

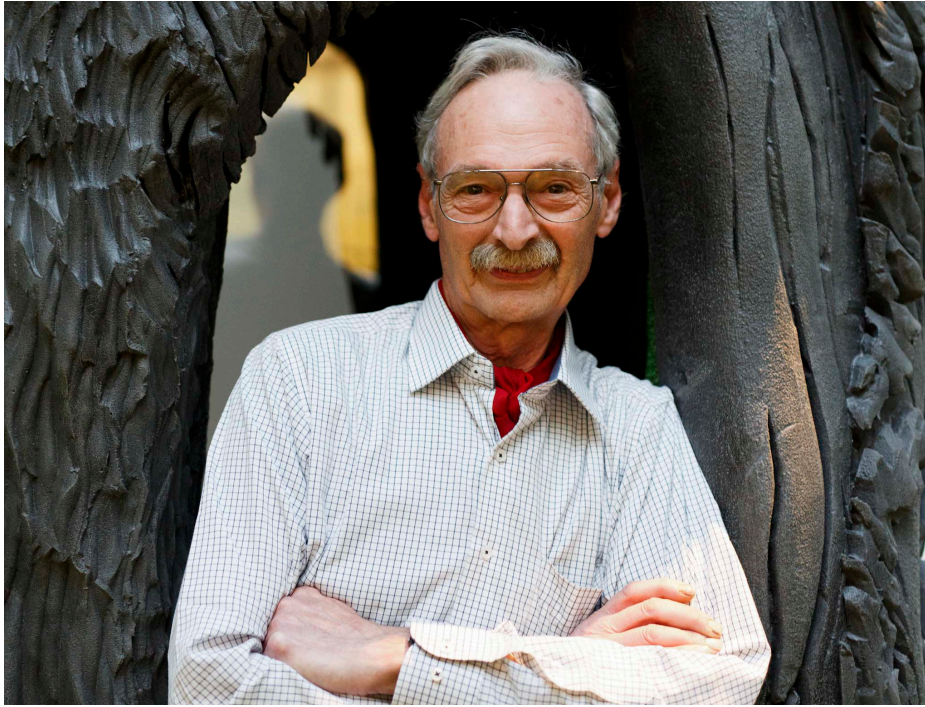
PIERO GILARDI

Foam Rubber Revolution

ChertLüdde / Hauptstr. 18, 10827 Berlin

7 September - 9 November 2024

Chert
Lüdde



PRESS TEXT

Piero Gilardi (1942–2023, Turin, Italy) was a renowned Italian artist and activist, celebrated for his innovative and experimental approach to art, particularly through his creation of *Tappeti-Natura* (Nature Carpets). These soft sculptural works, crafted from hand-carved and painted polyurethane foam, vividly mimicked natural environments such as riverbanks, seashores, forests, caves, vegetable gardens, and flowers. Gilardi's artistic journey began in the early 1960s, coinciding with the emergence of Arte Povera in Turin. He played a crucial role in this movement, not only as a creator but also as a theorist, critic, and curator of social initiatives, serving as a key reference point for other artists.

For Berlin Art Week 2024, ChertLüdde presents *Foam Rubber Revolution*, a significant homage to Gilardi, curated by Marco Scotini and organized in collaboration with the Fondazione Centro Studi Piero Gilardi in Turin and Galleria Giraldi in Livorno. The exhibition will showcase a selection of *Tappeti-Natura* from the 1960s, displayed across the gallery's walls and floors to become an immersive and hyper-realistic landscape, frozen in an artificial yet soft and inviting medium. These works were originally designed not merely for visual appreciation but for interaction. Viewers could lie, play and engage with them, offering spaces conceived as beds, alcoves, and foam playgrounds to welcome the body.

The exhibition aims to capture the essence of Gilardi's belief in art as a tool for social change and environmental awareness. It reflects his lifelong dedication to pushing the boundaries of art, emphasizing the interconnectedness of nature, technology, and human experience. Alongside the sculptures, archival materials will provide further context, highlighting his ecological activism, political beliefs, and commitment to social justice.

VERNISSAGE

7 September 2024,
6 - 9 pm

Piero Gilardi next to the installation "PHOSPHORE", 2008 at MAXXI - National Museum of 21st Century Art, "Nature Forever", 2017. Photo by Musacchio and Ianniello

As Gilardi once remarked, “Art educates by conveying knowledge, but also emotions through empathetic communication.” By evoking proximity to nature through synthetic materials, he embraced a techno-utopian vision that revolutionized public perceptions of both art and the environment. This exhibition stands as a testament to Gilardi’s enduring legacy, demonstrating how his work continues to inspire and challenge the ways we perceive and interact with both art and the natural world.

BIOGRAPHIES

Piero Gilardi (1942-2023, Turin) created his first pieces in polyurethane foam in 1965, a medium that he would later exhibit internationally in cities like Paris, Brussels, Cologne, Hamburg, Amsterdam and New York. From 1968, he stopped producing regular art works to pursue his interest in materials connected to the technological advancements of the time and engage in the new artistic trends like Arte Povera, Land Art and Antiform Art of the late ‘60s. This led him to participate in the first two international exhibitions of the new trends at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and at the Bern Kunsthalle.

As a political activist and facilitator of youth culture, he organized several experiences of collective creativity across Africa, South America and Reservations in the USA. In 1981, he resumed his activity in the art world and exhibited installations, accompanied by creative public workshops. By 1985, he started an artistic research project with new technologies through the IXIANA PROJECT (later presented at the Parc de la Villette in Paris). This work consisted of a technological park in which the public could artistically experiment with digital technologies. In 1993, he set up a “virtual” hall based on his decades of research at the 45th Biennial in Venice and more recently produced a number of multi-medial interactive installations and participated intensively in international shows like the ARTEC Biennial of Nagoya, ARTIFICES 3 Paris and MULTIMEDIALE 4 Karlsruhe. For many years, he presided over the international association “Art Technica” which promotes two Artlab exhibitions of neo-technological art in Turin. He has published two books of theoretical reflection about his varied forms of research: *Dall’arte alla vita, dalla vita all’arte* (From art to life, from life to art), La Salamandra, Milano 1981 and *Not for Sale*, Mazzotta, Milano 2000 and *Les Presses du reel*, Dijon 2003. He also wrote articles for a number of different art magazines such as *Juliet* and *Flash Art*.

Marco Scotini is the head of the Visual Arts and Curatorial Studies Department at NABA (Milan-Rome), Artistic Director of the FM Center for Contemporary Art and Head of Exhibitions Program at Parco d’Arte Vivente (PAV) in Turin. He has curated the Albanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2015), three editions of Prague Biennale, Anren Biennale (2017), the Second Yinchuan Biennale (2018) and collaborated on two editions of the Bangkok Biennale (2020, 2022). His project, *Disobedience Archive*, has been traveling for 20 years through international museums and recently it was invited to the 17th Istanbul Biennale, Timisoara Architecture Biennial and 60th Venice Biennale.

PRESS MATERIAL

IMAGES

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ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

[PIERO GILARDI -
JRPIEditions](#)

[NATURE FOREVER. PIERO
GILARDI - Il documentario](#)

INFORMATION

“Foam Rubber Revolution”
Piero Gilardi
07.09 – 09.09.2024
Admission free

Opening hours:
Tuesday – Saturday
12 pm – 6 pm

PRESS CONTACT

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