

MILANO
GALLERIA 10 A.M. ART
FROM 29 FEBRUARY TO 9 MAY 2024
“LUCIA DI LUCIANO. WORKS FROM THE 60s TO 2024”
A project in collaboration with Fabio Cherstich

From February 29 to May 9, 2024, the 10 A.M. ART gallery in Milan, at its venue in Corso San Gottardo 5, is organizing the exhibition "Lucia Di Luciano. Works from the 60s to 2024", a project articulated in a series of events that delve into the figure of the artist.

"Painting for me is, still now, a work of research made of rationality, imagination and creativity. This is a precise choice that I have made with myself, aware that it will continue to give a positive qualitative contribution to my existence."

Lucia Di Luciano

It was a real thunderbolt that I felt for Lucia Di Luciano's paintings. Today, 15 years after our first meeting and following a long period of friendship and collaboration, the initial enthusiasm has materialized in the exhibition "Lucia Di Luciano. Works from the 60s to 2024", which presents, along with a selection of the artist's historical works that are better known to the international public, an important body of new small and medium-sized works, shown for the first time in the spaces of her gallery of choice, the 10 A.M. ART in Milan. The recent paintings, all made after her invitation to the Venice Art Biennale, best represent the most poetic, colourful and free phase of almost seventy years of pictorial research.

I discovered Lucia's work fifteen years ago in Rome, in the living room of the home of her son Oscar, a close friend. Historical works, created in the 1960s, adorned the walls of the room. They were square paintings, strictly geometric and obsessively black and white, which caused a strange dizziness when observed up close. On the ground, an unexpected surprise: along the entrance hallway, placed on the floor and vertical, was a sequence of rectangular canvases. Tall and narrow, they represented a chromatic spectrum that graded from white to yellow, going through the different shades of the rainbow all the way to black. This, as I later found out, was only a small part of the monumental installation entitled *Gradienti* [*Gradients*], consisting of 55 panels which Lucia had made in 2001 to explore visual perception and colour representation, with a special focus on nuance. In the dining room, instead, a large painting looked like the topographical map of an imaginary city, with intricate lines and colourful geometric shapes, squiggles and dashes. This series of works, called *Capricci* [*Whims*], consisted of large horizontal canvases that appeared as landscapes of the mind and of signs, where each portion of the painting was inhabited by portions of primary colours, incomprehensible alphabets, and tangled lines which were so dense that they blurred the boundaries between the hordes of images that populated the painting.

From our first encounter with her more recent and lesser-known, not to say unknown, work, it was clear to me that I was looking at the research of an artist who was able to evolve her painting into formal results that were always changing and, for that reason, always new and surprising. As I delved deeper and studied her practice, a daily and obsessive practice, I realized what matters for Lucia is the dynamism of the pictorial surface, of the rhythmic sequences of signs and lines in the space of the painting, and the contrast between background and mark impressed with quick brush strokes, or with a felt tip and pen.

Along with a brief historical overview of her work, we present for the first time to the public her recent series of *Minimal* and *Senza titolo* [*Untitled*], works never exhibited before, produced over the past three years in her Rome studio. The works in the exhibition, all medium and small in size, are the result of a long process of evolution and rarefaction in Lucia's work. From the geometric and programmed period there are still the square format and abstract matrix of the forms. From *Capricci* (*Whims*), there is only a gesture, a sketch made with a brush full of pure colour, to suggest imprecise squares on the pink, silver and yellow backgrounds of the painted Masonite.

"Colour, too long kept out of her studio, knocks, at last, timidly at her door. Lucia lets in but a few colours, and these become hypothetical characters, meant to visually diversify and amplify her already rich array of images/signs. But the bulk of the colours cannot wait any longer, and Lucia, with Munsell's Book of Color,

begins to select colours in a methodological way. Even what has just been said is not perfectly true, because her creativity gives the systematic hues the fresh aura of her inventiveness and imagination. She gets her colours where brightness makes them airy and floating in the visual (...)."

Giovanni Pizzo in *Una pittura che si racconta* [*Painting that Tells its Story*] edited by Simonetta Lux and Domenico Scudero, Rome 2003

Fabio Cherstich
Milan, February 2024

For the duration of the exhibition, an excerpt from the documentary *Lucia Di Luciano: Verificare l'utopia* [*Lucia Di Luciano: Verifying Utopia*] will be shown in the gallery. The film, written and directed by Fabio Cherstich, was filmed entirely in the artist's studio in Formello, Rome, and aims to contextualize Di Luciano's art through her works and words, serving as a useful study tool to frame the exhibition.

On February 29, during the Vernissage, a piano concert by Oscar Pizzo, son of the artist and classical pianist with an international career, will be held in the gallery. Starting at 8 p.m., he will dedicate a dialogue between painting and music to the Milanese public with a program that includes pieces by Hans Otte, Philip Glass and Alvin Curran.

Over the two months of the exhibition, a program of meetings and events dedicated to Lucia Di Luciano's work has been organized, including the integral preview screening of Fabio Cherstich's documentary film dedicated to the artist, entitled *Lucia Di Luciano: Verificare l'utopia* [*Lucia Di Luciano: Verifying Utopia*], scheduled in the gallery as one of the events of the closing day of the exhibition; and the presentation, during Design Week, of the book *WORKS*, the first publication to put Lucia Di Luciano's work and that of her painter husband, Giovanni Pizzo in dialogue. The book is published by Apartamento, edited by Fabio Cherstich with a text by Natalie Du Pasquier, in collaboration with 10 A.M. ART and Archivio Lucia Di Luciano Giovanni Pizzo. The book's release is scheduled for February 27, 2024.

Biographical note: Lucia Di Luciano was born in Syracuse in 1933. She arrived in Rome and attended the Academy of Fine Arts, where she met Giovanni Pizzo. The two were married in 1959. In 1963, together with Francesco Guerrieri and Lia Drei, they founded Gruppo 63 [Group 63], which gave itself a strongly rationalistic imprint in the sphere of kinetic-programmed research. This four-member association was short-lived due to programmatic divergences. As early as 1964, Lucia Di Luciano and Giovanni Pizzo gave birth to Operativo R [Operative R], with Carlo Carchietti, Franco Di Vito and Mario Rulli. The works produced in that period take their starting point from the analysis of visual processes of a gestalt matrix. In Lucia Di Luciano's works, an effect of overlapping black and white grids often occurs, which gives an evident multidimensionality to the image. There was then a return to colour, with the gradual introduction of primary tones. This is not a betrayal of the original propositions, but a deepening of an investigation into optical perception, which Di Luciano puts into practice, for example, in the series of the *Gradients*, works rich in imaginative verve combined with scientific rigor. In the recent *Minimal* and *Senza titolo* [*Untitled*] series, Di Luciano frees the sign from the rigorous grid of the 1960s to make room for tracings and gestures of pure colour.

In 2022 she exhibited in the Central Pavilion of the 59th Venice Biennale. Her works can be found in important museum collections, such as, to name a few: Tate Modern in London, Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, MAMCO in Geneva, VAF-Stiftung in Frankfurt, MACBA Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Buenos Aires and Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna in Rome.

“Lucia Di Luciano. Works from the 60s to 2024”

**Milan, galleria 10 A.M. ART (Corso San Gottardo, 5)
29 February – 9 May 2024**

Opening day: Thursday 29 February 2024 at 5 p.m.

**Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.
All other days, by appointment only**

Free entry

**Information:
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