

RODOLFO ARICÒ

ANNA CASTELLI FERRIERI

L'amore per il Progetto

Curated by Paola Nicolin

OPENING

Thursday 26.09.2019, 6 pm – 8 pm

DATES

27.09 – 23.11.2019

One year after its opening, Galleria Tommaso Calabro continues its exhibition program with *Rodolfo Aricò / Anna Castelli Ferrieri. L'amore per il progetto*, a show creating a dialogue between two pivotal figures in twentieth-century Italian art and architecture: **Rodolfo Aricò (Milan, 1930-2002)** and **Anna Castelli Ferrieri (Milan, 1918-2006)**. The exhibition will be open from September 27 to November 23, 2019.

Born in Milan in 1930, **Rodolfo Aricò** was one of the most peculiar artists in Post-War Italian art. After studying Fine Arts at Brera Liceo Artistico between 1946 and 1950, attending Guido Ballo's art history lectures, from 1955 Aricò attended the Architecture faculty of the Polytechnic University of Milan. During the second half of the 1950s, he approached Objective art and Spatialism, while simultaneously looking at the pictorial research of his American contemporaries. After encountering American Minimalism and Kenneth Noland's post-painterly abstraction, Aricò developed his shaped canvases, "object-paintings" characterised by ambiguous geometries and a strong lyrical component. In both small and monumental works, Aricò designed his canvases with structural rigor applying the principles of axonometric projection. The artist was much invested in the study of traditional perspectival systems, particularly those employed in fifteenth-century Italian painting, which he innovatively referenced in the illusionism of his works. Since the early 1970s, Aricò investigated the relationship between space and the object by applying paint through irrigation spray cans, creating the effect of apparently monochrome surfaces. Aricò conceived colour as an unpredictable element, contrasting the rational logic of the geometric structure, and opening the possibility of a sensory fruition of the work. The combined interest in painting, space and architecture in Aricò's oeuvre led architect Aldo Rossi to invite him to exhibit his works in the architecture exhibition *Idea e Conoscenza*, organised at the Milan XVI Triennale in 1982.

Architect, designer, academic and woman of vast culture, **Anna Castelli Ferrieri** was one of the most important figures in Italian architecture during the second half of the twentieth century. Born in Milan ten years before Aricò, Castelli was one of the first women to graduate in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Milan, attending lectures by pivotal architects, including Gio Ponti. A student of Franco Albini, Castelli Ferrieri soon approached Italian rationalism, frequenting the most important architects and designers of her time, namely Piero Bottoni, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, Vico Magistretti, Achille Castiglioni, Ettore Sottsass, Roberto Sambonet and Marco Zanuso. Her rigor in design was combined with an acute knowledge of music, literature, cinema and the figurative arts, which Castelli first

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encountered thanks to her father, the film director and intellectual Enzo Ferrieri, who had founded *Il Convegno*, a magazine and cultural circle which was a reference point for European culture from the 1920s to the 1940s. Alike Aricò, Castelli Ferrieri's interdisciplinary education led her to design her works with creativity and rigor, emotional charge and formal control. Her continuous research on new materials led her to introduce the use of plastic in design, exploiting its versatility to create innovative pieces of furniture. Many of these were designed for Kartell, a design industry founded by Castelli Ferrieri's husband, Giulio Castelli, in 1949, which she artistically directed from 1976 to 1987. The 4870 chair, the 4814 armchair, and the famous *Componibili* – today displayed in the most important museums worldwide, including MOMA and the Centre Pompidou – are still iconic today. Characterised by vivid colours and executed in propylene, polyurethane and resin – materials that were almost unexplored in early 1970s design – her creations derived from a thorough research of materials' properties, which aimed at responding to both functional and aesthetic needs, while always paying special attention to quality. Her interest in projects of different scale – from furniture to building and office design – proves Castelli Ferrieri's ability to think critically and openly about the relationship between the arts.

The exhibition *Rodolfo Aricò / Anna Castelli Ferrieri. L'amore per il progetto* reveals **affinities and differences between two personalities who paid meticulous attention to designing their works and were among the first ones in Milan to challenge the limits of painting and architecture respectively. Shaped canvases** by Rodolfo Aricò dating to the 1960s and 1970s are exhibited across three rooms of the gallery, alongside **pieces of design** by Castelli Ferrieri, in an **interplay of correspondences between objects and their poetry**. The exhibition presents these works as structures overcoming the traditional categories of art history, **standing across painting, sculpture, architecture and design**. In the fourth room of the show, archival documents from Anna Castelli's private archive are exhibited to the public for the first time.

The present show inaugurates a series of three exhibitions curated for the gallery by Paola Nicolin, aiming to foster new dialogues between the visual arts, architecture and design of Post-War Italy. With this exhibition the gallery continues its ambition to present projects offering an interdisciplinary approach to art history and unexpected perspectives on twentieth-century art.

The gallery is grateful to the Archivio Rodolfo Aricò and the Kartell Museo for supporting the organisation of this exhibition. The gallery would also like to thank Valerio Castelli and Matteo Iannello for allowing consultation of Anna Castelli Ferrieri's private archive.

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OPENING TIMES

Tuesday – Saturday / 11 am – 7 pm
Monday / by appointment

PRESS REQUESTS

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INSTAGRAM

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