

My Home's Wind

Mario Merz





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il vento trasportatore è il ponte non costruito, ancora da costruire,
il ponte già costruito, il ponte terrestre, il PONTE, per quanto ne sappiamo.

Mario Merz

Vènto s. m. [lat. *vēntus*; le accezioni del significato dallo spagn. *viento*].
– **a.** movimento di masse d'aria atmosferica che avviene orizzontalmente. Suoi caratteri essenziali sono la direzione, influenzata dalla forza deviatrice dovuta alla rotazione terrestre, dalle irregolarità del suolo e dall'attrito.
– **b.** nell'uso poetico, *il regno dei v.*, il mare, l'oceano: *Felice te che il regno ampio de' venti, Ippolito, a' tuoi verdi anni correvi!* (Foscolo). *Viene il v. recando il suon dell'ora* (Leopardi).
– **c.** aria smossa o che può muoversi o essere messa in movimento.
– **d.** v. *solare*, il flusso di particelle ionizzate emesso dalle regioni della corona solare in espansione, nelle quali la velocità di agitazione termica delle particelle raggiunge la velocità di fuga.
– **e.** nelle costruzioni ogni elemento strutturale capace di resistere solo a trazione.

My Home's Wind richiama citazioni letterarie, dalla "casa del vento" di T.S. Eliot (in *La terra desolata*), ai "venti che precipitano dai monti di Norvegia / ti avevano parlato dell'aspra libertà" di Rimbaud (*Ophelia*).

Per commemorare il ventesimo anniversario della scomparsa di Mario Merz, la Fondazione Merz organizza il palinsesto di eventi dal titolo *My Home's Wind* che inizia con questa mostra personale allo ZACentrale. Seguirà in autunno, a Torino e altrove, un ricco calendario, occasioni di riflessione e di studio e di festa.

Quindi eccoci a chiederci ancora una volta dopo tutti questi anni: come avrebbe fatto Mario, cosa avrebbe portato con sé proprio qui a Palermo? Il nostro compito ora è di comporre, con le sue parole e le sue opere, attraverso le nostre mani, una nuova mostra. Un progetto certamente trasversale a come l'avrebbe pensato lui, ma rispettoso, poetico, scientifico, rigoroso, seppur con qualche seme di irrazionalità.

Tenendo a mente un suo pensiero, ciò che verrà è in formazione, non lo vediamo prima lo vedremo mentre si forma, una meta intensa e integra di meraviglia, abbiamo scelto igloo, animali pittorici, numeri al neon, strutture metalliche, giornali, terra, fascine, fantasticando sull'idea che l'insieme di opere e di elementi, intersecandosi tra loro, costruiscano un ponte, un ambiente che potrebbe contenere il vento.

Fulmine metafisico che attraversa la Storia, la Poesia e con la sua velocità dilata il senso dello stare in un tempo lunghissimo e in uno spazio immenso: "...il graffiare degli animali e lo scorrere del vento come immagini di noi nel futuro e del passato nel presente", il vento di libertà che consente di "correre con il mondo".

Un omaggio collettivo al vento di casa che sospinge i fuggiaschi altrove evocando toni di malinconia e dignità intellettuale, di denuncia e di partecipazione a una vita comune nell'universo.

Beatrice Merz

the carrying wind is the bridge unbuilt, yet to be built,
the bridge already built, the land bridge, the BRIDGE, as far
as we know.

Vènto (Wind) [lat. *vēntus*; from which derives meaning of Span. *viento*].
– **a.** movement of atmospheric air masses that occurs horizontally. Its essential characteristics are its direction, influenced by the deviating force due to the earth's rotation, the irregularities of the ground and friction.
– **b.** in poetic usage, *the realm of the winds*, the sea, the ocean: *Happy ye who the wide realm of the winds, Hippolytus, you chased in your youthful years!* (Foscolo). *The wind arrives bearing time with it* (Leopardi).
– **c.** air that can move or be set in motion.
– **d.** v. *solare* (solar wind), the flow of ionised particles emitted by the expanding regions of the solar corona, in which the speed of thermal agitation of the particles attains escape velocity.
– **e.** in construction, any structural element capable of resisting only tension.

My Home's Wind recalls literary quotations, from T.S. Eliot's "home of the wind" (in *The Wasteland*), to Rimbaud's "the winds descending from the great mountains of Norway / That spoke to you in low voices of better freedom." (*Ophelia*)

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of Mario Merz's death, the Fondazione Merz is organizing a program of events entitled *My Home's Wind* that begins with this solo exhibition at ZACentrale. It will be followed by a rich calendar of events, opportunities for reflection, study and celebration in Turin and elsewhere in the autumn.

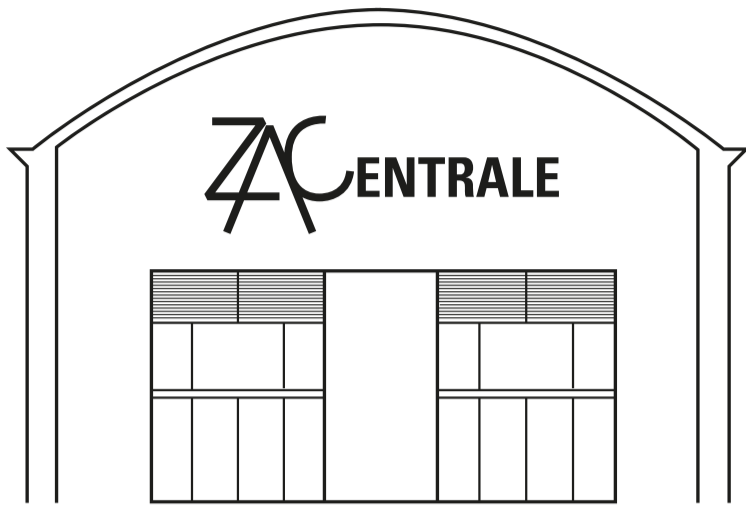
So here we are again asking ourselves after all these years: how would Mario have done it? What would he have brought with him right here in Palermo?

Our task now is to compose a new exhibition through our hands, using his words and works. A project certainly transversal to how he would have thought of it, but respectful, poetic, scientific, rigorous, albeit with some seeds of irrationality.

Keeping in mind a thought of his, what is to come is in the making; we do not see it first but we will see it as it takes shape, an intense and integral goal of wonder. We have chosen igloos, pictorial animals, neon numbers, metal structures, newspapers, earth, bundles of wood, fantasizing about the idea that the ensemble of works and elements, intersecting with each other, build a bridge, an environment that could contain the wind.

Metaphysical lightning that blasts through History, Poetry, and with its speed dilates the sense of being in a very long time and in an immense space: "...the scratching of animals and the flowing of the wind as images of us in the future and of the past in the present", the wind of freedom that allows one to "run with the world".

A collective tribute to the home wind that drives fugitives elsewhere, evoking tones of melancholy and intellectual dignity, of denunciation and participation in a common life in the universe.



ZACentrale – Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa
via Paolo Gili 4, 90138 Palermo | Italy

ingresso gratuito | Free Entry

martedì - domenica | Tuesday - Sunday
10:00 - 18:00 | 10 am - 6 pm
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visite guidate | Guided Tours
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prenotazioni | booking: zac.segreteria@fondazionemerz.org

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Entrance is allowed according to current health rules

ZACentrale è il progetto triennale articolato e interdisciplinare realizzato dalla Fondazione Merz con la Città di Palermo. È acceleratore creativo che sperimenta viaggi, partenze e ritorni, accoglienze e lanci, un orizzonte fatto di percorsi, relazioni e contaminazioni. È un programma di mostre, concerti, spettacoli teatrali, di danza e attività formative, crea e condivide un archivio e una biblioteca specialistica di arte contemporanea.

Il programma attiva una relazione tra lo spazio dei Cantieri Culturali, il suo intorno e altre aree della Città. ZACentrale ha un obiettivo: proporre un confronto sull'evoluzione delle città, sul cambiamento delle comunità, sulle responsabilità che la cultura non può negare, di fronte alla complessità delle sfide sociopolitiche contemporanee.

Al centro la riflessione sul tema straordinariamente urgente quale l'ambiente e il ruolo che, in questo, gioca l'uomo quale agente di trasformazione. La metafora naturale e agricola guida così le varie fasi e parti del progetto, avendo l'ambizione di inserirsi in modo anticoloniale nel vissuto culturale di una città che ci ha accolti con lo stesso entusiasmo e generosità che ha saputo dimostrare nei confronti di tutte e tutti coloro i quali si sono avvicinati a queste sponde.

Oltre al programma espositivo e performativo, ZACentrale si sviluppa in altre aree:

[public program] un programma interdisciplinare che propone esperienze e momenti di apprendimento nei campi delle arti visive, performative, delle tematiche sociali e tra i vari linguaggi espressivi.

[musica] innesti di tradizioni, linguaggi e storie diverse, per disegnare, con chi ascolta, nuove cartografie del passato, del presente e del futuro. Una disseminazione di identità musicali e sonore in continuo mutamento, che rende i Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa parte integrante del germinare di nuove possibilità di pensiero, fruizione attiva e relazioni.

All'interno di tale ricerca condivisa si sviluppa WADI, incubatore creativo nato per mettere in relazione i talenti siciliani con gli sguardi e le visioni sonore del contemporaneo.

[progetto educazione] un programma di attività educative che offre un insieme di azioni e servizi finalizzati a favorire la relazione tra il territorio e lo ZACentrale, diffondendo la conoscenza dei linguaggi e delle pratiche dell'arte contemporanea: visite guidate e laboratori per la scuola, percorsi formativi per insegnanti, workshop con artisti. Il progetto inoltre coordina e forma i servizi di accoglienza del pubblico nelle aree espositive.

[bibliotecalea] il progetto, legato alle aree educative e di public program, si completa con l'istituzione di una biblioteca specializzata che, coerente allo spirito "arboreo" che anima ZACentrale, pone a dimora un'iniziale donazione da parte della Fondazione Merz. Da questa talea gemmeranno altri libri, contributi e donazioni, fino a costituire un centro autonomo specializzato e dedicato all'arte contemporanea a disposizione degli appassionati e degli studiosi.

[terredicoltura] un osservatorio sull'arte giovane nell'area del Mediterraneo con l'intento di creare una realtà fluida e aperta, che metta in relazione artisti di tutte le generazioni con una rete di osservatori/coltivatori esterni, animato da un team curatoriale e favorirà la relazione tra le esperienze della scena artistica italiana e internazionale. Nell'ambito di questo progetto si stanno attivando programmi con visiting curators, residenze e gemellaggi.

ZACentrale is a three-year multi-faceted and interdisciplinary project realised by Fondazione Merz with the City of Palermo. It is a creative accelerator that experiments with journeys, departures and returns, welcomes and impulses, a horizon made up of paths, relationships and fusions. It is a programme of exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances, dance and training activities, creating and sharing an archive and a specialised library of contemporary art.

The programme renders active a relationship between the space of the Cantieri Culturali, its surroundings and other areas of the city. ZACentrale has one aim: to propose a debate on the evolution of cities, on change in communities, on the responsibilities that culture cannot deny, in the face of the complexity of contemporary socio-political challenges. At the centre is a reflection on the extraordinarily urgent theme of the environment and the role that man plays in it as an agent of transformation. The natural and agrarian metaphor thus guides the various phases and parts of the project, with the ambition of fitting in an anti-colonial way with the cultural experience of a city that has welcomed us with the same enthusiasm and generosity it has shown towards all those who have approached these shores.

In addition to the exhibition and performance programme, ZACentrale will develop other areas:

[public program] an interdisciplinary programme offering experiences and moments of learning in the fields of the visual and performing arts, social issues and between the various expressive languages.

[music] the music programming unfolds along a meshwork of interwoven lines, grafting together a diversity of practices, aesthetics and forms. Focusing on sound as a relational, emplaced and processual means, it aims at giving an overview of music as a living cultural and creative phenomenon. It thus fosters collaborative practices with artists in other areas, with the Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa playing a key role in the germination of new possibilities for shared experiences and relationships among different cultural activities. Framed in this open research is also WADI, a creative incubator aimed at developing and improving meaningful connections of Sicilian talents with the perspectives and visions of today.

[education project] an educational programme that proposes a set of activities and services aimed at fostering the relationship between the territory and the ZACentrale, spreading the knowledge of the languages and practices of contemporary art: guided tours and workshops for schools, training courses for teachers, workshops with artists, as well as coordinating and training for the services welcoming the public in the exhibition areas.

[bibliotecalea] the project linked to the educational and public programmes is rounded off with the opening of a specialised library which, in keeping with the "arboreal" spirit that animates ZACentrale, will plant an initial donation from the Fondazione Merz. From this cutting, other books, contributions and donations will bud, until an autonomous specialised centre dedicated to contemporary art is established, available to enthusiasts and scholars.

[terredicoltura] an observatory of young art in the Mediterranean basin with the intention of creating a fluid and open reality, which will connect artists of all generations with a network of external observers/cultivators. terredicoltura will be animated by a curatorial team and will encourage the relationship between the experiences of the Italian and international art scene. As part of this project, programmes with visiting curators, residencies and twinning are being set up.

Partner della Fondazione Merz per il progetto ZACentrale | Partners of the Fondazione Merz for the ZACentrale project

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grazie al personale dei Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa e alle realtà culturali che li abitano e li rendono vivi, agli artigiani e ai professionisti coinvolti dai partner nel progetto e ai Patrons della Fondazione Merz

thanks to the staff of the Cantieri Culturali alla Zisa and to the cultural subjects that inhabit and animate them, to the artisans and professionals involved by partners in the project, and to the Patrons of the Fondazione Merz

Mario Merz by chronological blocks

1925 -1965

Mario Merz was born on 1 January 1925 in Milan and moved with his family, of Swiss origin, to Turin as a child. During the years of World War II, he abandoned his university studies in medicine and actively participated in the anti-fascist struggle.

Arrested in 1945 during a leafleting campaign, he began to draw in prison. After the Liberation, he decided to devote himself entirely to painting and in 1954 inaugurated his first solo exhibition at the Bussola gallery in Turin, where he presented expressionist paintings.

In the mid-1960s, Merz's research developed and evolved towards an experimentation that led him to create the 'volumetric paintings', constructions of canvases that incorporate *objets trouvés*, organic or industrial materials, the inclusion of which in the work would contribute to placing the artist among the protagonists of Arte Povera.

1

Mario and Luciano Pistoï.

Galleria Notizie, Turin, 1954.

Luciano Pistoï in the same year reviewed Mario's solo exhibition at the Bussola gallery in Turin in the pages of L'Unità and referred to the process of fantastic elaboration of natural forms.

1966 - 1969

Everyday objects (a basket, a saucepan, a mackintosh), organic relics (bundles of twigs, beeswax, clay), technical materials (iron rods, wire mesh, glass, neon), and quotations, both literary and non, manifest themselves as energies hitherto neglected by artistic practice, which Merz freed into "a sum of inner projections onto objects", a definition borrowed from the words of Germano Celant. The desire to work on the transmission of energy from the organic to the inorganic led Mario to work on the use of neon as an element with which to cross other objects, including everyday objects.

During these years, Mario's poetic universe began to be studded with igloos.

2

Senza titolo (untitled), 1966

In the assemblages the object agglomerates become "groups of meaning", their legibility transcending the whole, creating a perception of estrangement and understanding of opposing levels.

3

Mario with Marisa, Germano Celant, Giulio Paolini, Anna Paolini and Emilio Prini at the Arsenali dell'Antica Repubblica on the occasion of the *III Rassegna internazionale d'arti figurative. "Arte povera + azioni povere"* (3rd International Review of Figurative Arts. "Arte povera + poor actions"), Amalfi, 1968

photo Claudio Abate

4

Mario with Marisa.

Galleria Bertesca for *Pesi Spinte Azioni* by Emilio Prini, Genoa, 1968

courtesy Archivio Prini

These were the years in which Mario began to participate in the first Arte Povera exhibitions promoted in Italy by Germano Celant, who defined Arte Povera as “the art that finds its maximum degree of freedom for the purposes of creation in linguistic and visual anarchy, in continuous behavioural nomadism”.

5

Mario and Piero Gilardi on the occasion of Merz’s solo exhibition at Galleria Gian Enzo Sperone, Turin, 1968

6

The kitchen in Via Santa Giulia with *Fibonacci Santa Giulia*, Turin, 1968

7

Mario with Marisa at the Galleria Arco D’Alibert for *Percorso*, Rome, 1968, setting up the *Igloo di Giap*. The neon inscription around it “se il nemico si concentra perde terreno se si disperde perde forza” (“if the enemy concentrates, he loses ground; if he disperses, he loses strength”) was made by the Vietnamese general Vô Nguyên Giap and is an ideal and also political reference in Merz’s visual poetry to the war in Vietnam.

photo Claudio Abate

8

Mario during the installation of *Impermeabile*, 1966, at Galleria Gian Enzo Sperone, Turin, 1968

photo Paolo Mussat Sartor

9

Mario with *Una goccia di spazio*, Agliè, Turin, 1969

photo Paolo Mussat Sartor

Mario continued his direct observation of nature in these years, investigating, for example, the extent of the empty space between the branches of a tree.

10

Mario at the Kunsthalle Bern for *Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form: Works, concepts, processes, situations, information*, Bern, 1969

courtesy Getty Image

The exhibition curated by Harald Szeemann established a full international recognition of Arte Povera, Conceptual Art and Land Art.

11

Deposito d’Arte Presente, Turin, 1967-1969

photo Paolo Bressano

12

Che fare? at Galleria l’Attico, Rome, 1969

photo Claudio Abate

At the gallery directed by Fabio Sargentini, Mario established a dialogue with the context, exhibiting works made with a plurality of materials – the material was considered independent and always relative.

The work *Che fare?* (What to do?) is a quotation from a speech by Lenin in 1902, and the question is amplified by the inexorability of water flowing from a tap that has deliberately been left open.

1970 – 1975

Igloos and tables are primary and archetypal structures, aesthetic and socio-political statements at the same time, in their representation of the definitive overcoming of the picture and of the artist's solipsism.

From the 1970s, the Fibonacci number series – a progression in which each digit is the sum of the previous two (0,1,2,3,5,8,13,21...), identified in 1202 by the Pisan mathematician Leonardo Fibonacci – was a fixed presence in Merz's work. The artist interpreted it as an emblem of the dynamics relating to the growth processes of the organic world, placing the figures in neon in his works, starting with the pioneering work of the *Fibonacci Santa Giulia*, hanging in the kitchen of his Turin home.

13

Mario with Marisa's blankets, Villaggio dei pescatori, Fregene, 1970
photo Claudio Abate

14

At the Kunstmuseum Lucerne during the *Processi di pensiero visualizzati: junge italienische Avantgarde* exhibition, Lucerne, 1970
photo Paolo Mussat Sartor

15

Mario at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome, for *Vitalità del negativo nell'arte italiana 1960/70*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, Rome, 1970
photo Claudio Abate

16

Mario with his daughter Beatrice at the 10th Tokyo Biennale '70: *Between Man and Matter*, Metropolitan Art Gallery, Tokyo, 1970

Mario's research into organic spaces led him to work on the Fibonacci series. From this moment on, he used the series, focusing his attention on the idea of contradiction and the infallible truth of numbers. Mario recognised in this system the ability to represent growth in space and incorporate it into his works, thus entering the cycle of transformation that governs the physical universe.

17

Mario with Daniel Buren and Seth Siegelaub in the 1970s.

18

Lumaca, Identifications, Gerry Schum Television Gallery, 1970

“The video-tape came about because I once picked up a snail and saw through the lens that there were spiral spaces on the shell, so I took a glass and put the snail on it, and from the snail I drew the spiral [...]”, is how Mario describes the genesis of the work.

19

Mario with Pietro Gallina, Armando Marrocco, Henry Martin, Luca Patella in Venice on the *Vascello fantasma*, for the XXXVI International Art Biennale, Venice, 1972
photo Ugo Mulas

20

Performance by Merce Cunningham in Mario’s solo show at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1972

“Fibonacci was my chance to understand space,” says Mario, “to understand relationships and who we are – everything.”

21

Mario with *Is space bent or straight*, Kunstmesse, Berlin, 1973
photo Angelika Platen

22

Auf dem Tisch, der hineinstösst in das Herz des Iglu, Berlin farewell exhibition, Lützowplatz, 1974
Mario stayed in Berlin for a year, a guest of the Berliner Künstlerprogramm des Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienstes. The international cultural and artistic context was absorbed and reworked; it is during these years that the idea of the table as a unifying element intensified.
photo Angelika Platen

1976 – 1979

The recurrence of certain shapes that can all be traced back to the spiral dominating the Seventies, such as the triangle, the cone, the vortex, artistically visualised, inferred or glimpsed in an infinite series of mostly organic elements, such as snails, branches, leaves, pine cones, horns, in a research always linked to the same Fibonacci series, a numerical transcription of a figure that, starting from zero, expands infinitely with a spiral pattern.

23

The studio in Corso Tassoni in Turin, 1976
photo Paolo Mussat Sartor

24

Mario in Venice at the XXXVII International Art Biennale, Venice, 1976
photo Paolo Mussat Sartor

1980-1990

The major exhibitions of the 1980s (Palazzo delle Esposizioni, San Marino, 1983; Kunsthaus, Zurich, 1985; Guggenheim, New York, 1989; Castello di Rivoli and Museo Pecci in Prato, 1990) were characterised by the re-emergence of a pictorial practice that became increasingly important, becoming 'long and fast', a natural habitat for wild and 'prehistoric' animals such as the rhinoceros, the crocodile, the tiger, the bison, the owl, the snail, that are also bearers of a naive primacy. The portraits of the animals are "religiously symbolic but also organic", placed side by side and assembled with the already detailed forms (igloo and table, and their being placed onto canvas) and objects (the neon, the bottle, the mackintosh, the newspaper, the tree of the "shaman" Merz), with a proliferating and spiralling cadence based on the Fibonacci series. In these years, in addition to his artistic practice, he also produced a sizeable and programmatic series of writings (*Voglio fare subito un libro*, 1985)

25

Mario at the Kröller Müller Museum during the installation of *Dalla bottiglia rovesciata*, Otterlo, 1980

26

Tenda di Gheddafi at the Musée National d'Art Moderne Centre Georges Pompidou, *Identité italienne. L'art en Italie depuis 1959* curated by Germano Celant, Paris, 1981

photo Nanda Lanfranco

Mario manifested a strong renewed interest in painting, which he used in coherence with his other work and in harmony with other languages explored in the context of his broader research.

27

Mario at the Museum Fridericianum for Documenta 7, Kassel, 1982

photo Nanda Lanfranco

28

Mario in Los Angeles, 1982

photo Jerry Sohn

29

Tucci Russo, Marisa Merz, Luciano Fabro, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Jannis Kounellis, Gilberto Zorio, Mario Merz, Beatrice Merz, Giovanni Anselmo and Michelle Coudray, at the Kölnischer Kunstverein for *Eine Kunst-Geschichte in Turin 1965-1983*, Köln, 1983

30

Mario at the market during the installation for the solo show at Galerie Pietro Sparta - Pascale Petit, Chagny, 1984

photo Florian Kleinfenn

31

Ouverture, curated by Rudi Fuchs, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, 1984

32

Se la forma scompare la sua radice è eterna, 1982, Chapelle Saint-Louis de la Salpêtrière, Paris, 1987

33

La goccia d'acqua, 1987, Capc Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, Bordeaux, 1987
photo F. Delpech

34

Mario during the installation of *Unreal City, Nineteen Hundred Eighty-Nine*, at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1989

photo Elio Montanari

In 1989, Mario held a major solo exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, curated by Germano Celant, which featured about a hundred works. Here the dialogue with Wright's architecture is strong and significant, with the triple Igloo that dominates the central rotunda activating a system of powerful forces and energies with the surrounding context. On the exterior façade of the museum, a crocodile followed by Fibonacci numbers stood out, a prehistoric and iridescent image and at the same time an ideal self-portrait of Mario.

35

Mario and Germano Celant at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1989

photo Elio Montanari

1991 - 1999

These are years in which his research was subject to a process of metamorphosis (technically procured by abolishing the frame and primer, and by letting the colour soak into the canvas, "so that it takes on the imprimitura of the painting, rather than being its support"). This made the painted canvas grow legs, so that it could become the animal he portrayed, following a phase characterised by a return to the essential nature of matter and sign (solo exhibition at Fundação Serralves, Porto, 1999).

36

Das Philosophische Ei, Hauptbahnhof, Zurich, 1992

37

Mario during the installation of *Couplet 1: Mario Merz*, curated by Rudi Fuchs, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1994

photo Martijn van Nieuwenhuyzen

38

Senza titolo, (Untitled, double Igloo in Porto), Fundação Serralves, Porto, 1999

photo Rita Burmester

2000-2003

Extensive emphasis was always placed on the practice of drawing, which became the protagonist of a series of large-scale installations in these years. Merz exhibited them in Nîmes, at the Carré

d'Art - Musée d'Art Contemporain (2000), and made his debut in Latin America with a solo exhibition at the Fundación Proa in Buenos Aires (2002). He participated in *Zero to Infinity: Arte Povera 1962-1972* (2001), the first anthological exhibition on Arte Povera in the United Kingdom organised by the Tate Modern in London and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Of the numerous honours awarded to him, particularly significant are the Laurea Honoris Causa from the Dams of Bologna (2001) and the Præmium Imperiale from the Japan Art Association (2003).

39

Mario with his daughter Beatrice, Nîmes, 2000
photo Felix Rozen

The urgency of his drawing practice constantly informed Mario's production; between the late 1990s and early 2000s, a large body of works on paper came to life. Drawing was the creative moment for Mario, the decisive stage between idea and object.

40

Il dei numeri, Mole Antonelliana, Turin, 2000

41

Un segno nel Foro di Cesare, Roma, 2002

The spiral of light rests on the ancient ground and forms a dialogue with the ruins of the temple of Venus Genetrix in the Imperial Forum in Rome.

photo Claudio Abate

42

Spostamenti della terra su un asse, Fundación Proa, 2002 Buenos Aires

43

Mario with Ken Loach, Bridget Riley, Claudio Abbado and Rem Koolhaas, during the Imperial Præmium ceremony, Tokyo, 2003

photo The Sankei Shimbun

44

Mario in front of *Igloo Fontana*, Public Art Project for the Passante Ferroviario Torino, 2003

photo The Sankei Shimbun

Together with *Il volo dei numeri* on the Mole Antonelliana, *Igloo Fontana* is a permanent sign of Mario Merz's work in the city of Turin.

dal 2003

Among the solo shows held after the artist's death in Milan on 9 November 2003, we would like to mention – alongside those proposed by the Fondazione Merz – the major Turin retrospective hosted in the three Turin venues of the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, the Castello di Rivoli and the Fondazione itself (2005); the monographic exhibition *Disegni*, at the Kunstmuseum in Winterthur and then at the Fondazione (2007); *What Is to Be Done?* (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds; Bildmuseet, Umeå, in 2011-12); *Mario Merz Arnulf Rainer. Tiefe weite (Fragmente)* at the Arnulf Rainer Museum, Baden (2013); Pace Gallery, London (2014); *Città Irreale*, in Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia; *Numbers are prehistoric*, at the Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens (2015); *Igloos*,

with over thirty igloos hosted at the Pirelli Hangar Bicocca in Milan (2018); the extensive anthological exhibition *El tiempo es mudo* at the Reina Sofía in Madrid (2019); and a long-term exhibition at the Dia Beacon Art Foundation in New York (from 2020).

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Inaugural exhibition at the Fondazione Merz, Turin, 2005

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Igloos curated by Vicente Todolí, Hangar Bicocca, Milan, 2018
photo Renato Ghiazza

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El tiempo es mudo, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, 2020