

BRUNO MUNARI

MAAB Gallery
Milano | Padova



Bruno Munari (Milan 1907-1998) was one of the international leaders of the renewal of the visual and material culture of the 20th century. His artistic path was versatile and seminal, not only for the variety of his references to the world of art and culture, but also because he was able early on to link together sculpture, industrial design, painting, cinema, animation, publishing, graphic design, and teaching. Still today his constant references to the creative freedom of childhood and a subtle yet unbridled irony have made him a reference point for the younger generations, also as a result of the wide-ranging cultural plan that he promoted which included such extra-European art experiences as those of the Far East.

The MAAB Gallery is giving an overview of Bruno Munari's research with a show, curated by Gianluca Ranzi, that focuses on the whole of his experiments and their aim of opposing any form of mental rigidity, intellectual fundamentalism, and immobility. With Munari, instead, contemporary art affirmed a positive value, that of the coexistence of differences. And so the artist could venture among purposely uncertain terrains, in an area with superimposed and often mutable boundaries. In the show are collages that are simply titled *Astratti* (made from the 1950s to the 1970s) which, while they give a side-glance to the fundamental forms and colours of the compositions of such historical avant-garde movements as De Stijl and Suprematism, in fact recalibrate chromatic weights and temperatures, solids and voids, with delicate irony and a musical counterpoint that allow the emergence of harmonies and dissonances. Movement, already physically present in his late Futurist works of 1930, became

not just a kinetic characteristic of the work, but a genuine operative method. And so the movement of the *Macchine Inutili* works makes the sculptures airy and multiplies possible viewpoints of them while, at the same time, arouses in the viewers a mobile vision, one permeated by changes and continuous perceptive remodelling. The same thing happens with the *Negativi-Positivi* works from the 1950s or with *Curva di Peano*: the viewers are awakened from the torpor of those who simply stand by and look, and are free to choose which form they take to be fundamental. As in his poetry, in the art of Munari too the pauses and empty spaces have the same value as the solid areas, so much so that the shadows have the same importance as the light. The sculptures *Sculture da viaggio* (1958 onwards) can be folded and placed in a suitcase; they can be reassembled after a journey, and they change their look according to whoever interacts with them. The *Sedia per visite brevissime* (designed in 1945 and made by Zanotta in 1991) ironically reread design's myth of functionality and of practicality at all costs. His *Negativi-Positivi*, which elude easy classification, cannot be compared to Optical/Kinetic art, nor do his *Macchine inutili* have anything in common with Calder's Mobiles. The irony that Munari managed to instil in them offered him a new and fertile territory, one which he never ridiculed, never overturned in his own favour; instead, he delicately and respectfully entered into the orbit of the others and, with zest and a sense of participation, inserted a new perspective to make that orbit more aware of itself.



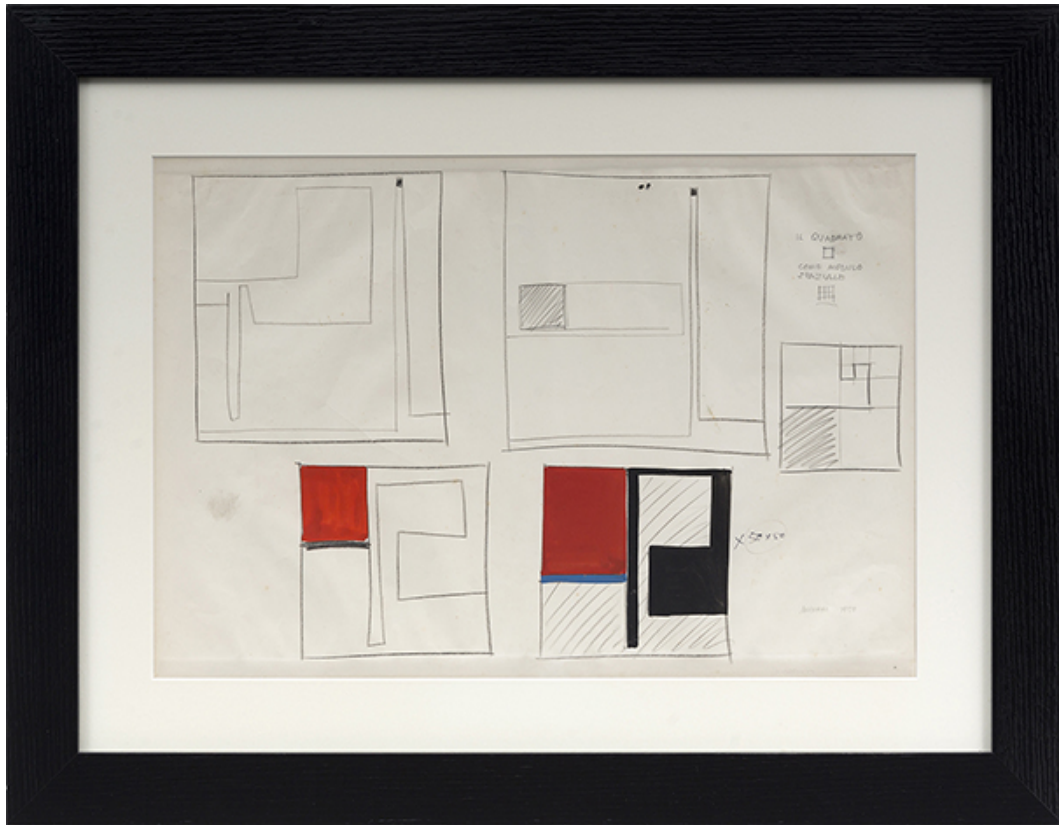
Bruno Munari

Sedia per visite brevissime

1945

serie 6/9G

ed. Zanotta



Bruno Munari

Progetto di Negativo-Positivo

1950

matita e tempera su carta | pencil and tempera on paper

34 x 50 cm | 13,38 x 19,68 in



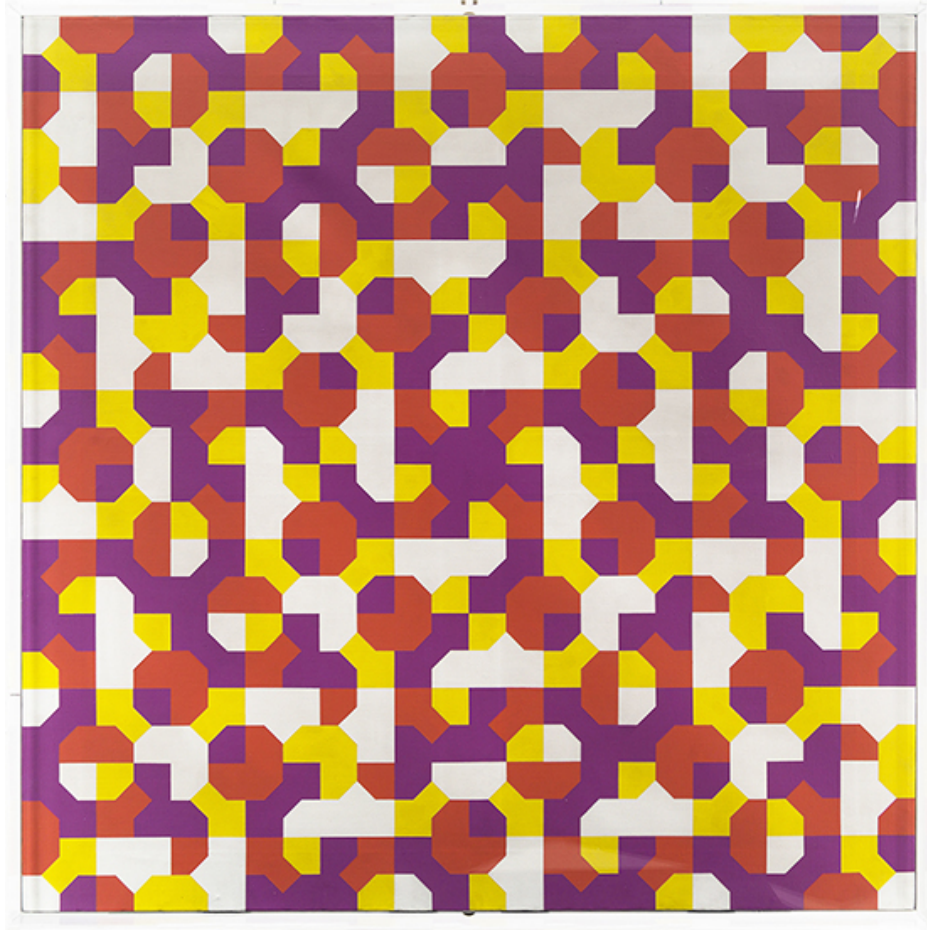
Bruno Munari

Sculptura da viaggio

1959

ottone | brass

36 x 59 x 17 cm | 14,17 x 23,22 x 6,69 in



Bruno Munari

Curva di Peano

1976

acrilico su tela | acrylic on canvas

120 x 120 cm | 47,24 x 47,24 in



Bruno Munari

Scultura da viaggio

1979

metallo argentato | silver metal

93,5 x 30 cm | 36,81 x 11,81 in