



Giulio Paolini, *L'arte e lo spazio. Quattro illustrazioni per uno scritto di Martin Heidegger (4)*, 1983

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The Book

Object Between Memory and Symbol

Opening April 10th from 6 to 9pm

16 avenue Matignon
75008 Paris

Artists: Vincenzo Agnetti, Alighiero Boetti, Jean Boghossian, Pascal Convert, Chiara Dynys, Emilio Isgrò, Anselm Kiefer, Giulio Paolini, Claudio Parmiggiani, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Yinka Shonibare et Chen Zhen

Since the Renaissance, the book in art has symbolized knowledge, with the codex—both as an object and a concept—becoming a metonym for scholarship and learning. In the digital age, where text is increasingly detached from its printed medium, Tornabuoni Art Paris will present *The Book. Object Between Memory and Symbol* from April 10, a project bringing together a selection of Italian and international artists who have explored the book not only for its literary content but also for its symbolic value. Aiming to offer a broad international panorama of the use of books in contemporary art, the exhibition will feature works by Vincenzo Agnetti, Alighiero Boetti, Jean Boghossian, Pascal Convert, Chiara Dynys, Emilio Isgrò, Anselm Kiefer, Giulio Paolini, Claudio Parmiggiani, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Yinka Shonibare, and Chen Zhen.

Spanning from the 1960s to the present day, the selection of works highlights the diversity and innovation with which these artists have incorporated books into their artistic practice. Whether physically present or merely suggested, transformed in form and materiality, or reimagined as a vessel for reinvented knowledge, each work engages with the book through different techniques and sensibilities.

Classifying the Thousand Longest Rivers in the World (1977) by **Alighiero Boetti** reflects the artist's fascination with systems of knowledge classification, while **Emilio Isgrò's** *cancellature* explore how the act of erasure can transform meaning, as seen in *Sopra un fiore* (1971) and his recent intervention on *Romeo and Juliet*. **Vincenzo Agnetti** takes this idea further with *Libro dimenticato a memoria* (1969), completely removing the text and questioning the preservation or oblivion of knowledge. Through his *British Library Collections*, **Yinka Shonibare** creates libraries in which each book is covered in Batik fabric, offering a reflection on Britain's diverse population. The library on display focuses on cinema, highlighting the impact of migration on the film industry.

TornabuoniArt

Anselm Kiefer, with *Für Paul Celan* (2004), pays tribute to the poet and translator by embedding the weight of Holocaust memory into the very material of the book. **Claudio Parmiggiani** evokes remembrance through his spectral imprints of libraries in *Untitled (Dittico con libri)* (2004), one of his iconic *Delocazioni* that embodies his poetic exploration of time's passage.

In *Le Chemin / Le Radeau de l'écriture* (1991), **Chen Zhen** presents books wedged between railway sleepers and stones, rendering them unreadable and silent. **Chiara Dynys**, on the other hand, transforms books into structures of glass and plastic, inscribing them with dualities such as whole/hole or memory/oblivion, prompting a reflection on perception and meaning.

Without claiming to provide an exhaustive analysis of the presence of books in art—an ever-relevant theme—the exhibition offers the Parisian public a glimpse into the richness and diversity of how books are integrated into contemporary artistic practice. By establishing a dialogue between historic works by major Italian artists and international figures, *The Book. Object Between Memory and Symbol* reaffirms Tornabuoni Art's commitment to promoting artists traditionally associated with its programming while broadening its scope toward a more international perspective.

The exhibition will also enhance the 2025 programming of [Italissimo](#) (April 1–6, 2025), the Italian Literature Festival in Paris, offering further exploration of the book as a cultural and artistic object. Essential loans and documents have been generously provided by the Archivio Vincenzo Agnetti, the Archivio Alighiero Boetti, and prestigious private collections.

TORNABUONI ART

Tornabuoni Art was founded in 1981 on Via Tornabuoni in Florence by Roberto Casamonti, whose passion for art was inherited from his father, a collector of 20th-century Italian art, and has since been passed down to the third generation of the family. In addition to its headquarters on Lungarno Cellini in Florence, the gallery has opened spaces in Milan (1995), Forte dei Marmi (2004), and Rome (2023), as well as international branches in Crans-Montana, Switzerland (1993), Paris (2009), and London (2015). The gallery is also present at major contemporary art fairs, including TEFAF in Maastricht and New York, Art Basel in Basel, Miami Beach, Hong Kong, and Paris, Frieze Masters in London, Arte Fiera in Bologna, and MiArt in Milan.

Tornabuoni Art's collection is primarily focused on the masters of the 20th-century Italian avant-garde, including Carla Accardi, Alighiero Boetti, Alberto Burri, Giorgio de Chirico, Lucio Fontana, Claudio Parmiggiani, Arnaldo Pomodoro, and Paolo Scheggi. The gallery also represents international artists from the same period, such as Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Jean Dubuffet, Serge Poliakoff, Wifredo Lam, Hans Hartung, Matta, Andy Warhol, and Christo.

Tornabuoni Art collaborates with numerous museums and institutions, both public and private, in Italy and internationally, through artwork loans and exhibition organization. In this context, the gallery has partnered with the Giorgio Cini Foundation during the Venice Biennale, presenting landmark exhibitions such as *Alighiero Boetti. Minimum-Maximum* in 2017, *Burri. Pittura, un'irriducibile presenza* in 2019, and the group exhibition *On Fire* in 2022. The gallery has also worked with the Estorick Collection, which hosted an exhibition dedicated to Paolo Scheggi in 2019 and is preparing a major retrospective on Claudio Parmiggiani for 2025.

The gallery consistently accompanies its exhibitions with significant editorial productions, collaborating with renowned art historians such as Luca Massimo Barbero, Bernard Blistène, Germano Celant, Bruno Corà, Enrico Crispolti, Philippe Dagen, and Margit Rowell, among others.

Drawing on over four decades of experience, Tornabuoni Art has also developed an advisory service for public and private collections worldwide.

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