

CARLA ACCARDI

SICOFOIL

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M&L FINE ART

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Galleria Marlborough, Rome 1965
Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

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Carla Accardi in her studio, 1970
Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

I've always considered Carla Accardi's sicofoil works among her most inspired creations. Painting with pure colour has been – from Manet onwards – one of the great artistic challenges. To bring out the best in colour, Accardi switched support. No more canvases or boards, materials which inevitably absorb pigment, but a transparent plastic sheet onto which colour is applied directly from the tube. By virtue of its translucent qualities, sicofoil exalts colours and strengthens their beauty and freshness. Accardi's intuition in this respect was as simple as it was effective, comparable to Fontana's holes and slashes.

In the past, similar effects had been obtained by means of lacquer or stained glass: elaborate and complex techniques through which light was imprisoned and reflected. Carla Accardi achieves similar these results through an entirely innovative support: a product of the scientific research undertaken in Italy at the time, which, as Laura Cherubini and Flavia Frigeri note in the pages of this catalogue, offered new possibilities in those same years to artists, architects and designers alike.

However, a certain openness and receptiveness were required in order to appreciate these novelties. Accardi possessed both, and focused her entire career in this direction, with a steadfast readiness to put her accomplishments behind her and seek out new, uncharted territories. For this reason, her artistic research, while rooted in the 1950s, continues to shine forth so alive and present.

Matteo Lampertico



**PAINTING LAID BARE:
FROM THE CONSTRUCTION
TO THE DISSOLUTION OF SIGNS,**

Laura Cherubini

Carla Accardi, *Oro* (detail), 1972.
Paint on sicofoil, 70 x 95 cm.

*"Carla doesn't do anything to convince you that her art is interesting.
And her work is also enriched by this infinite freedom."*

Paola Pivi

TRANSPARENCIES

Carla Accardi is an artist who has ventured in many directions: from the abstraction of the Forma group to environments, from the use of gold and silver to her macroscopic marks and the incredible freshness of her later works. Her oeuvre has often been discussed in terms of two-dimensional configurations of space and surface. But for Accardi, the surface was not only a terrain for the structural analysis of the foundations of painting and for exposing the elements that made up painting. It was most of all a virtual space, the site of much potential. Because of its intrinsic tendency, surfaces could develop beyond their confines, into the three-dimensional objects and inhabitable environments of Carla Accardi's work. However, her biggest and most groundbreaking adventure was with transparency. Beginning in the Sixties with the discovery of a new and different material, the work of Carla Accardi took a new turn. The material was a sheet of transparent plastic called sicofoil. "What interested me was its transparency, you could see the stretcher," Accardi said in a conversation with Paolo Vagheggi. "I wanted to render what was around us transparent". Transparency led her in a new direction. The *Piccola tenda* (Small Tent 1965-66) and other environments originated from the evolution of the intrinsic potential of this diaphanous industrial material: usable objects, virtually inhabitable and permeated with light, that were at once paintings, sculptures and architectures.

This line of her research, which produced began with two little paintings from 1966, *Bianco-bianco* (White-White) produced the empty backgrounds of plastic material, sicofoil, of the end of the Seventies. These works were delimited by wood, a material considered in some traditions to be on par with the four primary elements (air, earth, water and fire), left in its untreated and natural state. The appearance of the wood grain is a clue that we were about to cross a diaphanous threshold (as in Francis Picabia's *Transparencies*, where the play of juxtaposed images includes the grain lines of the supporting structure?). The modern transparency embodied by this new artificial plastic material, seemed to allude, in the spirit of *Wabi*, to the *Absolute Void*, one of Japan's fundamental aesthetic categories achieved through the suppression of colors. Those who have embarked on the ways of color and are aware of its pleasures are the only ones who can find the strength to decree color's absence and attempt its progressive annulment.

Only after experiencing the rich colors of the Seventies could Carla Accardi begin identifying surface with support in absolute transparency. While she began using sicofoil in the late Sixties, Carla Accardi continued to employ the same brilliant colors of those years, something she would repeat at a later phase of her work. Indeed, color was present even when the artist used paint and plastic to build *Triplice tenda* (Triple Tent, 1969) a more complex environment from the point of view of spatial organization. As a locus built with bodily measurements in mind (implicitly and almost secretly, the artist had always transposed an existential dimension into language) the artist chose the color of flesh for it: rose pink. "It was the color of the body, but also of the sunset which I saw from the terrace of my studio, every evening at seven I was [presented with] a fantastic color." (Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer, 1998). The following excerpts relating to the works made with sicofoil are taken from this and from a later conversation:

CA – Then I made *Triplice tenda* (Triple Tent, 1969-71, now in Beaubourg).

LC – What is the main difference between this bigger, more articulated tent and the first one?

CA – First of all, in this case I used a single color, a special rose pink, and then the signs were not so carefully drawn as those of the first tent were, they were more informal, intersecting, yet always with a double layer, to confer a greater robustness, a greater presence to it.

LC – Furthermore, *Triplice tenda* has a more complex spatial organization, it creates three spaces.

CA – The biggest space is an octagon, then a hexagon and then a cabin the size of a person.

LC – Afterwards you only made paintings with sicofoil which were transparent.

CA – Transparent and crisscrossed with a regular rhythm.

LC – In a way the crisscrossing replaces the signs.

CA – Yes, in order to further distance myself from painting.

LC – It was a very radical moment, [a moment] of cancellation. Nevertheless, there was a strong underlying idea: to make painting out of light. Through a mental process, the structural elements of a painting were analytically stripped bare. Further on, the paint was moved to the perimeter.

CA – Yes, when I painted on canvas.

LC – Color does resurface but it is along the edges of the painting. There is another very important environmental piece titled *Ambiente arancio* (Orange Environment, 1967-8).

CA – I wanted to reproduce a fragment of reality, a section of beach with a beach umbrella and an inflatable mattress on the ground.

LC – The colors are radiant. Why did you think of the sea and the beach?

CA – I don't know, thoughts come to me like inventions, from my imagination, nothing is causing them. *Ambiente arancio* is now at the Museum of Strasbourg.

LC – In recent years it was exhibited at Zerynthia in Rome, but did you initially make it for a specific place?

CA – I don't usually make things for a space, instead I first think of making them, and then find a place in which to put them later."

(Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer in 2007).

A precedent to *Ambiente arancio* could be *Arancio-arancio*, a beautiful piece from 1966. Eventually, the transparent surface bent, curved around itself, and rolled into a stratified enclosure inside a singular cylindrical object: that is how *Rotoli* (Rolls) came to be.



Installation view, Castello di Rivoli, *Triplice Tenda*, 1969-71. Paint on sicofoil, on perspex stretcher, diameter 550 cm. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.



Tenda, 1965-66. Paint on sicofoil, 215 x 220 x 140 cm. Private Collection, Turin. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

The pieces made with transparent material are combined with themes of intersection, an architectural node that is the basis of building and inhabiting. By the mid Seventies, colors had become completely muted and juxtapositions remained the only form of [past] signs "in order to put painting at a greater distance [from me]", the artist said. "At a certain point, the signs disappeared, as if they were self-destructing and you could no longer do anything." (Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer, 1998) We see examples of this radical strategy in the three transparent works on view, made between 1974 and 1975.

FROM A KERCHIEF TO A TEMPLE

Piccola tenda (Small Tent) was begun in 1965 and exhibited for the first time at Luciano Pistoï's Notizie Gallery in Turin. It was an *environmental* work, in other words, an art construction that was practicable and comprised architecture, sculpture and painting. In another dialogue:

LC – There is something I would like to understand: at what point were you, an artist who painted, pushed towards the environment.

CA – Do you know what happened? I passed through Ravenna and saw the Mausoleum of Gallia Placidia, which is marvelous...

LC – ...and you understood that painting could be a space.

CA – Since architects never gave us anything to do, because of the influence of Le Corbusier never to use paintings in architecture which was a really terrible thing... So I said to myself: "now I am going to make my own".

LC – So you came up with the idea of making your own architecture.

CA – You know how small opportunities can be, a square of this new sicofoil material was sent to my studio so that it could be made into a kerchief.

LC – So the new work also comes from the material! But of course, it is obvious!

CA – I never made the kerchief, I never make anything associated with handicrafts, otherwise the work can become vulnerable to attack. But I spent a summer with this material, working on the floor and painting all these panels and juxtaposing red and green, truly incredible...

LC – The small tent is not so big...

CA – No, but you can enter and stand in it.

LC – It is shaped like a house, and makes you think of a dwelling.

CA – It is the size of a small temple... Zorio said to a young lady: 'Carla was influential in Turin and so she wrote her thesis on it.

LC – I know. [You are referring to] Maria Sensi.

CA – I then exhibited the tent in Essen in Germany.

LC – Was it a solo show or a group show?

CA – A solo show and afterwards [it went to] Beatrice Monti in Milan.

LC – These are the three solo shows of 1966, at the Notizie Gallery, at the Thelen Gallery and at the Galleria dell'Ariete.

CA – And guess who installed the tent in Milan? Luciano Fabro! I exhibited it in three solo shows that year

because I considered it to be an important work. Anna Piva, the wife of Giulio Paolini, photographed me, Fabro and his wife Carla standing in front of the tent in Luciano Pistoï's gallery.

LC – So the tent comes from the idea of a colored space, from the relationship between interior and exterior which transparency makes possible, from the desire to make your own architecture and, consequently, from the idea of living: [the tent] possible has a threshold and a sloping roof. Even the temple is connected to this, because a temple is the house of god.

CA – It is a home made in the simplest way.

LC – It is like the shape children use when they draw their first home”.

(Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer 1998).

A TRAP FOR THE VIEWERS

So, Accardi sought inspiration in the classical form of the *home-temple*. The idea came to her inside the mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, a space of light and color that affected her greatly and, at a time of great disappointment, when she realized how little interaction there was between the art and architecture of her time. She therefore decided to take matters into her own hands and patiently painted two layers of translucent sheets, one with smaller green signs on it and one with larger signs. What is striking to note is that no trace of the bedazzlement she felt in Galla Placidia was ever discerned in the work, no chromatism, no sign or figure, none of the decorative patterns or even the more abstract ones. This is what Carla Accardi used art history for: to forget it.

In *Rapporto 60*, published in 1966 while the Sixties had not yet ended, Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco immediately described *Piccola tenda* (Small Tent) as “a painting open to all dimensions, like a trap that attracts viewers and finally places them at the center of artistic production.” In other words, it was a device that enabled the mandate of Futurism and of Boccioni to be carried out: to bring the viewer into the center of the painting. Furthermore, it also anticipated the role attributed to viewers by more recent artistic practices and is probably another reason why Carla Accardi is so beloved by artists like Alberto Garutti and Fabrice Hybert. The fact though is that viewers are inside the paintings of Carla Accardi as well. She has said that her paintings are in her head and that ideas pass through her arm as it paints. But there is also a path through the emotions created by colors that induces the pictorial composition to impress itself on the minds of viewers. Musil wrote about concave and convex feelings, with the tent we can feel both.

What really makes Accardi's work a precursor vis-à-vis the younger generations is its relationship to *architecture*. Hans Ulrich Obrist noted that its influence lies mainly in the manner “materials and colors are treated on a semi-architectural level” and in the fact that the work “is concentrated on visual impact and constantly oscillates among art, architecture and design.” Obrist's remarks on the work's relationship to design are particularly interesting: “When Accardi decided to work with new materials like plastic and fluorescent colors at the beginning of the Sixties, they were considered to be in bad taste... The operation of blurring the lines between “highbrow” and popular culture and products for mass consumption, was in a sense similar to the approach adopted by the radical Italian designers of the time who introduced new materials like laminated plastic surfaces, bright colors and well-delineated geometric patterns”, citing as examples the experimental objects (sofas, tables and chairs) of Cini Boeri.



Alba, 1965. Carla Lonzi, Carla Accardi, Luciano Fabro, Luciano Pistoï and Giulio Paolini. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

FROM TRANSPARENCY TO THE ENVIRONMENT

In the course of her work, Carla Accardi addressed the influence of the environment quite early on, beginning in the mid Sixties with *Piccola tenda* (Small Tent), but she continued to address it during her entire working life with other pieces like the extraordinary *Ambiente arancio* (Orange Environment 1966-68), *Casa-Labirinto* (Home-Labyrinth, 2000 for *Verso Sud*), and finally the experimental sound sculpture which emitted sounds from a modular floor of ceramic tiles made in collaboration with Gianna Nannini (2007). Some other pieces that addressed the relationship between painting and the environment are: *Rotoli* (Rolls from 1965), *Paravento* (Screen, 1971-72), *Cilindrocono* (Cylindercone, 1972, exhibited at Rivoli), a sort of well...

CA – Each sheet in *Rotoli* (Rolls) is a different color, I rolled them and they stayed up naturally, without [needing] any other support. *Paravento* (Screen) is a repeated rhythm, with two layers of signs, a darker and a lighter grey.

LC – According to me, *Paravento* already contained the seeds of *Casa-Labirinto*, in other words, the idea of planes arranged in space and predisposed for human habitation. The concept of habitation was already there in both tents...

CA – In the *Casa-Labirinto* you enter on one side, there is a division, and exit on the other. There is a symmetrical rhythm. There are many transparent voids and few spaces marked with grey signs.

LC – It is very rarified.

CA – Very minimal."

(Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer, 2007).

In 1972, the artist also made *Segni grigi* (Grey Signs) in the same period as she made *Paravento*.

A PRACTICABLE PAINTING

More than anything though, Accardi transformed painting and its surfaces, both transparent and colorful, into something as light as skin, into the frame of our lives, a thin membrane that surrounds us, a space that engages us; in front of Carla's paintings it is as if we were always inside a tent, small or triple though it be. "In 1965, when I began building objects in plastic, and I mean objects in a generic sense, I also continued to paint – [instead of] tempera paints I used fluorescent colors on transparent plastic..." *Objects* that were paintings, sculptures and architectures all at once, objects that became paintings, paintings that became spaces. Practicable paintings. Artists have always addressed how they relate to the environment, just think of the great fresco cycles of artistic tradition. But in this case, Carla Accardi made her own architecture and granted it the status of object. "My first tent, [made in] 1965, was decorated with arabesques that brought to mind those of Islamic art. I find the tents particularly fascinating; I am interested in them because they represent a way of living that is symbolically different – life outdoors, in contact with nature, air and light, free and without any of the trappings of civilization." Achille Bonito Oliva and Germano Celant have both pointed out the *nomadic* aspect of Accardi's work. She has said that she drew inspiration for *Triplice tenda* (Triple Tent) "from those who went to war and travelled, setting up tents in which they lived a refined life" (in conversation with the writer, 2007). These environment-objects present clearly delineated insides



Catasta, 1979. 8 elements, sicofoil on painted wood, dimensions variable. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

and outsides, interiors and exteriors at the same time, as *Ambiente arancio* (Orange Environment) shows particularly well.

Just as 1953 had been a crucial year for Carla Accardi, a year of crisis and of rebirth brought on by the artist's radical and strong gesture of working on the floor, a regenerating act that led to the invention of her brushstroke signs, in 1965 another breakthrough led to the creation of *Piccola tenda* (Small Tent), the artwork that made painting habitable.

FROM BACKGROUNDS TO SIGNS

Accardi continued to use sicofoil until it was no longer in production. The lifespan of the sicofoil series coincided with the production cycle of the materials from which they were made. "The phases of my work have always been based on changes in the materials, because when I made black and white [paintings] I used the background. The background is what characterizes my work and is also what distances me from traditional painting. In the Fifties, my backgrounds were black, then came a period of contrasting colors of equal strength that turned into monochromes when viewed from afar, with small signs that I had retrieved. I had taken the signs from the black and white paintings and lined them up in rows as if they were being

documented. We actually found a painting that was quite indicative of this [strategy]. Then came the long period [in which] plastic and sicofoil became the supporting surface. At the same time, the signs that had been iconographically very lively in the Fifties, became at first archival and then anonymous, or always the same, in the plastic series. This development manifested itself in both the backgrounds and the signs." (Carla Accardi in conversation with the writer, 1998).

The concept of transparency as a system of representation that simultaneously renders depth and surface remained in the objects and paintings made with raw linen backgrounds that turned into foregrounds. Even in Accardi's later works, in fact, unprimed linen continued to appear either as a border or a background. In the latter instance, the canvas was used just like the black backgrounds or the plastic materials that preceded it. Raw linen appeared in her work from the Eighties, in a system of painting characterized by two types of overlapping signs that generate points of intersection between two different formal grids. Like the plastic before it, the raw linen canvas alluded to the extreme rarefaction of color.

SI DIVIDONO INVANO

Si dividono invano (They Divide in Vain, 2006) is the title of a large bas relief, (requested by Jan Hoet, the director of the Herford Museum, in 2007), which is two and a half meters high and extends for 12 meters along a white wall. It is also the title of the preparatory model. Here the giant signs are repeated, as the artist put it, with "a slight movement". The bas-relief is painted in enamel on wood in a grey color.

As mentioned above, *Si dividono in vano* is the title of both the bas-relief and the corresponding model, but it could also be a comment on the destiny of all the variegated signs that inhabit Accardi's oeuvre. They Divide in Vain because they are destined to seek each other out, chase each other, combine with each other and reunite in families of signs, however litigious or extended they may be, always connected by reciprocal attraction, animated by virtual movement, attracted by magnetism. There is one work that can be said to demonstrate more than any other perhaps, the artist's development from painting to object to environment: it is *Catasta* (Pile, 1979).

After having annulled color and made the void completely transparent in the sicofoil works, animating them exclusively through the intersection of signs, Accardi moved on once more, no longer able to resume painting on canvas. Color eventually returned to her work, but it appeared where we least expected it, at the very edges of the painting. In the exhibition held at Paola Betti's in Milan (1978) color was applied to the stretchers. "For this work I used eight big stretchers shaped like right-angled triangles (280 x 220x 180 cm in size). I removed the cross bars so that they could become as light as sails, then I painted them, the first coats in dense colors and afterwards with very diluted glazes (using the colors of nature, [with] light blues or blues on acid or warm yellows that turned into tender or garish greens, and yellows on dark and burnt reds that became light or bright oranges). Finally, I covered them with sheets of transparent sicofoil instead of canvas" wrote the artist in the newsletter of Samangallery, a Genoese gallery directed by Ida Gianelli (who co-curated the exhibition with Giorgio Verzotti at the Castello di Rivoli in 1994 and proposed the same work). The title of the exhibition, *La vita e' simbolo: dimenticare, mettersi in salvo* (Life Is a Symbol: Forgetting, Saving Oneself), alludes to the strategy of anti-memory that Accardi continuously put into practice in her



Dimenticare mettersi in salvo, 1978. Sicofoil on painted wood. 8 elements, 280 x 180 x 220 cm, always presented together. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

work. Safety lies in forgetting, the true operative word in the oeuvre of Carla Accardi.

Accardi's transparent pile derives its strength from its connection to the ground. In my opinion, this series originated from a very distant yet ever present episode in the life of Carla Accardi: "For me, 1953 was a year of internal, existential crisis. I worked very little and badly. But at a certain point I felt really inspired... I closed myself in the studio and began working on sheets placed on the floor. It is an episode that I remember as one of the really extraordinary moments of my life".

Catasta (Pile) shows Accardi's entire artistic journey from floor to wall and back again. Based on the identification of the stretcher with the frame, *Catasta* summarizes the sequence of painted stretchers, painted edges, colors on the margins, and stretchers disarticulated and recomposed into frames. With its painted borders and empty sicofoil centers, it joins together color and with the absence of color, manual and material artistry with mental grasp, the two polarities in the dialectics of Accardi's oeuvre.

The fundamental connotation of the work remains one of extreme lightness. Not surprisingly Accardi compared the big triangles to sails which are in contact with air and water, elements of transparency which tend towards maximum mobility and inconsistency in their fluid and ethereal states. Light is another element of fundamental value in the work of Accardi and an extremely mobile and immaterial element it is. The significance of the transparent works seems to be their tendency towards pure luminosity, so much so that some of the objects, the plastic rolls made with Marta Lonzi (sister of the other Carla, Carla Lonzi, who co-founded with Accardi the group *Rivolta femminile*, before their paths diverged), can be transformed into light sources. Likewise, the use of the color gold helps to highlight the value of light in *Due ori* (Two Golds, 1968), *Oro* (Gold, 1972) and *Segni Oro* (Golden Signs, 1967-76). We have already mentioned Accardi's painted stretchers, but here the *stretchers* became *frames* because of the materials used and the removal of the crossbars that made the work even lighter. By turning stretchers into frames, the most apparently decorative part of a painting became the structure itself, a logical step in the work of an artist like Accardi who has always fused decoration and structure together, in a synthesis of high quality. In Art history, frames are traditionally viewed as predominantly decorative elements until the historical avant-gardes (Futurism, Dadaism, Surrealism) used them as a terrain for experimentation, perhaps because frames underscore that paintings are a material that is separate from reality. Frames are the border between the work and the world and became an area of special interest for the artist.

"Accardi is without doubt an artist's artist, for all generations of artists," Obrist writes. In fact, on the occasion of Accardi's solo exhibition at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris in 2002, with co-curator Laurence Bosse' and director Suzanne Paget, artists like Fabrice Hybert, Bertrand Lavier, Paola Pivi, Franz West and Grazia Toderi were asked to write a text for the catalog. To be an "artist's artist" is very important. Artists know how to recognize other artists and not many have been as loved as Carla Accardi has. I might add that she is also much esteemed by many young curators, another difficult and important goal to reach.

Forgetting in order to save oneself is the healthy practice of oblivion and anti-memory that Carla Accardi put into practice: every work is new because the artist always started from zero, she never took anything for granted. So much so that in an interview (with Delphine Borione) Carla said she did not like museums, places where art was preserved, not made. When she moved very young to Florence from Sicily,

she did not find the world's most famous art capital to be contemporary enough and left, but not before taking advantage of her stay by studying the colors of Beato Angelico at his most abstract, in the Armadio degli Argenti. Yet she never indulged in any mention or nostalgia, in any complacency for historical memory or artistic tradition. I still think of Carla as the youngest of my friends, the most vital, the most curious, the one with the greatest energy. Nothing in her work is directed towards the past (be it distant or recent), nothing is ever anachronistic, ever dated. The feeling of extreme freshness that we feel when looking at a work by Carla Accardi derives from her having annulled everything and from always confronting the current work as if it were her first.

Translated from Italian by Mila Dau



Installation view, MARTa Herford, 2007. Featured work: Carla Accardi, *Si dividono invano*, 2006. Enamel on wood, 250 x 1200 cm. Courtesy MARTa Herford and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome

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G. Celant, *Carla Accardi. La vita delle forme*, Zerynthia, Rome-Silvana Editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo 2011.


The interviews referred to are extracts from two of my many conversations with Carla: the first partially and incorrectly published in *Carla Accardi. Opere 1947-1997*, catalogue for the exhibition at Chiesa della Badia Grande-Laboratorio Officina, Trapani, 1998, curated by C. Cerritelli, texts by me, P. Occhipinti and interview by me, Edizioni Charta, Milano 1998; the second published in a monograph featuring texts by various authors on Chiesa del Santo Volto by Piero Sartogo: L. Cherubini, *Carla Accardi*, in A. Bonito Oliva, *Architettura del sublime. La Chiesa del Santo Volto di Gesù a Roma*, Mondadori Electa, Milano 2007.

“[My works are] abandonment to the rhythms of life,
both on an everyday basis and over longer periods.”

Interview with Damiano Benvegnù, “Volevo l’antipittura”, *Inside Art*, March 2007: 15



Carla Accardi in her studio, Rome, 1966. Photo Ugo Mulas.
Courtesy Ugo Mulas Heirs and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.



CARLA ACCARDI'S PLASTIC DREAMS

Flavia Frigeri

Carla Accardi, *Trasparente* (detail), 1975.
Sicofoil on wood frame, 73,5 x 75 cm.

In an interview with critic Anne-Marie Sauzeau Boetti the artist Carla Accardi observed: "I don't know why I always go back to plastic."¹ Indeed, plastic in the form of sicofoil (a transparent membrane) was central to the artist's vocabulary and acted as a support to many of Accardi's works. The initial encounter with sicofoil was fortuitous and as Accardi later acknowledged, it was thanks to a textile company planning a range of ready to wear silk scarves based on her paintings that she was first sent a stack of sicofoil sheets. The idea of the scarves, however, was quickly discarded and the plastic repurposed by the artist for her own use. In her words:

*This particular material was brought to my studio one day by someone who wanted to reproduce one of my works. I was curious, of course. I thought: I want to try using it so I can unveil the mysteries of art. I was interested in transparency, you could see the framework. This was the start of it all, the inspiration. I wanted to make everything around us transparent. It was the sixties.*²

The material quality of plastic is conflated here with the spirit of the 1960s, a time when a utopian vision of alternative and liberated lifestyles first came into being. Plastic, acted as a powerful barometer of contemporary cultural and societal shifts, and quickly came to encapsulate the *zeitgeist* of a new and younger generation, that aspired to break free from traditional hierarchies. The rapid expansion of the plastics industry meant that the 1960s saw the kaleidoscopic profusion of plastic objects and furnishings. In *Mythologies* his incisive diagnosis of new mythological constructs, Roland Barthes described plastic as a 'miraculous substance'.³ Virtually ubiquitous and prone to infinite transformations plastic, was for Barthes "impregnated with wonder," despite, or perhaps in light of its utilitarian function.⁴ Indeed, when it came to plastics the connection with the functional world of design was inescapable. A case in the point was Italy, where leading design companies such as Artemide, Kartell and Poltronova gave designers the freedom to experiment with this "miraculous substance". The outcome was diverse and striking, and included Ettore Sottsass and Perry King's *Valentine* typewriter, Marco Zanuso and Richard Sapper's *Model No. 4999* child's chair and Gatti, Paolini and Teodoro's *Sacco* beanbag. These progressive designs were often highly futuristic, seamlessly marrying a brightly coloured Pop present with a Space Age future.

1 Carla Accardi qtd. in A.M. Boetti, "Lo specchio ardente", *Data*, Milan no. 18 Sept-Oct 1975, p.50

2 Carla Accardi qtd. in Luca Massimo Barbero ed. *Carla Accardi: segno e trasparenza*. Cinisello Balsamo/Milano: Silvana, 2011. p. 33.

3 Roland Barthes, "Plastic" in *Mythologies*, Annette Lavers trans. London: Jonathan Cape, 1972 rpt. London: Vintage, 2009. p. 97

4 *Ibid.*

Accardi's own enthusiastic embrace of sicofoil should be considered in light of this burgeoning fascination with plastics. As Hans Ulrich Obrist eloquently noted: "The manner in which Accardi began to use plastic... strongly echoes the pioneering work of Italian designers of the time, above all Cini Boeri's experimental objects (sofas, tables, chairs) created in the mid-sixties."⁵ By drawing attention to Boeri, one of a handful of female architects active as an industrial designer in post-war Milan, Obrist implicitly poses the accent on the emancipatory potential of plastic. Arguably, the new synthetic material came to represent a new lifestyle that granted greater freedom to women, amongst other things.

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

Accardi's connection to plastic can be understood in terms of an aesthetic and conceptual awakening. Not just a material, plastic partakes in the work's meaning. It is especially the transparency that the artist associates with it, that plays a critical role in Accardi's zealous embrace of sicofoil. In an unpublished writing from 1968 the artist claimed: "One evening, last year, I was overcome by enthusiasm...because I had begun a new period, I remember it,

⁵ Hans Ulrich Obrist, "An A to Z for Carla Accardi, Paris Pro Toto" in *Carla Accardi*, Danilo Eccher ed. Roma/MACRO; Milano/Electa, 2004. pp. 89-93.



Ambiente Arancio, 1966-68. Painting, sunbed, umbrella, roll and floor piece in 7 elements. Painting on sicofoil, 251 x 337 x 441 cm. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome and Musées de Strasbourg.

you know, the period of transparency."⁶ And again, "This was the start of it all, the inspiration. I wanted to make everything around us transparent. It was the sixties."⁷ Transparency for Accardi meant not only opening up to a new material, but it also, and most importantly entailed revealing the framework. The wooden bars supporting the stretched canvas which usually remained out of sight, were brought to light thanks to the transparent plastic, as evinced by *Trasparente* (1975). Equally crucial to Accardi's project was the fundamental connection between colour and light. Brilliance and luminosity were, in fact, the ultimate goal, and works like *Arancio-arancio* (1966) and *Segni oro* (1967-76) with their bright orange and gilded hues expressed Accardi's "gradual search for brighter light."⁸

The yearning for transparency, which from the very get go propelled the sicofoil works should be understood as both a formal and symbolical quest. Formally, as discussed above, it relied on the interconnection between colour, light and exposed structure. Symbolically, it encapsulated the spirit of the 1960s and the period's fixation with plastics. Like Accardi, also the Belgian artist Evelyne Axell exploited the novelty and eye-catching nature of synthetic materials in her work. In *Project for an Archaeological Museum of the 20th Century* (1970) (conceived for the Galleria Apollinaire in Milan but never realised) Axell hailed plastic as the substance that best expressed her contemporary age for future generations. This ambitious environment was, in fact, conceived as a time-capsule representing the residues of a lost civilisation enthused with plastics. At the heart of it was a plastic Venus, which rescued from the purview of static beauty, was reclaimed as a self-empowered stand-in for female emancipation. Ultimately, this archaeological fiction acted as a celebration of femininity in the name of the feminist cause, while also exposing Axell's enthrallment with plastics. When it came to the conception of her three-dimensional works, *Tenda* (1965), *Ambiente Arancio* (1966-68) and *Triplice Tenda* (1968-1971) Accardi was moved by a similar prerogative. Like Axell also the Italian artist turned to the environment as a metaphorical and physical locus for an alternative spatial domain.

Despite her leading role (together with Carla Lonzi) in the founding of "Rivolta Femminile" – one of the first feminist movements in Italy – Accardi reluctantly inflected her two life-size tents with a clear feminist agenda, describing them instead as a 'purely aesthetic act' partly inspired by the nomadic life of Turkish tribes.⁹ Nevertheless, it appears that in creating these intimate shelters along with their contemporary bright orange environment Accardi was speaking to a feminist yearning to carve a space of one's own in a still predominantly patriarchal society. This aspirational stance resonated with Axell's programmatic feminist mission, as well as that of her contemporaries Marta Minujin and Niki de Saint Phalle who also invoked alternative lifestyles through the creation of whimsical environments.

In *Ambiente Arancio*, Accardi creates an idiosyncratic environment, where indoor and outdoor space are seamlessly merged. A sunbed and a sun-umbrella become one with the sicofoil paintings neatly laid on the floor. Paintings are no longer privy to the gallery walls and furnishings loose their functional use in this pictorial sublimation of sun swept radiance. As a liminal space *Ambiente Arancio* playfully challenged traditional notions of domesticity. Similarly,

⁶ Carla Accardi, unpublished writing, A.E.I.O.U., December 1968. p.29.

⁷ Carla Accardi qtd. in "La vita non è arte. L'arte è vita. Paolo Vagheggi intervista Carla Accardi," in *Carla Accardi*, Danilo Eccher ed. Roma/MACRO; Milano/Electa, 2004. pp. 117-21

⁸ Carla Accardi qtd in Barbero ed. *Carla Accardi*, p.33.

⁹ Carla Accardi in conversation with Carla Lonzi. See: Carla Lonzi, *Autritratto*, Milano: Et al., 2010. And, *Carla Accardi*, exh. cat. Torino: Galleria Notizie, 1966 rpt. in Lara Conte, Laura Iamurri and Vanessa Martini eds. *Carla Lonzi: scritti sull'arte*. Milano: et al., 2012. p. 450.



Installation view, Niki de Saint Phalle, "HON - en katedral" ("SHE - a cathedral"), 1966, Moderna Museet, Stockholm. Photograph: Hans Hammarskiöld. Courtesy the artists and Moderna Museet.

Minujin's *La Menesunda* (1965)¹⁰ and de Saint Phalle's *Hon - en katedral* (SHE - a cathedral, 1966)¹¹ invited viewers to enter an alternative realm, in which long held gender and societal norms could be radically subverted. The effect of both, Minujin's meandering labyrinth consisting of sixteen environments and de Saint Phalle's non-denominational cathedral in the shape of a woman's body, was intentionally disorienting. Indoor and outdoor realms were merged in these two works, which like *Ambiente Arancio* sought to burn down the patriarchal house and build a new and egalitarian home for the emancipated woman. A Pop aesthetic dominated all three projects, which effectively trod the fine line between trivial entertainment and consciousness-raising exercise.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Nomadism, as a symptom of social and cultural displacement is a powerful trope in Accardi's work. Devised as independent spatial entities *Tenda* and *Triplíce Tenda* occupy an interstitial space, which finds in the fluid concept of nomadism a comfortable *placelessness*. The genesis of the first tent coincided with a transitional moment for Accardi, as it marked the shift from two-dimensional pictorial surface to three-dimensional spatial environment.¹² Although the Turkish tents certainly offered the initial impetus for Accardi's *Tenda*, it was a visit to the Mausoleo di Galla Placidia in Ravenna which cemented her interest. The all-immersive experience of the decorated mausoleum made it clear to the artist that painting could also be space, and that the two were not necessarily mutually exclusive. As a result, Accardi went on to translate the monumental fixity of the Mausoleum into the precariousness of the mobile tent constructed out of transparent panels donning Accardi's iconic painted ciphers. Through the red and green weave of marks, the inside of the *Tenda* was made visible from the outside and vice-versa. The primacy of transparency came once again to the fore, as inner and outer space were seamlessly conflated, making *Tenda* not just a portable habitable shelter, but also a visibly penetrable structure.

Art historian Teresa Kittler, has eloquently suggested that Accardi's structures represent "a different way of living", that is, an alternative existence founded on utopian aspirations grounded in the contemporary countercultural embrace of communal living.¹³ For Kittler, *Tenda* is symptomatic of a life beyond the norm and indeed Accardi's work speaks to an anomaly in conventional lifestyles; yet it does so through static mobility. Hardly the proof of a nomadic existence *Tenda*, in fact, never makes the journey to foreign and unknown territories nor does it provide shelter to wandering nomads. It merely dislocates mobility by remaining within the safe precinct of the gallery space. Ultimately, it appears that *Tenda* monumentalises a different way of living rather than turning it into an actual possibility.

Nil Yalter's *Topak Ev* (1973) is a similarly static yet conceptually mobile tent, stemming from the artist's encounter with Central Asian nomadic communities. As she explained: "Being an artist from Turkish origins, I am at times attracted by the codes and the technology of occidental culture, but often I am nostalgic of the richness and the difference of my own culture."¹⁴ Yalter

¹⁰ The project was conceived in collaboration with Rubén Santantonín, Pablo Suárez, Floreal Amor, Rodolfo Prayon, Leopoldo Maler, David Lamas and others associated to the Torcuato di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires. For more on this project see: Victoria Noorthoorn, *La Menesunda según Marta Minujin*, exh. cat. Museo de Arte Moderna de Buenos Aires, 2015.

¹¹ The project was conceived in collaboration with Jean Tinguely and Per Olof Ulivedt. For extensive analysis of the project's history and meaning see: Annika Öhrner, "Niki de Saint Phalle Playing with the Feminine in the Male Factory: HON - en katedral" in *Stedelijk Studies #7 - Lose Yourself! On Labyrinthine Exhibitions as Curatorial Model*. Volume 7 (Fall 2018). pp. 1-16.

¹² For a full account of the issues surrounding the interpretation of Accardi's *Tenda* see: Teresa Kittler, "Living Differently, Seeing Differently: Carla Accardi's Temporary Structures (1965-1972)," *Oxford Art Journal* (40.1.2017). pp. 85-107. And: Leslie Cozzi, "Spaces of Self-Consciousness: Carla Accardi's Environments and the Rise of Italian Feminism," *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* (21, no.1, 2011). pp. 67-88.

¹³ Kittler, "Living Differently, Seeing Differently", pp. 85-107.

¹⁴ Nil Yalter qtd. in Cornelia Butler and Lisa Gabrielle Marks eds. *Wack!: art and the feminist revolution*, exh. cat. Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (Cambridge, Mass/London: The MIT Press, 2007). p. 319.

ascribed to the tent a cultural and symbolical value, that seemed to distance her project from Accardi's. Arguably, however, also the Italian artist conceived of her tents – and this is especially true of *Triplice Tenda* – as a site of reflection on cultural constructs. According to Boetti *Triplice Tenda*, with its Russian doll like structure and its layers of painted pink waves, represented “the peak of a free and totalizing private journey into the cultural sphere.”¹⁵ An expanded version of the earlier and smaller tent, *Triplice Tenda* made Accardi's gendered mission far more explicit, whilst retaining a sense of intimacy. This shift was partly dictated by the colour scheme, which saw pink prevail over red. As Accardi later admitted pink was all along her first choice, even though she initially felt shy about it. This typically feminine hue accorded the work with different associations ranging from a basic bodily experience to the reverberations of the sunset, which Accardi observed daily from the window of her studio in Rome. While a romantic vision is called to mind by the latter, a more programmatic one is ensued by the former. The bodily experience referenced by Accardi is, in fact, a feminine and a feminist one. Female desire is on display in this labyrinthine structure, which displaces intimacy and reconstitutes it as a migratory entity, privileging nomadism as a public platform and plastic as a material conduit.

¹⁵ Anne Marie Sauzeau-Boetti is amongst the first to discuss Accardi's works in feminist terms. See specifically: Anne Marie Sauzeau-Boetti, “Carla Accardi,” *Data* (vol.20, 1976), pp. 72-74.



Installation view, *Topak Ev (Nomad's Tent/La Yourte): A Study of Private, Public and Feminine Spaces*, 1973. Installation with leather, felt, paint and metal. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Hubert Winter, Vienna.



Ottoman Tent, first half of the XVII Century CE. Cotton, silk, gilt lather. Collection of Wawel Royal Castle, Krakow, Poland.

“It is wrong to consider me a painter. I prefer to say that I use colours and signs. Moreover, I don't regard my art as abstract but simply as an *art of signs*”

Interview with Gabriele Simongini, *L'antipittrice*, December 2000: 157



Installation-view, *Segno e Trasparenza*, Fondazione Puglisi Cosentino, Palazzo Valle, Catania, curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, 6 February - 12 June 2011.
Featured work: Carla Accardi, *Vie Alternative*, 2010. Ceramic



ENTRETIEN ENTRE CARLA ACCARDI ET HANS ULRICH OBRIST STUDIO ACCARDI, ROME, 2001

Originally published in French in the catalogue of the exhibition *Carla Accardi*,
curated by Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist,
Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 17 January - 3 March 2002.

Carla Accardi, *Rosso* (detail), 1975.
Paint on sicofoil, 62 x 50 cm.

Hans Ulrich Obrist: My first question is about Sicily, where you were born. What were your first artistic activities, your first steps?

Carla Accardi: I began to draw at the age of 11 or 12. It was merely a childish vocation. My father was very happy with my first artistic achievements and encouraged my efforts. At this age, I produced portraits of friends in china ink. And at the age of 16, during my high school years in Trapani, I realised my first self-portrait. We did not study art history so much, at least not as much as I had wanted. We were taught Ancient Art. That is why I studied art history on my own. Then I pursued my studies at the Academy of Fine Arts of Palermo, where I sat a baccalaureate in art. Florence was my next stop, which seemed to me an important destination. I met Antonio Sanfilippo in Florence, who, like me, was part of the Forma Uno group. But I was very quickly disappointed by the arts in Florence.

HUO: What were the trends in the Academy?

CA: The Academy's trends focused on Italian art. Meanwhile in Europe, people like Kandinsky, Klee and Mondrian were operating. During that period, Italy was a little turned in on itself. Of course, there had been Balla and the Futurists, who were extraordinary. Yet by this time, following the war, they had already become part of the past. Back then, these activities were predominantly tied to local experiments and were all figurative, such as "rappel à l'ordre." I am not sure if you are familiar with this reactionary European movement? Since I was disappointed in the Academy, I would go and copy Beato Angelico's work in the Convent of San Marco, which was located on the same square as the Academy. I would also go on the edges of the Arno river. Then Sanfilippo mentioned that he had some really interesting friends in Rome...

HUO: And this all happened in 1946?

CA: Yes, I came to Rome where I met Giulio Turcato, Pietro Consagra, Achille Perilli and Piero Dorazio and began to work on some projects with them.

HUO: Were there contacts between different generations?

CA: Yes, but Severini only came to see us from time to time because he lived in Paris. There was also

Prampolini who socialised with the younger crowd. Then, in 1947, we formed a group in order to keep pace with the trends in Europe.

HUO: You mentioned the Art Club gallery, as an important place for you. Did you hang out there before the group came together?

CA: No, it happened simultaneously. Several artists came together at the Art Club; it quickly became a meeting point.

HUO: Did you also meet in the artists' studios?

CA: Yes, particularly at Consagra's studio. Even though we were very young, once we printed and published *Forma Uno* and presented a group exhibition, we generated a lot of interest in Rome. Our work constituted a break with the past. We were the first post-war group. After us came *Origine*, and the *Gruppo degli Otto*. During those years, I also met Cella. We would often go to his studio, where we also had an exhibition in homage to Leonardo da Vinci.

HUO: An exhibit of your group's work?

CA: No, not only, there were works by members of the *Origine* group.

HUO: So, the group's boundaries were fluid?

CA: Somewhat fluid. But we naturally had a particular identity to uphold. The *Origine* group was made up by Burri, Ballocco and Colla and ours of Turcato, Consagra, Sanfilippo, Dorazio, Perilli and me. Two or three years later, we each went our separate ways.

HUO: Was that in the beginning of the 1950s?

CA: Yes, it was 1954. After a few years of research, I produced many paintings in colour, in which signs began to appear. But I also made two or three black and white paintings. It was then that I met Michel Tapié.

HUO: Was there dialogue between Paris and Rome? Or were there strong differences?

CA: There was dialogue, even though each one chose their own artistic references. For instance, I exhibited my work with Tapié, at the Spazio gallery in Rome. He had picked some of my paintings to show together with works by other Italians, such as Burri, Capogrossi, Fontana and Moreni. Later he got me to sign a contract with the Stadler gallery in Paris, which at the time showed the work of young artists. At Stadler, I had my first solo exhibition, right after Tapié's show. Each one pursued the path that appealed the most to

him/her. I always looked for references among the more abstract artists. I liked Hartung a lot, and I went to visit him in his studio.

HUO: What was your relationship to Fontana?

CA: We had very good relations. He respected me and I admired him enormously. He used to come and see me in my studio, and I visited him at his. He even wrote me a letter once, where he shared his thoughts... This was very important to me. I saw his earlier works at the Biennale, the canvases with holes. I also participated in the Biennale very early on, with a small painting, among others from the group.

HUO: I believe one cannot talk about your work without referencing Art Informel. But it is also true that there is something more structured in your work, since your signs are not like those in the Spontaneous movement.

CA: That is true, I did not trust the automatic "spontaneism." But there was a certain degree of automatism, when I sat on the ground to draw or paint in black and white. It is just that I really enjoyed having control over what I did. The Art Informel style felt very easy and repetitive, since by that time, it had become fashionable, unfortunately. Then I met Fautrier and other artists in Paris; all important encounters for my



Installation view, *Carla Accardi*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, curated by Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist, 17 January - 3 March 2002. Photo by Attilio Maranzano, Courtesy Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

work. When I made the black and white paintings, I began with a drawing. I would make temperas on paper out of which, slowly, a world of signs and structures emerged. Later on, these signs would perform a sort of return, in the sense that they reappeared, changed and transformed in other works. I would repeat them in reference to past works. But there was always something new. The works were always connected. Whenever I finished a piece, I would make a new one, by using the earlier one as a starting point. But every time, something different appeared, which itself became the work's most important element.

HUO: And what was the starting point for the black and white signs?

CA: I visited Hartung's studio, and from this moment, I began to draw large signs that criss-crossed each other. Then, I turned to more personal signs, without looking for inspiration elsewhere. It became the fruit of my own thoughts and reveries.

HUO: There is a red line that connects your works, from the earlier to the most recent ones: those elements of a scientific nature that are reminiscent of cells, micro-organisms and biological microstructures.

CA: Yes, because at the time I was pursuing two parallel approaches: one had a scientific and biological character, with growing and shrinking amoebas; and the other one was more geometric, with sharper works, even though, curves appeared at times.

HUO: There is a certain fluctuation between something constructive and something more organic. For how long did you pursue such an approach?

CA: Until 1960. Then I began to use grey for two or three years. Following that, I placed signs one after the other. I abandoned black and white and began to use colour, with very strong contrasts, while still using the same concept as in the black and white ones. I always wanted to pursue what I call 'anti-painting.' In fact, I never painted on an easel, but always horizontally, on the floor or on a table.

HUO: What were the relationship with America at the time? There was certainly a dialogue with Paris, but were the news from America reaching you?

CA: Yes, there was a dialogue, particularly following my meeting Pollock in Rome. I especially liked the way he worked.

HUO: Did you pick up colour again after the black and white years?

CA: Yes, but a new kind of colour, used in a very particular way. After that, I moved onto fluorescent colours, which offer a strong luminance. In 1964, I exhibited at the Biennale, where I was offered my own room. Fontana was the one who put my name forward.

HUO: Was Lucio Fontana the curator?

CA: That year, Fontana had been asked to be part of the jury. I also started working with Luciano Pisto in Turin, who I admired very much. In Rome, my situation became less and less favourable, so I opted for Turin and Paris instead.

HUO: When did you begin working with plastic? And how did such a clear transition take place?

CA: In 1965. The transition took place while I was working on the fluorescent paintings: I produced light through the use of colour and thought to myself: Why not produce light with the material as well? I discovered sicofoil, a clear and bright material. Other artists moved on to neon.

HUO: Did you know Luciano Fabro?

CA: Of course. Both Fabro and Paolini were represented by the Pisto gallery. There was also Carla Lonzi, a friend of Luciano Fabro.

HUO: This is interesting. So, there was an exchange of ideas. Did you frequent artists of the Arte Povera since the beginning?

CA: Yes, in Turin. There is a young researcher who focussed her work on that subject. But I would like to speak to you of my first tent.

HUO: There is a relationship between the interior and the exterior.

CA: Yes. I was looking for this confrontation, which was always at the heart of my personal quest for "anti-painting."

HUO: These environments, these tents... Last year, I saw Ambiente Arancio (1966 – 1968) at the Zerynthia association in Rome. This relationship between art and life is incredible. Allan Kaprow published a collection of essays, Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life (1993), where he speaks about the blurring of boundaries between art and life. It would be interesting if you can talk about the great 1970s debate concerning the relationship between art and life.

CA: For me, art and life run parallel to each other. On the one hand, I mythologized art, holding it in very high regard, but at the same time, I had a tendency to demystify it. I wanted to understand what lay behind it. But above all, I wanted the public to not feel stuck in front of a work, an attitude which I found to be too pervasive. I wanted the audience to be shaken, to appreciate the art, to discover that behind it, lies life. And to show them that both can be united, in the same way that others have done in the past. But first and

foremost, I wanted to be a contemporary artist, I wanted to find out what 'contemporary' meant.

HUO: There is also this complex tent...

CA: Triplice Tenda. You can walk inside it.

HUO: **Ambiente Arancio is different still. It is not a tent, but an umbrella with a bed: a space to sleep outdoors.**

CA: Similar to a house. I did not like the houses of the time, I found them ugly and heavy... I had been an admirer of the Bauhaus but found that people lived in houses in poor taste. It shocked me a little. And as a result, I attempted to create a space that offered an unusual way of living, of a spiritual order... I conceived this space and exhibited works in sicofoil for an exhibition at the Marlborough gallery in Rome.

HUO: It would be interesting if you can explain how your works fit into the décor. There are the "paintings/spaces" such as *Ambiente Arancio*: We have the works on one hand, the spaces on the



Installation view, *Carla Accardi*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, curated by Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist, 17 January - 3 March 2002. Photo by Attilio Maranzano, Courtesy Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

other, and then we have the works that are part and parcel of this very space – there is a break. In contrast to a work that is seen as autonomous, there is here the idea of a sequence. You mentioned that *Ambiente Arancio* was a manifestation of unease. Can you tell me more?

CA: It sought to push people to live differently, in a natural way. There wasn't a philosophical or ideological thought behind it really. The work dealt with the idea of an image, of a space. Behind it, was the drive to push one towards something unknown that could turn into a different kind of living. But above all, it was a way of dreaming. Then, I made some transparent cut paintings, where the sign disappeared. My sign evolved over time: it went from black and white, to colour and finally reached transparency. The sign itself became anonymous and ended up disappearing altogether, after having been imbued with rich and varied iconic references.

HUO: Were you influenced by Matisse at any point?

CA: At one point, yes. But mostly in the beginning... the balconies that he used to paint.

HUO: The way your work evolves in a dynamic and non-linear manner escapes a definite style. DeLanda talks about a history of a thousand years of a non-linear process. I think this idea is applicable to your work. We spoke about the Informel style... Other critics have highlighted the relationship of your work to Pop Art...

CA: Every time I reached something definite, I had the desire to challenge myself and others by running away and doing something different. I did not want to become academic.

HUO: I believe this is one of the reasons why so many young artists admire your work, be it in Rome or beyond. When and how did you reach the third big chapter of your work – a new passage to canvas?

CA: I had moved from black and white, to fluorescent colour and then to sicofoil. At one point, I said to myself: But there is absolutely no link between these works, it's crazy! I needed to make that clear to others. I had gone a long way and I felt the need to lend further cohesion to my work. As in other circumstances, this pushed me to change and to experiment with new ways. I went looking for rough canvases and suddenly began creating large works, diptychs. Each included an image. I was invited by Giovanni Carandente to show them at the Venice Biennale. These large paintings are very different from those in the past; they involved games; each one contained a unique game.

HUO: This represented a leap?

CA: Yes, a leap that I would describe as perilous even, because suddenly, I produced successful work, with real content.

HUO: Many artists from the 1990s told me that the feminist and political aspects of your work had been very important to them. I would like to know more about this, and especially about your relationship with Carla Lonzi.

CA: I had more than a friendship with Carla Lonzi. Together, we revisited women artists from the past, such as Angelika Kaufmann, Artemisia Gentileschi... I think abstraction worked in my favour as a woman. Up until then, there had been very few women artists. I would have been unable to carve a space within an iconography that was dominated by male protagonists: all of men's adventures over the centuries, their extraordinary achievements, their religious events, their conquests...everything. It happened that I was not forced to represent real histories. Eventually, I moved away from these feminist movements because I realised that I was born a woman by chance, but, more importantly, I was born an artist. At that point I said to myself: That's enough! No more thinking about this!

HUO: At that time, however, there was a closeness to the world of Nancy Spero and other women who, in the United States, had created spaces in which to exhibit works by women.

CA: We knew all that. In fact, we had put together a little gallery in which, we organized a couple of shows, such as my own exhibition and before that the one we dedicated to Artemisia Gentileschi. In the 1960s, we would organise meetings and discussions. But in the end, I left all this behind and quit the feminist movement because the conversations tended to block me. I wanted to find my own art, which was my personal reason for living.

HUO: At the time, was there a dialogue with the positions of French and American feminism?

CA: Yes, we read their books and even went to Paris to meet them. We had groups in Rome, Milan, Turin, and Genova. Eventually, as I mentioned, I moved away from them.

HUO: So, there was an active decision to separate your artistic itinerary from your political one. How, then, do you understand the political dimension in art?

CA: Personally, I have had some falling outs with politics. And so, I understood that art was far from politics. In the past, I believed in political engagement, but I was quickly persuaded that there was no possible dialogue with the experts. We each have a different language, a way of expressing ourselves. I think that we have to get to the bottom of things, in order to extract a profound meaning, a meaning that makes sense.

Translated from French by Amina Diab



Installation view. Carla Accardi, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, curated by Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist, 17 January - 3 March 2002. Featured works: *Carla Accardi, Rotoli, 1966-72*. Photo by Attilio Maranzano, Courtesy Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.



PLATES

Carla Accardi in her studio, 1976.
Photo by Maria Grazia Chinese.
Courtesy of Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome

ARANCIO-ARANCIO, 1966

Acrylic on sicofoil laid on primed canvas

65 x 85 cm.

Inscribed on the reverse in orange paint: "Accardi 1966 - 448 / Arancio-arancio".

PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Rome;

Private Collection, Riccione;

Private Collection, Bologna.

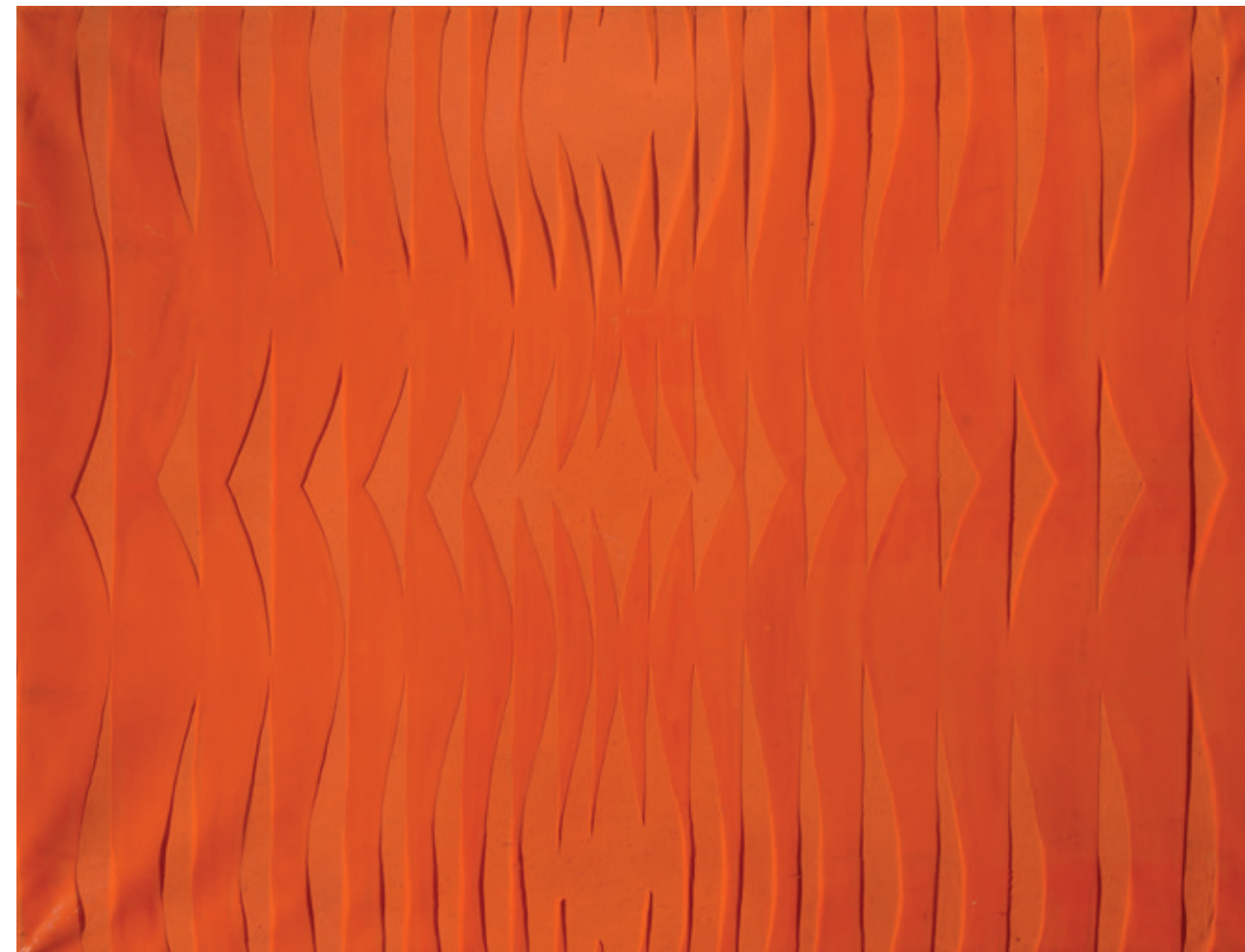
LITERATURE

Dal futurismo alla Street Art, 2015, p. 67, illustrated;

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,

cat. no. 1966 12, p. 303, illustrated in black & white.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 448 Bis.



SEGNI ORO, 1967 - 1976

Enamel on sicofoil

95 x 68 cm.

Signed and dated "Accardi 67" lower left;

Signed, titled and dated "ACCARDI segni oro 1967" on the stretcher.

PROVENANCE

Private Collection;

Sperone Westwater, New York.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1967 + 76 2, pp. 318-19, illustrated in black & white.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 707.



DUE ORI, 1968

Paint on sicofoil

70 x 50 cm.

Inscribed on the stretcher "Accardi 1968 493 BIS".

PROVENANCE

Fumagalli Collection, Bergamo;
Private Collection, Italy.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1968 9, p. 321, illustrated in black & white.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 493 Bis.



SEGNI ROSA, 1971

Paint on sicofoil

63 x 80 cm.

Inscribed on the stretcher "Accardi Segni Rosa" 1971 n. 561 bis.

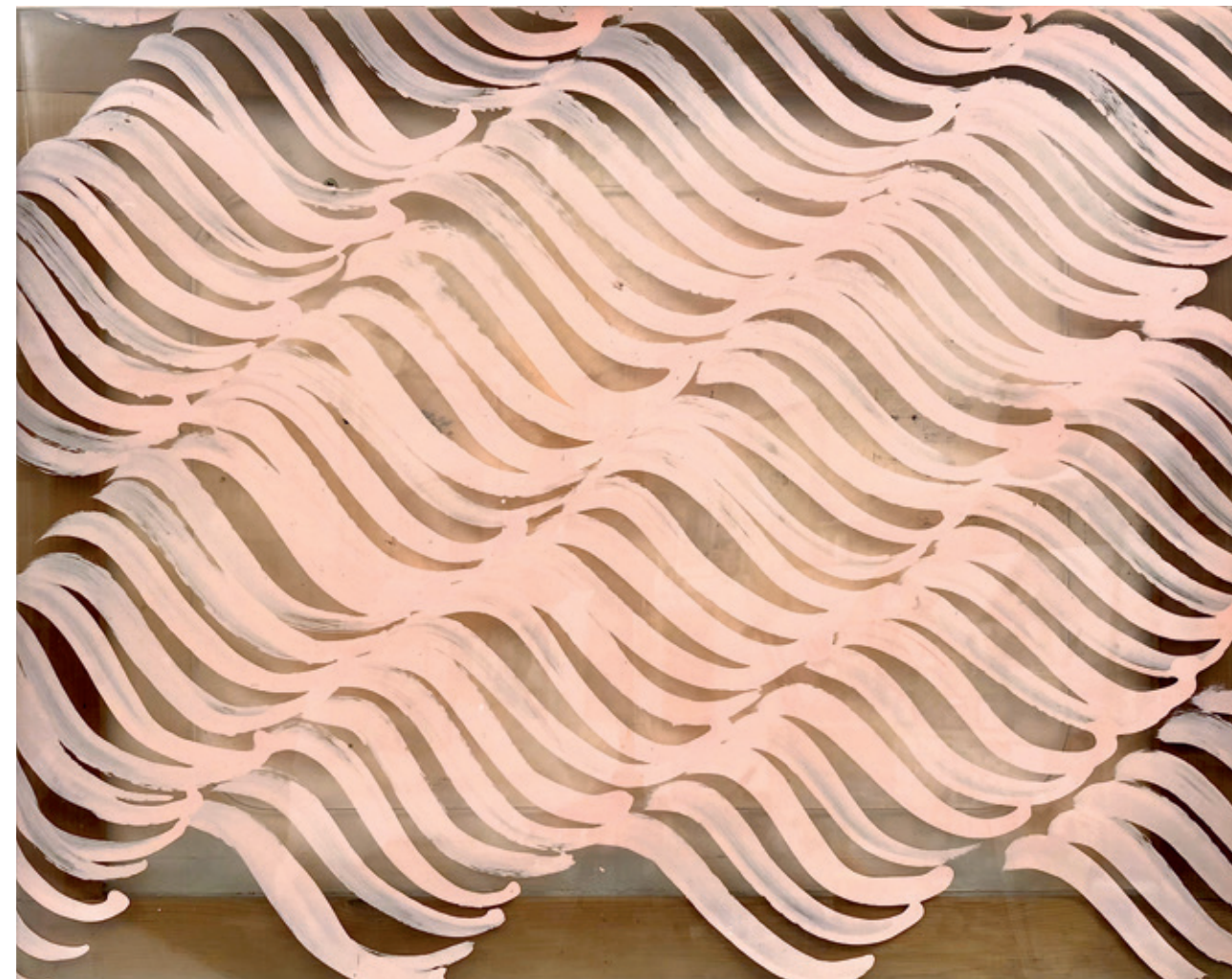
PROVENANCE

Private Collection, Rome.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011, cat. no. 1971 17, pp. 361, illustrated in color.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 561 Bis.



SEGNI GRIGI, 1972

Enamel on sicofoil

45,4 x 54,5 cm.

Inscribed on the stretcher "Accardi 1972 592 BIS".

PROVENANCE

Collection of the Artist, Rome;
Private Collection, Italy.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1972 28, p. 340-41, illustrated in black & white.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 592 Bis.



ORO, 1972

Paint on sicofoil
70 x 95 cm.

PROVENANCE

Galleria d'Arte Editalia (stamp on the reverse);
Private Collection, Italy.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011,
cat. no. 1972 51, p. 364, illustrated in color (upside down).

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 1972 51.



TRASPARENTE, 1974

Sicofoil on wood frame

106 x 106 cm.

Inscribed on the stretcher "Accardi Trasparente" n. 649 1974 106 x 106 cm.

PROVENANCE

Collection of the Artist, Rome;
Private Collection, Rome.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1974 34, p. 355, illustrated.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 649.



UNTITLED, 1974

Varnish on sicofoil and gauze

60 x 80 cm.

Signed, titled and dated on the stretcher.

PROVENANCE

Collection of the Artist, Rome;
Sanfilippo Collection, Italy.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011,
cat. no. 1974 39, pp. 368-369, illustrated in color.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 629 Bis.



TRASPARENTE, 1975

Sicofoil on wood frame
73,5 x 75 cm.

PROVENANCE

Lia Cigarini Collection, Milan;
Private Collection, Italy.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1975 9, pp. 358-359, (another work illustrated);
Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011,
cat. no. 1975 9, p. 370, illustrated.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 659.



ROSSO, 1975

Paint on sicofoil
62 x 50 cm.

PROVENANCE

Jacorossi Collection, Rome;
Private Collection, Rome.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011,
cat. no. 1975 39, p. 371, illustrated in color

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 687.



TRASPARENTE, 1975

Sicofoil on wood frame
50 x 80 cm.

PROVENANCE

Collection of the Artist;
Massimo Minini, Brescia;
Private Collection, Milan;
Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York;
Private Collection, Switzerland.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi*, Milan 1999,
cat. no. 1975 26, p. 363, illustrated in black & white.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 680.



ROSAVERDENERO, 2008

Paint on sicofoil

62 x 25 cm.

Inscribed on the stretcher "C. Accardi arch. n. 492.4".

PROVENANCE

Tornabuoni Arte, Florence;
Private Collection, Europe.

LITERATURE

Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi. La Vita delle Forme*, Milan 2011,
cat. no. 2008 108, pp. 518-19, illustrated in color.

Work registered at the Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome, no. 184/08.

As is also the case with a few other works executed on sicofoil, this painting originates from the larger "Composition n. 492 bis", 1988, which was subsequently divided into 4 pieces by the artist; each element was signed and registered in the archive under a new archive number in progressive order.




“Nothing satisfies me. Going further is an inherent, physiological need. I seek all the time and never let myself get bogged down by formulas. Returns and reiterations help me to go forward. Every painting is conceived in relation and contrast to the one before... I try to go as deep as possible and not to remain on the surface. I feel the whole as inner content.”

Interview with Luciano Marucci, “Incontro con Carla Accardi. Seconda Conversazione”, *Hortus. Rivista di poesia e di arte*, November 1997: 289



Installation view, Castello di Rivoli, 1999. Courtesy Castello di Rivoli and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.



WRITING ALOUD: MAPPING THE TRAJECTORY OF CARLA ACCARDI'S PRACTICE

Pietro Pantalani

Carla Accardi, *Segni Grigi* (detail), 1972.
Enamel on sicofoil, 45,4 x 54,5 cm.

"If it were possible to imagine an aesthetic of textual pleasure, it would have to include: writing aloud. [...] Due allowance being made for the sounds of the language, writing aloud is not phonological but phonetic; its aim is not the clarity of messages, the theater of emotions; what it searches for (in a perspective of bliss) are the pulsional incidents, the language lined with flesh, a text where we can hear the grain of the throat, the patina of consonants, the voluptuousness of vowels, a whole carnal stereophony: the articulation of the body, of the tongue, not that of meaning, of language."

Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 66-67.

Accardi's art is the art of *writing aloud*. Whether in painting, sculpture, or installation, her multi-faceted practice lies at the intersection of what we may call structure and sensibility, to borrow Jannis Kounellis's dialectical thinking.¹ Her art is sensual, but precise. It calls into question the limits of the body and of the mind. It takes itself seriously, it quotes poignantly and eloquently, while never falling backwards. It's an art of formal honesty and material integrity, which despite its transparency never fails to give way to deeper, layered meanings. As the artist claims in an extraordinary statement, "I don't regard my art as abstract but simply as an «art of signs»"²

Born in Trapani, Sicily, in 1924, but Rome-based for most of her life, Carla Accardi is today acknowledged among Italy's most important post-war artists. Over the course of a rigorous, poetic and conceptually informed career lasting nearly seven decades, Accardi developed a radical and sophisticated painterly syntax in which the formal and conceptual elements of style were made to embrace rather than conflict. Her paintings and installations made using sicofoil, a flexible, translucent plastic developed during Italy's post-war industrial renaissance, were begun in 1965 and have since become the artist's most iconic works.

Following a brief period at the Accademia in Florence, where she met her future husband, painter Antonio Sanfilippo, Accardi moved to Rome in 1946. She and Sanfilippo immersed themselves in the young but ambitious art scene of Italy's war-scarred capital, befriending fellow artists Ugo Attardi, Pietro Consagra, Piero Dorazio, Mino Guerrini, Achille Perilli, and Giulio Turcato. In 1947 this group, of whom Accardi was the only female representative, published

¹ Willoughby Sharp, "Structure and sensibility: An Interview with Jannis Kounellis," *Avalanche* 5, 1972: 16-25.

² Interview with Gabriele Simongini, *L'antipittice*, December 2000: 157.

the manifesto *Forma*, which, stating that “the terms Marxism and Formalism may not be irreconcilable,” argued for the legitimacy of abstraction in the fraught political climate of cold-war Europe.³ That same year in Milan, Lucio Fontana was among the signatories of the *Primo manifesto dello spazialismo*, further amplifying the choir of Italian artists hungry for recognition on the European scene.

Accardi’s research revolved around two fundamental, closely related issues that she continuously sought to challenge, develop and problematize both within and beyond the frame: on the one hand, the formal occupation of pictorial space, through her investigations of signs and symbols, and on the other the diffusion of light, or in other words the visibility of the work itself.

To understand Accardi is thus to understand the complex, subtle and supremely eloquent evolution of these two intertwined problematics throughout her practice. From the early white-on-black paintings of the 1950s to the colour-intensive works, her later adoption of sicofoil, and finally her extraordinary environments, Accardi’s art endeavours to generate a conciliation of pictorial forms that produces a sense of unity and belonging through light and space.

In the 1950s Accardi visited Jean Fautrier and Hans Hartung in Paris. The encounter with these two giants of Art Informel, pioneers in the development of new forms of experimental mark-making, influenced Accardi’s desire for a dialogue with the European neo-avant-gardes and simultaneously enlivened her research of an art made of pure signs. Her white-on-black compositions from this period are calm and controlled: dense forests of cyphers where white casein is constituted as a subject advancing in a contrasting territory, black. Negativity and positivity co-exist in a relation of mutual respect and reciprocal dependence.

From in 1959 onwards, the coloristic impetus in Accardi’s work gradually distanced her research from the anguish and post-war existentialism of Art Informel and Abstract Expressionism. At the same time, thanks to the efforts of influential critics Michel Tapié and Pierre Restany, and gallerists Luciano Pisto and Gian Tomaso Liverani, Accardi’s work was shown in group and solo exhibitions in Paris, Rome, Osaka, Pittsburgh, Tokyo, Düsseldorf and London.

In 1963, Accardi’s dense clusters began to give way to configurations that gathered together signs and colours more loosely. Without assuming the inflexible and absolute nature of Giuseppe Capogrossi’s markers, or conversely giving way to broad chromatic fields, in the style of Clyfford Still, her marks acquired a form of indeterminate, repetitive seriality more attuned to the syntax of Mark Tobey, for example. Accardi’s informed exchanges with her American counterparts, including painters she met in Rome, such as Philip Guston, Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, are palpable. To the latter she was also bound by analogous working methods,

³ *Manifesto del gruppo Forma 1*, Rome, 15 March 1947.



Biennale di Venezia, 1964. Carla Accardi, Gastone Novelli, Robert Rauschenberg, Andrea Cascella, Giuseppe Santomaso. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

for Accardi worked on canvases – and later sicofoil sheets – arranged on the floor of her studio, claiming her practice incompatible with easel painting. Compared to the convulsions of gesture and colour that marked the Abstract Expressionist’s work, however, Accardi’s was more oriented towards a process of engagement with pictorial identity, or an awareness of difference within the picture plane. The calm vitality and controlled radiance of her work led American critic Roberta Smith to claim that Carla Accardi is “the Agnes Martin of Italy.”⁴

In 1964, Accardi, who had previously shown at the Venice Biennale in 1948, was again invited by Lucio Fontana, a supporter and influential mentor, to participate in Italy’s premier contemporary art exhibition. This resulted in a solo presentation curated by Carla Lonzi, the prominent critic and author through whom Accardi made contact with the Arte Povera group, especially Giulio Paolini, whose research also hovered over the limits of the picture plane, and Luciano Fabro.

In 1970 Accardi and Lonzi founded *Rivolta Femminile*, among the first feminist movements in Italy. With other members of the group, in 1976 Accardi created *Cooperativa Beato Angelico*, an experimental gallery space in Rome which, by presenting historic and contemporary female artists in dialogue, campaigned for the visibility of women’s art across centuries. The gallery’s

⁴ Roberta Smith, “ART IN REVIEW: Carla Accardi,” *New York Times*, 18 February 2005.

inaugural exhibition, on April 8 of that year, centred on Artemisia Gentileschi's *Aurora* and featured a substantial academic apparatus prepared by Accardi and her peers. It is worth mentioning that this was three years before Yvon Lambert's seminal *Mot pour Mot: Artemisia* exhibition in Paris in 1979. Notwithstanding her deep friendship with Lonzi, Accardi later distanced herself from *Rivolta Femminile's* militant ideology, remaining however a strong reference point for a generation of younger women artists in Italy and Europe.

The earliest painting on view at M&L Fine Art, *Arancio-arancio*, belongs to a group of works made between 1965 and 1966, in which Accardi laid down sicofoil sheets onto a primed canvas and finally added uniform, graphic brushstrokes, employing the same shade of household varnish. The sicofoil works thus began to embody a fundamental demonstration of the conceptual drive in Accardi's practice, which she described as an attempt to produce a form of anti-painting defined by its refusal of traditional fine art materials and techniques.

Accardi's operations were aligned with Conceptual Art and Arte Povera by the proposition that all forms and all materials, by virtue of their fundamental arbitrariness, are fragile, and therefore charged with potential energy. The timeliness of Accardi's interventions is echoed in Germano Celant's claim that "in the case of the use of sicofoil and its transparency, the existence of intervening precedents is hard to identify and one might say, rather, that her work provides a precedent. It marks, or at least shares, the anticipatory role of a *dematerialization* of art, which, from 1966 onwards, began to take over in international experimentation."⁵ It is no coincidence that American critic Lucy Lippard, in her important text *Six Years: The dematerialization of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, also identified a metaphysical abstraction starting in that same year, and closely tied to the use of non-art materials, such as latex, in the practice of Eva Hesse and Bruce Nauman.⁶

Beginning in 1967, Accardi pushed the disappearance of the conventional picture plane further, towards an expanse of pure colour and light, by fastening the sicofoil sheets directly onto the stretcher. In *Segni oro* (1967), *Due ori* (1968), and *Oro* (1972), sicofoil is at once sign and signifier, pertaining simultaneously to the plane of content and to the plane of expression. As Celant states, "the use of Sicofoil shows Accardi's desire to question the line/frontier represented by the surface, previously opaque and now transparent. Painting, as a plane of conjunction and exaltation of colour/light, produces the maximum intensity when it reveals its indifference to the blocking of light."⁷

It would be a mistake, however, to situate conceptual rigour and poetic sensitivity at opposing ends of Accardi's practice; on the contrary, her work seeks to resolve their tension, and this is its greatness. Such is the case of her relations to colour, for example the pink brushstrokes in *Segni rosa* (1971). As the artist claims in Laura Cherubini's essay for this catalogue, "[pink]

is the colour of the body, but also of the sunset I used to see from the terrace of my studio: every evening at seven I witnessed its fantastic colour."

In the early 1970s, Accardi once again turned to the colour grey, which she had already adopted in her dense compositions of the 1960s. In *Segni grigi* (1972), the negotiation of grey signs with the translucency of sicofoil on the pictorial surface exposes not only the artist's sophisticated investigations of colour but also an exacerbation of the ontological tension between painting's condition as visible object and metaphysical plane. That the conceptual dimension of Accardi's formal investigation reflected a wider concern emerges in the comparison with 'anti-painter' Gerhard Richter, whose own early 1970s grey paintings express similar concerns.

Indeed, Carla Accardi's work is best experienced when treated as an investigation into the dynamic exchange of light and darkness, expounded firstly through the interactions of pure positive and negative space in the black and white works, and most strikingly in the interwoven sicofoil sheets, culminating in the works on view from 1974 and '75, all titled *Trasparente*, onto which Accardi does not interfere pictorially at all. As Anne-Marie Sauzeau Boetti stated of these works: "space and 'calligraphy' are no longer distinct entities: the environment is simultaneously woven and inscribed starting from the fragmented transparent matter; soft tissue plunging within itself and writing the trace of its passing, in bandaging and ornamentation, in expectation and memory, within the structural confines of the dark stretcher."⁸ This bare layering of surface thus referred directly to the brightness of the wall and of the entire space, while the painting itself, at the furthest point of sublimation, disappeared and was transmuted into pure light.

In engineering the architectural fusion of her own work within its setting, Accardi had already in the 1960s moulded painted sicofoil sheets into rolls, and subsequently cones, to present free-standing objects that transcended the conventions of image-based painting. This led to the production of extraordinary sicofoil 'tents' and environments, with which Accardi took part in a historical narrative embracing both avant-garde precedents like Sonia Delaunay and Kurt Schwitters, and close contemporaries, Italian – Enrico Castellani, Marisa Merz, Michelangelo Pistoletto – and foreign – Yayoi Kusama, Allan Kaprow, Claes Oldenburg. With these amazing environments, most famously *Tenda* (1965), *Ambiente Arancio* (1966), and *Triplice Tenda* (1968-1971), Accardi posited a metaphor for the body image, converted into a habitable centre, but also a collective portrait of the cultural nomad, who makes images and deposits them in each territory she visits.

Between 1970 and 1974 Carla Accardi spent long periods in Morocco, moving between Casablanca, Fez and Tangier. Through her association with gallerist Pauline de Mazières, she was introduced to the inner circle of international artists, writers and intellectuals who after the war to adopted Morocco as their home. Accardi's encounter with Islamic culture and its art left

⁵ Germano Celant, *Carla Accardi: The Life of Forms*, (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2011), 57.

⁶ Lucy Lippard, *The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, (New York: Praeger, 1973).

⁷ Celant, op. cit., 55.

⁸ Anne-Marie Sauzeau Boetti, "Carla Accardi", *Data 20* (April – March 1976), 74.

a profound impact on her work, further deepening her engagement with an aesthetic of pure signs, and infusing new meanings to some recurring imagery within her practice, such as her tents and environments.

In 1986 Accardi was invited by curator Jan Hoet to Gent, Belgium and alongside forty-nine other international artists participated in the exhibition *Chambres d'amis*, presenting a 1971 large-scale sicofoil work. Developed across fifty-nine homes in the Flemish town, this extraordinary project matched artists – mostly conceptual practitioners such as Marisa and Mario Merz, Lawrence Weiner, Bruce Nauman, Daniel Buren and Joseph Kosuth – with homeowners who agreed to host the artists' work and allow access throughout the summer, as in a delocalized museum exhibition. Responding to long-standing trends in advanced artmaking, which, in the words of the curator caused "painting to break loose from its frame and the canvas to be cut into bits,"⁹ this exhibition further validated Accardi's research in yet another highly specific context, bringing together Italian and foreign artists in an original arrangement not unlike Harald Szeemann's *When Attitudes Become Form* eighteen years earlier.

Starting in the 1980s Accardi shifted her research to another uncharted territory, once more laying bare the picture plane's surface by exposing its rough, unprimed materiality. The transition from an art of transparency to one of overstressed opacity is another of example of the conceptual elasticity at play in the Accardi mature work, now caught in the wave of Neo-Expressionist tendencies rapidly expanding across Europe. Intermingling with resonances of Matisse's sinuous late style, Accardi established contact points with the pictorial strategies of Transavanguardia through fellow Italians Enzo Cucchi and Francesco Clemente, in addition to Giorgio Griffa, and Georg Baselitz and Sigmar Polke in Germany, among many more contemporaries.

Carried by this ulterior gust of wind, Accardi's work acquired even further institutional solidity throughout the 1990s, both in Italy and abroad. A major solo exhibition at Castello di Rivoli was followed by her inclusion in a series of pivotal group presentations in New York, curated by Germano Celant at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Achille Bonito Oliva at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center. In 2001, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev staged another show, focused on *Triplice Tenda*, at P.S.1.

Until her sudden death at age eighty-nine, in 2014, Carla Accardi continued to challenge the boundaries of the artistic territories she inhabited. Whether reconfiguring her own works, as in the case of *Rosaverdenero*, (2008, originally made 1988), or variously alternating between opaque and translucent surfaces, in two and three-dimensions, Accardi's practice continued to shape painting "in the manner of Ariadne's thread, which is bound up with changing one's awareness of oneself."¹⁰

⁹ Jan Hoet, "Chambres d'Amis: A museum ventures out," in *Chambres D'Amis* (Gent: Museum Van Hedendaagse Kunst, 1986), 341.

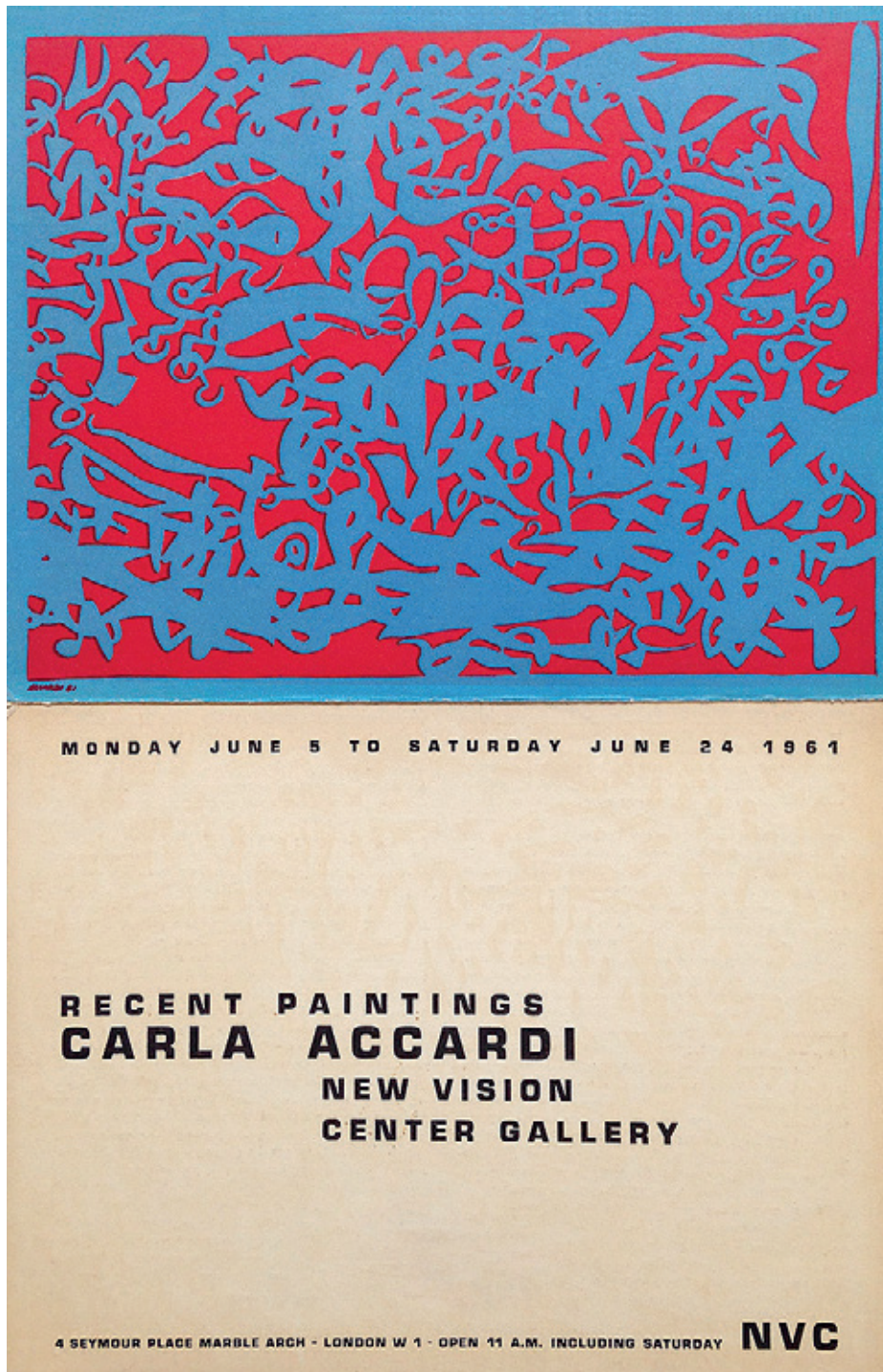
¹⁰ Celant, op. cit., 63.



Installation view, *Chambres d'Amis*, Museum von Hedendaagse Kunst, curated by Jan Hoet, Gent, 21 June - 21 September 1986.
Featured work: *A Gent abbiamo aperto una finestra. Segni grigi*, 1971 + 96, paint on sicofoil, 130 x 118cm.



Installation view, *TV 70: Francesco Vezzoli Guarda La Rai*, Fondazione Prada, Milano, 9 May - 24 September 2017.
Photo Delfino Sisto Legnani and Marco Cappelletti. Courtesy Fondazione Prada, Milan.



SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1950

Rome, Galleria Age d'Or, *Carla Accardi*. 15 *Tempere*, 16 November – 1 December.]

1952

Florence, Galleria d'Arte Contemporanea, *Mostra personale della pittrice Carla Accardi*, from April 23.
Venice, Galleria del Cavallino, *Carla Accardi*, 5 – 23 July

1955

Rome, Galleria San Marco, *Accardi*, 16 – 30 June.

1957

Milan, Galleria dell'Ariete, *Accardi*, from October 4.

1958

Rome, Galleria La Salita, *Carla Accardi*, from April 12.
Lausanne, L'Entracte Galerie d'Art Moderne, *Carla Accardi. Peintures récentes*, from 7 June.

1959

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Dipinti e tempere di Carla Accardi*, from 5 February.
Rome, Galleria La Salita, *Accardi. Opere recenti*, from 9 December

1960

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Dipinti di Carla Accardi*, from 1 February.

1961

Rome, Galleria La Salita, *Carla Accardi*, from 4 February.
New York, Parma Gallery, *Carla Accardi*, 23 May – 10 June.

London, New Vision Centre, *Carla Accardi*. Recent paintings, 5 – 24 June.

1964

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Accardi*, 16 October 15 November.

1965

Genoa, Galleria La Polena, *Accardi*, 14 – 28 January.
Paris, Galerie Stadler, *Accardi 1955-1964*, 16 March – 17 April.

1966

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Carla Accardi*, from 21 May.
Essen, Galerie M.E. Thelen, *Carla Accardi*, 16 September – 31 October.
Milan, Galleria dell'Ariete, *Accardi*, from 15 November.

1968

Rome, Galleria Marlborough, *Carla Accardi*, from 28 March.
Terni, Galleria Poliantea, *Accardi*, 9 – 24 November.

1970

Genoa, Galleria La Polena, *Accardi*, 12 February – 10 March.

1971

Rome, Galleria Editalia/Qui Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi. Le tre tende*, 27 February – 24 March

1972

Turin, Galleria Christian Stein, *Carla Accardi*, 19 April – 15 May.
Rabat, Galerie L'Atelier, *Carla Accardi*, 14 December 1972 – 8 January 1973.



Carla Accardi with Enrico Castellani and *Ambiente arancio*, Galleria dell'Ariete, Milan, 1967.
Photo Ugo Mulas. Courtesy Ugo Mulas Heirs and Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

1974

Rome, Galleria Editalia/Qui Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi. Sette lenzuoli*, 8 – 31 May.

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Carla Accardi*, from 27 November.

1975

Florence, Studio Fiori, *Carla Accardi*, from 1 February.

1976

Roma, Cooperativa di via Beato Angelico, *Carla Accardi. Origine*, from 25 May.

1978

Milan, Studio Betti, *Carla Accardi*, from 14 February.

1980

Leghorn, Galleria Peccolo, *Carla Accardi*, from 16 February.

Milan, Studio Betti, *Carla Accardi*, from 18 April.

1981

Turin, Galleria Menzio-Pron, *Carla Accardi*, from 3 February.

Leghorn, Galleria Peccolo, *Carla Accardi. "Omaggio a Matisse" 1964*, from 28 March.

1982

Bolzano, Galleria Spazia, *Carla Accardi*, 20 February – 20 April.

Rome, Agenzia d'Arte Moderna, *Carla Accardi. L'Arte: il campo del togliere*, from 24 April.

1983

Ravenna, Pinacoteca Comunale, Loggetta Lombardesca, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Vanni Bramanti, 12 February – 27 March.

Milan, Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Corrado Levi, 21 Aprile – 23 May.

Rome, Galleria Il Millennio, *Carla Accardi. Trentacinque opere su carta 1947-1983*, 12 May – 30 June.

Brescia, Galleria Massimo Minini, *Carla Accardi*, from 3 December.

1984

Rome, Galleria Editalia/Qui Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi. Opere dal 1956 al 1984*, 23 May – 30 June.

1985

Madrid, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, *Carla Accardi. Le plastiche*, 18 June – 18 July.

1986

Acireale, Palazzo di Città, *Accardi*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, 21 December 1986 – 25 January 1987.

1987

Milan, Galleria del Milione, *Carla Accardi. Opere recenti*, 5 – 31 March.

1988

Venice, Giardini di Castello, Padiglione Italia,

solo presentation within *XLIII Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte*, curated by Giovanni Carandente, 26 June – 24 September.

Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, University of Toronto Art Department, *Carla Accardi. Sicofoil e opere recenti*, 26 June – 24 September.

1989

Paris, Galerie Di Meo, *Accardi*, 27 January – 4 March.

Modena, Galleria Civica, Palazzina dei Giardini Pubblici, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Flaminio Gualdoni, 26 February – 16 April.

New York, Salvatore Ala Gallery, *Carla Accardi*, 23 September – 31 October.

1990

Turin, Galleria Eva Menzio, *Carla Accardi. "Allegre tinte diurne"*, 20 March – 28 April.

Gibellina, Museo Civico, Case di Stefano, *Carla Accardi. Grandi dipinti 1965 – 1990*, curated by Giuseppe Appella, 11 August – 30 September.

Brescia, Galleria Massimo Minini, *Carla Accardi. Nuovi lavori*, from 29 September.

1992

Rome, Galleria Pieroni, *Carla Accardi*, 29 March – 10 May.

Frankfurt-am-Main, Frankfurter Westend Galerie, *Carla Accardi*, 4 April – 13 June.

Milan, Galleria Toselli, *Carla Accardi*, 18 November 1992 – 31 January 1993.

1994

Bruxelles, Galerie Meert Rihoux, *Carla Accardi. Opere 1954-1993*, 24 march – 14 May.

Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Ida

Gianelli and Giorgio Verzotti, 24 June – 28 August.

1995

Ludwigshafen am Rhein, Kunstverein, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Susanne Pflenger, 7 September – 22 October [travelled to: Wolfsburg, Städtische Galerie and Istituto Italiano di Cultura, 4 February – 8 April 1996; Lübeck, Overbeck-Gesellschaft, 2 June – 14 July].

1996

Bergamo, Fumagalli Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi*, 20 Gennaio – 1 March.

Livorno, Galleria Peccolo, *Carla Accardi "giochi galleggianti e trasparenze" 1978 – 1980*, 7 September – 5 October [travelled to: Salò, Sala dei Provveditori, 1 November – 1 December].

1997

Bruxelles, Galerie Meert Rihoux, *Carla Accardi. Ambiente arancio 1967, Tele – Carte*, 4 June – 12 July.

Paris, Studio Simonis, *Dove nasce il segno. Carla Accardi. Œuvres 1953*, from 13 November.

Rome, Accademia di Francia, Atelier del Bosco di Villa Medici, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Bruno Racine e Zerynthia Associazione per l'Arte Contemporanea, 18 December 1997 – 12 January 1998.

1998

Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, *Carla Accardi. Installazione per i bambini*, 4 February – 3 May [travelled to: Bonn, Kunstmuseum Bonn, with the title *Carla Accardi. Triplice Tenda*, curated by Sabina Leßmann 11 May – 4 July 1999].

Trapani, Chiesa della Badia Grande-Laboratori

Officina, *Carla Accardi. Opere 1947-1997*, curated by Claudio Cerritelli, 21 March – 19 April.

1999

San Casciano dei Bagni, Micro-Museo Camera Oscura, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Cornelia Lauf, 10 April – 4 May.

Paris, Studio Simonis, *Transparences. Carla Accardi 1978 – 1980*, from 9 September.

Rome, Galleria Edieuropa, *Carla Accardi opere 1950 – 1990*, 24 October – 27 November.

2000

Brescia, Galleria Massimo Minini, *Carla Accardi. "Sicofoil"*, 27 May – 15 September.

Rome, Museo Laboratorio d'Arte Contemporanea, Università degli Studi "La Sapienza", *Carla Accardi*, curated by Lorenzo Benedetti, 31 May – 26 June.

2001

Rome, Edicola Notte, *Carla Accardi*, curated by di H.H. Lim, 8 May – 15 July.

New York, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, *Carla Accardi. Triplice tenda*, curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, 20 May – 3 September.

Belluno-Cortina d'Ampezzo, Palazzo Crepadona-Galleria Civica, *Carla Accardi. Premio Artista dell'anno 2001*, curated by Renato Barilli e Lia Durante, 4 August – 22 September.

2002

Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist, 17 January – 3 March.

2003

Rome, Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, *Carla Accardi. Si adagiarono sparse*, curated by Laura Cherubini, 28 March – 30 April.

2004

Bruxelles, Galerie Meert Rihoux, *Carla Accardi*, 15 May – 3 June.

Rome, Macro Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Danilo Eccher, 19 September 2004 – 9 January 2005.

Ljubljana, Mala galerija, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Zdenka Badovinac, 21 October – 28 November.

2005

New York, Sperone Westwater Gallery, New York University, Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, *Carla Accardi*, 8 January – 19 February.

2006

Brescia, Galleria Massimo Minini, *Carla Accardi. "Cenni e barlumi". Sette nuovi dipinti*, 18 March – 6 May.

2007

Rome, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, 3 March – 12 May.

Bruxelles, Galerie Greta Meert, *Carla Accardi*, 25 October – 24 November.

2008

Rome, Fondazione Volume!, *Carla Accardi. Segni e forme*, curated by Angelo Capasso and Emanuela Nobile Mino, from 31 January.

Moscow, MMOMA Moscow Museum of Modern Art, *Carla Accardi. Superficie in ceramica, con elaborazione sonora di Gianna Nannini. Passi di passaggio*, 4 – 28 September [travelled to: Rome, Auditorium Arte, Auditorium Parco della Musica, 21 November 2008 – 7 January 2009; Lima, Sala Luis Miró Quesada Garland, 25 April – 17 May 2009; Buenos Aires, Centro Cultural Recoleta, from 10 February 2010; Córdoba, MEC Museo

Emilio Caraffa, 14 June – 14 July 2010].

2009

Rome, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, *Carla Accardi. Ombre sui muri*, curated by Valentina Bonomo, 28 April – 30 May.

2010

New York, Haunch of Venison, *Carla Accardi*, curated by Adachiara Zevi, 10 May – 26 June.

Rome, Museo Carlo Bilotti. Aranciera di Villa Borghese, *Carla Accardi. Spazio Ritmo Colore*, curated by Pier Paolo Pancotto, 1 December 2010 – 27 February 2011.

2011

Catania, Fondazione Puglisi, Palazzo Valle, *Carla Accardi. Segno e trasparenza*, curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, 6 February – 12 June.

2012

Castelbasso, Fondazione Malvina Menegaz per le Arti e le Culture, *Carla Accardi. Smarrire i fili della voce*, curated by Laura Cherubini, 29 June – 2 September [With co-curation by Maria Rosa Sossai, travelled to: Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Torun, Poland; Vasarely Múzeum, Budapest; Alex Milona Museum, Thessaloniki and Athens].

2013

Matera, MUSMA, *Carla Accardi. Sculture, disegni, immagini e documenti 1946 – 2012*, curated by Giuseppe Appella, 2 March – 19 April.

2015

Rome, Galleria Valentina Bonomo, *Accardi – Accardi*, from 28 February.

Rome, Omaggio a Carla Accardi, MACRO, May 21 – September 5.



Carla Accardi with *Tenda*, 1965-66. Galleria Notizie Turin, 1966. Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

2017

Rome, *Carla Accardi, Senza passato*, La Nuova Pesa, 15 February – 31 March.

2018

Brescia, *Carla Accardi*, Galleria Massimo Minini, September 22 – November 17.
Milan, *Carla Accardi*, Francesca Minini, September 18 – November 10.

2020

Milan, Museo del Novecento, *Carla Accardi. Contesti*, curated by Maria Grazia Messina and Anna Maria Montaldo, 27 March – 8 August 2020.

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1947

Rome, Studio d'arte moderna, *Accardi, Attardi, Manisco, Monachesi, Sanfilippo*, 22 November – 12 December.
Rome, Galleria di Roma, *la Mostra Annuale dell'Art Club*, 14 – 31 December.

1948

Rome, Galleria di Roma, *Arte astratta in Italia*, from 15 March.
Venice, Giardini di Castello, *XXIV Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte*, 29 May – 30 September.
Rome, Galleria Ritrovo dell'Art Club, *Accardi, Attardi*, Sanfilippo, 28 June – 8 July.

1949

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *Terza Mostra Annuale dell'Art Club*, 5 March – 5 April.

1950

Milan, Galleria Bergamini, *Accardi, Attardi*,

Sanfilippo, 18 February – 2 March.

1951

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *Arte astratta e concreta in Italia*, from 3 February.
Milan, Libreria Salto, *Carla Accardi, Antonio Sanfilippo*, 31 March – 6 April.

1952

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *6a Mostra Annuale dell'Art Club*, 22 March – 22 April.

1953

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *Arte astratta italiana e francese*, 22 April – 22 May.

1954

Rome, Galleria dell'Asterisco, *Accardi, Capogrossi, Consagra, Perilli, Sanfilippo, Turcato*, 5 – 18 July.

1955

Paris, Galerie Rive Droite, *Individualités d'aujourd'hui II*, curated by Michel Tapié, 15 March – 12 April.
Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *VII Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte di Roma*, November 1955 – April 1956.

1956

Paris, Galerie Stadler, *Peintures de Accardi – Sculptures de Delahaye*, 18 February – 8 May.

1957

Rome, Rome-New York Art Foundation.

1958

Rome, La Medusa Studio d'Arte Contemporanea, *Segno e materia*, from 24 February.
Osaka, Osaka International Festival, *The International Art of a New Era (Informel and Gutai)*, 12-20 April.

Rome, Galleria La Salita, *Carla Accardi. Tempere, Gastone Novelli. Collages, Toti Scialoja. Gouaches*, from 5 December.

1959

Rome, Galleria La Tartaruga, *Giovane pittura di Roma*, from 10 February.

Turin, Circolo degli Artisti, Palazzo Graneri, *Mostra internazionale di pittura e scultura. Arte nuova. Ikebana di Sofu Teshigahara*, 5 May – 15 June.

London, New Vision Center Gallery, *Painters of Rome. Accardi, Conte, Dorazio, Sanfilippo, Turcato*, 1 – 20 June.

Tokyo, Sirokya Gallery, *Pittori italiani d'oggi*, organized by the magazine "Asahi" and presented by Galleria La Salita, from 9 June [travelled to: Sendai, Osaka].

1960

Turin, International Center of Aesthetic Research, *Mostra collettiva per l'inaugurazione del Centro*.

Turin, Galleria Il Grifo, *2° Salone "i 4 Soli". 13a mostra*, 20 May – 20 June.

1963

Minneapolis, The Minneapolis Institute of Art, *Eight Contemporary Artists of Rome*, 11 September – 20 October.

1964

Venice, Giardini di Castello, Padiglione Italia, *XXXII Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte*, 20 June – 18 October.

1965

Turin, Galleria Notizie, *Accardi, Castellani, Paolini, Pistoletto, Twombly*, 28 May – 15 June.

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *IX Quadriennale d'Arte di Roma*, October 1965 – March

1966

Rome, Galleria Arco d'Alibert, *Forma 1*, 19 November – 7 December.

1968

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *Sesta Biennale Romana. Rassegna delle Arti Figurative di Roma e del Lazio*, February - March.

New York, The Jewish Museum, *Recent Italian Painting and Sculpture*, 24 May – 2 September.

1970

Rome, Studio d'Arte Arco d'Alibert, *Turcato, Sanfilippo, Novelli, Perilli, Dorazio, Accardi, Rotella*, from 23 June.

Rome, La Salita, *Burri, Colla, Fontana, Lo Savio, Manzoni, Chia, De Filippi, Fabro, Lombardo, Paolini, Pisani, Titus Carmel, Christo, Jaquet, Klein, Serra, Accardi, Angeli, Colombo, Festa, Marzot, Novelli, Rotella, Sanfilippo, Schifano, Scialoja, Sordini*, July – August.

1971

Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *New Italian Art 1953-1971*, 22 July – 11 September.

São Paulo, Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, *XI Bienal de São Paulo*, September – November.

1973

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *X Quadriennale Nazionale d'arte di Roma. 2. Situazione dell'arte non figurativa*, 8 February – 25 March.

1976

Rome, Galleria Marlborough, *L'Esperienza moderna 1957-1959*, from 5 February.

Todi, Palazzo del Popolo, Sala della Pietra, *Forma 1 (Roma 1946/1949)*, from 4 July.

Venice, Giardini di Castello, *Padiglione centrale*,

Ambiente /Arte, curated by Germano Celant, within La Biennale di Venezia 1976. *Ambiente, partecipazione, strutture culturali*, curated by Vittorio Gregotti, 18 July – 10 October.

1978

Venice, Giardini di Castello, *Sei stazioni per artenatura. La natura dell'arte*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, Jean-Christophe Amman, Antonio del Guercio, and Filiberto Menna within *La Biennale di Venezia 1978. Artenatura*, 2 July – 15 October.

Rome, Galleria Editalia – Qui arte contemporanea, *"Forma 1" trent'anni dopo*, 6 December 1978 – 20 January 1979.

1980

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *L'altra metà dell'avanguardia*

1910-1940, curated by Lea Vergine, 15 February – 13 April.

1981

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *Linee della ricerca artistica in Italia 1960-1980*, 14 February – 15 April.

1982

Rome, Mura Aureliane, *Avanguardia Transavanguardia 68-77*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, April – July.

1983

Bologna, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna, *L'Informale in Italia*, a cura di Renato Barilli e Franco Solmi, June – September.



Installation view, *Ambiente/Arte - La Biennale di Venezia 1976*, Italian Pavillion, Giardini di Castello, Venice, curated by Germano Celant, 14 July - 10 October. Featured works: *Tenda*, 1965-66 and Andy Warhol, *Cow Poster La Biennale*, 1976. Screenprint in colours, with printed signature "Andy Warhol".

1985

Frankfurt, Frankfurter Kunstverein, *Italienische Kunst 1900-1980*, curated by Peter Weiermair e Mercedes Garberi, 22 February – 8 April.

Rome, Galleria Arco d'Alibert, *Forma 1*, 24 May – 20 July.

Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli, Il Museo Sperimentale di Torino. *Arte italiana degli anni Sessanta nelle collezioni della Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna*, curated by Mirella Bandini and Rosanna Maggio Serra, 18 December 1985 – February 1986.

1986

Gent, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, *Chambres d'Amis*, curated by Jan Hoet, 21 June – 21 September.

Gibellina, Museo Civico, *Forma 1 1947-1986*, curated by Gabriella Di Milia, 26 July – 26 September.

1987

Saint Priest, Galerie Municipal d'Art Contemporain, *Forma 1. 1947 – 1987. Oeuvres de 1965 à 1987*, 11 April – 28 June.

Saint Priest, Bourg-en-Bresse, Musée de Brou, *Forma 1. 1947 – 1987. Oeuvres de 1965 à 1987*, 13 April – 21 June.

Darmstadt, Mathildenhöhe, *Forma 1. 1947 – 1987*, 6 December 1987 – 31 January 1988.

1989

London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Italian Art in the 20th Century*, curated by Germano Celant and Norman Rosenthal, 14 January – 9 April.

Moscow, Casa Centrale dell'Artista, *Orientamenti dell'arte italiana. Roma 1947 – 1989*, 28 June – 28 July.

1990

Bruxelles, Centre Albert Borchette, Entretien, *Quatre générations d'artistes italiens*, curated by Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, 17 September – 15 December.

Rome, Galleria Il Millennio, *Decimo anniversario*, curated by Daniela Lancioni, November – December.

1991

Rome, Palazzo Rondanini, *Percorsi ininterrotti dell'arte. Roma 1990*, curated by Fabrizio D'Amico, 13 February – 16 March.

1992

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *XII Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte di Roma. Italia 1950 – 1990. Profili*, 10 July – 21 September.

1993

Rivoli, Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, *Un'avventura internazionale. Torino e le arti 1950 – 1970*, curated by Germano Celant, Paolo Fossati, and Ida Giannelli, 5 February – 25 April.

Venice, Giardini di Castello, *XLV Biennale di Venezia. Punti cardinali dell'arte*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, 14 June – 10 October.

New York, The Murray and Isabella Rayburn Foundation, *Roma – New York 1948 – 1964*, curated by Germano Celant, 5 November 1993 – 10 January 1994.

1994

Parma, Galleria d'Arte Niccoli, *Forma 1*, curated by Giorgio Cortenova, 1 October – 15 November.

New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943 – 1968*, curated by Germano Celant, 7 October 1994 – 29 January 1995.

1995

Ferrara, Civiche Gallerie d'Arte Moderna e contemporanea – Palazzo dei Diamanti, Roma 1950 – 1959. *Il rinnovamento della pittura in Italia*, curated by Fabrizio D'Amico, 12 November 1995 – 18 February 1996.

1997

Turin, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, *Tapié. Un art autre. Torino, Parigi, New York, Osaka*, curated by Mirella Bandini, 13 March – 1 June.

1998

Prague, Scuderie del Castello, *Forma 1 e i suoi artisti 1947/1997*, curated by Giovanna Bonasegale e Simonetta Lux, 4 June – 19 July.

Bologna, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, *Pittura aniconica, 3a sezione "pittura scrittura"*, curated by Danilo Eccher, Dede Auregli, Claudio Poppi, 7 November 1998 – 14 February 1999.

1999

New York, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, *Minimalia. An Italian Vision in 20th Century Art*, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, from 6 December.

2000

Havana, Teatro Nacional San Isidro, Casa Comunitaria, *Ventana hacia Venus. Finestra su Venere, within VII Bienal de Arte Contemporáneo de La Habana*, from 19 November.

Rome, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Stabilimenti ex Birra Peroni, *Forma 1 e i suoi artisti*, curated by Simonetta Lux, Elisabetta Cristallini, and Antonella Greco, 19 December 2000 – 28 February 2001.

Rome, Scuderie Papali al Quirinale – Mercati di Traiano, *Novecento. Arte e Storia in Italia*, curated by

Maurizio Calvesi and Paul Ginsborg, 30 December 2000 – 1 April 2001.

2002

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Roma 1948 – 1959. *Arte, cronaca e cultura dal neorealismo alla dolce vita*, curated by Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco and Claudia Terenzi, 30 January – 27 May.

Venice, Fondazione Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, *Temi e variazioni. Arte del dopoguerra dalle collezioni Guggenheim*, curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, 2 February – 4 August.

2002

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Roma 1948 – 1959. *Arte, cronaca e cultura dal neorealismo alla dolce vita*, curated by Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco and Claudia Terenzi, 30 January – 27 May.

Venice, Fondazione Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, *Temi e variazioni. Arte del dopoguerra dalle collezioni Guggenheim*, curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, 2 February – 4 August.

2003

Turin, GAM Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, *Pittura degli anni '50 in Italia*, curated by Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, 29 May – 31 August.

Mons, Musée des Beaux-Arts, *Les années '50 à Rome*, curated by Claudia Terenzi e Michel Draguet, 12 October 2003 – 1 February 2004.

Liège, MAMAC – Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, *Forma 1 e i suoi artisti*, 18 October – 14 December.

2004

Riga, Casa delle Teste Nere, *Forma 1 e i suoi artisti*, curated by Simonetta Lux, Elisabetta Cristallini, and Antonella Greco, 23 April – 9 May.

Rome, A.A.M. Architettura Arte Moderna, *On paper*. Carla Accardi. Francesco Impellizzeri, curated by Francesco Moschini and Gabriel Vaduva, November 2004 – January 2005.

2005

New Delhi, National Gallery of Modern Art, *Italian Art 1950-1970. Masterpieces from the Farnesina Collection*, curated by Maurizio Calvesi, Lorenzo Canova, and Renato Miracco, February – March.

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *XIV Quadriennale di Roma. Fuori Tema. Italian feeling*, curated by Luca Massimo Barbero with Marco Tonelli, 9 March – 31 May.

2006

Turin, Torino Esposizioni, Museo, Museo, Museo. 1998-2006. *Duecentocinquanta nuove opere per la GAM*, curated by Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, 8 November 2006 – 27 January 2007.

New York, Sperone Westwater, *Infinite Space: Carla Accardi & Lucio Fontana*, 6 January – 25 February.

2007

Los Angeles, MOCA The Museum of Contemporary Art, *Wack! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, curated by Cornelia Butler, 4 March – 16 July [travelled to: Washington D.C., National Museum of Women in the Arts, 21 September – 16 December; New York, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, 17 February – 12 May 2008; Vancouver, Vancouver Art Gallery, 4 October 2008 – 18 January 2009].

2008

Venice, Palazzo Grassi, *Italics. Arte italiana fra tradizione e rivoluzione 1968/2008*, curated by Francesco Bonami.

2009

Pescara, Ex Aurum, *Cromofobie. Percorsi del bianco e del nero nell'arte italiana contemporanea*, curated by Silvia Pegoraro, 14 February – 31 May.

Paris, Centre Pompidou, *elles@centrepompidou*, curated by Camille Morineau, from 27 May.

Lucca, Lu.C.C.A. Lucca Center of Contemporary Art, *Un mondo visivo nuovo. Origine, Balla, Kandinsky e le astrazioni degli anni '50*, curated by Francesca Romana Morelli and Maurizio Vanni, 9 May – 23 August.

Palermo, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea – Palazzo Belmonte Riso, *Passaggi in Sicilia. La collezione di Riso*, 9 July – 4 October.

2010

Rome, MAXXI, Luigi Moretti. *Razionalismo e trasgressività tra barocco e informale*, curated by Bruno Reichlin and Maristella Casciato, 30 May – 28 November.

Lissone, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Milano, Rotonda di via Besana, and Bergamo, GAMeC, *Il Grande Gioco. Forme d'Arte Italia 1947 – 1989*, curated by Luigi Cavadini, Bruno Corà, Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, 24 February – 9 May [travelled to: Lugano, Museo d'Arte, 3 July – 26 September 2010].

2011

Ravenna, Museo d'arte della città di Ravenna, *L'Italia s'è desta. 1945 – 1953. Arte in Italia nel secondo dopoguerra*, curated by Claudio Spadoni, 13 February – 26 June.

Venice, Fondazione Musei Civici, Palazzo Fortuny, *TRA. Edge of becoming*, curated by Axel Vervoordt, 4 June – 27 November 2011.

2013

London, Massimo De Carlo, *Once upon a time*.

Carla Accardi, Paola Pivi, 21 June – 31 July.

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *Anni '70. Arte a Roma*, curated by Daniela Lancioni, 17 December 2013 – 2 March 2014.

Mexico City, Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, *A Roma. Opere della collezione Farnesina*, curated by Laura Cherubini, from 4 March 2013.

2014

Città di Castello, Pinacoteca Comunale, *Segno Forma e Gesto. Afro, Burri, Fontana e gli artisti italiani negli anni '50 e '60*. Opere su carta dalla Collezione della Galleria Civica di Modena, 23 August – 16 November.

2015

Milan, Gallerie d'Italia, *Cantiere del '900.2*

Opere dalle collezioni Intesa Sanpaolo, curated by Francesco Tedeschi, from 5 March.

2017

Milan, Fondazione Prada, *TV 70: Francesco Vezzoli guarda la Rai*, co-curated by Cristiana Perrella, 9 May – 24 September.

2018

Bolzano, *Tutto. Prospettiva sull'arte italiana*, MUSEION, 13 October 2018 – 24 March 2019.

2019

Rome, *Donne. Corpo e immagine tra simbolo e rivoluzione*, Galleria D'Arte Moderna, 24 January – 10 November.



Carla Accardi with Palma Bucarelli at Galleria Editalia, Rome, 1972.
Courtesy Archivio Accardi Sanfilippo, Rome.

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