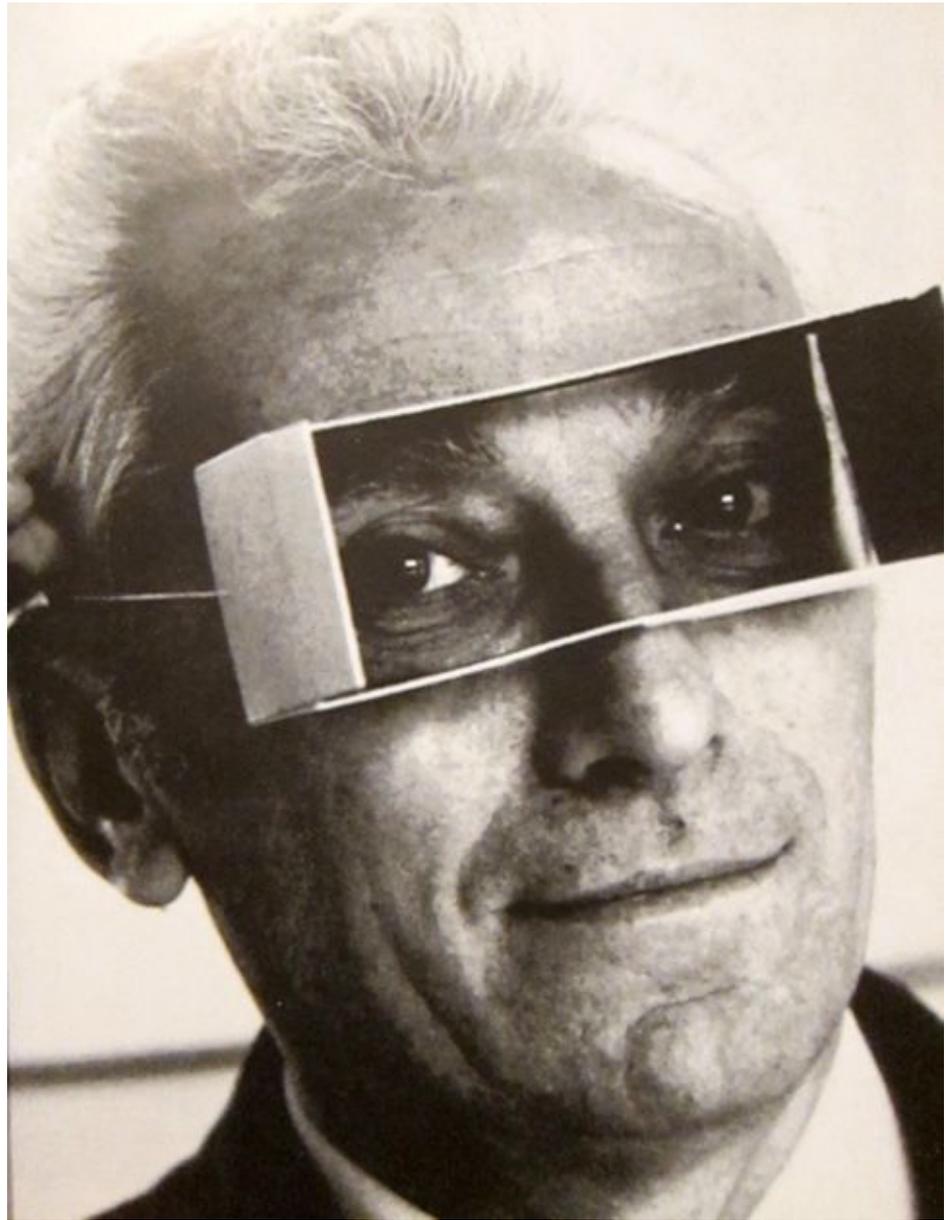


BRUNO MUNARI



BRUNO MUNARI (1907 - 1998)

Bruno Munari was an Italian artist and designer with wide-ranging skills. He worked as a painter, sculptor, and industrial designer, he was a graphic artist and filmmaker, a writer and a poet. Munari believed in the power of simple design to stimulate the imagination. Considered one of the greatest protagonists of art, design and graphics of the 20th century, always maintaining unchanged his whimsical creativity to support his constructive survey of form through visual and tactile experiments, and his great ability to communicate through words, objects, toys.

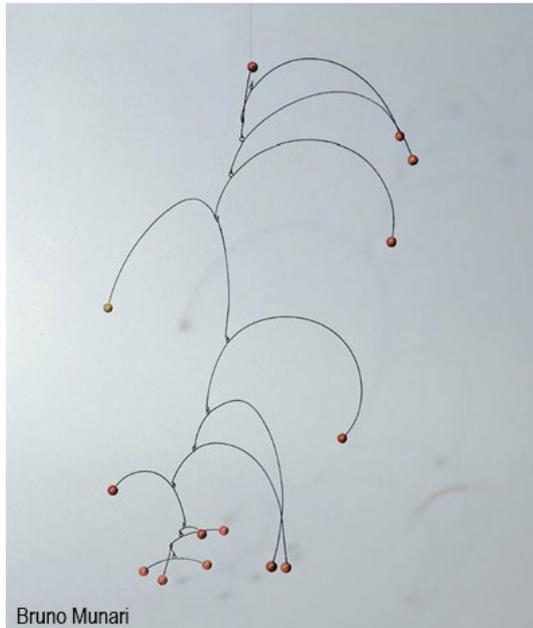
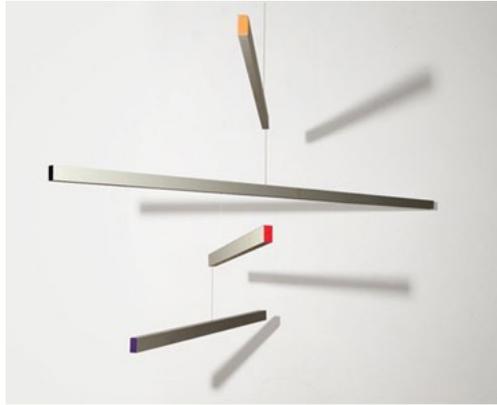


FUTURISM AND *USELESS MACHINES*

1927 took part in the events of the second Futurism in Milan, participating in the collective of the Pesaro Gallery as well as the Venice Biennale and the Quadrennial in Rome and Paris in the thirties.

1933 he exhibited his "useless machines", mechanical devices studied for their aesthetic characteristics, presented as "experimental models to test the possibility of aesthetic information of visual language."

From 1934 to 1936 he devoted himself to abstract painting.



Bruno Munari



Arte Concreta and Arte Povera

- In 1948, together with A. Soldati, G. Monnet, G. Dorfles, he founded the MAC (Concrete Art Movement). In the fifties his research resumed with a series of "concave-convex sculptures" (1949-65), of paintings "positive-negative" (1951 onwards), of three-dimensional experimental models (Composition on the square; Travel Sculptures; Structures continuous), until the visual experiment obtained with polarized light (from 1953 onwards).
- In the mid 1950s-'60s Munari was concurrently in Milan with Arte Povera artists such as Lucio Fontana and Piero Manzoni.

Design As Art

- Munari and many other Italian artists began to publish their ideas in journals, some which are still published, and to make art renegotiating the definition of the true artist as separate from an outmoded, elitist avant-gardism.
- Munari also published articles and books of essays about the overlap of art and design and the changing roles of art in contemporary society, perhaps the most famous being *Design As Art (1971)*.

ILLEGIBLE BOOKS

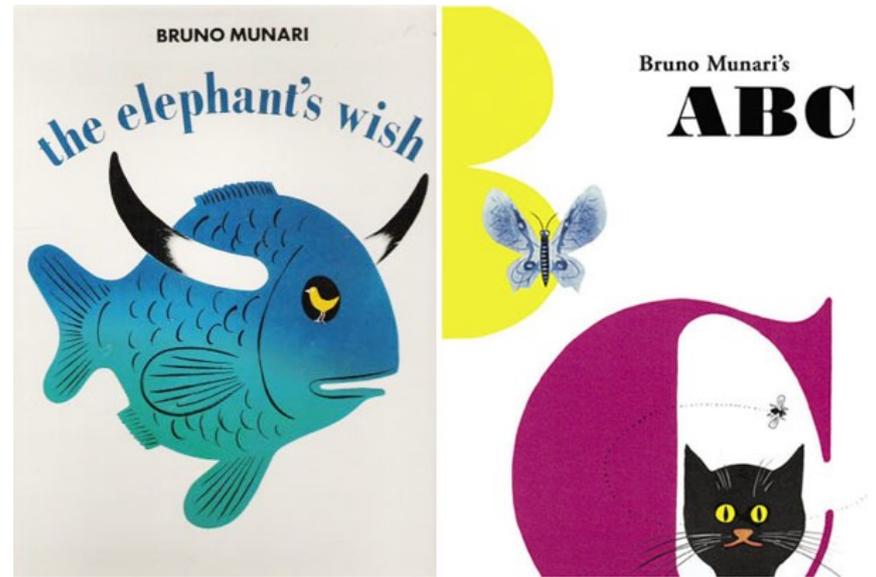
- His *Illegible Books* (1966), known also as *Unreadable Books*, were books made as visual treatments and experiments in form. They seek the same “harmonic relationship between all the parts” that his kinetics did. The same could be said about his children’s books.



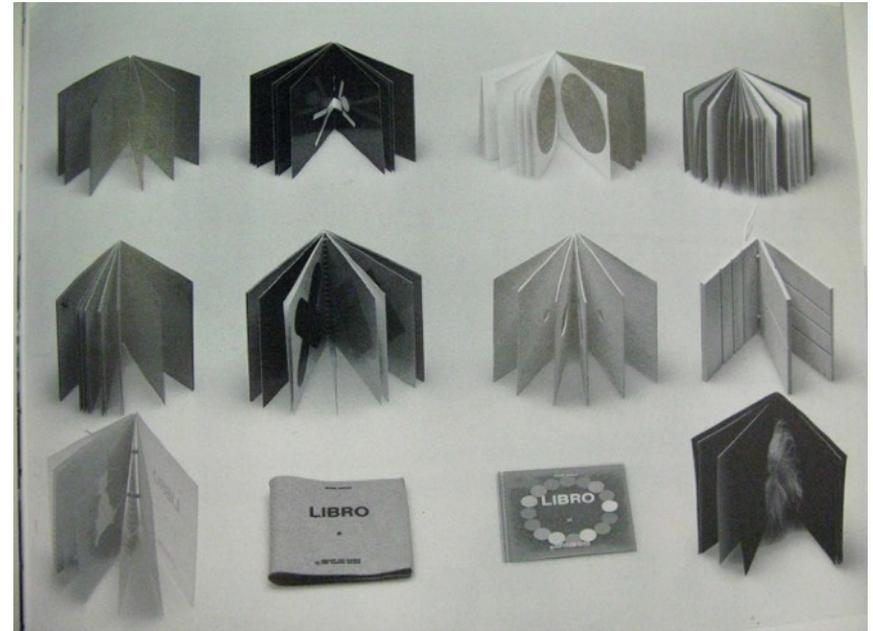
Bruno Munari, *Libro Illeggibile (Unreadable Book)*, 1966.
Proof and actual edition for The Museum Of Modern Art. © Bruno Muna
Courtesy Corraini Edizioni.

Children's Books

- Munari was interested in the interrelationship between games, creativity and childhood. For this reason, he strove to create children's materials that would support the maintenance of the young mind's elasticity and point of view.
- Munari did not believe in the inherent value of fantastical stories of princes and princesses, or dragons and monsters; instead, he wanted to create simple stories about people, animals, and plants that awaken the senses. Books with basic story lines and a humorous twist, brought to life by simple, colorful illustrations drawn with clarity and precision.
- For these works he won the Andersen award for Best Children's Author in 1974, a graphic award in the Bologna Fair for the childhood in 1984, and a Lego award for his exceptional contributions on the development on creativity of children in 1986.



- In addition, he created other “pre-books,” to inspire a love of reading in pre-literate minds.
- Munari’s *Pre-Books (Prelibri)*, first published in 1980, creating spaces for tactile play to encourage musing and contemplation. The twelve small *Pre-Books* are made of “materials like transparent plastic, cloth, paper, and wood. They are meant to tell stories through the visual, tactile, sonorous, thermal, and physical.”



Bruno Munari, *Prelibri (Prebooks)*, originally published In 1980
Currently published by Corraini Edizioni.
© Bruno Munari. Courtesy Corraini Edizioni.

Laboratorios

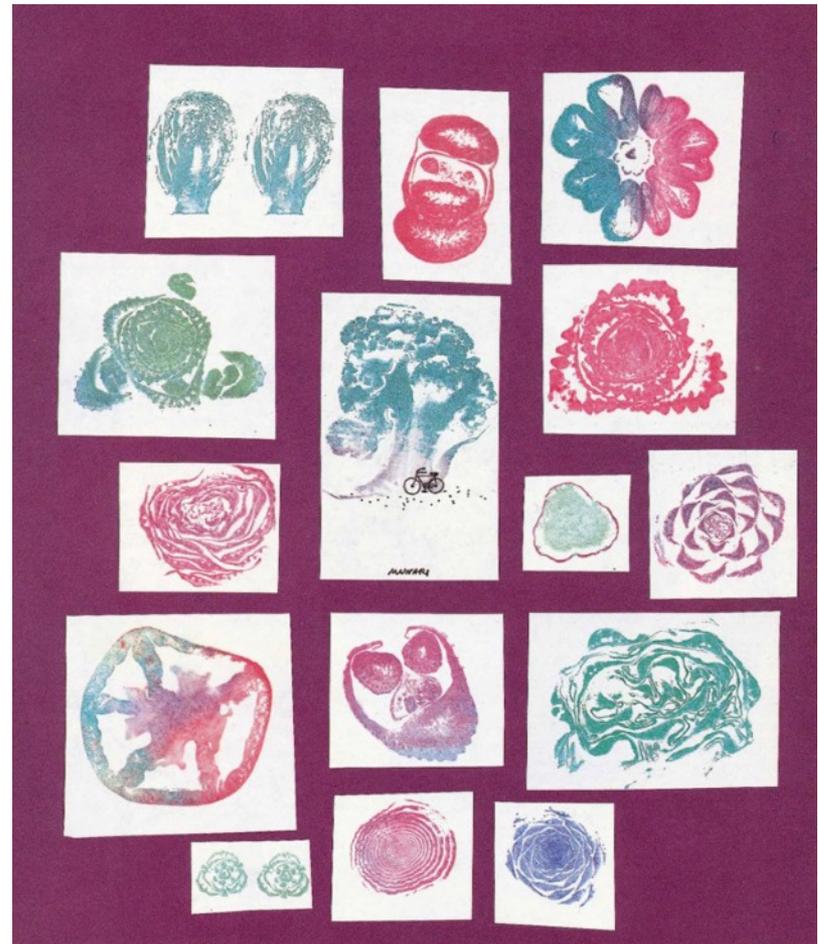
- Munari was a fan of simplicity, which he believed was found in both nature and children. He eventually renounced his design career to lead international children's workshops he called *Laboratorios*, beginning in 1977.
- In these workshops, Munari focused on the positive creative imagination of kids “who come out of school happy and laughing,” rather than dwelling on institutionalized Modern Art.



Bruno Munari, *The First Children's Workshop In Brera, Milan, 1977*.
© Bruno Munari.
Courtesy Corraini Edizioni.

The workshop series

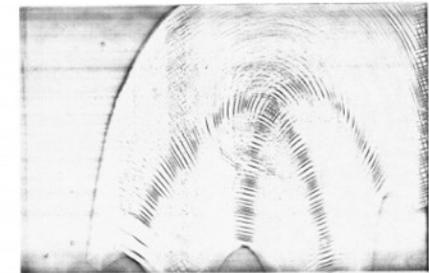
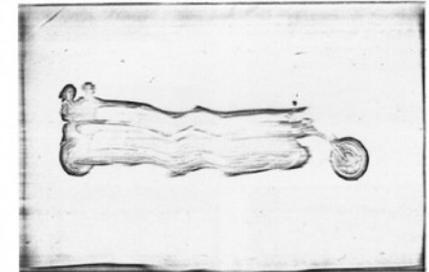
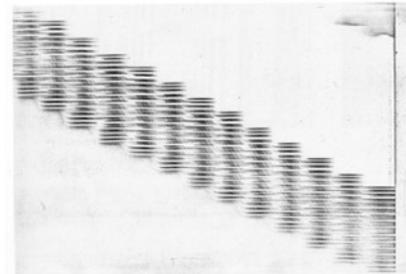
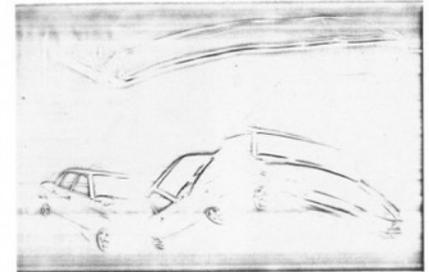
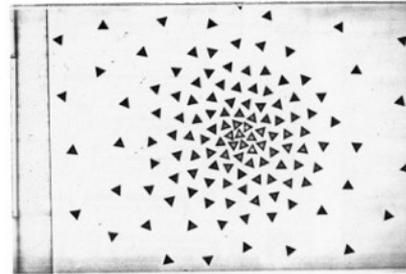
- *Roses in the Salad* is one of a series of books referred to as The Workshop Series. This series, recently back in print, also includes *Drawing a Tree*, about plant symmetry, and *Drawing the Sun*, a meditation on shadow, color, and ways to portray the sun. The first four books in the Workshop Series were drawn from Munari's educational workshops offered for children.



Bruno Munari, *Roses In The Salad*, 1983. Stamps issued from salad. © Bruno Munari. Courtesy Corraini Edizioni.

XEROGRAPHIES

- Another book in The Workshop Series, *Original Xerographies* (1977), which Munari described as “methodical studies performed on an electrostatic copier,” was comprised of what he called original copies. To generate these copies, he moved paper around on the platen glass and turned the photocopied errors into discreet works of art. Munari’s simple but brilliant concept was rooted in his love of play and movement.
- During the golden age of the Xerox Art movement (from the 1970s to the 1990s), many artists regarded Munari as the founding member of what is referred to in a 1979 photocopy art catalogue *Electroworks* as Generation One: the first artists to experiment with this new medium.



Bruno Munari, *Original Xerographies*, 1977. © Bruno Munari. Courtesy Corraini Edizioni.

- His multi-faceted communication skills is manifested in many different fields: industrial communication and publicity
- School books:
 - The eye and the art. Art education for middle school, in 1992
 - Sounds and ideas to improvise. Build creative paths in music education and teaching instrumental, 1995
- games, graphical laboratories and research books.