

Gracis Gallery

presents the exhibition

The Crack Group

Curated by Laura Cherubini

March 20 – June 20, 2025

Piazza Castello 16, Milan

OPENING: MARCH 20, 2025, AT 6 PM

From March 20 to June 20 2025, the Gracis Gallery will present an entirely new exhibition project with a strong historical and critical emphasis dedicated to *The Crack Group*.

Eight Italian artists, each with different stylistic orientations, work together briefly in 1960. These were prominent figures in the Roman art scene: Pietro Cascella, Piero Dorazio, Gino Marotta, Fabio Mauri, Gastone Novelli, Achille Perilli, Mimmo Rotella, Giulio Turcato, along with poet and critic Cesare Vivaldi.

Curated by Laura Cherubini, with a critical contribution by Francesco Guzzetti and scientific support from the archives of the involved artists, this Milanese exhibition tells the story of this unique artistic experience for the first time.

The Gracis Gallery will present, from March 20 to June 20 2025, the exhibition *The Crack Group*, an artistic experience that lasted only one year—1960—and represented a **deliberate break from both the recent past and contemporary art trends**, serving as a polemical stance against the prevailing climate.

This innovative and unprecedented exhibition project aims to examine a transitional moment, crucial for the revision and development of artistic languages on an international level, particularly in the period between the 1950s and 1960s.

In that highly dynamic cultural atmosphere, eight artists—**Pietro Cascella, Piero Dorazio, Gino Marotta, Fabio Mauri, Gastone Novelli, Achille Perilli, Mimmo Rotella, and Giulio Turcato**—together with poet and critic **Cesare Vivaldi**, founded a group properly named *Crack*.

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This group, consisting of artists from different generations and stylistic approaches, emerged from a shared desire to break free from the constraints of informalism and the abstraction/realism dichotomy of previous years. They advocated for extreme freedom of style, medium, and themes, along with intellectual independence regarding the relationship between art, visual communication, and reality. *"We conceived it as a protest against the academicism dominating Italian art, the gatekeepers controlling it, and the taboos they impose,"* the group declared.

The Crack Group initiative was documented through a single exhibition at Galleria Il Canale in Venice in August 1960 and through the publication of a book curated by Mauri, Marotta, and Vivaldi, published by Krachmalnikoff, a publishing house led by Achille Mauri, Fabio Mauri's brother.

The book captured the essence of this artistic endeavour, with Cesare Vivaldi's introductory text stating: *"Everything, in short, that can satisfy our hunger as image hunters, as looters of the marvellous vineyard of the world. And in our hands, everything becomes gold, framed, and ordered. To the old car without wheels, we will attach four Corinthian capitals rescued from the magma: and the machine will move forward, in jolts, but always forward. What does it matter if the journey becomes harder? If we wish, we can also ride swiftly through the night."*

The Gracis Gallery strongly desired to tell the story of the Crack Group — a lesser-known but fascinating and significant narrative. This Milanese exhibition, built on a solid scientific and critical foundation and made possible by the collaboration of the artists' archives, provides the first opportunity to explore a wide selection of works by the Crack Group's key figures. It will include pieces reproduced in the original 1960 catalogue.

The project also highlights the case of **Piero Dorazio**, showcasing rarely seen reliefs by the artist, which were documented in the Crack book and represent an example of the development of his work.

A **catalogue** will be published for the exhibition, edited by Manfredi Maretti, featuring a reproduction of the 1960 one. It will be organized into monographic sections, reproducing works from each artist involved. Alongside colour reproductions of the exhibited works, the catalogue will illustrate archival documents and materials related to the Crack Group's story.

It will include critical contributions by **Laura Cherubini**—art critic, curator, and art history professor at the Brera Academy in Milan since 1992 and a member of numerous artist archive committees, including Fabio Mauri and Gino Marotta—and **Francesco Guzzetti**, researcher and lecturer at the University of Florence.

Opening Cocktail Provided By



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Gracis Gallery

Piazza Castello 16, Milan

Hours: Monday to Friday, 10 AM - 1 PM | 2 PM - 6 PM

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