



FABIO MAURI

L'Esperimento del Tempo

Curated by Ivan Barlafante

Opening: 6 May h 5 p.m.

6 May - 28 August 2026

To mark the centenary of Fabio Mauri's birth, Galleria Michela Rizzo is delighted to present *L'Esperimento del Tempo*, a solo exhibition curated by Ivan Barlafante, which opens to the public on Wednesday 6 May from 5 pm to 10 pm at the gallery's Palazzo Palumbo Fossati venue in Venice.

"Eternal life is not long; it is a timeless instant." With these words, quoted by his friend Giacomo Marramao in *L'Esperimento del Mondo*, begins the reflection on Fabio Mauri, at the heart of the exhibition *L'Esperimento del Tempo*.

The exhibition explores the intersection between time and eternity, dimensions that run through the artist's entire body of work. Mauri's work stems from a constant tension between historical experience and metaphysical inquiry: having lived through fascism and Nazism, coupled with a profound reflection on the absolute, leads the artist

to a radical analysis of reality and its modes of representation.

"I know what art is; ask me what art is, and I do not know," writes Mauri, paraphrasing Saint Augustine. This apparent contradiction encapsulates a vision in which time is concentrated in the present, the only possible locus of existence.

The exhibition brings together around 80 works, spanning the artist's entire career: from *Schermo-Disegno / Orizzontale-Verticale* (1957) to *Etc.*, created for his final solo exhibition, which opened posthumously in 2009 in the gallery's own premises.

Through this journey, it becomes clear how the relationship with history, with reality and with the sacred is inscribed within a complex temporality, in which past, present and eternity coexist.

A time — Mauri's time — outside of time.



FABIO MAURI

Fabio Mauri was born in Rome in 1926. Mauri's work spans a wide range of fields, including theater, performance, installation, painting, theory, and teaching, all of which form part of a single expressive universe. He worked at the Bompiani publishing house in Rome from 1957 to 1975. In 1979, he was offered the chair of Aesthetics of Experimentation at the Academy of Fine Arts in L'Aquila, where he taught until 2001. He has been active in the Italian avant-garde since 1954. His first monochromes and *Schermi* date back to 1957. In the 1970s, Mauri turned his attention to the ideological component of the linguistic avant-garde. These were the years of *Ebrea* (1971). He staged his first major performance, *Che cosa è il fascismo a Roma* (1971). This was followed by *Natura e Cultura*, *Oscuramento*, and *Muro d'Europa* at De Appel in Amsterdam. In 1975, he presented the performance *Intellettuale* on the occasion of the inauguration of the new Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna in Bologna, with the participation of Pier Paolo Pasolini, a close friend of Fabio Mauri.

In 1974, he was invited once again to the Venice Biennale, where he would also exhibit in 1978 with the installation *I numeri malefici*, in 1993 with the *Western Wall* or *Wailing Wall*, and in 2013 with the 1973 performance *Ideologia e Natura*.

In 2015, he returned to the Biennale, invited to represent Italy in the Central Pavilion. He staged the performance *What Is Philosophy? Heidegger and the German Question*. *Table Concert* in 1989 for the Quarto Multimedia Center in S. Giusta, L'Aquila.

In 1994, his first retrospective, *Fabio Mauri. Works and Actions 1954–1994*, was held at the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rome. In 1997, he staged *Le Proiezioni* at MOCA in Los Angeles, the Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, Ohio), the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome.

A second retrospective was presented in 1997 at the Kunsthalle in Klagenfurt. In 1999, his work featured in 'Minimalia. Da Giacomo Balla a...' at P.S.1 in New York. In 2000, he was included in 'Novecento. Arte e Storia in Italia' at the Scuderie del Quirinale in Rome.

His last retrospective was held in 2003 at Le Fresnoy, the National Studio for Contemporary Arts, in Lille. In 2007, he took part in the major exhibition *Not Afraid of the Dark | Emergenze* in Milan with his imposing installation *Inverosimile*.

In 2009, he presented his final exhibition *Fabio Mauri, Etc.* at the Galleria Michela Rizzo in Venice.

He died in May 2009 following a long illness. In 2012, his work was featured at DOCUMENTA(13) in Kassel and at Palazzo Reale in Milan in the exhibition *Fabio Mauri. THE END*.

In 2013, the installation *Warum ein Gedanke einen Raum verpestet? / Why does a thought pollute a room?* (1972) was re-staged at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Anni '70. *Arte a Roma*. In 2014, the Cima Foundation in New York hosted *L'Espressionista* (1982), a performance adapted from *Gran Serata Futurista 1909–1930* (1980), whilst the Fundación Proa in Buenos Aires dedicated its first retrospective in South America to the master.

In 2015, Hauser & Wirth, first at its historic New York location and then in London, dedicated two highly successful solo exhibitions to him, presenting him again in New York in 2018 at its flagship venue.

In 2016, the MADRE Museum in Naples hosted one of the largest retrospectives dedicated to the artist. In 2023, he had two major solo exhibitions: *FABIO MAURI. Amore Mio* at Hauser & Wirth (Zurich) and *Fabio Mauri. Experiments in the Verification of Evil* at the Castello di Rivoli (Turin).

His work can be found in Canada, the USA, Austria, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Switzerland and England. He has exhibited in Vancouver, Toronto, London, Edinburgh and at the Kulturhaus in Potsdam. His work continues through Studio Fabio Mauri and the art association *L'Esperimento del Mondo*.

Mauri has published numerous essays in art journals and catalogues. His prolific output is compiled in his latest publication, *Io sono un ariano*, published by Volume!/Rome and Lampi di Stampa/Milan.