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MUNARI, CASTELLANI, MARI di G. M. Accame

The fundamental principle of the researches of Castellani and Mari is to face up to the objective and relative reality of art as the product of a specific historical period and therefore lacking in absolute value although constituting a part of a continuous evolution. To add the name of Bruno Munari means to recognize his anticipation of much that has happened in the last few years. He comes from the second generation of Futurists and in 1933 he was already making his «useless machines», which are based on the principle of suspension and mobility. In 1948 he realized his «concave-convex» forms – always working with the same principle but towards different ends. His experimental research has been characterized from the very beginning by a constructive simplicity that permits him to vary and multiply his works in the most diverse fields – the most fundamental field being that of design. In 1963 he was making experimental films, the intention of which was to individuate a new cinematic language. His principle activity of these past years, however, has been the projecting of «multiples», even though his work has never contained a principle of «uniqueness». Munari's multiples are composed of freely assembled modules, such as the «Tetracone», or «Flexy», etc. At the 1966 Venice Biennale, he presented a single object in four variations – the «Polariscop», an experiment in the projection of direct and polarized light.

Among the young artists who began to work in the abstract-expressionist climate of the 1950s, Castellani was one of the first to break through into more rigorous terms with his surfaces in monochrome relief. He is not interested in self-expression but rather in the objectification of a temporal quantity by means of the repetition of a gesture. He conceives the canvas as an extension of the wall – a hypothetical and repeatable wall replete with corners, perspective vanishing points, etc. For the past two years, Castellani's primary activity has mainly consisted of politics – not only in terms of the modification of the mythical and ritual structures of the art world, but above all with respect to the establishment and deepening of contacts with the collectives that are engaged in struggles more essential than those of art.

Enzo Mari began his first researches in the psychology of vision in 1952. Two aspects are of interest to him – 1) the ambiguity of internal three dimensional space, 2) the analogy between the serial structuring of natural phenomena and the programming of perceptual phenomena. Mari's most frequently recurring structural image is the alveolar, and all of his objects start out from a serial project before finally becoming objects, true and proper. From 1959 to 1961 he was concerned with the analysis of the possibility of the serial production of examples of his researches in «cinematics» and perception. In 1963 he became one of the charter members of «Nuove Tendenze» and he organized its 1965 show in Zagreb. He has been active in the field of design since 1956 and has dealt with problems inherent to the child's period of development, morphological research with the use of partially-worked industrial products, research on the limitation of obsolescence, on the modular organization of prefabricated low-cost structures, and stamping processes for high quota production. Mari too has been working for years among engineers and designers in an attempt to combat the current economic and social conditions that mythicize and instrumentalize these particular fields of activity.