



Emilio Tadini
Color & Co., 1969
silkscreen, 65 x 50 cm
Studio Marconi Edition

EMILIO TADINI 1967-1972
Before Our Eyes, Behind Our Gaze

Opening: 27 March from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm
Dates: from 28 March to 28 June 2019
Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 3pm - 7pm
Free entrance

Studio Marconi '65 is pleased to present a selection of graphic works by Emilio Tadini on the occasion of the exhibition devoted to him at the Fondazione Marconi that focuses on the early years of the artist's career from 1967 to 1972.

Emilio Tadini is considered one of the most original personalities of Italy's post-World War II cultural debate. From the early 1960s he began to evolve an original painting style which he applied to major cycles of surrealist works, populated by a confluence of literary, dreamlike elements and everyday characters and objects, often fragmentary, in which the laws of space, time and gravity are totally suspended.

Tadini's work stems from an emotional state, from a mental flow "in some semi-dark area of consciousness", from which images emerge in a Freudian process of relationships and associations, and where the "real" situations he depicts are immersed in an hallucinatory, dreamlike atmosphere presented in a surrealist-metaphysical form. This automatic process develops not only in the first image of each painting but over the entire series: from one image emerge others that modify and alter it.

Each of Tadini's works tells a story, so that his painting develops in cycles, like a series of serialised novels.

Interpreting his works requires conceptual tools: seemingly simple, straightforward images hide a multiplicity of meanings ("everything happens before our eyes... thought takes refuge ... behind the eyes"), there are references to Surrealism and de Chirico's Metaphysics, as well as to Lacan and Freud's psychoanalysis.

With unique ability Tadini controls two kinds of languages, the visual and the literary, the cyclic form of his painting also links it to literature, in particular to writing, which he practised masterfully. His work is therefore a place of convergence for different forms of expression.

Between 1967 and 1972 Tadini's output was particularly prolific and his working and stylistic method began to achieve definition.

His point of departure was Pop Art: the first two large series of works conceived in that manner were *Life of Voltaire* (1967) and *The Organisation Man* (1968). These were followed chronologically by *Color & Co.* (1969), *Closed Circuit* (1970), *Journey in Italy* (1971), *Malevič's Landscape* and *Archeology* (1972).

However Tadini was not interested in the aggressive manifestations typical of American Pop Art but in the more introspective, personal, and at times intellectual, political and critical variants of British Pop Art.

He paid particular attention to the art of Ronald Kitaj, Peter Blake, David Hockney and Allen Jones, but also to that of Francis Bacon, Patrick Caulfield, and the figurative narratives of Valerio Adami, Eduardo Arroyo and Hervé Télémaque. This was a transitional phase, however, which Tadini abandoned in the 1980s, but nevertheless it was to leave an indelible mark on his subsequent work.

The graphic works on display at **Studio Marconi '65**, together with the paintings and drawings presented at Fondazione Marconi, contribute to demonstrate how Tadini's "stories in images" invariably involve the use of canvas and paper, painting and drawing. The final objective of *Emilio Tadini 1967-1972. Before Our Eyes, Behind Our Gaze* is to "shed light" on the graphic and pictorial work of the Milanese master by reconstructing the complete figure of the artist (painter, illustrator, intellectual, writer and poet) cultured and profound, also in light of his particular relationship with Giorgio Marconi, gallery owner, collector and above all Tadini's friend.



Emilio Tadini
Vita di Voltaire, 1967
silkscreen and collage
on paper, 70 x 50 cm

Biographical notes

Born in Milan in 1927, Emilio Tadini received a Bachelor of Arts degree and immediately began to distinguish himself as one of the most lively and original voices in the post-World War II cultural debate.

In 1947 he debuted with a poem in Elio Vittorini's magazine *Politecnico*, which was followed by intense critical and theoretical writing on art (*Possibilità di relazione*, 1960; *Alternative attuali*, 1962, and the long essay *Organicità del reale* in *Il Verrì* literary magazine). In 1963 he published his first novel, *Le armi l'amore* (Rizzoli), followed in 1980 by *L'opera* (Einaudi), in 1987 came *La lunga notte* (Rizzoli), in 1991 the volume of poems *L'insieme delle cose* (Garzanti), and in 1993 his last novel, *La tempesta* (Einaudi).

Alongside his critical and literary work, from the late 1950s Tadini began to practise painting.

His first solo exhibition was in 1961 at the Galleria del Cavallino in Venice.

From the outset his art took the form of large cycles of paintings constructed according to a technique of superimposed temporal planes in which memory and reality, the tragic and the comic, constantly contend with one another.

From 1965 he regularly exhibited at Studio Marconi, and during the 1970s he held solo exhibitions abroad, in Paris, Stockholm, Brussels, London, Antwerp, the United States and Latin America, both in private galleries and in public spaces and museums.

His work was also shown in numerous group exhibitions.

He was present at the 1978 and 1982 Venice Biennale, and in 1986 he held a large solo exhibition in Milan at the Rotonda di via Besana, where he showed a series of paintings that anticipate the subsequent cycles *Refugees* and *Italian Cities*, the latter shown in 1988 at the Tour Fromage in Aosta. In 1990 he exhibited seven large triptychs at Studio Marconi, and in 1992 the exhibition *Overseas* was held in Paris at Galerie du Centre. In 1993 the *Overseas* exhibition, with additional new paintings, was revived by Studio Marconi in Milan. In 1995 at Villa delle Rose in Bologna he exhibited eight triptychs from the cycle *The Philosophers' Dance*. From autumn 1995 until summer 1996 a major retrospective exhibition took place in the museums of Stralsund, Bochum and Darmstadt, accompanied by a monograph edited by Arturo Carlo Quintavalle.

In 1996 *The Philosophers' Dance* was reproposeed at Galleria Giò Marconi.

In 1997 he held solo shows at Galerie Karin Fesel in Düsseldorf, Galerie Georges Fall in Paris and at the Museo di Castelvecchio in Verona. His last cycles to be exhibited were *Fairy Tales* and *Still Lifes*. In 1999 he presented the *Fairy Tales* cycle at Die Galerie in Frankfurt.

For some years he was a commentator for the newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, and from 1997 to 2000 he was president of the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. In 2001 a large retrospective of his work was held at Milan's Palazzo Reale. He died in September 2002.

In spring 2005, the Villa dei Cedri Museum in Bellinzona held a large retrospective exhibition of his work. In 2007 the exhibition *Emilio Tadini 1960-1985. The Eye of Painting* was inaugurated in Milan in the exhibition rooms of the Marconi and Mudima Foundations and at the Brera Academy.

The artist's works have been recently presented for solo or group exhibitions at Fondazione Marconi (2009, 2011, 2012, 2015 and 2016); Fondazione Roma (*Gli irripetibili anni '60*, curated by L.M. Barbero, 2011); Museo della Permanente, Milan (2012); Galleria Cortina, Milan (2013); Fondazione Magnani Rocca in Mamiano di Traversetolo and Villa Olmo, Como (2016).

Among the latest initiatives dedicated to the artist at Casa Museo Spazio Tadini is *Il '900 di Emilio Tadini*, part of the extensive exhibition *Novecento Italiano* organised by the City of Milan (2018), and the exhibition of the *Refugees* cycle from the 1980s-1990s, currently running until 20 April 2019, which is more timely and emblematic than ever.

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