



**MILANO**  
**GALLERIA 10 A.M. ART**  
**FROM 27 OCTOBER 2022 TO 27 JANUARY 2023**  
**“CURVE AND STRAIGHT.**  
**THE LINE IN ITALIAN ABSTRACT-KINETIC RESEARCH”**  
**Curated by Paolo Bolpagni**

From 27 October 2022 to 27 January 2023, the 10 A.M. ART gallery at Corso San Gottardo 5 in Milan will be hosting the exhibition ‘Curve and straight. The line in Italian abstract-kinetic research’.  
Curator Paolo Bolpagni tells us:

*Abstract-kinetic research, both at its peak and in the pioneering experiments that anticipated it, is characterized by certain common elements: the adoption of a formal lexicon that is mostly geometric, the frequent aspiration to investigate ways of seeing, the pursuit of the pictorial rendering of dynamism and optical phenomena and light, the recurrent recourse to effects of modularity, pulsation, permutation, dissociation or distortion, and the overcoming of the traditional concept of art as expression, overtaken by the investigation of perceptive and psychological mechanisms. Furthermore, it was essential for the exponents of this current to return to the fundamentals of pictorial language, often elevated to become the focus of investigation or redefined.*

*Juxtaposing the works of Luigi Veronesi, Franco Grignani, Mario Ballocco, Lucia Di Luciano, Giovanni Pizzo, Ennio L. Chiggio, Claudio D’Angelo and Marina Apollonio serves first and foremost to assess the relationship between two generations (the first three were born at the beginning of the 20th century, the others between 1933 and 1940). Equally importantly, it serves to recognize the value and variety of research that on the one hand still shows its strength and topicality, while on the other it continues to astonish us with the infinite field of possibilities opened up by the use of just a few basic ‘ingredients’. Indeed, Western music is constructed almost entirely on twelve semitones: just seven notes and five alterations, which have been used for perhaps the most extraordinary creative achievements of human civilization – from Bach to Mahler. Consequently, on the occasion of the exhibition organized by 10 A.M. ART, the focus has been placed on the generative faculties of the line, in reference to a twenty-year period of time, from Mario Ballocco’s *Contrasti simultanei* of 1956 to Claudio D’Angelo’s triptych *Progetto di spazio* of 1976, with the only temporal overrun represented by the unitary cycle of ten paintings by Lucia Di Luciano produced in 2003: *Verticalità dalla 2 alla 11*. There are twenty works in total, selected for the two floors of the gallery: on the ground floor are four paintings by Luigi Veronesi from the 1970s (*Composizione Q12* from 1973, *Composizione T2* from 1974 and, both from 1975, *Costruzione Epsilon Variante 4* and *Costruzione Sigma 6*), in which the line is the main instrument used for acquiring cognition of the figurative passage of time within the spatial infinity of the plane, gaining the ability to fix it in a rhythmic reality, so that the individual piece is not the final goal, but a moment ‘frozen’ in the flow of an unlimited duration. These works are flanked by Marina Apollonio’s vertiginous curved variations (*Verde + Blu 8N* from 1966–71, *No. 44 Gradazione 8+8P nero bianco su nero* from 1966–72 and *Dinamica circolare Cratere N* from 1968), which test the mechanisms of our brain, and Claudio D’Angelo’s rarefied *Progetto di spazio*, ‘visual outcrops’ in which the gestalt principles of continuity and ‘common fate’ are applied with originality and sagacity. The choice of the three works by Mario Ballocco is exemplary precisely in the exploration of the ‘etymon’ and the perceptive repercussions – to quote and paraphrase the title of a canvas from 1975 – of the straight line and the curve, both in relation to colour (as in *Contrasti simultanei* of 1956) and in the simplicity of black and white, all the way through to the *reductio ad unum* of the acrylic painting *Effetto bidimensionale del cerchio*, which symbolically returns*

to Vasari's anecdote about Giotto as a young boy, or to the 'magical' and mysterious purity of a simple circumference. Franco Grignani, in both his *Vibrazione induttiva* of 1965 and his *Interlinea 18A* of 1963, makes the straight line and the curve interact and alternate, producing virtuosic variations that tickle the visual faculties. Ennio L. Chiggio is perhaps the most optical of the artists in this exhibition. In *Interferenza Lineare 8* of 1966, he overlaps a double airbrushed plexiglass plate, which distorts perception and generates the illusion of movement. In *Dispositivo A+B* of 1964, he instead works on sequential and repetitive forms, developing the phenomenal component of the pictorial act. The works of Giovanni Pizzo and Lucia Di Luciano are displayed on the ground and lower floors of the gallery (as are those of Apollonio, Grignani and Chiggio). The former features with two Sign-Gestalt pieces (from 1964 and 1965) that allude to the notion of a 'sign-form', alternately articulated according to progressions and rhythmic structuring of geometric modules produced by lines, squares and rectangles, which do away with any distinction between 'figure' and 'background', provoking a perceptive instability between 'positive' and 'negative'. Meanwhile, Lucia Di Luciano – following on, like Marina Apollonio, from her triumphant presence in the Central Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2022 – is present with two works from very different periods, namely *Discontinuità ritmica in orizzontale e successione in verticale* of 1965 and the aforementioned *Verticalità dalla 2 alla 11* of 2003. We progress from the rigour of severe black and white to the exploration of chromatic dynamics, but without losing sight of the mastery in handling the multiple possible combinations of the line, which is the absolute protagonist of her research and that of the other artists featured here.

**Marina Apollonio**, born in Trieste in 1940, is one of the most representative figures of international optical and kinetic art. Daughter of the great scholar Umbro Apollonio, she studied under Giuseppe Santomaso at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice. She went on to devote herself to industrial graphic design and interior architecture solutions, before beginning her research into perception and visual communication in 1962. After a period in Paris, she returned to Italy in 1964 and produced her first metal reliefs in alternating colour sequences. From 1965 onwards she gravitated around Gruppo N in Padua and Gruppo T in Milan, sharing both their research intentions and choice of materials. Since 1975, she has been producing works based on the orthogonal relationship of coloured, vertical and horizontal parallel lines against a black background. She exhibits her work extensively. In 2022, she featured with some important works in the Central Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

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**Mario Ballocco** (Milan, 1913–2008) was a forerunner in numerous fields: a highly consistent abstract painter, he made a fundamental contribution to exploring colour and visual perception. After studying with Aldo Carpi at the Brera Academy, he came into contact with Lucio Fontana in Argentina in 1947. Having founded the Gruppo Origine (also joined by Alberto Burri, Giuseppe Capogrossi and Ettore Colla) in Milan in 1950, he went on to establish and edit the *AZ* (1949–52) and *Colore. Estetica e Logica* magazines (1957–64). In 1952–53 he curated design shows and an exhibition on the history of photography in Milan. Ballocco was the inventor of "chromatology", an interdisciplinary method for solving "visual problems of collective interest". He featured twice at the Venice Biennale with solo exhibitions/tributes (in 1970 and 1986). It is also worth mentioning his teaching activity, which began in the early 1970s at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts.

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**Ennio Ludovico Chiggio** (Naples, 1938 – Padua, 2020) attended the Academy and the Faculty of Architecture in Venice on a somewhat irregular basis. In 1957, he began painting works of informal inspiration. In 1958 he came into contact with a group of young Paduan artists, while in 1960 he was one of the five members of Gruppo N, with which he participated in the 'Arte programmata' exhibition, presented by Umberto Eco in Milan in 1962. He developed an interest in visual poetry and photographic concretism. In 1963–64 he took part in 'Nuove Tendenze 2' at the Fondazione Querini Stampalia. In 1964 he presented his electronic work *Ambiente sonoro* at the Venice Biennale. In May 1965 he founded the Gruppo di Fonologia sperimentale NPS with Teresa Rampazzi, Serenella Marega and Memo Alfonsi, for the production of sound objects with electronic music. He also turned his attention to the study of body kinetics, environmental planning and design. Between the 1970s and 1980s he produced works in which red-and-white fields alternate geometrically, leading the viewer to meditate on visual instability. From 1978 to 1989 he taught Design and Industrial Aesthetics at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice.

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**Claudio D'Angelo** (Tripoli, 1938 – Ascoli Piceno, 2011) was born in Libya to parents from the Marche region. In 1942, the family returned to their place of origin in Italy. As a teenager, he became interested in visual arts and music. After an informal and neo-Dadaist pictorial debut, in the second half of the 1960s he moved more and more in the direction of geometry and design, eventually developing his own aniconic language. His first investigations into the exactness of the image and the kinematics of spatial configurations date back to 1964. In 1966 he came into contact with the gallery owner Fiamma Vigo, who took an immediate interest in his work, making him participate in national and international exhibitions. In 1968 he developed modular organisms using “Forme toroidali” (toroidal forms). The 1970s opened with a series of works that D'Angelo termed *Ipotesi progettuale*. This was followed by the cycle of *Progetto di spazio* and *Progetti di genesi dinamica dello spazio*. In 1976 he came up with studies, called *Analysis situs*, aimed at structuring photodynamic values through combinatorial sequences of signs. He also began developing installation-environments and performances. In the 1980s, his research took on the sign-archetype as a sounding out of complex stratifications of the latent ego. A turning point arrived with the appearance of the colour blue, as well as extra-pictorial materials (fabric, glass, plexiglass, metal), accompanying him to the end.

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**Lucia Di Luciano** was born in Siracusa in 1933. After arriving in Rome, she attended the Academy of Fine Arts, where she met Giovanni Pizzo. The pair married in 1959. In 1963, together with Francesco Guerrieri and Lia Drei, they founded the Gruppo 63, which gave itself a strongly rationalistic imprint within the context of kinetic-programmed research. This group of four was short-lived due to programmatic differences. As early as 1964, Lucia Di Luciano and Giovanni Pizzo set up Operativo R, involving Carlo Carchietti, Franco Di Vito and Mario Rulli in the new team. The works produced in that period were based on the analysis of visual processes of a gestalt stamp. Lucia Di Luciano's works often feature overlapping black and white grids, which gives the image an evident multi-dimensionality. Then came the return to colour, with the gradual introduction of primary tones. This was not a betrayal of her original assumptions, but the furthering of an investigation into optical perception, which Di Luciano would put into practice in the *Gradienti* series, among others, featuring works steeped in imaginative verve combined with scientific rigour. In 2022, she exhibited in the Central Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

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**Franco Grignani** (Pieve Porto Morone, Pavia, 1908 – Milan, 1999) participated in the manifestations of Second Futurism from a very young age, exhibiting extensively. After leaving the Faculty of Mathematics, he moved to Turin in 1929 to enrol in Architecture and, at the end of his studies, he moved to Milan, working in exhibition and graphic design. As regards his artistic research, from 1935 onwards he abandoned all figurative references to devote himself to experimenting with his camera too: this led him to approach the abstractionist and constructivist avant-garde movements. After being called up at the outbreak of the Second World War, he was entrusted with teaching an aerial sighting course. This experience led him to take an interest in the analysis of optical perception. At the end of the war he resumed his work in graphic design, but devoted more and more time and attention to art. From now on, his painting was an ongoing experiment that ranged from spurious mathematics to optical techniques, without, however, abandoning a constructive freedom open to new insights. His meeting with gallery owner Lorenzelli gave him the opportunity to display the results of his extensive research and to start a long exhibition collaboration. In 1975, the Municipality of Milan dedicated an anthological exhibition to him at the Rotonda della Besana. In 1980, he began teaching at the NABA – New Academy of Fine Arts in Milan, which named one of its department after him.

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**Giovanni Pizzo** (Veroli, Frosinone, 1934 – Rome 2022), came to Rome and graduated in architecture in 1955. In 1959 he married Lucia Di Luciano. In 1963 he founded Gruppo 63 with her, Francesco Guerrieri and Lia Drei, adopting a logical-mathematical approach aimed at defining geometric modules to allow art to be combined with industrial design and architecture. The association was short-lived, and in 1964 he and Lucia Di Luciano founded Operativo R, also involving Carlo Carchietti, Franco Di Vito and Mario Rulli. The works produced in that period featured a blend of scientific research and virtuosic technique. His study of Bertrand Russell's texts on mathematical logic and his desire to conform to strict geometric rules

determined the creation of a “sign-image” where colour, as a potentially emotional and subjective factor, is banished. He mostly worked on Masonite or in any case plates, whose dimensions are based on the proportional ratios of the golden section. His compositions feature the prefix *Sign-Gestalt* in the title: a sort of primary element of a fundamental alphabet, developed according to progressions and rhythmic structuring of geometric modules. His return to colour would be accompanied by further study of optical perception, in a so-called “geometric-rational” phase during which Pizzo discovered the potential of Albert H. Munsell’s *Atlas*.

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**Luigi Veronesi** (Milan, 1908–98) enrolled at the technical institute, attended a course for textile designers and studied painting under Carmelo Violante. At a very young age, he approached the artists who gravitated around the Galleria Il Milione. As he drew closer to abstract art, he joined the Abstraction-Création group in 1934. Fundamental to this period were his encounters with Josef Albers, László Moholy-Nagy and Max Bill, which enabled him to absorb the teachings of the Bauhaus and get to know the work of Malevich, Lissitzky and Rodchenko. In the meantime, he worked with *Campo Grafico* magazine. In the 1930s and 1940s he developed a personal geometric-constructivist abstractionism, while remaining open to different spheres of expression: painting, photography, engraving, cinema and set design. In 1947 he joined La Bussola photographic group, signing its manifesto, while in 1948 he joined the M.A.C. (Movimento Arte Concreta). In the 1950s and 1960s, Veronesi received his first important recognitions (prizes, participation in the Venice Biennale and the Bienal de São Paulo in Brazil, solo exhibitions in Italy and abroad) and went through a period of restless openness to certain instances of Informal Art, later overcome during his return to a clear lyrical-constructivist geometricism. He also began teaching at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts (where he “inherited” the chromatology course introduced by Mario Ballocco), and then at the New Academy of Fine Arts in Milan. In the 1980s and 1990s, his renewed interest in photography and film was combined with work in the field of applied art, with frescoes, projects for public spaces and outdoor graphic interventions.

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**Milan, Galleria 10 A.M. ART (Corso San Gottardo, 5)**  
**27 October 2022 - 27 January 2023**

**Opening: Thursday 27 October 2022 at 5 p.m.**

**Opening hours: from Tuesday to Friday, from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., and from 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.**  
**On other days by appointment only**

**Free entry**

**Information: tel. + 39 02.92889164; info@10amart.it; www.10amart.it**