

WHITE CUBE

Mason's Yard

Pier Paolo Calzolari
Organised by Mathieu Paris
21 March – 5 May 2018
Preview: Tuesday 20 March 2018

White Cube is pleased to present the first comprehensive UK exhibition of Pier Paolo Calzolari (b. 1943), one of the most prominent artists involved with Arte Povera. The exhibition spans his extensive career and includes several major installations from the 1970s and 80s.

Calzolari's **work investigates** the sublime through transformation. Exploring alchemical processes, his installations feature formed and un-formed materials such as lead and ice, tobacco and moss, or fire and neon. He engages with early traditions of art history, in particular Renaissance painting and Byzantine culture, as well as the works of Italian 'Valori Plastici' and 'Pittura Metafisica' artists. **Calzolari's 1969 text 'La Casa Ideale'** and the related series of works are considered seminal to the Arte Povera movement, however he rejected his association with it in 1972 when he publicly declared it over.

Born in Bologna, Calzolari grew up in Venice where the city's striking light and reflections led him to explore luminosity through his signature material of frost. Created using small refrigeration units and copper tubing, this sensory material with its tactile, powdery surface is used to convey 'pure' whiteness, something that cannot be found in pigment and exists in nature alone. Furthermore, Calzolari often combines frost with warm elements in transfiguring, unusual combinations to suggest notions of life and death.

Combustio (1970) exemplifies these themes, consisting of a frosted mattress pinned flat against the wall with the word 'combustio' written in red glowing letters on its centre. Both this work and the major installation *Tolomeo* (1989), a large, frosted table with a pool of molten copper on its surface, convey the essence of time, using the suspension of materials to halt it for the viewer's consideration.

Calzolari merges organic materials with other matter to explore the inevitability of disintegration. In the exhibition, blocks of burnt wood and salt form a striking black and white abstract composition in *Untitled* (1989), while the seminal work *Il mio letto così come deve essere* (1968) features a metal structure covered with moss, a banana leaf and bronze lettering placed across the floor.

Pier Paolo Calzolari opens **at White Cube Mason's Yard** on 21 March and continues until 5 May 2018.

ENDS

For additional press information and images contact:
Emma Vooght on +44 (0)20 7036 1576 or emmavooght@whitecube.com

Notes to Editors:

- Pier Paolo Calzolari was born in 1943 in Bologna, Italy, and lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal. He has exhibited internationally including group exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou, Paris (2016); MoMa, New York (2014); Fondazione Prada, Venice (2013); Kunstmuseum, Basel (2012); Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice (2011); MAXXI, Rome (2010); Tate Modern, London (2001) and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1994). His work is represented in numerous international public collections including the MoMa, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim, New York; Fine Art Museum, Boston; Documenta, Kassel; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Palazzo Grassi, Pinault Foundation, Venice; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.
- **Admission to White Cube is free. White Cube Mason's Yard is open Tuesday–Saturday 10am–6pm.**
- Address: **25–26 Mason's Yard, St. James's, London SW1Y 6BU, United Kingdom +44 (0)20 7930 5373 whitecube.com**
- **White Cube's exhibition programme extends across its three gallery spaces: Bermondsey in South London, Mason's Yard in St. James's, London and Hong Kong Central district. Since its inception in 1993, the gallery has exhibited the work of many of the world's most highly acclaimed contemporary artists.**
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