



HAUSER & WIRTH PUBLISHERS

Press Release

## Book Release: 'Lucio Fontana: Sculpture'

Hauser & Wirth Publishers' new publication is the first scholarly monograph in English devoted to Lucio Fontana's extraordinary sculptural work

To be released on 3 November, accompanying the artist's eponymous show at Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street



'And what if he had only been a sculptor?'

—Enrico Crispolti, 2007

Hauser & Wirth Publishers' substantial new publication on Lucio Fontana (1899 – 1968) charts the uncategorizable artist's exploration of sculpture from the 1920s until his death in 1968. In this first scholarly monograph in English devoted to Fontana's sculptural production, various bodies of work from different periods are considered together, highlighting continuity and evolution in the oeuvre of the Italian master. Characterized by a pioneering approach, the publication reveals the full range of Fontana's experimentation through new essays, archival images and the artist's own illustrations.

This richly illustrated volume allows readers to discover Fontana's rarely seen sculptural works, which will be exhibited at Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street from November 2022 through February 2023. Curated by leading Fontana scholar Luca Massimo Barbero in collaboration with Fondazione Lucio Fontana, this show is the second part of a trilogy of exhibitions dedicated to the radical Italian artist and will take place at the gallery's uptown location—the very same building where, in 1961, Fontana's work was shown for the first time in the United States.



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Fontana was always determined to go beyond the confines of genres, challenging the canonical distinction between painting and sculpture. Constantly in dialogue with color, the artist experimented with terra-cotta, clay, plaster, metal and concrete, incorporating the conquest of space as a key element of his artistic practice. Although best known for his Cuts series ('Tagli'), slashed paintings created in the 1950s and 1960s that became symbolic of the post-war era, sculpture was immensely important to Fontana's working methods and pivotal to his trajectory as an artist—some of the artist's very first explorations of spatial concepts occurred in clay before ever being realized on canvas.

The publication starts with an introduction by the Foundation's former president Paolo Laurini and includes a biographical essay by the Foundation's Maria Villa, with an in-depth examination of the artist's sculptural practice. In a substantial essay, Luca Massimo Barbero explores Fontana's constant and vocational experimentations with different materials over the decades. The text is accompanied by a host of archival material and numerous illustrations of sculptures, revealing Fontana's vast sculptural oeuvre and the artist's creative process. In her art historical analysis, scholar Cristina Beltrami looks back on the early years of Fontana's career, characterized by a highly personal and groundbreaking style that places him among the pioneers of European sculpture.

This publication is a companion volume to 'Lucio Fontana: Walking the Space: Spatial Environments, 1948–1968,' which was published on the occasion of an exhibition by the same name at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles in spring 2020, documenting the first comprehensive presentation of Fontana's ground-breaking Spatial Environments.



### About Hauser & Wirth Publishers

Artists' voices, exceptional art, scholarship, design and bookmaking are at the heart of Hauser & Wirth Publishers' program, which has been helmed by Michaela Unterdörfer since 2005. Books are critical gateways to new ways of thinking and seeing; they provide vital, lasting records of artists' works and ideas and the discourse they inspire. This is why publishing has been a cornerstone of the gallery's activity since its founding and why Hauser & Wirth Publishers has grown to become a leading imprint for unique, object-like books that encourage an understanding and appreciation of modern and contemporary art. With the special access granted by artists to their writings and archives, Hauser & Wirth Publishers often brings new and overlooked aspects of an artist's creative practice into focus. Our backlist offers a robust program that comprises artists' books, artists' writings, biographies, monographs, surveys, exhibition catalogs and collectors' perspectives. Hauser & Wirth's publishing activity extends back to 1992, from where it steadily flourished through partnerships with reputable imprints such as Hatje Cantz, JRP|Ringier, Snoeck, Steidl, Thames & Hudson and Yale University Press, before publishing independently under its own imprint. Based in Zurich and New York City, Hauser & Wirth Publishers commissions titles that we believe are keystone resources and references related to the artists represented by the gallery and beyond. Our titles are distributed worldwide via Distributed Art Publishers and Buchhandlung Walther König.



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**'Lucio Fontana: Sculpture'**

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Texts by Luca Massimo Barbero, Cristina Beltrami, Paolo Laurini and Maria Villa

Book design by Leonardo Sonnoli

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**Caption and courtesy information:**

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Lucio Fontana: Sculpture.  
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Lucio Fontana, Milan  
1963  
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Lucio Fontana  
Concetto spaziale  
[Spacial Concept]  
1961-1962  
Slipped terracotta and cuts  
38 x 28.5 cm / 15 x 11 1/4 in  
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Lucio Fontana  
Scultura astratta  
[Abstract Sculpture]  
1934  
Wrought-iron wire and clay  
33 x 19 cm / 13 x 7 1/2 in  
© Fondazione Lucio Fontana by SIAE 2022  
Photo: Daniele De Lonti

Lucio Fontana  
Concetto spaziale, La luna a Venezia  
[Spacial Concept, The Moon in Venice]  
1961  
Acrylic, glass, and holes on canvas  
150 x 150 cm / 59 x 59 in  
Archivio Patrimonio Artistico Intesa Sanpaolo  
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