

BIOGRAPHY

- 1907

Born 24 October, Milan. After a few years his family moves to the Polesine area southwest of Venice where the artist spends his youth.

- 1926

Having returned to Milan, Munari immediately comes into contact with members of the Futurist movement.

- 1927

Starts to exhibit his work in the collective shows of the Futurist group in Italy and Europe.

- 1928

With Aligi Sassu, Munari signs the manifesto "Dynamism and Muscular Painting", celebrating a new mechanical world with juvenile enthusiasm.

- 1929

Starts to work in advertising. Along with Gino Severini, Luigi Russolo, Fortunato Depero, Giacomo Balla, Enrico Prampolini and others, he participates in the collective exhibition *Peintres Futuristes Italiens* held at the Galerie 23 in Paris. Contributes to the foundation of the *Lombardy Radio-Futurist Group* which makes its debut with a group show in Varese.

- 1930

Produces the *Aerial Machine* and begins to design his *Useless Machines*. Participates in the XVII Venice Biennale. With Ricas (Riccardo Castagnedi) Munari opens a graphic studio named Studio R+M and begins to collaborate with several magazines such as *La Lettura*, *Natura*, *L'Ufficio Moderno* and *L'Ala d'Italia*.

- 1931

Participates in the I Rome Quadriennale.

- 1932

Participates in the XVIII Venice Biennale.

- 1933

Photograms, photomontages and photocollages exhibited in an exhibition of Futurist photography organised by F. T. Marinetti in Rome.

- 1934

Munari exhibits his first *Useless Machines* in Futurist exhibitions, attracting the attention of Depero and Marinetti. Participates in the XIX Venice Biennale. Purchases the only painting sold at Kandinsky's first exhibition in Italy, held at the Galleria del Milione in Milan.

- 1935

With Ricas, Munari becomes co-director of the magazine *Ufficio Moderno*. Starts to collaborate with Studio Boggeri and publishes the book *Palette of Typographical Possibilities*. Participates in the II Rome Quadriennale.

- 1936

Participates in the XX Venice Biennale.

- 1937

Illustrates Marinetti's *Poem of the Milk Dress*.

- 1939

Works as the graphic director of the magazine *Tempo*. Participates in the III Rome Quadriennale.

- 1940

Exhibition of *Metaphysical Objects* at Milan's Galleria del Milione, where the poet Salvatore Quasimodo, who will later win the Nobel Prize for Literature, also presents his work.

- 1942

Publishes the book *Munari's Machines*.

• 1944

Domus publishes his book *Photochronicles*. Solo exhibition of abstract paintings held at Galleria Ciliberti, Milan.

• 1945

Using the spring-driven movement of an alarm clock, Munari designs the kinetic "multiple" *X Hour*, which will be produced by Danese of Milan in 1963.

• 1946

At the first Paris *Salon des Réalités Nouvelles*, an exhibition focusing on concrete art, Munari exhibits the environmental piece *Concave-convex*.

• 1947

Participates in the exhibition *Abstract and Concrete Art* in Milan, the first international show to be organized in Europe since the end of the war.

• 1948

Participates in the foundation of the *Movimento Arte Concreta* (M.A.C.) with Gianni Monnet, Gillo Dorfles and Atanasio Soldati. Displays *Useless Machines* and the *Concave-convex* at his solo exhibition at the Galleria Borromini in Milan. Begins the series of paintings entitled *Negative-positives* in which the distinction between foreground and background is annulled, creating a sense of perceptual instability.

• 1949

For the Italian company Pirelli, Munari designs *Meo the Cat*, a posable polyurethane foam toy.

• 1950

Continuing his work with M.A.C., Munari produces his *Light Projections* by employing transparencies. Solo exhibition of *Illegible Books* at the Salto bookshop in Milan. The books are conceived of as unique, wordless pieces telling stories through images, lines, colours, torn pages, transparencies, cotton threads and other pull-out elements.

• 1951

Begins the *Arrhythmic Machine* series, in which chance is introduced by the use of clockwork elements. Solo exhibition of *Found Objects* at the Galleria dell'Annunciata in Milan, where the collage *Fragments of Posters found in Rue Monsieur le Prince, in Paris, on a Wooden Fence, a bit Washed-out by Rain* is displayed.

• 1953

First *Direct Projections* shown in public in Milan at Studio B24. Begins to employ a polaroid filter to produce *Projections of Polarised Light*.

• 1954

Wins the first *Compasso d'oro* (Golden Compass Award) for *Zizi the Monkey*, a flexible toy made in expanded polyurethane foam.

• 1955

Exhibition *Two Graphic Designers* with Alvin Lustig at MoMA, New York, where Munari presents his *Illegible Books* and *Direct Projections*.

• 1956

Begins to produce the series of works *Theoretical Reconstruction of Imaginary Objects Based on Residual Fragments of Uncertain Origin and of Unknown Usage*, started in Panarea in 1955 with the invention of an *Imaginary Museum of the Aeolian Islands*. First *Polarised Projections* shown in Milan at Studio B24.

• 1958

Creates the *Speaking Forks* and exhibits his *Travel Sculptures* - portable sculptures made in foldable coloured cardboard - at Galleria Montenapoleone in Milan.

• 1959

Starts to produce the series *Fossils of the Year Two Thousand*, compositions obtained from industrial detritus. Presents the "multiple" *Continuous Structures* in Paris for Edition M.A.T., produced by Daniel Spoerri.

• 1961

Exhibits in group shows of kinetic art organised by Pontus Hulten at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, the Moderna Museet, Stockholm and the Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek.

• 1962

Organises the exhibition *Programmed Art* at the Olivetti showroom in Milan.

• 1964

Munari becomes the first artist to experiment with the creative possibilities of Xerox machines, producing unique artworks entitled *Original Xerographs* by means of the movement of images during the photocopying process.

• 1965

Munari designs a *Fountain of 5 Water Drops* for Tokyo. Produces the limited edition kinetic work *Tetracone*.

• 1966

Participates in the Venice Biennale. Solo show at the Howard Wise Gallery, New York.

• 1967

Holds a series of lectures in visual communication at Harvard University, Cambridge (USA). Publishes the *Illegible Book N. Y. 1* for MoMA.

• 1968

Produces the "multiple" *Flexy* for the Danese company.

• 1969

Participates in the event *Urban Field* held in Como, with the performance *Making the Air Visible* and the creation of polarised projections onto moving screens.

• 1973

Solo exhibition of *Illegible Writings* at Galleria Sincron in Brescia.

• 1974

Starts the series of works *Colours in Peano's Curve*, inspired by the work of the famous Italian mathematician, at Galleria Sincron in Brescia. Directs the working team who will design the new logo of the Lombardy Region.

• 1980

Solo exhibition *Oil on Canvas* at Galleria Sincron.

• 1981

Produces aerial structures entitled *Threadweights* with tubes and cables for the Galleria Sincron.

• 1986

Solo room at the Venice Biennale with the series *Oil on Canvas*. Anthological exhibition at Palazzo Reale in Milan.

• 1988

Anthological exhibitions at the Museum of Jerusalem and the University of Genoa, where Munari is conferred with an *Honoris Causa* Degree in Architecture.

• 1990

For the Galleria Sincron Munari produces the series of works entitled *High Tension*, sculptures linked to the Tensostructures produced during the 1930s.

• 1994

Anthological exhibition *Bruno Munari Unexplored Zones. Works 1933-1994* at Studio UXA, Novara. Presents the series of works entitled *Trees* at the Galleria Corraini, Mantua.

• 1995

Solo exhibition at Museum für Gestaltung, Zurich.

• 1997

Exhibition of "Original Xerographs" entitled *Portraits and Self Portraits of the artist's collector friends* at the Galleria Sincron. Solo exhibition entitled *Installations* at the Museum of Modern Art in Klenova (Czech Republic).

• 1998

Munari dies in Milan on 30 September.

The biographical notes were edited by Luca Zaffarano

WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Archivio 3M, Milan, IT
Casaperlarte, Cantù, IT
Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, IT
Civico Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Varese, IT
CLAC, Cantù, IT
CSAC, Parma, IT
Fondazione Cariparo, Padova-Rovigo, IT
Fondazione Jacqueline Vodoz - Bruno Danese, Milan, IT
Fondazione Massimo e Sonia Cirulli, Bologna, IT
Galleria Civica, Modena, IT
Cantiere del '900, Collezione Intesa San Paolo, Milan, IT
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, IT
ISISUF, Milan, IT
Museo MAGA, Gallarate, IT
VAF-Stiftung, Frankfurt, DE
MART Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, Rovereto (Trento), IT
Museion, Bolzano, IT
Museo Caproni, Trento, IT
Museo del Novecento, Civici Musei di Milano, Milan, IT
Museo del Parco, Portofino, IT
Museo Novecento, Florence, IT
Museo di Villa Croce, Genoa, IT
Triennale Design Museum, Milan, IT
Università di Pavia, Fondazione Maria Corti, Pavia, IT
Centre Pompidou, Paris, FR
Brooklyn Museum, New York, US
Collezione Merrill-Berman, New York, US
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US
MOMA, New York, US
Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, New York, US
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, US
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, US
The British Museum, London, UK
Museum Kaiser Wilhelm, Krefeld, DE
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, HR
MACBA Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Buenos Aires, AR
Museo de Arte Moderno Jesus Soto, Ciudad Bolivar, VE
Keio University Art Center, Tokyo, JP
NPO Committee of Citizen for Artistic Activities, Tokyo, JP
Toyama Prefectural Museum of Art and Design, Toyama, JP