



## PRESS RELEASE

### RODOLFO ARICÒ. *UNQUIET PAINTING* The Nineties

Intesa Sanpaolo will be showcasing an exhibition entitled **Rodolfo Aricò. Pittura inquieta** in association with the Rodolfo Aricò Archive at the Bank's Milan-based museum hub, Gallerie d'Italia - Piazza Scala, **between 3 October 2014 and 18 January 2015**. Curated by Francesca Pola, it is part of the *Cantiere del '900. Opere dalle collezioni Intesa Sanpaolo* project created by Francesco Tedeschi.

The exhibition centres on the final stage in the career of Rodolfo Aricò (Milan 1930-2002), a key figure in Italian art in the second half of the 20th century and a lynchpin of the international movement known in the US as Post-Minimal Painting (*Pittura Analitica* in Italian), an intimate reflection on the artist's role and a style of painting completely removed from reality.

A piece dating from 1960, *Modificazione*, serves as an introduction to the exhibition housed in Room 9 of the Museum's *Cantiere del '900* wing. It is the perfect link to the early part of Aricò's career, expressing his alternative critical view of contemporary man's existential condition; here, his work features a palette of matt greys and ochre shot through with irregular black lines, their surfaces forming brand new concepts of space.

Alongside four particularly significant canvases from the last few decades in Aricò's career, centred on a critical analysis of painting, the certainties of rationality and life itself, there are also ten works on paper which provide clear insight into the artist's interior journey, also expressed through a series of written pieces in the form of short stories dating from the same time. They complete the overview of his artistic technique as the old millennium drew to a close, a time of existential crisis for Aricò during which he produced highly dramatic and expressive works.

Heralded by the critical rereading of the principles of geometry which characterised Aricò's output in the 1970s, this new period is marked by an interior retreat and the subsequent expansion of colour and shape reflecting his spiritual mood at the time.

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It is epitomised by *Sensus 2* (1988), acquired by Banca Commerciale Italiana – now Intesa Sanpaolo – in the early 1990s and chosen by the artist himself for the cover of the main volume of his work published during his lifetime.

The other pieces in the exhibition are fine examples of Aricò's output from the 1990s. During this decade, a material and formal dramatization emerged in his art, mirroring a more complex, intense relationship with the moment of genesis in his work and his exemplification of painting itself.

Pieces such as *Pittura inquieta*, *Natura viva* and *Sotto la superficie* reflect his apprehensions over his production while combining a subtle, sophisticated awareness of colour with materials brimming with emotional tension. The collage technique modifies and embellishes the images, and their identity is torn, even at the germinal stage.

The underlying geometrical concept – cornerstone of Aricò's previous artistic period – is constantly modified as he pushes materials beyond the normal boundaries, expressing an evolution which breathes in time with the universe. It is seen most clearly in his works with profiled or contrasting frames, which exude a tension both physical and mental in origin.

The exhibition is also a chance to present the whole of Aricò's narrative output from the 1990s. There are eight unpublished stories on the painting of other historical periods, based around encounters with 17th-century Dutch masters, English masters from the 1700s and also a contemporary artist, Mark Rothko, all figures with whom Aricò identifies.

As with the four other exhibitions held over the past 18 months – explorations of themes or authors featured in Intesa Sanpaolo's 20th-century collection – this exhibition will also include a multimedia experience designed with **Zenit Arti Audiovisive**. It has been created using documentation sourced primarily from the Rodolfo Aricò Archives and takes a closer look at Aricò's career, focusing on his artistic and literary output during the 1990s with catalogues, photos and documents.

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition (published by Skira with texts by Francesca Pola and Francesco Tedeschi) brings together all of Aricò's stories in print form for the very first time.

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#### **For further information**

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