

# CARDI GALLERY

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Pablo Picasso, *Petit Verre*, 1922, Oil on canvas, 18.5 x 23.4 cm (7 1/4 x 9 1/4 in)

## ART BASEL MIAMI BEACH ONLINE

### **OVR: Miami Beach**

VIP preiveiw: November 29, December 7, 2020

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For OVR: Miami Beach, Cardi Gallery takes the viewer on a journey through some of the key art movements of the 20th century that left an indelible mark on art history.

The journey begins with *Velocita' d'automobile*, by Italian artist Giacomo Balla (1871 – 1958), who had signed the Futurist Manifesto in 1910. Produced at the height of the movement between 1912 and 1914, this oil painting encapsulates its very essence: the quest to express motion and the passage of time. The symbolic embodiment of speed – the roaring automobile, as Marinetti had defined it – is one of the most recurrent motifs in Balla's works of the period, portrayed in a strongly abstracted way, as inspired by Cubism.

The approach toward abstraction is presented in the still life *Petit verre*, produced by the Spanish master Pablo Picasso in 1922. An example of Synthetic Cubism rendered in a simplified and almost decorative, playful style with essential outlines and flat colour planes, this small composition is characterised by the presence of a recognisable object: everyday reality was something the artist never relinquished.

With *Natura Morta*, 1941, Italian painter Giorgio Morandi reinforced the simple geometric solidity of everyday objects and strived to highlight their spatial relationships. A precise take on still life, and a product of meticulous compositional studies, the painting is rooted in tradition, yet on the canvas the bottles, jars, pitchers, and bowls become self-contained forms in space, forerunning Minimalism.

Exceeding the bounds of painting, the Italo-Argentinian Lucio Fontana founded Spazialismo in 1947, calling for an art form suitable for the mechanical age, based on the unity of space and time. *Concetto Spaziale, Teatrino*, 1965-66 and *Concetto Spaziale, Attese*, 1968 both aim to transform the canvas into a three-dimensional space. Always seeking to invoke a sense of the boundless, infinite space that lays beyond and around the canvas itself through the use of holes and slashes, with the Teatrini, Fontana further altered the visual perception of this spatial dimension by adding a new element, the contoured lacquer frame.

Elaborating upon Fontana's work and pushing the boundaries of the medium even further into the three-dimensional, Italian artist Agostino Bonalumi developed what he defined "pittura – oggetto" (painting-object). *Untitled (Nero)*, 1967 is an example of his "extroflexions" - intricate stretchers moulding vinyl-coated monochromatic canvases, creating a pictorial space where light and form can flow.

Working at the threshold between painting and sculpture, exploring the sculptural possibilities of time and motion and questioning the static character of art, was American sculptor Alexander Calder. He ventured into the mutability of space through his colourful, abstract kinetic sculptures known as "mobiles", of which the present work *Frère (maquette)*, c. 1973 is a late example.

The display continues with *Escuma i fustes*, 1986, a work by Matter painter, Catalan artist Antoni Tàpies. Here, painting reaches the third dimension through the incorporation of a variety of materials unexpected in fine art, that at once create a complex paint medium and the very pictorial surface. The artist's use of lowly everyday materials serves to elevate matter in almost alchemic mysticism juxtaposing letters and symbols, while negating a predetermined structure and form.

Similarly, the practice of American painter Cy Twombly progressed along its own path towards abstraction, incorporating a deep fascination with language and history that became foundational elements of a visual vocabulary laden of gestural marks and letters. *Untitled*, 1976, like most of his production, is a delicate piece inhabited by collaged fragments of ancient poetry, the focus moving between the painting and the performative act of writing itself.

The threshold between performativity and painting is further explored in a recent example of mirror painting by Italian Arte Povera artist Michelangelo Pistoletto, *Partitura in Nero*, 2010 – 2012. The performative act in this instance is left to the viewer, as the life-sized work could not live without an audience. Called upon to actively participate, the viewer begins to appear in the picture plane alongside the portrayed woman: the work of art not only exceeds its boundaries; it physically lets life in.

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## **PRESS**

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