

Back to the '80s : From Arte Povera to the Rediscovery of Nuovi Nuovi

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Ierimonti Gallery opens its new location in New York presenting an overview of the extensive and prolific Italian art panorama of the 1970s and the 1980s. Luciano Bartolini, Bruno Benuzzi, Alighiero Boetti, Pierpaolo Calzolari, Enzo Cucchi, Nicola De Maria, Antonio Michelangelo Faggiano, Jannis Kounellis and much more.



While politics and economics underwent a profound transformation and culture transitioned from progressive modernism to the postmodernist weak thought, Italian art at the time elaborated old and new themes using the most disparate materials.

Artists shifted from using industrial materials such as iron, coal, wood bundles, neon, mirrors, terracotta—common in [Arte Povera](#) [2] (Mario Merz, Jannis Kounellis, Alighiero Boetti, Pierpaolo Calzolari, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Emilio Prini)—to dismantling installations and favoring paint and color—popular among [Transavanguardia](#) [3], Anacronisti and Nuovi Nuovi.

A new creativity flourished in those transitional years: the harsh ideology of the economic miracle years and the 1968 protest gave way to reconnecting with the past.

The new generation of artists after Arte Povera and [Conceptualism](#) [4] rediscovered the value of painting, history and two-dimensionality, while maintaining an evolutionary vision of art.

The world, explored through the installations and actions of the 1960s and 1970s, dematerializes into the canvas with the birth of Transavanguardia (Mimmo Paladino, Sandro Chia, Enzo Cucchi, Francesco Clemente, Nicola De Maria) launched by Achille Bonito Oliva in the mid-1970s.

In the same years a new group of artists from different areas of the peninsula emerges, supported by [Renato Barilli](#) [5], [Francesca Alinovi](#) [6] and Roberto Daolio: the Nuovi Nuovi. Today, Ierimonti Gallery rediscovers and revives this group, after the success of their first exhibition at the Holly Solomon Gallery in New York in 1980.

This versatile group of artists draws an imaginary, intangible and symbolic portrait of the Italian cultural context of those years. With an eclectic and retrospective attitude, the Nuovi Nuovi embraced the idea of “different repetition” (Gilles Deleuze, [Renato Barilli](#) [7]), or the repetition of the past, retour à, and the value of quotations.

The ideological and conceptual lightning leads artists like Luigi Ontani, Bruno Benuzzi, Felice Levini, and Salvo to self-figurative, colorful and ironic forms. An empirical chromaticism replaces the political black and white, with Luciano Bartolini’s poetic, initiatory and contemplative visions, Giuseppe Maraniello’s and [Luigi Mainolfi](#) [8]’s material dexterity, Aldo Spoldi’s post- pop irony, and Antonio Michelangelo Faggiano’s retrieval of erudite and mythological images.

With “Back to the 80’s. From Arte Povera to the Rediscovery of Nuovi Nuovi,” [Ierimonti Gallery](#) [9] aims to explore a movement rich in expressive potential and not yet inflated from the market, and to reconstruct its historical context and grammar.

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