

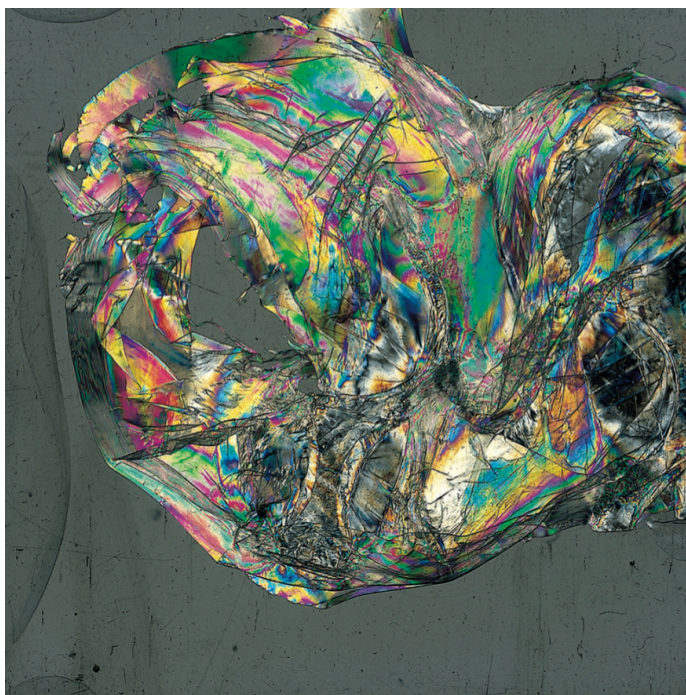
BRUNO MUNARI. The colours of light

curated by Miroslava Hajek and Marcello Francolini

PLART FOUNDATION

48 Via Giuseppe Martucci, Naples

**As part of the 2018 edition of Project XXI
Donnaregina Foundation for contemporary arts
in collaboration with the Plart Foundation**



Bruno Munari, *Polarised-light projections*, 1953, materiali vari
Courtesy Miroslava Hajek

Dates: 30 November 2018 - 20 March 2019

Opening: Thursday 29 November 2018 at 7:00 PM

The **Donnaregina Foundation for contemporary arts**, in collaboration with the **Plart Foundation**, as part of the 2018 edition of *Project XXI*, presents the exhibition **BRUNO MUNARI. The colours of light**, curated by **Miroslava Hajek** and **Marcello Francolini**, held at the **Plart Museum** (48 Via Giuseppe Martucci, Naples). *Project XXI* is the platform through which the **Donnaregina Foundation for contemporary arts** has been aiming, since 2012, to explore the emerging artistic production, in its theoretical-practical realization, and to analyse the legacy of the most seminal artistic practices of the last decades, in their exemplary methodological proposal. The project intends to contribute to the production and dissemination of **alternative narratives and historiographies of the contemporary** and to the definition of a **regional system of contemporary arts, based on collaboration and interchange between public and private institutions operating in the Campania Region**.

In particular, the collaboration with the **Plart Foundation** has allowed to expand the standard audience and deepen new lines of research, by exploring the constantly updated relationships between art, architecture and design in order to create the premises for museum projects which are able to embrace the broad spectrum of these relationships. It has also started, with a plurality of **subjects of excellence**, a systematic reflection on the **issues of restoration** in contemporary arts and it has supported, therefore, the affirmation of **new professions connected to them**.

Bruno Munari (Milan, 1907-1998), designer, writer and one of the main protagonists of programmed and kinetic art, is the author of a multifaceted research that, beyond any categorisation, defines the figure of an intellectual who has interpreted the aesthetic challenges of the Italian twentieth century, by exploring the relationship between the disciplines and the interchange between the concept of work and that of product, between form and function.

The exhibition presented at the Plart analyses one aspect in particular and a specific body of works by Munari, the **Fixed-light projections** and the **Polarised-light projections** made in the Fifties, with which he completed his research aimed at conquering a new spatiality beyond the two-dimensional reality of the work. The artist, by exploring the notion of painting with light, first came, in 1950, to the process of dematerialisation of art through the use of projections of slides entitled **Direct Projections**: compositions with organic materials, transparent and coloured plastic films, paint, screens, cotton threads secured between two slides. These small collages were projected indoors and outdoors, on the facades of buildings, giving a sense of monumentality and conquest of an unprecedented three-dimensional and pervasive spatiality of the work. Thus was born the "projected painting" of Munari who, by progressing in his investigations, reached a peak in 1953, when he discovered and developed for the first time a way to **break the light spectrum using a Polaroid lens**. In fact, by means of a movable polarising filter applied to a slide projector, Munari obtained the **Polarised Projections** and achieved the futurist utopia of a dynamic and ever-changing painting.

The direct projections and the polarised ones were presented for the first time in 1953 in **Milan** at the **B24 architecture studio**, which at the time was a space for the exhibitions of the **MAC- Movement for Concrete Art**, and then in 1955 at **MoMA in New York** under the title **Munari's Slides**, as part of a personal exhibition. Later in 1955 they were presented at the **National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome** and finally in **Tokyo, Stockholm, Antwerp, Zurich, Amsterdam**.

This particular part of the complex and varied artistic production of Bruno Munari will be **presented for the first time in Naples**, following the research conducted by the **Plart Foundation**, which has carried out an accurate **scientific work in digitising the slides that will be projected in specific areas of the exhibition**. Since they date back more than fifty years ago (**Direct Projections**, 1950; **Polarised Projections**, 1953), digitisation was also necessary for the **conservation of these works**, given their precarious material constitution. Furthermore, digitisation allows to bring to the public's knowledge a **particular aspect of Munari's work that has remained unknown for a long time**, filling also the gaps and the shortcomings in the reconstruction not only of some aspects of his research but, more generally, of the history of contemporary art, especially when it comes to the **relationship between art and technology**. In fact, the work of Munari that will be exhibited has had a decisive influence on the subsequent developments of **Kinetic art in France** and **Programmed art in Italy**. In addition, the environments created by means of direct projection or polarised projection have anticipated, in a completely seminal way, solutions that are typical of **multimedia video-installations** and, consequently, of the most recent methodologies and lines of research in **interactive art**, such as *Mapping* and *Kinect-Art*.

The exhibition itinerary of the Plart is enriched by the presence of some works epitomising the research that led Munari, since the Thirties and the Forties, to develop the work in an environmental sense: **Useless Machine** (1934), **Tactile Table** (1938), **Arrhythmic Machine** (1947), are works that declare a will to exit from the two-dimensionality, which will reach its peak in the design of **Concave-Convex** (1947). **Point of light**, a 1942 oil painting on masonite reveals *in nuce* the formal research Munari will come to with his **direct and polarised projections**, which, by the way, witness a research to sensitise, in an artistic and visual sense, coloured plastic materials that are used for transparency. In **Direct Projections**, in fact, **plastic is employed depending on its colour** to be invested by light, while in **Polarised Projections** **plastic is the means to extract colour from light**. Thus, Munari merges **matter and light** by creating works whose final message goes beyond their physicality. The exhibit of works such as **Flexy**, multiples made of plastic since the 1960s, and **Fossil of the year 2000** (1959), in which electronic components and metallic materials are immersed in pieces of irregular and burnt plexiglas, shows Munari's continuous interest in plastic materials which, over time, have become fundamental elements in visual communication, as they determine variable colour effects.

The exhibition catalogue will be published in the months following the opening and it will contain prestigious contributions critically framing the main and essential aspects of the exhibition.

The exhibition is realised and fully funded by the **POC 2014-20 (COMPLEMENTARY OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME) Campania Region**.



Progetto realizzato con fondi POC (PROGRAMMA OPERATIVO COMPLEMENTARE) Regione Campania