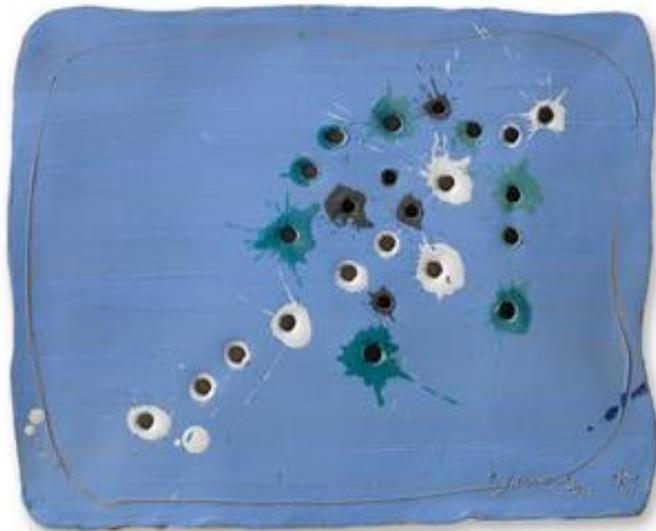


# GALERIE KARSTEN GREVE



Lucio Fontana, *Concetto Spaziale*, 1951, terracotta, painted, 23 x 30 cm / 9 x 11 3/4 in

## Lucio Fontana *Ceramics*

November 18, 2020 – January 23, 2021

Opening: Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 10 am – 6:30 pm

to coincide with ART COLOGNE 2020

[www.artcologne.de](http://www.artcologne.de)

Galerie Karsten Greve is delighted to present a solo exhibition featuring ceramics and works on paper by Lucio Fontana in Cologne. Since 1977, Galerie Karsten Greve has represented the Italian artist, who spent his whole life focusing on sculpture and searching for a new dimension, and dedicated comprehensive exhibitions and four catalogues to his work. *LUCIO FONTANA Ceramics* is the eighth one-man show to open at Karsten Greve's Cologne gallery. A total of about forty pieces will be shown in the context of Fontana's avant-garde oeuvre, including ceramic sculptures and so-called *Concetti spaziali* ("spatial concepts") as well as works on paper known as *Ambienti spaziali*.

In Lucio Fontana's early years, during various sessions in the famous ceramics workshops in Albisola in 1934 and 1936, the artist created remarkable sculptures inspired by natural forms such as *Cocodrillo* (Crocodile), and more amorphous pieces including *Conchiglia e Polpo* (Sea shell and octopus) or *Farfalla e Conchiglia* (Butterfly and sea shell). Ceramics painted with glaze colors dominated from 1936 when Fontana returned to figurative sculpture. During a session at the porcelain factory of Sèvres near Paris in 1937, he created heads, figures, animals, and still lifes characterized by expressive dynamics, specifically textured surfaces, and opalescent colors. The series of polychrome ceramic sculptures that Lucio Fontana made in that period include two popular figures from the Italian Commedia dell'arte, *Arlecchino* and *Colombina*, terracotta sculptures that almost dissolve in their terpsichorean representation of movement.

Born in Rosario, in the province of Santa Fe, Argentina, in 1899, to Italian immigrant parents, Lucio Fontana spent the first years of his life in Milan, enrolling at a school of engineering in 1914. Returning to Argentina in 1922, he worked in his father's sculpture studio before opening one of his own in 1924. Towards the end of the 1920s, he went back to Italy to study at the Accademia di Brera, as a student of sculptor Adolfo Wildt, for two years. From 1939, he lived in Argentina again, and, after settling in Buenos Aires in 1940, Fontana became a teacher at the Altamira art school. During this period, he worked on the *Manifiesto Blanco*, in which he called for a synthesis of the arts and the abolition of conventional materials, propagating the dimensions of time and movement in space instead. In 1947, Lucio Fontana returned to Milan, where he founded the „Movimento spaziale“ group of artists, published two manifestos of *Spazialismo*, and went on to become one of the most distinguished avant-garde artists of the first post-war generation. He died in Comabbio (Varese) in 1968.

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Since the 1930s, Lucio Fontana's works have regularly been presented in international solo and group exhibitions, including at the XXIV Biennale di Venezia (1948), documenta II (1959) and documenta IV (1968), Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1987), Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna (1996/97), Hayward Gallery, London (1999-2000), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2019), Galleria Borghese, Rome (2019), and the Museum of Modern Art, Moscow (2019/20); his works are part of the public collections of international institutions such as The Art Institute of Chicago, United States, Museum Ludwig in Cologne, Tate Modern in London, Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, or The National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo.

Having returned to Italy in 1947, Fontana created his first works corresponding to his new conception of space as put into words for the first time in his theoretical treatise, *Manifesto Blanco*. From this time forth, the artist was to refer to his works by the title of *Concetto spaziale*. The appropriation of space based on expressive, dynamic gestures manifests itself in the upward movement of the figures in the group of works known as *Crocifissi* (Crucifixes) and *Crocifissioni* (Crucifixions). As evidenced by the bulging of the draped loincloth of Christ and the sweeping folds of the robe, Lucio Fontana processed the clay with a view to spatial expansion in a baroque style. These ceramics are particularly fascinating as they allow Fontana's spatial concept to be experienced in a sensual manner.

Accompanying the exhibition, four publications on Lucio Fontana published by Galerie Karsten Greve are available:

**Lucio Fontana**, *Lucio Fontana Crosses – Catalogue IV*, texts: Choghakate Kazarian, Ugo Perone, Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris 2017, 50.00 euros.

**Lucio Fontana**, *Sculpture / Skulptur. 'Io sono uno scultore e non un ceramista' – Catalogue III*, texts: Karsten Greve, Robert Storr, Galerie Karsten Greve, 2012, 70.00 euros.

**Lucio Fontana**, *Peintures et sculptures / Paintings and sculptures / Gemälde und Skulpturen – Catalogue II*, texts: Michel Tapié, Lucio Fontana, Galerie Karsten Greve, 1989, 70.00 euros.

**Lucio Fontana**, *Bilder / Paintings*, Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne 1988, 40.00 euros.

## ABOUT GALERIE KARSTEN GREVE

Karsten Greve has been a successful art dealer for fifty-one years. He opened his first gallery in 1973 with a solo exhibition of Yves Klein and Cy Twombly in Cologne. He then opened additional premises, one in Paris (Rue Debelleye) in 1989 and one in St. Moritz (Via Maistra) in 1999. Galerie Karsten Greve ranked from the beginning as a leading gallery worldwide and is regularly represented at international art fairs such as the Art Basel shows, FIAC and TEFAF. The gallery organizes important individual exhibitions of renowned international artists such as Lucio Fontana, Piero Manzoni, Joseph Cornell, Willem De Kooning, and WOLS. Its program is determined by the owner's personal contact to artists of the international post-1945 avant-garde, such as Cy Twombly, Louise Bourgeois, Jannis Kounellis, John Chamberlain, and Pierre Soulages. Karsten Greve's long-standing collaboration with artists such as Gotthard Graubner, Pierrette Bloch and Leiko Ikemura has contributed significantly to them achieving worldwide recognition. The gallery, which is representing about thirty artists, is constantly expanding its portfolio to include rising young artists like Georgia Russell, Claire Morgan, Gideon Rubin, and Raúl Illarramendi. Galerie Karsten Greve is equally well known for its solo exhibitions and its highly ambitious accompanying catalogue productions published by the gallery.

## PRESS CONTACT

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We are happy to provide you with images of the works shown in the exhibition.