

MARIO AIRÒ
co-mondo

Opening: Wednesday 17 September, from 6 to 8 pm
Until 31 January 2026
Wednesday to Saturday, 11 am – 1 pm | 3 – 7 pm

Tucci Russo Gallery is pleased to present Mario Airò's second solo exhibition at its Turin venue, part of an ongoing collaboration with the artist that began in 2013 and has so far comprised five shows, three of them held at the Torre Pellice gallery.

"Marquis Hill, the Chicago jazz trumpeter, has always combined his masterful skill as an instrumentalist with an interest in bringing influences from various musical genres and styles, especially African-American, into his music. Against this soundscape, he feels the need to include spoken words with strong and heartfelt poetic/philosophical and socially conscious content in his compositions.

In the song *Breathe* the voice recites: "*When we breathe in, that is God coming within us and when we breathe out, it is God's concept leaving to join the world around us...*".

Leaving aside the religious metaphor, what I want to emphasise is the permeability that Hill underscores. For him, breath is voice, sound, music; for him, as composer/improviser, it is the moment when form and figures come into being. With exhalation, the Other that has entered us finds voice and shape through a process of metabolic osmosis.

co-mondo ("co-world") is the world as co-author or rather, us as authorial collaborators: for if we remain secular, we must acknowledge that every content of our consciousness, every fantasy, invention, and image, is born of encounters with the world, from the ceaseless interpenetration with what surrounds us and exists alongside us."

Mario Airò, 2025, Introduction to the *co-mondo* exhibition

What better introduction to the works on display in the first room, entitled *Pareidolia capillare* (2025)? A collection of 'pictures', laid on the floor on buffalo hide bones, close together, slightly overlapping to eliminate the possible boundary between one and the other, offering themselves to the perception of the viewer. Pareidolia, then, to understand our attempt to find familiar forms? But the works move independently, accepting the viewer without needing them. They play between raw material and colour, in their own harmonious dialogue.

In the same room, a temporal leap follows: *Il giardino delle delizie* (1989), a real orange on which the silhouette of the hand holding it is drawn with a marker pen. Airò: "It was exhibited in my first solo exhibition, almost a manifesto of an ethical and aesthetic attitude. [...] A work of art is a fruit, [...] it feeds on care". Here too, the viewer is asked to open himself up to a different imagination and vision of the work of art.

A similar request is made for the three works presented in the following room and entitled *Trilogia della devozione* (2024). Subtle nuances differentiate the painting from the materials that protect it; one could almost say that they fit it and welcome it. Is this a sensitive request for prayer and respect for art?

Le voci della sera: una cromatografia (2022) is instead the chromatic transcription of the emotional and narrative tones of Natalia Ginzburg's novel of the same name. The book was immersed in several successive baths of ink of various shades. The lighter, brighter tones were superimposed last on the darker tones, so as to distort their qualities, emphasising the impossibility, even for the most cheerful of impulses, of changing the status quo outlined in the text and intensified by the stylistic dryness of the prose that the author uses to emphasise it.

In the third room, we are greeted by the suspended work *Ierofania* (2011), the ultraviolet light from which illuminates a sheet of paper, a suspended page supporting a small shell. It is not a blank page, but has a text whose 'title' turns out to be "*When the sacred manifests itself*". The neon light illuminates and pierces not only the page, but also the words and their meaning.

The *Grattages*, works created in 2016, are in dialogue with this work, but in their case, the paper, as the preferred support for the image, becomes the very material of the image: a bas-relief that reacts to light.

Musica per una fine (2025) concludes the exhibition, or perhaps I should say Mario Airò's 'creed'. It is a limited edition of 30 copies, inspired by the first page of *Musica per una fine*, a piece composed by Ennio Morricone in 1998, accompanied by a text written and interpreted by Pier Paolo Pasolini. Mario Airò recounts: "Reading Pasolini's text, when I came to *la cui soave saggezza* (whose gentle wisdom), a whole world opened up to me. In two words, he manages to condense all his love for Italian culture, the everyday, atavistic culture present in gestures, faces and vernacular languages, the culture he regrets seeing disappear and which he would like to protect, almost like a champion. In the heartbroken, bitter atmosphere of the text, this is the only sweet moment. I poorly fingered the melody of the introduction on the piano and imagined that the music became particularly poignant in that passage. The image that came to mind was a gesture: a rose soaked in alcohol and turned upside down, pressed onto the score to pour out its colour."

Mario Airò (Pavia, 1961) lives and works in Milan, the city where he studied and made his artistic debut in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Among the artist's major exhibitions are: Palazzo Brancadoro, Fermo (2025); Antico Mulino Spagnolo di Orbetello (2021); Fondazione Malvina Menegaz, Castelbasso – TE (2020); Galleria Nazionale di Parma – Palazzo della Pilotta, Parma (2015); Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Villa Croce, Genoa (2013); Palazzo della Triennale, Milan (2004); GAM, Turin (2001); S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium (2001); Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Japan (2001); Kunsthalle Lophem, Belgium (2000). His works are included in important public and private collections, including the ArtLine park in Milan, the MAXXI in Rome, the Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art (Turin), the GNAM in Rome, the MAMbo in Bologna, and the Museion in Bolzano. Mario Airò participated in the Venice Biennale in 1997, the Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2005, and the Gwangju Biennale (South Korea) in 2004. His light installation *Cosmometrie* is part of the permanent public project in Turin called "Luci d'Artista". Some of his projects have also been realised as part of the "Nuovi Committenti" public commissioning programme and the international collective of the same name, "Nouveaux Commanditaires".