



Alighiero Boetti, *Catasta*, 1967-92, 12 elements in Eternit, 187 x 150 x 150 cm

PRESS RELEASE
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ITALIA Minimal

October 22 - December 22, 2020

Opening: October 21 from 5 to 9PM

TORNABUONI ART PARIS
16 avenue Matignon 75008 Paris

Exhibited artists : Vincenzo Agnetti, Alighiero Boetti, Agostino Bonalumi, Alberto Burri, Enrico Castellani, Mario Ceroli, Gianni Colombo, Dadamaino, Lucio Fontana, Emilio Isgrò, Jannis Kounellis, Sergio Lombardo, Piero Manzoni, Paolo Scheggi, Giuseppe Uncini

Tornabuoni Art will open its new Paris gallery at 16 Avenue Matignon on 22 October 2020 with *ITALIA Minimal*: an exhibition of carefully selected masterpieces created by Italian pioneers of visual experimentation between the late 1950s and '70s: Vincenzo Agnetti, Alighiero Boetti, Agostino Bonalumi, Alberto Burri, Enrico Castellani, Mario Ceroli, Gianni Colombo, Dadamaino, Lucio Fontana, Jannis Kounellis, Sergio Lombardo, Piero Manzoni, Paolo Scheggi and Giuseppe Uncini. While there was no defined minimalist movement in Italy, many artists of this time were interested in minimalist ideas - in particular the search for pure form - so current at the time of the space race - which they approached in different ways.

Italian artists interpreted Minimalism's rejection of any decorative and narrative elements principally through a search for new materials and a focus on art's fundamentals: colour, surface, material, space and time. They combined such interests with the sense of geometry and perspectival organization rooted in centuries of Italian art. Their pursuit of the absolute translated into an attempt to condense form into its lowest common denomi-

nator in their work, that is, to find the pure form, beyond any possible condition and contamination. These are fundamental aspects of the Italian approach to Minimalism which *ITALIA Minimal* explores through an unprecedented exhibition, accompanied by a critical text by the art historian Ilaria Bignotti, who comments:

"In this exhibition, we reinterpret the 1960s and '70s as paradigmatic periods in which Italian artists seemed to be looking through an imaginary telescope that could unite the Renaissance and the moon."

As the title of this exhibition suggests, the post-war work by these artists is seen through the lens of Minimalism: a definition which, although traditionally linked to American art, can offer an interesting insight into Italian post-war culture, highlighting the affinities and relationships between these figures and American and European artists, with whom there was a fertile dialogue.

This exhibition takes place 20 years after the great exhibition "*Minimalia. An Italian 20th Century Vision*", curated by Achille Bonito Oliva at the Museum of Modern Art in New York between October 1999 and January 2000, and many of the artists who were included in that show now have works on show at Tornabuoni Art Paris: Agnetti, Burri, Castellani, Ceroli, Colombo, Dadamaino, Fontana, Kounellis, Lombardo, Manzoni and Uncini.

As that iconic MoMA exhibition illustrated, and as Tornabuoni highlights in its current show, Italian artists reflected on Minimalism in distinctive ways, attuned to their sensibilities, more intuitive than analytical, with a sense of play and warmth. They fused exploration of form with the potential of space, light and air, the metaphysical and the accidental, in search of a new, pure sensibility. As Ilaria Bignotti comments:

"This was not a pure arithmetic procedure, but a constant examination of the relationships between surface, size, material, space and colour: an approach to Minimalism that is open to life and warmed by a Mediterranean sense of inventiveness and spontaneity."

These ideas, explored by *ITALIA Minimal*, still feel relevant today: in an era marked by momentous traumas that are radically transforming relationships, contexts and balances between humanity and the environment, space and time, the real and the virtual, people and politics, we look to art to help us reflect upon our world, to help us understand where we are amid the flux of changing realities. In their various pursuits of the absolute, these Italian artists attempted to find pure form: sublime perfection, so exact that it is dizzying. This is why today we return to looking at the compelling and passionate works of these visual pioneers: they give us new eyes to do so.

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Catasta, 1967-92
12 elements in Eternit,
187 x 150 x 150 cm



Enrico Castellani,
Superficie bianca n°5, 1964
tempera on shaped canvas
146 x 114 x 30 cm



Agostino Bonalumi,
Blu, 1972
tempera on shaped canvas
180 x 160 cm



Paolo Scheggi,
Intersuperficie curva bianca, 1967
acrylic on three shaped canvases
140 x 140 x 7 cm



Jannis Kounellis,
Senza titolo, 1989
iron and lead
183 x 206 x 12 cm



Lucio Fontana,
Concetto spaziale, Attesa, 1965
water-based paint on canvas
66 x 53 cm