

*Antonio Calderara - Luce*

13 February - 3 April 2020

During the same period, Annemarie Verna Galerie is presenting the exhibition *Antonio Calderara Watercolors* Annemarie Verna Galerie, Neptunstrasse 42, 8032 Zurich.

Larkin Erdmann is proud to present *Luce*, a solo exhibition of works by Italian artist Antonio Calderara (1903 – 1978). *Luce*, meaning 'light' in Italian, was a theme that preoccupied Calderara throughout his entire career. This exhibition, featuring works from the 1950s up until the mid-1970s, is an homage to Calderara's unrivalled aptitude in the depiction of light effects through abstraction, focussing on the artist's transition from figurative works to distinctively coloured abstract works.

Born in Milan in 1903, Antonio Calderara was a self-taught painter who abandoned his studies in engineering in the early 1920's in order to devote himself to artistic explorations. Calderara's early works were dominated by figurative compositions; portraits, still life paintings and representations of the city around him. Calderara was mentored by Lucio Fontana during his formative years, and he counted Seurat, the Milanese Novecento artists and the 15th Century Renaissance artist Piero della Francesca amongst his early influences.

Calderara remained in his hometown, Milan, until 1933 when he relocated to Lake Orta, living initially in Pella and then moving to Vacciago. It was during this period living by the lake that Calderara was struck by the unique, radiant quality of light that played over the water. In his works from the 1940s and early 50s it is plain to observe the artist's growing affinity with the balmy luminescence of his surroundings at Lake Orta, as his paintings gradually began to exude a distinctive warmth and radiance.

By the late 1950's Calderara's oeuvre mostly comprised of landscapes and town scenes such as the work *La chiesa dell'Inviolata*, 1958, in which his dusty, phosphorescent depiction of light clearly resembles a misty haze as though seen across the lake. By this point, Calderara had already begun to reduce and strip back his compositions, which evolved from the traditionally figurative in favour of a new style of abstract, geometric works. Calderara was an avid collector of works by his contemporaries, including Mondrian and Albers, whose influence on Calderara's oeuvre can be strongly felt both in terms of colour selection and abstract composition.

In later works such as *Orrizonte A. B.*, 1969, the radical, unique approach to abstract minimalism that Calderara adopted is well-developed, featuring simple, two-dimensional forms in subtly contrasting, light-washed colours which can be interpreted as the figurative: horizon lines of a lakeside landscape. Similarly, in *Orizzontale interrotta*, 1972, the same simple horizon lines are broken, interrupted by a blank silhouette that signals the presence of Isola San Giulio, the tiny island in Lake Orta.

*Luce*, Larkin Erdmann's first solo presentation of Antonio Calderara is open from 14 February – 3 April 2020 at Rämistrasse 28, 8001 Zurich.