



ABC - ARTE
Contemporary Art Gallery

Via XX Settembre 11 A
Genoa 16121 - Italy

www.abc-arte.com



Alan **Bee**, Paolo **Iacchetti**, Tomas **Rajlich**, Nanni **Valentini**
WHERE THE UNMEASURABLE MEETS THE MEASURABLE

17 January - 13 March 2020

Curated by Flaminio Gualdoni

A work, the architectural genius Louis I. Kahn wrote, "must begin with the unmeasurable, go through measurable means [...], and in the end must be unmeasurable". The act of objectivisation, of implementation, is a form of rationalisation, but "what is unmeasurable is the psychic spirit. The psyche is expressed by feeling and also thought and I believe will always be unmeasurable".

The exhibition that opens in ABC-ARTE on 17 January explores this subtle and incisive intuition of Kahn, verifying it in the work of four artists who differ in terms of nationality, generation and cultural context: Alan Bee (1940-2018), Paolo Iacchetti (1953), Tomas Rajlich (1940) and Nanni Valentini (1932-1985). Bound by no superficial affinity, they all operate with perfect awareness of the debate of the avantgardes, above all aware of what they do *not* want to be.

With the curator Flaminio Gualdoni, ABC-ARTE has chosen not to group them in a joint presentation, but to experience the sense of unrepeatable singularity of each of these artists. So **WHERE THE UNMEASURABLE MEETS THE MEASURABLE** consists of four parallel one-man shows. The synthetic selection of works of each artist demonstrates the fundamental reasons in which the regularity of the operational process is not an end in itself, but serves to distil its profound expressive reasons.



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A further novelty is the first presentation in public of the paintings of Alan Bee, the pseudonym of a well-known German industrialist and businessman (Karlsfeld 1940 - Munich 2018) who besides all his official activities was for decades an art collector with a secret and intense passion for painting. In his will he authorised the diffusion of his own works after his death, while maintaining his real identity secret. This enabled him to meet and frequent such prominent artists as Joseph Beuys, Carl Buchheister, Emil Schumacher and Bernard Schulze.

The opening will be accompanied by the presentation of a new publication as a companion to the exhibition. Part of the bilingual (Italian and English) series ABC-ARTE edizioni, it contains the critical text by the curator Flaminio Gualdoni, photographs of the exhibition space and reproductions of the works, as well as a rich apparatus of historical documentation.

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Opening Friday 17 January 2020 6.30pm - 09.30pm
17 January 2020 - 13 March 2020
Orario: tuesday-saturday 9.30 - 13.30; 14.30 - 18.30
Sunday-Monday: by appointment

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Brief biographical sketches of the artists

Alan Bee

Alan Bee is the pseudonym of a well-known German industrialist and businessman (Karlsfeld 1940 - Munich 2018) who besides all his official activities was for decades an art collector with a secret and intense passion for painting. In his will he authorised the diffusion of his own works after his death, while maintaining his real identity secret.

His passion for painting was always shared with his passion for bees and their world. He loved the natural surroundings of his native Bavaria and was influenced as a young man by the experiences with honey of Joseph Beuys. He has connected them with the profound sense of materials and the insertion of objects as advocated by painters like Carl Buchheister, with whom a youthful meeting in Hannover was fundamental, Emil Schumacher, with whom Bee subsequently had various fruitful meetings in Karlsruhe, and Bernard Schulze, whom he frequented in Cologne. The results are quite surprising.

Paolo Iacchetti

I have been following the silent, menacing work of Paolo Iacchetti (Milan 1953) since the early Eighties in his lucid stripping away of colour to reveal light and space.

He has drawn from his historical heritage above all the ethical value of inquiry, of a ratified untimeliness, and the confident sense of spending all his time in the luminous space of his workshop, always the same throughout his life, not to repeat rituals, but because a genuine love story is like that. Paolo Iacchetti has taught at the Scuola Politecnica di Design di Milano and now teaches at the Università Cattolica di Milano. His works are present in the Museo del Novecento and the Museo della Permanente di Milano, as well as in international collections such as the Gratianus Stiftung in Reutlingen and the Ciba collection in Basel.



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Tomas Rajlich

I encountered the work of Rajlich (1940) in 1974 at his one-man show in the Françoise Lambert Gallery in Milan, shortly before he became one of the protagonists, along with Brice Marden, Robert Ryman, Gerhard Richter and others, of the memorable exhibition *Fundamentele schilderkunst / Fundamental Painting* in the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 1975, a milestone in the international recognition of analytical painting. I immediately considered him an artist among all those practitioners of Fundamental Painting who announced an experience that was meant to be of long duration, that raised decisive obstacles in its apparent clarity, that was indeed always an implied passing from Silence to Light. Afterwards we met in 1993, and that was fully confirmed in the anthological exhibition in Palazzo Martinengo in Brescia to which it gave rise. We reaffirmed it in the other one-man show in this same gallery in 2018. From 1999 to 2002 Rajlich was artist in residence at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, which includes his works in its collection.

Nanni Valentini

The atypical, wise and humblest of sculptors Nanni Valentini (Sant'Angelo in Vado 1932 - Vimercate 1985) collaborated with Lucio Fontana in the late 1950s on the monumental Tomba Melandri in Faenza, won the Faenza Prize in 1956, 1961 and 1977, and the award of the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts in 1958. He frequented a broad and lively intellectual circle, from Tancredi to Scanavino, from Arnaldo and Giò Pomodoro to Sottsass. He has been a part of me ever since 1976, when he held the first one-man show of his second life in Carla Pellegrini's Galleria Milano, where 'there were transparent webs hanging or detached from the wall. In another room there were terracotta floor tiles'. We exchanged very many ideas in our conversations, reading the same books, devising exhibitions: I did not even curate the most memorable, in the Padiglione d'arte contemporanea in Milan at the beginning of 1984, but we devised and experienced it together. (Valentini had already taken part in the Biennale in 1980 and 1982.) Then he passed away suddenly in 1985, at the peak of his achievement. But we have continued to work together in a different way.

F.G.