

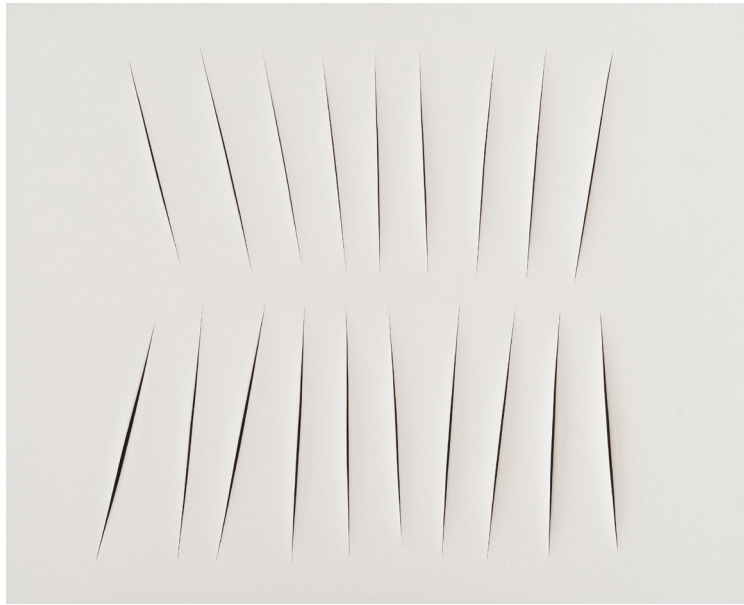
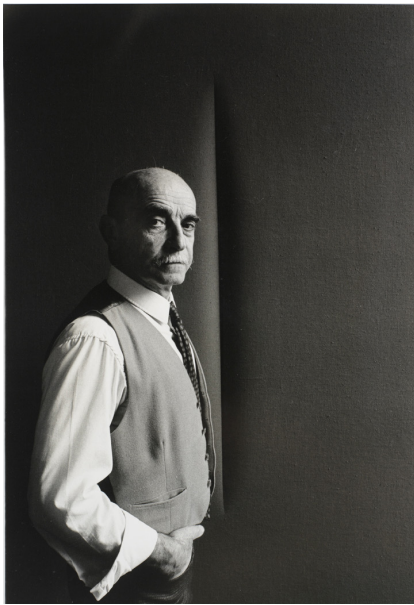
Press Release

## Lucio Fontana

Spatialism. Pioneering the Contemporary

17 September – 19 December 2026

Hauser & Wirth Hong Kong



'I pierce this canvas that was the basis of all art and I have created an infinite dimension. The idea is right there, it is a new dimension corresponding to the cosmos.'

— Lucio Fontana

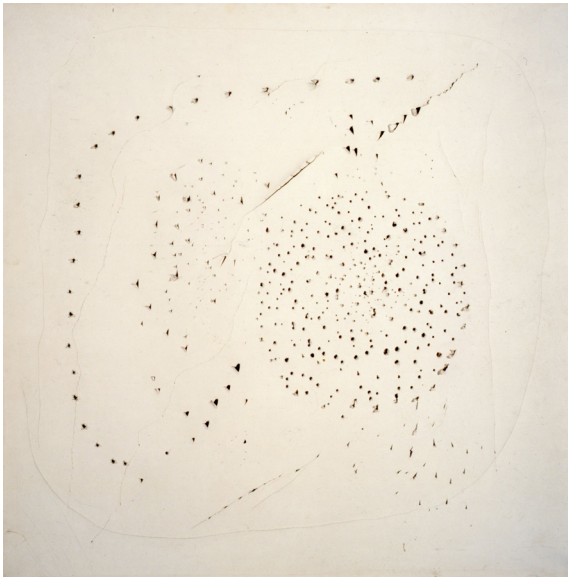
Hong Kong... Beginning 17 September 2026, Hauser & Wirth Hong Kong presents a major exhibition by Argentine-Italian artist Lucio Fontana (1899 – 1968). Titled 'Lucio Fontana: Spatialism. Pioneering the Contemporary' and featuring seminal works from 1949 onward, the exhibition focuses on Fontana's revolutionary *Buchi* (Holes) and *Tagli* (Cuts), tracing the evolution of the Spatialism movement he founded and his radical exploration of the canvas as a site of infinite possibility. Breaking the boundaries between painting and sculpture, Fontana transformed the canvas into a dynamic area of light, gesture and movement. His punctured and slashed surfaces, central to Spatialism, fundamentally redefined the relationship between artwork and space. Through an innovative aesthetic, his visionary practice paved the way for postwar contemporary art and continues to inspire artists around the world.

Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, in collaboration with the Fondazione Lucio Fontana, the Hong Kong exhibition marks the last highlight of a trilogy, following presentations in Los Angeles (2020) and New York (2022 – 2023). A major new publication on Fontana is forthcoming from Hauser & Wirth Publishers on the occasion of the exhibition. This volume marks the first widely available introduction to the artist's practice in Simplified Chinese, offering Chinese audiences a comprehensive account of his groundbreaking career spanning from the 1920s to late 1960s, alongside specifically translated writings by the artist.

## HAUSER & WIRTH

### About the Exhibition

The exhibition begins its journey in 1949, the pivotal year that saw the birth of Fontana's revolutionary Buchi (Holes) series. Initially perceived as a scandalous gesture, the act of piercing the canvas transcended all pictorial limits, opening up a positive, futuristic dimension that connected art with the concept of infinite space. The presentation traces the original conceptual development of the Buchi across his career into the 1960s, including one of the very first and unique perforated papers on canvas, rare terracotta spatial constructions where painting and sculpture uniquely merge, and the late pierced works.



By the late 1950s, this relentless experimentation led to his internationally acclaimed series *Concetti Spaziali*, *Attese* (Spatial Concepts, Expectations), famously known as the *Tagli* (Cuts). For Fontana, who was then in his 60s, these sharp, elegant slits were more than a mere gesture; as he declared: 'My cuts are a philosophical expression, an act of faith in the infinite, an affirmation of spirituality.' These iconic *Tagli* originated in experimental gestures and incisions first made on canvas-backed paper and on canvases treated with highly diluted aniline paint. They later evolved into more precise and conscious cuts executed on canvases prepared with monochromatic water-based paint. In these works, the cut acquired a more clearly defined formal role, becoming a constant point of reference for the avant-garde artists of the 1960s. The exhibition brings together a significant selection of works from this series, alongside the emblematic *Quanta*, created between 1959 and 1960, a series of shaped canvases, slashed or more rarely perforated, that anticipated the American shaped canvas movement and exemplified absolute freedom in spatial arrangement.

Throughout the presentation, the installation underscores Fontana's masterful exploration of matter, light, and space through the diverse and multifaceted series of works that define his Spatialist practice. Works utilizing pure white, deep black and metallic colors like gold and silver react dynamically with the surrounding environment activating changing perceptions of light, surface, and space.

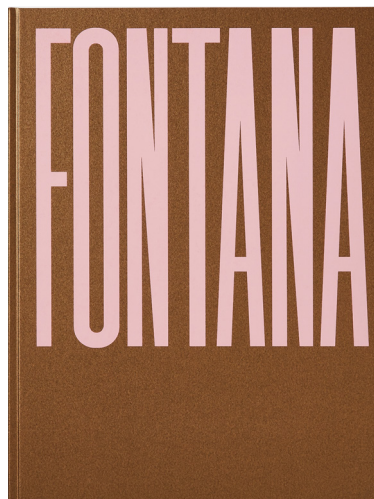
Presented in close dialogue with these spatial paintings are the *Nature* (*Natures*) series, conceived between 1959 and 1960 and comprising a group of bronze sculptures of geodesic, organic forms resembling terrestrial or extraterrestrial spheres. Modeled and punctured with immense physical effort by the artist to represent the unknown, these sculptures embody what Fontana described as 'still forms with a dream of bringing inert matter to life.' Together, they showcase the exhaustive richness of his Spatialist period, confirming Fontana as a true precursor of our contemporary world.



#### Hauser & Wirth Publishers

'Lucio Fontana' is the first widely available introduction to Lucio Fontana's practice in Simplified Chinese, offering Chinese audiences a long-overdue opportunity to discover the full scope of the artist's groundbreaking work. Published on the occasion of an exhibition of Fontana's work at Hauser & Wirth in Hong Kong, this new monograph marks the gallery's third collaboration with Fondazione Lucio Fontana and curator Luca Massimo Barbero following the exhibitions and accompanying publications 'Lucio Fontana: Walking the Space; Spatial Environments, 1948-1968' (2021) and 'Lucio Fontana: Sculpture' (2022).

Edited by Barbero, a leading Fontana's scholar, the book provides a detailed account of the artist's influential career, richly illustrated with artwork and archival images. Over four chapters, texts by Barbero and Maria Villa, the Vice President of the Foundation, track the evolution of Fontana's work, beginning with his early days as an artist in Argentina and Europe in the 1920s and 1930s, moving through the birth of Spatialism in the 1940s and the development of his pioneering Ambienti Spaziali (Spatial Environments) in the 1950s, and concluding with the innovative late works created in his final decade, including his iconic slashed canvases. Offering further insight into the artist's theories, aims and intentions are a selection of Fontana's writings, including manifestos, interviews, and articles, between 1939 and 1967, which have been translated into Simplified Chinese for the very first time.



# HAUSER & WIRTH

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## Caption and Courtesy:

Lucio Fontana, Milano, 1964

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Lucio Fontana

Concetto spaziale, Attese (Spatial Concept, Expectations)

1964

Water-based paint on canvas, slashes

81 x 100 cm / 31 7/8 x 39 3/8 in

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Lucio Fontana

Concetto spaziale (Spatial Concept)

1949

Paper on canvas, holes, incisions

100 x 100 cm / 39 3/8 x 39 3/8 in

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Lucio Fontana

Concetto spaziale (Spatial Concept)

1957

Slipped terra-cotta, holes

26 x 25 cm / 10 1/4 x 9 7/8 in

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Lucio Fontana

Concetto spaziale (Spatial Concept)

1961

Oil on canvas, slash, incisions

81 x 100 cm / 31 7/8 x 39 3/8 in

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Lucio Fontana

Concetto spaziale, Natura (Spatial Concept, Nature)

1959–1960

Bronze

48 x 44 x 39 cm / 18 7/8 x 17 3/8 x 15 3/8 in

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'Lucio Fontana' (2026) by Hauser & Wirth Publishers

'Lucio Fontana: Sculpture' (2022) by Hauser & Wirth Publishers

'Lucio Fontana: Walking the Space; Spatial Environments, 1948-1968'  
(2021) by Hauser & Wirth Publishers