

MAZZOLENI □

II 49. The coloured intermediary between two colours.

Art | Basel
Miami Beach

4-8 December 2024

Highlights

Visual Lexicon: The Language of Art, including works of **Carla Accardi, John Baldessari, Mel Bochner, Alighiero Boetti, Joseph Kosuth, Salvo** and **Marinella Senatore**, unites artists across generations, exploring how they have pushed the boundaries of traditional linguistic conventions and visual representation. The presentation delves into the essence of communication – beyond the surface of the canvas – to decode the nuances of form, gesture, signs and words, unravelling a multilayered dialogue about the language of art and the human desire to communicate.

Although the formal systems used by these artists differ in each, their formal outcomes are united by the connection between linguistic units – whether forms, gestures, signs or words – and concepts. Together these artists form a “visual lexicon” that transcends linguistic boundaries, inviting visitors to explore the essence of art as a universal language.

CARLA ACCARDI

The origins of Carla Accardi's (1924 – 2014) artistic practice reside in the post-war Italy of 1946, a period when the art scene was marked by the dispute between figuration and abstraction. She was the only woman to sign the *Manifesto Forma 1* in 1947. The formal/informal dialectic encountered Accardi's private, intimate universe as well as her international inspirations, which spanned French, American, but also Oriental and Egyptian art. Accardi translates her personal relationship between vision and experience into a sign-like weave that variously scans the surface of the canvas, in more structured or freer combinations over the decades, and take the form of sophisticated intersections of positive and negative.

Carla Accardi
Filtrare di orli, 1992
Vinyl on canvas
220 x 160 cm, 86 5/8 x 63 in





coloured

JOSEPH KOSUTH

In the second half of the 1960s, a transnational strand of research emerged that shifted the objective of art from the linguistic form to the linguistic content, transitioning from a problem of morphology to one of function. With the advent of Conceptual Art words invaded the space that was previously the domain of images. Joseph Kosuth (b. 1945) is one of the pioneers of Conceptual and installation art. His work has consistently explored the production and role of language and meaning within art. In *'#1149. (On Color/Multi #9)'*, text becomes artistic medium, combined with the luminous matter of neon in a layering of meanings and sensory experiences.

II49. The coloured intermediary between two colours.

Joseph Kosuth

'#1149. (On Color/Multi #9)', 1991

Neon mounted directly on the wall

Text reads: II49. The coloured intermediary
between two colours.

Colour order: White, Violet, Green, Yellow,
Orange, Blue, Red

8.5 x 393.8 cm, 3 3/8 x 155 1/8 in

MEL BOCHNER

Mel Bochner (b. 1940), a key figure of conceptual art, grounded his artistic practice in the exploration of language's diverse modes of expression. His works often feature texts painted in vibrant colours, with large-scale characters, and phrases in various languages or vernaculars. This approach expands the boundaries of language, incorporating expressions that lack direct meaning yet have become commonplace in everyday speech. In his series *Blah Blah Blah*, referring to the phrase 'Blah Blah Blah' as "the black hole of language", Bochner utilises it as a catalyst for contemplation, prompting viewers to question their understanding of language.



Mel Bochner

Blah Blah Blah/BOZO/Who Cares?, 2021
Oil on handmade paper in three parts
152.5 x 152.5 cm, 60 x 60 in



PAPER CLIP

JOHN BALDESSARI

The combination of photographic image, film stills, and caption-like text is also what characterises the work of John Baldessari (1931 - 2020). The choice of compositional elements corresponds to the will to “synthesise the maximum in the minimum”, as Baldessari explains. This translates into a surprising montage on which the artist intervenes with paint and that occupies a space between the Surrealist tradition and narrative, but always with a cryptic and ironic intention embedded in his works. The images chosen, moreover, may appear banal and simple extracts of reality, but always give the sensation of concealing something special thanks to the halo of mystery and importance conferred by the artistic act. In works like ‘Paper clip’ (2015), Baldessari disrupts traditional reading norms by presenting captions seemingly detached from the visual elements. These compositions evoke diverse connections, expanding the scope of interpretation and introducing unexpected perceptual avenues and unconventional ways of thinking.

John Baldessari

Paper clip, 2015

Varnished inkjet print

on canvas with acrylic paint

232.5 x 137.2 x 4 cm, 91 1/2 x 54 1/8 x 1 5/8 in

ALIGHIERO BOETTI

A key member of the Italian *Arte Povera* group, Alighiero Boetti (1940 – 1994) often incorporated words, phrases, and sentences into his artworks. One of his most notable series is the *Arazzi* (Tapestry) series, in which he worked with Afghan and later Pakistani weavers to create intricate and colourful textiles. In these tapestries, Boetti employed the traditional craft of embroidery to convey his conceptual ideas, such as in the artwork *Oggi ventesimo giorno dodicesimo mese dell'anno millenovecentoottantotto* (1988). Boetti's use of sentences in his artworks reflects his interest in the intersection of language, systems, and artistic expression. The inclusion of text introduces a narrative dimension to his visual creations, inviting the viewer to consider the relationship between language and visual representation.

Alighiero Boetti

Oggi ventesimo giorno dodicesimo mese dell'anno millenovecentoottantotto, 1988

Embroidery

107 x 107 cm, 42 1/8 x 42 1/8 in





SALVO

Salvo (1947 – 2015) explores the question of language and identity in *Tricolore* (1971), which presents an illuminated display of Salvo's chosen name, in the colours of the Italian flag.

This work symbolises his identity as an artist, Salvo, rather than Salvatore Mangione and his Italian heritage.

Returning to painting in 1973, Salvo's vibrant, psychedelic landscapes offer a different approach to language, with each imaginary scene utilising light as the key signifier within the work. His landscapes transport the viewer to an idealised dimension where elements of reality are recognisable yet exist in a realm beyond conventional boundaries. This is beautifully exemplified in works such as *La Valle* (2006), where a familiar scene is elevated to a plane of sublime abstraction.



Salvo

Tricolore, 1972

Neon

10 x 50 x 7.5 cm, 4 x 19 3/4 x 3 in

overall dimensions with support:

20.5 x 60.5 x 9.5 cm, 8 x 23 4/5 x 3 3/4 in



Salvo

Il villaggio, 2007

Oil on canvas

50 x 50 cm, 19 3/4 x 19 3/4 in



Salvo
La valle, 2006
Oil on canvas
100 x 130 cm, 39 3/8 x 51 1/8 in



WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS
2023

Installation view at Southbank Centre's Winter Festival, London 2024

MARINELLA SENATORE

On the contemporary art scene, Italian artist Marinella Senatore seamlessly integrates text and image within the same compositional syntax in all the languages she uses: from drawing to painting, from collage to light sculpture. Internationally renowned for her participatory art, Senatore's works encompass a wide variety of languages and media, merging social activism with communal engagement.



MARINELLA SENATORE. *IO CONTENGO MOLTITUDINI*
2024
Installation view at Rotonda Diaz, Naples
Photo by Mazen Jannoun
Courtesy the Artist, Napoli Contemporanea 2024
and Mazzoleni, London - Torino

Collage is another central medium in Senatore's artistic practice, serving as a direct translation of her personal and collective vision. Her large-format collages and gold-leaf board collages intertwine with her participatory projects, embedding narratives and experiences from the communities involved. Images and silhouettes of participants from the School of Narrative Dance, her most extensive participatory project, populate these collages. Over eight million people across 23 countries have engaged in this project, contributing to a continuous flow of phrases and quotes about empowerment and personal growth. These works also reference diverse art forms, including music, painting, theatre, and dance. Her collages encapsulate collective creative energy, transforming individual contributions into communal "acts of thought."

Marinella Senatore
Make it Shine, 2023
Collage and mixed media
on cotton paper
220 x 160 cm, 86 5/8 x 63 in





MARINELLA SENATORE. *WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS*
2023
Installation view at Museum der Moderne, Salzburg
Curated by Jürgen Tabor





Marinella Senatore

Opera!, 2023
Collage and gold leaf
on wood panel
70 x 50 cm, 27 1/2 x 19 3/4 in



THERE IS SO MUCH WE CAN LEARN FROM THE SUN
2024
Installation view at Chiesa di San Giuseppe delle Scalze,
Agovino Collection, Naples

MAZZOLENI

Mazzoleni is a leading Post-War Italian and contemporary art gallery based in London and Turin. With over 35 years of activity, Mazzoleni focuses on a museum-calibre exhibition programme and participates in the main international art fairs, including Art Basel, Frieze, and TEFAF, as well as Artissima, Artefiera and Miart. Most recently, the gallery has expanded its reach towards new art scenes with its participation in Frieze Seoul, Art Abu Dhabi and Art Dubai. The Mazzoleni collection is exhibited in museums and institutions worldwide, such as: the Centre Pompidou and Palais de Tokyo in Paris; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in New York; the Smithsonian Institution in Washington; The State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg; Tate and the Estorick Collection in London, as well as Museo del Novecento in Florence, the GNAM in Rome, MADRE Museum in Naples, Triennale Milano and Palazzo Reale in Milan, and the Venice Biennale. Mazzoleni represents the Estate of Agostino Bonalumi.

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MIAMI BEACH CONVENTION CENTER
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