

PIETRASANTA (LU)
THE PIAZZA DEL DUOMO AND THE COMPLEX OF SANT'AGOSTINO
TO HOST THE EXHIBITION
ALDO MONDINO, SCULPTOR
FROM 12 SEPTEMBER TO 12 DECEMBER 2010

For the first time, an exhibition of thirty sculptures traces the creative career of one of post-war Italy's most significant artists.

From 12 September to 12 December 2010, the Cathedral Square and the complex of Sant'Agostino in Pietrasanta, near Lucca, will host an exhibition devoted entirely to the sculptural career of Aldo Mondino (Turin, 1938-2005).

Curated by Valerio Dehò and promoted by the City of Pietrasanta Department of Culture, in partnership with the Mondino Archives, the exhibition will be showing thirty large pieces made by the Turin artist from the sixties until his recent death, in a sequence capable not only of reviewing his work in 3D, but also of highlighting the subtle mechanism of his poetic.

An eclectic character, always prepared to experiment with original forms of expression and new materials, Mondino's work took him from collage to painting, from installation to sculpture. This last was a particular constant throughout his career. Mondino was always on the lookout for plastic solutions, even in his paintings, as he sought to achieve a three-dimensional effect even when his work was strictly related to the practice of painting.

The exhibition sets out to explain this process for the first time, so as to demonstrate how Mondino succeeded in combining the organic and gestural side of painting with the one that dialogues with volumes and his works' ongoing relationship with their surroundings and with the exhibition space. As early as the sixties, for example, he was combining plastic balloons with the paintings in his *Informel* series to give depth and relief to their composition, while in the cycle dedicated to Felice Casorati, his "chequered paintings" were flanked with objects (such as doormats and curtains) in which he obsessively repeated the icon of *Maternity* by Casorati.

Mondino himself, it should be stressed, explained that he came to painting in the early sixties after completing works that featured animals, among other things, such as his 1967 work *Gravere* (comprising more than a hundred kippers hung up to dry) and *Ittiodrom*, which was presented in 1969 at the Arco d'Alibert in Rome, in which he assembled fish with blood.

As his career advanced, Mondino always practised his sculpture directly or by means of an often plastic vision of his painting. His series of chocolate sculptures are celebrated, as are the installations he made with cane sugar (*Wailing Wall*) or with nougat packets (1968, the title *Torre di torrone* translates as *Tower of Nougat*, but loses its tripping alliteration).

His cross-fertilisations between the sculptures of Giacometti and Degas, his two artistic benchmarks, are also celebrated: once again here, the shape of a fish is sometimes placed on a pair of elongated legs that smack decidedly of Giacometti, while others pirouette on the legs of Degas's ballerinas.

His *Word Games* are also famous: in one, for example, a Singer sewing machine is ridden by a monkey, becoming a sculpture called *Singe* (which is French for monkey), while his *Mamma di Boccioni* is not so much a tribute to the great Futurist as an intentional misunderstanding about a mother's great breasts, which here comprise a pair of bowling balls (while the word 'boccioni' in Italian officially means 'bowling balls', it also has a secondary slang meaning of 'large breasts').

Many are the creations in which a 3D element has a certain prevalence: the lamps made of iron and Bic ballpoint pens called *Jugen Stilo* at the 1993 Venice Biennale (where he had a personal room) or the rugs he made of Eraclit compressed chipboard panels, with the effect of an illusion, were just some examples of a unique creative career and a capacity to summarise fantastic ideas in memorable artistic creations.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue published by **Allemandi**.

Aldo Mondino was born in Turin in 1938, where he also died in 2005. In 1959, he moved to Paris, where he frequented William Heyter's workshop and the Louvre School and attended the mosaic course at the Academy of Fine Arts with Severini and Licata. Back in Italy in 1960, he started showing his work in the L'Immagine Gallery in Turin (1961) and the Alfa Gallery in Venice (1962). His meeting with Gian Enzo Sperone, who directed the Il Punto Gallery, was to be crucial for his artistic career, launching what was to be a life-long relationship. He also held important personal shows in the Stein Gallery in Turin, the Studio Marconi in Milan, the La Salita Gallery in Rome and the Paludetto Gallery in Turin. His most important exhibitions include two participations in the Venice Biennale, in 1976 and in 1993, and his personal exhibitions in the Modern Art Museum at Palais Lichtenstein in Vienna (1991), the Sultanahmet Museum at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul (1992, 1996), the Jewish Museum in Bologna (1995) and the Civic Gallery of Modern Art in Trento (2000). His works can be found in the permanent collections of leading Italian and international museums and in numerous private collections.

MONDINO, SCULPTOR

Pietrasanta (LU), piazza del Duomo and complex of Sant'Agostino (via S. Agostino, 1)

12 September – 12 December 2010

Entry: free of charge

Opening hours: until 10 October: 5.30-8.00 p.m.; 9.00-11.00 p.m.;

From 12 October: 4.00-7.00 p.m.;

Closed on Mondays.

Catalogue: Umberto Allemandi & C.

Vernissage: Saturday 11 September, 6.30 p.m.

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