

# A ARTE INVERNIZZI

## FRIEZE MASTERS 2016

6-9 October 2016

Stand F14

MARIO NGRO AND DADAMAINO

ACTIVE SPACES, BETWEEN MIND AND MATTER

CURATED BY FRANCESCA POLA

The exhibition wishes to create a dialogue between the works of the Italian artists Mario Nigro (1917-1992) and Dadamaino (1930-2004).

The exhibition presents representative works by Mario Nigro created during the middle of the 1950s and in the 1960s that belong to the cycle entitled "Spazio totale" [Total Space] in relation to Dadamaino's "Volumi" [Volumes] of 1958 and to her "Volumi a moduli sfasati" [Volumes with Shifted Modules] of 1960. Mario Nigro and Dadamaino were two protagonists of Italian postwar art and for more than forty years developed innovatory research, exhibiting together in numerous Italian and international exhibitions. The awareness of a dynamic physicality of space, in its multiplied and fragmented identity, which encompasses both mental and material aspects, has been one of the most significant achievements in creative practice from the 1950s. This awareness has challenged every form of artistic expression: from those more directly related to the practice of painting, which have sought new trajectories and forms of organization for their images, to those which have decided to go beyond the canvas, by breaking it, or replacing it with other materials and means of expression. The exhibition presents these parallel perspectives in the work of two significant Italian artists, Mario Nigro and Dadamaino, through a selection of works belonging to a parallel chronology from the 1950s and early 1960s, and where this new concept of active space finds its interpretation between mind and matter.

Nigro's titles, as "Contrast", "Dram", "Dramatic Tensions", "Dram in Space", "Total Space-Divergence", mirror the strong expressive component, which underlies his works from this period. He investigates the existence of different degrees of reality, indicating a vision that aims to translate relationships between people, both on the level of their actions and on that of their feelings. Despite some superficial, anticipatory touching on the optical-perceptive mechanisms that were to become the subject of research in Optical Art in the 1960s, the issue of space never remained on the surface for Nigro, but acquired substantial human content. The tonal gradations of the background, which intensifies into areas that are more expressive and others that are more dilutive, are run through by expanding grids which spread out in all directions, like the lines and avenues of a story in the making.

In Dadamaino, space is explored in its concreteness, by sensitizing the physicality of the piece itself: her "Volumes" are monochrome canvases opened up by large perforations; conceived in the wake of Lucio Fontana's Spatialist revolution, they reject that work's metaphysical and sidereal dimension and, instead, appear as radical gestures of the liberation of the surface, with the concreteness of their shadows and their relationship with the surrounding space. These large openings gradually shrink, multiply and assume the dimension of progression in her "Volumes with Shifted Modules", where rhythmic successions of holes on different layers of transparent material shift the viewer's attention from the space to the perception of it over time. The time that Dadamaino is interested in capturing in her images is not, in reality, the purely perceptual or dynamic time of much optical-kinetic research of that era, but rather the time of the human being's private existence in relationship to the world.