

Exhibition 27 November 2014 - 12 April 2015
Palacio de Velázquez. Parque del Retiro

Luciano Fabro



Luciano Fabro. *Italia d'oro*, 1971,
and poster of the exhibition at the Galleria de Nieubourg, 1969
© Silvia Fabro (Archivio Luciano e Carla Fabro). Photograph by Giancarlo Baghetti, 1973

The work of Luciano Fabro (Turin, 1936-Milan, 2007) expands the expressive possibilities of sculpture in the second half of the 20th century. His art associates the use of simple and common materials that redefine the nature of the object and its space with a constant poetic reflection on the practice of sculpture, evident in the numerous texts in which the artist has always related thought with experimentation in new practices.

In post-war Italy, the questioning of the nature of the artwork which we find in Manzoni, or the spatial concept that appears in Lucio Fontana, spread through the works of a whole generation of artists who were grouped in numerous exhibitions under the heading of 'Arte Povera'. Simple everyday materials revelatory of the human presence in the world were contrasted in their work with the techniques characteristic of a society in a state of rapid mutation. This confrontation between craftsmanship and a poetic awareness of the world led to the adoption of a critical stance towards industrialization and the consumer society in Italy at that time.

Among the artists of his generation, Fabro is perhaps the one who has most emphatically linked the urgency of the new with the expression of chronological time, fully conscious of the possibilities that the ruins of the past have always provided for artists in an Italy that has never ceased to inspire new creative perspectives through the revelation of the treasures of its culture. Questions of classical sculpture like weight and equilibrium are rewritten in his work, summoning up material and technical associations while adding other more recent ideas on transparency, flexibility and spatial relations, together with a redefinition of the viewer, absorbed by the new situations in which space and time are coordinated and articulated.

This anthological exhibition, the first to be held since the artist's death, gathers a constellation of works that are fundamental for an understanding of the singularity of Fabro's oeuvre. Emblematic series like *Italy*, in which the artist explores the cartographic outline of the famous "boot" through its association with an extraordinary diversity of materials in an acute critical perception of the portrait of today's Italy, or *Piedi*, a metamorphosis of the relationship between object and architecture, pedestal and sculpture, are shown alongside his earliest reflections on transparency, such as *Impronta*, *Mezzo Specchiato Mezzo Trasparente* and *Tutto Trasparente*.

From the reconstruction of space as sculptural expression in one of his best-known *Habitats*, the conceptual project to reconfigure the façade of the Church of the Redeemer in Venice, to the many works in which marble is used in awareness both of tradition and the urgent need to break with it, such as that wonderful synthesis and ineffable self-portrait of the disappearance of the artist in his own work entitled *Lo Spirato*, this show sums up Luciano Fabro's oeuvre as an essential chapter for understanding and questioning the paths of contemporary sculpture.

Exhibition organized by Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía
in collaboration with Silvia Fabro / Archivio Luciano e Carla Fabro

Palacio de Velázquez

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Parque del Retiro, Madrid

Opening Hours

From April to September

Every day from
10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

From October to March

Every day from
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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