

Travelling Light: Cinematic Munari, Matilde Nardelli

Abstract

Expanding the focus of the Estorick's current exhibition, *Bruno Munari: My Futurist Past*, which covers the artist's work up to the early 1950s, this talk broaches the work Munari made *after* his 'futurist part', in the period between the 1950s and the early 1970s in particular. Bringing into relief one thread especially that connects his artistic activity in the first and second halves of the 20th century, the talk will look at, and bring together among others: Munari's direct and polarized projections; the short films he made at the Studio of Monte Olimpino; his *Travel Sculptures*; his Xerox art; and the conceptual/performative intervention *Making the Air Visible*. This connecting thread is what we could call the 'cinematicity' of Munari's work, manifest in particular, as we consider, in the ways in which Munari's art pursues movement, in the sense not only of motion, but also of transience and change, and courts 'travelling light' – in the dual sense, again, of light moving through space and of lightness. As the talk argues, cinema, as the medium of movement and light, and of transience and lightness, can be traced throughout Munari's oeuvre. It is present both literally, as in the 16 and 35 mm films he made, and in varying degrees of figuration and abstraction. Indeed, as we also consider, it is precisely the constancy of the 'cinematic' in Munari's multifaceted and eclectic output that works to bring into relief the centrality of cinema to the 20th Century.