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Press Release

Gilberto Zorio

Gilberto Zorio was born September 21, 1944, in Andomo Micca, Italy. He entered Turin's Accademia di Belle Arti in 1963 to study painting. However, he soon moved on to sculpture and had his first solo show of three-dimensional works in 1967 at the Galleria Sperone, Turin. Associated with the revolutionary Arte Povera [more] movement, Zorio exhibited in a number of the defining group shows of Arte Povera in 1967 and 1968. He was included in a group exhibition, Nine Young Artists: Theodoron Awards, at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 1969. Around this time, Zorio embarked upon a series dealing with language, *Per purificare le parole*, a theme he would investigate through the early 1980s. In 1970, Zorio graduated from the Accademia and, in 1971, he began teaching at the Liceo Artistico, Turin.

Zorio's work emphasizes process and alchemy, exploring transformative natural phenomena like evaporation or oxidation and the effects wrought upon materials by these chemical interventions. He has always been preoccupied with the idea of energy. This focus led him to examine the properties of electricity, incorporating a lamp or incandescent tubes in some pieces. In other works, he adopted star and javelin forms—both archetypal constructs intimating energy. Zorio frequently employs fragile materials in his sculpture, creating giant stars from terra-cotta or perching Pyrex alembics containing liquid solutions upon slender steel javelins. He tends to suspend or balance these components in purposely precarious installations, suggesting the tensions and transience of the physical realm.

In 1976, the Kunstmuseum Luzern, Lucerne, recognized Zorio with a significant exhibition. A mid-career retrospective of the artist's work followed at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, in 1979. A monograph on Zorio was published in Italian in 1982. By 1984, he had started another series utilizing a primeval form, that of the canoe, which he made from assorted materials such as pitch or steel. The canoe, along with the star and javelin, became a recurrent motif in Zorio's oeuvre. In 1985, the Kunstverein, Stuttgart, organized a major retrospective, which traveled in 1986 to the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris; Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva; and Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven. In 1992, an exhibition took place at the Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato, Italy. Zorio lives in Turin.