 1950s).

Franco Grignani always rejected the aims and means of traditional painting; he undertook his work in seclusion, but it was absolutely rigorous and coherent, analytical, meaningful, and verifiable through the theories of Gestaltpsychologie. His painting was an immense and varied series of experiments that ranged from optical techniques to spurious mathematics without, however, divorcing himself from a constructive freedom that was sensitive and receptive to new intuitions.

However, his plans for exhibitions were faced by the incomprehension of the art world which considered his work not to be art. His meeting with Lorenzelli was to give him the possibility of showing the results of his various researches, and so began a long collaboration on exhibitions.

The two sides of Grignani, however, were parallel: since the 1950s he had undertaken communications for Alfieri & Lacroix, and he was also art director, selector, and author for the *Pubblicità in Italia* directories from the beginning of the 1950s to 1985. He created covers for Penguin Books Ltd. and was art director for Dompè Pharmaceuticals' communications.

From the early 1950s he was a member of the AGI, Alliance Graphique Internationale, and of the International Center of Typographic Art, New York, ICTA.

In 1957 he curated the graphics section of the Milan Triennial.

In 1964 he designed the Pure Virgin Wool Mark which was, according to opinion polls, the most significant trademark ever produced.

In 1965 he was invited to be a speaker at the first World Congress for human communications, Vision '65, in Carbondale, Illinois, together with such personalities as Max Bill, the geodesic architect Buckminster Fuller, the philosopher and sociologist Marshall McLuhan, and Roger Stevens, arts councillor for President Johnson.

He was part of the Typomundus XX/2 jury for twentieth century graphics communications, and also a member of the jury of the Biennale de l'Affiche, Warsaw, in 1970. Invited by many universities from the English-speaking world, he always refused to leave Italy.

In 1967 he was elected an honorary member of STA, the Society for Typographic Art of Chicago and, in 1972, he took part in the Venice Biennale in the experimental graphics section.

Despite his solitary research, Franco Grignani was one of the people who most influenced the studies and inquiries into visual perception, as well as the Op Art currents of international graphics.

In 1975 the City of Milan organised a retrospective show of his work at the Rotonda della Besana in which were to be seen more than one hundred and fifty works. From then on he devoted himself almost exclusively to art: his areas of experimentation ranged from permutations to dissociations, periodic tables, psycho-

plastics, hidden diagonals, and symbolic and hyperbolic structures. He devoted himself to demanding exhibition projects: in Venezuela, 1977, and in Italy in 1979 and then throughout the 1980s.

At the beginning of the 1990s he began a collaboration with Arte Struktura, and also created a series of designs for the gallery's art editions.

In 1980 NABA, the Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, asked him to become part of its teaching staff. This was the start of a long experience of teaching, though this was united to an incessant activity of research and with the creation of increasingly complex mathematically-based works.

At the end of 1998 a degenerative illness forced him to be confined to bed and, on 20 February 1999, he died in Milan, his adopted home. Still today, an NABA department is named in his memory.

Solo Exhibitions:

1958

Crawford Gallery, London, UK

Esperimenti in Dissolvenza, Libreria Salto, Milan, IT

Biblioteca Comunale di Milano, Milan, IT

1960

Tensione Visuale, Galleria Salto, Milan, IT

Normandy House, Chicago, US

1965

Conservatorio Musicale Cherubini, Florence, IT

Container Corporation of America Gallery, Chicago, US

Centro Proposte, Florence, IT

1966

Galleria Il Cenobio, Milan, IT

Centro Proposte, Palazzo Capponi, Florence, IT

500 D Gallery, Chicago, US

Studio di informazione estetica, Turin, IT

Galleria L'Elefante, Venice, IT

Galleria Flaviana, Locarno, CH

1967

Staatliche Verkkunstschule Kassel, Kassel, DE

Galleria Il Paladino, Palermo, IT

Grattacielo Pirelli, Milan, IT

Galleria Il Punto, Turin, IT

1968

Galleria Behr, Stuttgart, DE

La geometria trovata di Franco Grignani, Studio 2B, Bergamo, IT

Galleria L'Elefante, Venice, IT

1969

Galleria San Fedele, Milan, IT

Galleria La Colonna, Como, IT

Galleria L'Arco, Macerata, IT

Le due reità, Galleria Il Brandale, Savona, IT

Collegi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya i Balears, Barcelona, ES

1970

Galleria Lorenzelli, Bergamo, IT

Galleria Rizzoli, Rome, IT

Galleria L'Arco, Rome, IT

500D Gallery, Chicago, US

1971

Galleria Peccolo, Livorno, IT

Galleria San Fedele, Milan, IT

Galleria Segnapassi, Pesaro, IT

Istituto di Cultura en Uruguay, Montevideo, UY

1972

Franco Grignani, 1° Rassegna Nazionale d'Arte Contemporanea di Saint Vincent, Saint Vincent, IT
Galleria Marini, Verona, IT

1973

Galleria Lorenzelli, Milan, IT
Galleria Trinità, Rome, IT

1974

Franco Grignani, Arte come sperimentazione e metodo, Galleria Marcon IV, Rome, IT
Galleria Andromeda, Bologna, IT
Galleria Lorenzelli, Bergamo, IT

1975

Una Metodologia della Visione, Rotonda della Besana, Milan, IT
Galleria Novelli, Verona, IT

1976

Galleria Lorenzelli, Milan, IT
Galleria Cesarea, Genoa, IT
Galleria Marcon IV, Rome, IT
Galleria Ravagnan, Venice, IT

1977

Studio d'Arte Il Moro, Florence, IT
Museo di Bellas Artes, Caracas, VE

1979

Franco Grignani. Pitture, Sperimentali e Graphic Design, Sala Comunale delle Esposizioni, Reggio Emilia, IT
Galleria Il Cortile, Bologna, IT

1980

Ricerca come arte - Franco Grignani, pitture sperimentali, grafica, Rondottanta, Centro Culturale, Sesto San Giovanni, IT

1981

I Segni e la Struttura, Galleria Spazia, Bologna, IT
Le Strutture Iperboliche, Galleria Lorenzelli, Milan, IT

1983

Sperimentazione Fotografica negli anni '30 e '70, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, IT
Photo Grafica di Franco Grignani, 50 anni di ricerca come arte. Creatività e metodologia, Palestra Comunale di Pieve Porto Morone, Pavia, IT

1984

Centro Verifica 8+1, Venice-Mestre, IT
Comunicazione Sperimentale TYPE, Galleria Quanta, Milan, IT

1985

Maison Gerbollier, La Salle, Aosta, IT
Dal Moiré alle Strutture Iperboliche, Galleria Il Salotto, Como, IT

1986

Opere Storiche, Galleria Vismara, Milan, IT
Centro Culturale Immagini Koh-I-Noor, Milan, IT

1988

Strutture Simbiotiche, Galleria Lorenzelli Arte, Milan, IT
La Ricerca come Professione, la Grafica come Ricerca, Galleria Mara Coccia, Rome, IT

Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

1989

La Realtà Ambigua, Opere Documentarie dal 1928 al 1988, Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

1990

30 Jahre Galerie, Loehr, Frankfurt, DE

1991

Franco Grignani - Quasi una Ripetizione Differente, Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

1997

Franco Grignani - Il Segno nell'Occhio, Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan, IT

2000

Foto documentate dal 1928 agli anni '70, Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan, IT

2013

L'Arte del Progetto, MAC - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Lissone, IT

2014

Alterazioni Ottico-Mentali, 1929-1999, Galleria Gruppo Credito Valtellinese, Milan, IT

Franco Grignani, Galleria Bergamo Arte, Bergamo, IT

2016

Franco Grignani. Il Rigore dell'Ambiguità, Galleria 10 A.M. ART, Milan, IT

2017

Franco Grignani, M&L Fine Art, London, UK

Franco Grignani. Art as Design 1950-1990, Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, London, UK

Franco Grignani. Gli anni di Alfieri & Lacroix, MAC - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Lissone, IT

2018

Franco Grignani: Subperception, Galleria 10 A.M. ART, Milan, IT

2019

Franco Grignani. Polisensorialità fra arte, grafica e fotografia, m.a.x. Museo, Chiasso, CH

2020

Franco Grignani. Lo spazio di una magia sorprendente, MUFOCO Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, Milano, IT

2022

Omaggio a Franco Grignani e Nanda Vigo, Accademia di Belle Arti di Urbino, Urbino, IT

Group Exhibitions:

1934

Futuristi Venticinquenni, Galleria delle tre Arti, Milan, IT

1951

Pavillon Marsan, Paris, FR

I Grafici dell'AGI, Paris, FR

1956

I Grafici dell'AGI, London, UK

1957

I Grafici dell'AGI, Losanna, CH

1959

University of California, Los Angeles, US

1961

I Grafici dell'AGI, Milan, IT

1962

Prima mostra nazionale di fotografia Leone d'oro, Sala Napoleonica S. Marco, Venice, IT

1964

Documenta III, Sezione Grafica, Kassel, DE

Galleria Lorenzelli, Bergamo, IT

I Grafici dell'AGI, Amsterdam, NL

1965

The Visual Arts Gallery, New York, US

Eur-Asian Graphics Show, Honolulu University, Hawaii, US

Illinois Mitchell Gallery, University of Carbondale, Carbondale, US

I Grafici dell'AGI, Hamburg, DE

1966

Biennale Grafica di Varsavia, Warsaw, PL

Medaglia d'Oro al Premio Termoli, Termoli, IT

Premio Città di Gallarate, Gallarate, IT

Premio A.P. Michetti, Francavilla Mare, IT

University of Kentucky Art Gallery, Kentucky, US

Galleria Vismara, Milan, IT

Arte Programmata in Italia, Modena and Reggio Emilia, IT

I Grafici dell'AGI, Vienna, AT

Sezione Grafica Sperimentale, XXXIII Biennale Internazionale d'Arte, Venice, IT

1967

Premio Silvestro Lega, Modigliana, IT

Ipotesi linguistiche Intersoggettive, Museo sperimentale d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin, IT

Nuova Tendenza, Galleria il Cenobio, Milan, IT

Nuova Tendenza, Studio 2B, Bergamo, IT

I Grafici dell'AGI, New York, US

Arte Moderna in Italia, Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, IT

Museo Internazionale d'Arte Contemporanea, Florence, IT

Premio A.P. Michetti, Francavilla Mare, IT

58° Biennale Nazionale d'Arte, Verona, IT

Galleria del Centro, Vercelli, IT

La nuova tendenza e arte programmata in Italia, Modena, IT

Today's Italian Publicity and Graphic Design, Reed House, London, UK

1968

Biennale Grafica di Varsavia, Warsaw, PL

Arte visiva internazionale, Alassio, IT

Studio 2B, Bergamo, IT

Galleria Behr, 25 Dm, Stuttgart, DE

Grafica internazionale, Studio 2B, Bergamo, IT

Oltre l'Avanguardia, Novara, IT

1969

Dall'Astrattismo alle Nuove Strutture, Galleria Vismara, Milan, IT

Kadun Galleria, Helsinki, FI

Premio Sassoferrato, Ancona, IT

Le due Realtà, Castello di Lerici, La Spezia, IT

XX Rassegna d'Arte Contemporanea, Massafra, IT

Nuove Strutture Plastiche e Funzione Estetica, Studio 2B, Bergamo, IT

Design Ricerche Plastiche, Palazzo Reale, Milan, IT

Galerie Umeni, Karlovy Vary, CZ

1970

Le due Realtà, Galleria Arte Centro, Milan, IT

Biennale de l'Affiche, Warsaw, PL

Mostra Nazionale di Grafica, Castello di Poppi, Arezzo, IT

Linguaggio Continuo, Galleria Vismara, Milan, IT

Studio 44, Milan, IT

Exhibition design, Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Andalucia Occidental y Badajoz, Seville, ES

Design aus Italien, Landesgewerbeamt, Karlsruhe, DE

1971

Galleria Olivetti, Copenhagen, DK

Galleria Il Segnapassi, Pesaro, IT

Arte Concreta al Westfälischer Kunstverein, Munster e Deutscher Ring, Hamburg, DE

Nuove Presenze, Acquasanta Terme, IT

Galerie Interior, Frankfurt, DE

Galleria Hispano Olivetti, Barcelona and Madrid, ES

Ausgewählte Graphic 71, Galerie Behr, Stuttgart, DE

1972

Sezione Grafica Sperimentale, XXXVI Biennale Internazionale d'Arte, Venice, IT

Biennale di Brno, Brno, CZ

IV Biennale di Arte Grafica Italiana Contemporanea, Faenza, IT

Poetiche d'Avanguardia Operanti a Milano, Galleria Pace, Milan and Turin, IT

Galleria Lorenzelli, Milan, IT

Biennale de l'Affiche, Warsaw, PL

Istituto Italiano di Cultura en Uruguay, Montevideo, UY

1973

IV Bienal Internacional del deporte en las Bellas Artes, Madrid, ES

Tecnicismo Contro l'Uomo, Arengario di Milano, Milan, IT

Operazioni sul Visivo, Studio 2, Sesto San Giovanni, IT

X Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte, Rome, IT

Galleria Polymnia, Rapallo, IT

1974

107 Grafici dell'AGI presentati dalla Olivetti, Sala della Balla, Castello Sforzesco, Milan, Vienna, AT, Bruxelles, BE, Toronto, CA, Montreal, CA, Città del Messico, MX, Buenos Aires, AR, Montevideo, UY, Caracas, VE

Museo Progressivo d'Arte Contemporanea, Livorno, IT

1975

Operativo 3, Galleria Marcon IV, Rome, IT

Galleria Fumagalli, Bergamo, IT

1976

XXI Premio Termoli, Termoli, IT

27° Mostra d'Arte Contemporanea, Torre Pellice, IT

1977

Tra Pittura e Fotografia, X Rassegna d'Arte Contemporanea, Acireale, IT

Galleria Cesarea, Genoa, IT

1978

Art Basel, Basel, CH

Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, FR

III Rassegna internazionale della Grafica Città di Lecce, Lecce, IT

Design per l'industria grafica, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Melbourne, AU

Alfabeto, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Tokyo, JP

1979

Mostra della grafica per la settimana dei Musei, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT

1985

Artisti oggi tra Scienza e Tecnologia, Palazzo Venezia, Rome, IT

1989

Arte costruita: incidenza italiana, Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

1993

Movimenti contemporanei: Colore-Forma-Spazio, Palazzo Chiericati, Pinacoteca - Museo Civico, Vicenza, IT

1996

L'Arte costruisce l'Europa: formato 20x20, Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

2003

Acquerelli Geometrici, Galleria Arte Struktura, Milan, IT

2005

Un Secolo d'Arte Italiana, VAF-Stiftung, MART Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto (Trento), IT

Gli anni '50, Palazzo Reale, Milan, IT

Formalismo, Realismo e Sperimentazione, Galleria Fotografia Italiana, Milan, IT

L'OEIL MOTEUR: Art optique et cinétique, 1950-1975, Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain, Strasbourg, FR

Bauhaus and Experimental Photography, Arte F, Zurich, CH

2007

Op-Art, Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, DE

Optic Nerve. Perceptual Art of the 1960s, Columbus Museum of Arts, Columbus, Ohio, US

2008

Viaggio in Italia - Arte italiana dal 1960 al 1990, Neue Galerie Graz am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, AT

2009

Fotografia Astratta. Dalle Avanguardie al Digitale, MUFOCO Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, IT

2011

Percorsi Riscoperti dell'Arte Italiana, VAF-Stiftung, MART Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto (Trento), IT

Arte in Italia dopo la fotografia, 1850-2000, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT

2012

Grafica Italiana, Triennale Design Museum 5, Milan, IT

Arte Programmata e Cinetica, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT

2013

Black & White, la Passione e la Ragione, Lorenzelli Arte, Milan, IT

Percezione e Illusione. Arte Programmata e Cinetica Italiana, MACBA Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, AR

Percezione e Illusione. Arte Programmata e Cinetica Italiana, MACLA Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano, La Plata, AR

2014

Munari Politecnico, Museo del Novecento, Milan, IT

Kinetic Art, Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art, Kofu, JP

Arte Cinetica e Programmata in Italia 1958-1968, Sampo Japan Museum of Art, Tokyo, JP

Global Exchange: Astrazione Geometrica dal 1950, MACRO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma, Rome, IT

Occhio Mobile: Lenguajes del arte cinetico italiano anos 50-70, Corporacion Cultural Las Condes, Santiago of Chile, CL

Occhio Mobile: Lenguajes del arte cinetico italiano anos 50-70, MAC Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Lima, PE

2015

Occhio Mobile: Lenguajes del arte cinetico italiano anos 50-70, CAC Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Quito, EC

2016

Pokrenuto Oko, MUO Museum of Arts and Crafts, Zagreb, HR

Olhar em Movimento, Istituto Tomie Othake, San Paolo, BR

Flashback Italian Photography 1960-2016, Palazzo Ducale, Genoa, IT

Kunst in Europa 1945-1968, ZKM I Zentrum fur Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe, DE

2017

Dalla caverna alla luna. Viaggio dentro la collezione del Centro Pecci, Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, IT

La complessità del segno elementare, Torino Graphic Days Toolbox, Turin, IT

2018

IXION - La collezione, la sua evoluzione e la ricerca culturale al servizio della città, MAC - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Lissone, IT

100% Italia. 1915-2015 Cent'anni di capolavori, Museo Ettore Fico, Turin, IT

2019

Passione. 12 progetti per l'arte italiana, MART Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto (Trento), IT

Vertigo. Op Art and a History of Deception 1920-1970, Mumok Museum Moderner Kunst Foundation Ludwig, Vienna, AT

Optical Icons Black & White, Panarte Gallery, Vienna, AT

Diálogos entre sentidos. Un viaje de la abstración perceptual entre América y Europa, Museo del Canal Interoceánico, Panamá, PA

Vertigo. Op Art und eine Geschichte des Schwindels 1920-1970, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart, DE

2020

FORMA/INFORME. La fase non - oggettiva nella fotografia Italiana 1935-1958, GAM Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, IT

Fotografia Astratta dalle Avanguardie al Digitale, MUFOCO Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, IT

2021

Linearità e Dinamismo, Civica Galleria d'Arte Contemporanea Filippo Scroppo, Torre Pellice, IT

Optical Vibes, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT

2022

La tradizione del nuovo, Triennale di Milano, Milan, IT

L'Italia e l'Alliance Graphique Internationale. 25 graphic designer del '900, Magazzino delle Idee, Trieste, IT

L'occhio in gioco. Percezione, impressioni e illusioni nell'arte, Palazzo Monte di Pietà, Padua, IT

Curva e retta. La linea nelle ricerche astratto-cinetiche italiane, Galleria 10 A.M. ART, Milan, IT

Works in public collections

Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR

MOMA, New York, US

MACC Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas, Caracas, VE

MACBA Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, AR

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

VAF-Stiftung, Frankfurt, DE

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, NL

Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, PL

Museo d'Arte della Svizzera italiana (MASI Lugano), Lugano, CH

Museo del Novecento, Civici Musei di Milano, Milan, IT

Museo Umbro Apollonio, San Martino di Lupari, IT

MART Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto (Trento), IT

Civica Galleria d'Arte Contemporanea Filippo Scroppo, Torre Pellice, IT

Museo di Villa Croce, Genoa, IT

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT

Museo Novecento, Florence, IT

Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, IT

MAC - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Lissone, IT

MUFOCO Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, IT

Fondazione Pirelli, Milan, IT