



## GIANNI COLOMBO

### The Space Device

by Marco Scotini

#### *The Gallery of Devices*

The model of the 'device' defines the matrix of Gianni Colombo's entire body of work in that it is the recurring form inherent in the different phenomenological approaches the work has taken over the course of time. In other words, it defines the work to the extent that when we consider each of his projects, the question we ask ourselves is not so much what the device represents or what regime of signs it presents, but instead how it works, or rather, in what ways it should be used, how it affects the viewer, and what relationships it establishes between the public, the work and the author.

In fact, as Jean Louis Schefer has stated, Gianni Colombo's work does not present us with "a catalogue of forms, nor with an alignment of the visible (as classical painting and art does, and from which, in effect, we have learned how to look)"<sup>1</sup>, and even less with a collection of objects. Instead we are dealing with the production of devices: interchangeable structures, fields, situations, passages, routes, environments, or however else they have been called. But what is a device? Whether we take one of Colombo's first alterable objects such as *Rotoplastik*, or a *Topoestesia/Topo-Awareness*, an environment from the Seventies; or even an architectural deconstruction from the Eighties, we are still dealing with devices that operate independently and, to some degree, anonymously. To explain how the work functions, it remains insufficient but necessary to resort to "The Open Work", or to the idea of programmed art as the first theoretical frame of reference. Colombo's works, on the one hand, have a preset operational model and rules to follow; on the other, they also demand the direct participation of the observer: his physical and mental



involvement. Corresponding to the viewer who asks himself each time “what do I have to do?” there is always a group of variables he is called upon to influence, but which the author has programmed beforehand. The mechanism established between the person as subject and the person who is “subjected” is not solely a condition, a way of being, in Colombo’s work, but – as is clear today – it is the actual substance and object of his entire research. Already in the tactile pictures of the late Fifties the viewer could make changes and variations in the work: by pressing the rubber surface of the picture with his fingers he could move the spheres (*Rilievi Intermutabili/Interchangeable Reliefs* 1959); he could manually alter the degree of projection of aluminium modular elements as they moved freely at right angles to the plane they were on (*In-Out*, 1959-60). He could turn an object-sculpture on its axis to create different relationships between the cut out wooden shapes (*Rotoplastik*, 1960), or change the shape of a symmetrical grid of square netting by hooking the ends of the elastics that composed it to certain fixed points on its surface (*Spazio elastico/Elastic Space* 1974). The impression given by this early work is that of a search for areas of contact between the body and the object it manipulates. Thus the problem lies precisely in the definition of the space that connects them both when elements (gestures) of the body enter a relationship with elements (modules) of the object being manipulated. This is a problem that becomes intensified as Colombo’s work moves from a picture-object to a spatial “involucre”, as Adachiara Zevi defined it.<sup>2</sup> In *Strutturazione cinevisuale abitabile/Kinetic-visual Habitable Structure* (1964), *After Structures* (1966), *Crono (Cromo) Dromo* (1964), *Zoom Squares*, (1967) but also in *Spazio elastico/Elastic Space* (1967). In *Campo praticabile/Traversable Field* (1970) – designed in collaboration with Vincenzo Agnetti – the viewer enters dark rooms and experiences a series of optical stimuli, flashes that succeed one another with increasing rapidity during which luminous grids or squares of polychrome



light alter the perceived spatial dimensions and depths of the room, forcing the brain to continually synchronize its activity to that of the flashing light. Vision is under attack, the confines of space are destabilized, spatial topology becomes difficult to define unless one's perception submits to continual adjustment, focusing and orientation. In these generators of visual disturbance, perception comes on stage, "to express itself"<sup>3</sup> as Colombo defined it. The sense of being present the viewer is required to feel anticipates the condition of "seeing oneself while perceiving, or perceiving oneself while seeing" essential to Olafur Eliasson's environments.<sup>4</sup>

"I've always sustained that my works have the character of a self-test," claimed Colombo, "they weren't made to obtain information, but to emancipate the viewer from his state of perception, making him aware of what concerned him."<sup>5</sup> However there is something in Colombo's work that goes beyond Eliasson's "orientation devices". Perhaps an attitude that is much closer to Carsten Höller's "laboratories of doubt" or "machines of confusion".<sup>6</sup> Or again to the "powerless structures" of Elmgreen and Dragset, with their declared Foucaultian background. The alterations to the white cube in the Portikus Room at Frankfurt in 2001 by Elmgreen and Dragset are a sort of development of Colombo's project at the Kröller-Müller Rijksmuseum at Otterlo in 1980: in the former case the reduction of a perfectly rational structure into a flexible space with a curving floor and skylight; in the latter, the distortion of four pathways that follow those made in 1937 by Van de Velde in the Dutch museum. Or again, the project for the Bern Kunstmuseum in 1984, for which Colombo claimed to want to contradict the polarity inherent in the concept of "art exhibition" – a group of works on show and a group of visitors who move about to view them – proposing the route itself as the work of art. The works *Topoestesie/Topo-Awareness*, *Bariestesie/Bary-Awareness* and *Architetture cacogoniometriche/Cacophonometric Architecture* – a further transition from



the involucre towards the interior space – are instead apparatus that is able to capture the body's movement in the temporal sphere of the programmed routes or courses. They contain stairs, arches, doors and columns, and set up other areas of contact: those that directly involve the motion of the body, the direction of gestures, states of equilibrium and reflexes. The viewer experiences real difficulties in movement performance due to interrupted pathways, steep surfaces, labyrinths or columns tilted at various angles. This produces the noted forms of disorientation, destabilization and drifting provoked by Colombo's structures, not so much as an attempt to escape from the rationalist culture but rather the desire for self-awareness and knowledge: we forgive him his methods in order to know ourselves better.

In this sense, each of Colombo's works presents itself as a sort of spatial device ready to reveal the conditioned reactions and forms of subjugation that tie our behaviour to the techniques space employs as expressions of ideologies and control. At the same time, his environments become tactile theses for a liberating potential, for regaining control of the body, and define themselves as spaces assigned for the development of other ways of being. It is the formation of an anti-discipline as an "experimental use of freedom", according to the Brazilian critic Mario Pedrosa; anti-discipline also in the sense of dismantling the sphere of a specific item of knowledge. Colombo's devices do not fully belong to the field of architecture, nor to the field of theatre, nor that of sculpture, nor – finally – to that of painting.

### *Nu Descendant un Escalier/Nude Descending a Staircase*

Let's take a black and white photo that shows in an interior, the front view of a flight of stairs with a wooden handrail, quite high risers and narrow treads. A completely ordinary staircase if it weren't for the fact that the stairs – thirteen in all – slope abnormally, tilting very slightly and with the surfaces between



them splayed so that any regular, mechanical movement becomes impossible when using them. What appears in the photo as a mute and inert presence, an empty and information-free diagram, would immediately, the moment anyone should decide to climb or descend them (or use them in any way), transform themselves into a theatre of action, into a series of unexpected reactions when confronted with the gap in the repetitive structure of the stairs. The route compels one to break the reciprocal links between each action and to undermine the structure of an obvious and habitual process. A stair-machine, Gilles Deleuze would say. A device affecting behaviour or perception, or a slapstick type of set-up, ready to turn a given situation into an unexpected comic one.

Instead, it is actually a variant of Gianni Colombo's work *Bary-Awareness*, first conceived in 1975 and returned to again, in this case after an interval of ten years, for the Hoffmann Gallery in Friedberg. A variant that, more than the original, declares its specific reference and affiliation: Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*.

Duchamp's work, famous from the time it was made in 1912, and marking the start of the Dada artist's research as a "precision optician", is not something casual within the course of Colombo's development; quite the contrary, even if critiques of Colombo's work have never investigated this relationship or, at best, have mentioned it only in passing. It is certainly true that kinetic art, or better still, programmed art – the framework within which Colombo's work continues to be considered – has always recognized Duchamp among its important precursors, but the generality of the attribution is totally insufficient. In fact, if on the one hand there is no room for doubt that Gianni Colombo was one of the great international figures of programmed art, although it is high time to propose other interpretations as well; on the other hand, the link between the work of Duchamp and that of Colombo goes well beyond *Rotative*



*plaques-verre* from 1920 with its five rotating plates of painted glass, the *Rotoreliefs* of 1935, or Duchamp's essays on stereoscopic photography. With regard to *Nude Descending a Staircase*, it could be said that we are still dealing with an example of the movement conducted by Duchamp commencing from Etienne-Jules Marey's chronophotography. On the contrary, in its variants *Bary-Awareness* is a device for the production of movement itself, in which the viewer abandons his function as the world's onlooker and becomes the actor or agent of the work, leaving open the possibility that things happens other than where the eye expects them, ready to comprehend the entire "field of possibilities". *Bary-Awareness* expresses a form of tactile apprehension and kinaesthetic reaction that develops by means of a series of steps, by their succession and their organization of space. The step, in fact, is nothing more than a way of adapting the body to temporal imperatives and spatial organization.<sup>7</sup> "The reason I chose stairs," said Colombo, "was because they are a form of construction typical of a specific environmental situation, also one with emotional connotations. We find stairs in every kind of environment because they are one of those things that we usually experience. Indeed there are rules we have internalized regarding the predictable nature of the shape of a stair: we are sure that one step will be the same as the next, because that's the rule."<sup>8</sup> In this sense Colombo's group of stairs, by testing the actual conditions of equilibrium, tend to sensitize "the vestibular zone (bary-awareness), the perception of space (topo-awareness) and the viewer's behaviour (reflexes)."<sup>9</sup>

The *Bariestesia* years were also those in which Colombo elaborated the formula that saw the transformation of "observers into technicians", an ambiguous declaration in his desire to define things which, though employing the scientific terminology typical of information theories, seems to indicate his proximity to the "precision optician" mentioned above. It is not by chance that the outcome



of Colombo's work always has a playful or comical nature, with the appearance of contradictory situations and teasing irony. However, precisely this constant interrogation of the function of the observer, together with the increasingly privileged role that this assumes with regard to his work, finds in Duchamp the main interpretive key: from the ready-mades to *Etant Donnés* – the voyeur, the physical presence of the voyeur, is central to his entire aesthetic thought.<sup>10</sup> As Francesco Poli writes: "Probably the most significant reference to Duchamp is not so much related to the kinetic works as to the unusual connection that is revealed between the environment *Sixteen Miles of String* (an installation for the show at the Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies, New York, 1942) and *Elastic Space*, an environment designed by Colombo in 1966-67 and realized for the first time for Trigon at Graz in 1967. Despite the great differences in conception and aesthetic results (on the one hand a show mounted in an exhibition space completely crisscrossed in every direction by an enormous random spider's web of threads; on the other, an empty cubic space with an orderly network of strings geometrically dividing the space), in both cases the visitor finds himself perceptively and physically involved in a "uneasy" manifestation of space that is profoundly disturbing; Duchamp's chaotic intertwining strings are only apparently opposed to Colombo's ordered ones, whose continual motion, in fact, produces an even more alarming sense of disorientation."<sup>11</sup> Poli could also have cited another example – philologically correct – which was perhaps the direct link with the idea of *Elastic Space*: Fontana's spatial environment *Esaltazione di una forma/Exaltation of a Form*, made for the 1960 show "From Nature to Art". Colombo himself recalls it: "There was a large space illuminated by red light, and this light produced a dazzling effect on some red fabrics that Fontana had stretched like a spider's web across the empty room. At the centre there was a slightly inclined, parallelepiped-shaped block covered in red cloth; one had the impression of



being in the middle of the clouds with those strips of cloth tied from one end of the ceiling and walls to the other."<sup>12</sup> In *Spazio Elastico*, Duchamp's spider's web, or Fontana's, becomes a large three-dimensional grid, a true 'perspective chamber', in which any hypothesis about the existence of an ideal space prior to experience itself is rejected, and mathematical space yields when confronted with physio-psychological space: or better still, announces its own crisis. The geometric and orthogonal grids of *Elastic Space* do not trap the body in the style of Giacometti or Bacon, but define an abstract and flexible structure, open to numerous possible variations, alternative compositions and mutations. Essentially, they become the paradigm that registers the transformation: a distorting and unpredictable mechanism, no less absurd or disorienting. In this way space acquires the ability to point out to us that we are in it, transforming the viewer into the subject itself. It is here as in the following series of works *Topo-Awareness*, *Bary-Awareness* and *Cacophonometric Architecture* that Colombo meets Buster Keaton in these trajectories of nonsense and with this deconstructive attitude, sealed by Colombo's 1977 work in which he re-designed the prefabricated house from *One Week* (1920) and set it beside one of his photograms. In the film, Keaton blindly assembles all the pieces of the house by hand without the aid of any instruction manual. The result is an incongruous and precarious structure that shortly afterwards is completely destroyed by another machine in the form of a train. But as Deleuze states: "aren't these machine-houses what makes Keaton the Dada architect par excellence?".<sup>13</sup> Colombo called the work "Studio gonometrico" [Study of Angles] and the graphic analysis of this alogical amalgam could not be more methodically precise.



### *The Resistance of the Organic*

"For some time now I have begun to create unequal heights on the surface of the picture-object, so that the viewer's eye, as it scans the surface, is forced to go up and down the levels and in and out of the hollows examining the aspects that natural variations of the light create in the picture."<sup>14</sup> Despite the fact that Colombo tried to conceal the bio-mechanical aspects of his first kinetic works as much as possible, today we cannot help but distinguish in the organic nature of these objects (the remains of the *amorphous* in them) one of the fundamental aspects of his entire work and the original matrix for the representative locations that – from time to time – he has presented.

The series *Espansione modulare/Modular Expansion* (1959-63), *Rilievo intermutabile/Interchangeable Relief* (1959), *Superficie in variazione/Surface Variations* (1959), and *In-Out* (1960-63) are presented as tactile screens made from different materials that the viewer is invited to press with his hand as he would a relief. The pressure of his fingers affects the variable configurations the object can take, developing a sensitive perception that leads to a sort of vision *through* the body or at least is inseparable from it. If it is true that the front of the work still presents a field for observation in the classical sense, it is equally true that to associate vision with the body already means moving in the direction of environments, the next step, and a complete endorsement of Colombo's research.

*Rotoplastik* (1960) also presents itself as a manipulable object that – together with *Strutturazione fluida/Fluid Structuring* (1960) – adds to the earlier works' curvilinear figures, typical of the organicist's repertoire. "At the time I was very fond of Hans Arp's work, and so in order to create a system in continuous mutation and variation I sought his organic forms: I wanted in fact to maintain that organic dimension, not of a Freudian or visceral type, but as if made purely perceivable by the flexibility, the tension, the transparency etc."<sup>15</sup>



Whereas in *Rotoplastik* the variation in the forms is obtained from the viewer, who holds the object by its two handles and makes it turn slowly on its axis, in *Fluid Structuring* the viewer has an apparently passive function while he is called upon to be aware of the subtle variations that the circular ribbon continuously designs within the thickness of the glass, and in the empty air beyond the transparency of the glass. In the same way, in the emptiness of the room, the elastics in *Elastic Space* create a three-dimensional square grid. Not only does the ribbon not present, nor will it ever present, a final determinate shape, but also *Fluid Structuring*, together with the other works conceived in the years '59-'61 appears as a decentralized, homogeneous surface on which – according to the inheritance of Pollock's *all-over* – every point in the uniform field of vision can become the place where the form happens, precisely because it excludes the construction of individual forms within it.

There is, however, one work more than the others that categorically states this bodily inherence as a true machine-body that produces organic and pulsating movements. Also with regard to *Strutturazione pulsante/Pulsating Structuring* (1959) Colombo stated that in constructing the electromechanical device he avoided analogous or evocative interpretations of reality. Nevertheless, the intermittent expansion and contraction of the foam blocks, the irregular and alternating opening of the cracks in the two-dimensional monochrome surface, create the illusion of an actual organism. And in this case too, the links with Duchamp's *Anémic Cinéma* are truly surprising.

*Anémic Cinéma* is something halfway between the static surface of a picture and the movement of a film, between the movie camera's perfectly immobile framing and the spirals rotating about themselves, but able to generate alternately outward and inwardly curving forms that distend and contract, that swell and subside, according to a continuous temporal process that becomes



“pulsation”. Here Duchamp required the viewer’s exclusive visual concentration, which, however, ends up becoming a bodily perception. It is not so much nor only due to organic analogies that the moving spirals have an evocative quality (eye, stomach, breast etc.), but instead – as Rosalind Krauss states – “the pulsation itself, with its diastolic repetitiveness, recalls the density of the nervous tissue, its feedback time, its response in time, retention and protension, to the degree that without this temporal undulation, no experience of any kind, visual or other, could take place.”<sup>16</sup> However, the nature of the rhythmic pulsation in this work of Colombo’s is the same – even if in this case on an environmental scale – as *Elastic Space*, able to subvert the rigid order of the perspective grid in the physiological processes of a living organism.

Without this strict inherence or reciprocal connection between body and vision, it is not possible to understand the transition Colombo made halfway through the Sixties from programmed or kinetic works to environments. It is hard to understand how all the critiques have made Gianni Colombo into a sort of “radical rationalist” or indiscriminate advocate of “the project”, – as Argan defines him<sup>17</sup> – erasing any informal or organic traces from his work. Or better still, ignoring a cultural context that not only Gianni Colombo came from (all his ceramic work from the end of the Fifties still remains to be studied), but also the actual essay/manifesto for programmed art: Umberto Eco’s *The Open Work*. In Colombo’s case in particular, his friendship with Manzoni on the one hand and Fontana on the other should not, however, have led to a focus on the more rationalistic instances of his art. And there have even been those who have defined his entire body of work as at first lingering in the mechanomorphic, the hard, and later showing a gradual conquest of softness, in which the “motor” becomes the true element of separation.<sup>18</sup> In an overly schematic way, the body of work has been set in a technological context when



Colombo himself, beginning with an interpretation by Trini in 1972, stated that the scope of his research had instead been to “concentrate on the opposite consequence of technology, which is the result of its effect on man’s behaviour.”<sup>19</sup>

While recently recalling Gruppo T, Giovanni Anceschi was the one to underline the pre-eminence of the body in all of Colombo’s work, from the time of the *Miriorama* on. “If we are to heed the evidence of sound represented by Armstrong, and the totally empathetic evidence represented by Keaton, it is the body, the whole body, that is central to Gianni Colombo’s work as an artist. The mind – reason – is the cognitive instrument (microscope and scalpel at the same time). But the object of the investigation and its protagonist is undoubtedly the body. The body not only patient, but pleasure-loving and multisensorial.”<sup>20</sup> Or again: “Already in his first, pre-kinetic exhibition, Colombo showed a series of works whose style obviously owed much to Fontana, yet did not possess Fontana’s ontological, absolute, conceptual character. Colombo’s style comprises roomy pouches of soft cotton wool. But then the works from his exhibition (*Miriorama 4*) that already introduce an “observer” relationship, that is ones that induce a more passive, contemplative attitude in the viewer – as for example the walls of foam bricks (*Pulsating Structuring*, 1959) or of thin sheets of cardboard (*Space Becoming* 1959) – present a physiognomy and expressive mimicry (mouths that open, emerging limbs).”<sup>21</sup>

### *The Body-Machine*

Recently, Guy Brett, one of the major experts on kinaesthesia, has set Gianni Colombo’s work beside that of Lygia Clark within a twentieth century trend that saw the eye and the body involved in the same cognitive process aimed at reuniting what, from the time of the Renaissance, had been disconnected.<sup>22</sup>



The inspired comparison of the Brazilian Neo-Concrete artist to the Italian artist is enough to shift Gianni Colombo's cultural context from what is by now a consolidated critical interpretation to a current perspective of an epistemological or anthropological stamp. The relationship between representing space and conditioning, or the political technology of the body, is central to this type of research that claims to be perceptive.

In fact, more and more often today's forms of relational aesthetics claim the participatory, performance, and transformative examples of certain artists from the '60s and '70s as precursors to their research: Lygia Clark, Hélio Oiticica and Gianni Colombo figure among these. In this vein, it would not be improper to investigate the fundamental role played by Lucio Fontana in Latin America at the end of the '40s, as well as that of the generation of artists in Milan in the '60s.

It is Colombo's environments that play a decisively important part here from the moment they directly involve the viewer and promote his aesthetic input. Just as Lygia Clark sought to free the body, making it accessible to "the conscious mind" by creating relational objects with a therapeutic value, made available to the public in such a way as to cancel the barrier between art and life, Gianni Colombo sought in a similar way to retrieve this awareness of the body through a series of sensory shocks suggested by the artist as self-tests. In *After structures* (1966) in a darkened space luminous grids explode on the walls in an accelerating rhythm of timed flashes. Subsequently, Colombo proposed routes, pathways and trajectories in which the luminous grids were set out on the floor, similar to Carl Andre's metal plate "carpets" (*Traversable Field* created together with Vincenzo Agnetti in 1969), or the threadlike geometric shapes, lit by a lamp by Wood and moved by electric motors distributed within the whole space (*Spazio Elastico*, 1967). The *Topoestesia* series on the other hand link our states of equilibrium and orientation to a



process of learning topographical organization, firstly through walking. These environments, capable of producing order and disorder and structure and events, present the transformation of our behaviour within the networks of a system of spatial organization. They interfere in the psychic makeup of the subject himself. "After this phase of the step and sloping plane for walking," declared Colombo, "I began once more to accentuate and make this state of equilibrium more perceptible with the help of visual elements that surround the viewer, not as an independent spectacle with regard to him, but using architectural indications that most exemplified the subsequent, different ways space was presented. I thought of creating a corridor that led to a rhombus-shaped room that in turn led to another room."<sup>23</sup>

As has already been said, what Colombo constructed was not a catalogue of forms, nor an archive of objects, but rather a combination of moments or passages in time during which, through movement, the inseparable relationship between corporeality and the perceived world was re-proposed. Every one of Colombo's environments is a meeting point for entities in motion: it prearranges a spatial order in a way that a combination of possibilities and prohibitions are set up; it is then up to the viewer to actualize some while leaving others open. The geometric grid therefore becomes a sort of Merleau-Ponty-like "geography", an abstract scientific determinant, univocal and isotropic, comparable to what Merleau-Ponty called "landscape": something waiting to be actualized, not yet objectified, in which to feel (*empfinden*) is one and the same as to move (*sich bewegen*), and where the passer-by occupies the centre, which moves with him and becomes the horizon.<sup>24</sup> Thus it is not by chance that Agnetti's following phrase was projected in *Traversable Field*: "In the endless thread that was the horizon, one only had to turn to find the horizon also under one's feet: rudimentary and formed, just an *underneath*, I think."



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<sup>1</sup> J. L. Schefer, *C'est un corps* in *Gianni Colombo*, catalogue for the exhibition at the PAC in Milan, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> A. Zevi, *L'opera di Gianni Colombo: una stasi apparente*, in "Temporale", n. 23, Lugano 1990, pp.11-17.

<sup>3</sup> J. De Sanna, *Storia come filtro della qualità. Interview with Gianni Colombo*, in V. Fagone (edited by) *I Colombo*, ed. Mazzotta, Milan 1995, p. 295.

<sup>4</sup> H. U. Obrist, *Olafur Eliasson* in *Interviste vol. 1*, edizioni Charta, Milan 2003, pp.209-210

<sup>5</sup> J. De Sanna, *Storia come filtro della qualità. Interview with Gianni Colombo*, op.cit., p.295

<sup>6</sup> H. U. Obrist, *Carsten Höller*, op. cit., pp. 414-424; G. Celant (edited by) *Carsten Höller. Registro*, Prada Foundation 2000

<sup>7</sup> See the chapter *I corpi docili* in M. Foucault *Sorvegliare e punire*, Einaudi, Turin 1976

<sup>8</sup> 8) J. De Sanna, op. cit., p. 299

<sup>9</sup> Gianni Colombo, *Topoestesia*, in V. Fagone, (edited by) *I Colombo*, op. cit., p. 403

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. O. Paz, *Aparencia desnuda* (1966), *the work of Marcel Duchamp*, ed. Abscondita 2000 and Rosalind Krauss, *Marcel Duchamp o il campo immaginario*, in *Teoria e storia della fotografia*, ed. Bruno Mondadori, Milan 1996.

<sup>11</sup> F. Poli, *Gianni Colombo e l'arte degli ambienti tra Europa e America*, in *I Colombo*, op. cit., pp. 272-273.

<sup>12</sup> J. de Sanna, op.cit., p. 290.

<sup>13</sup> G. Deleuze, *L'immagine-movimento*, Ubu Libri, Milan 1984, pp. 200-205.

<sup>14</sup> G. Colombo, *Miriorama 4*, in *I Colombo*, op. cit., p. 401.

<sup>15</sup> *Storia come filtro della qualità. Interview with Gianni Colombo and Jole de Sanna* in *I Colombo*, op. cit. pp. 294-295.

<sup>16</sup> I. A. Bois, R. Krauss, *L'informe*, Bruno Mondadori, Milan 2003, p. 136

<sup>17</sup> G. C. Argan, *Gianni Colombo*, catalogue of his solo show at il Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara 1972 .



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<sup>18</sup> Cfr. R. Barilli, *La ricerca nello spazio e nell'ambiente. Gli ambienti di Gianni Colombo*, in *I Colombo*, op. cit., pp. 251-256

<sup>19</sup> M.N. Varga, *L'arte senza programma*. Interview with Gianni Colombo in *Terzoocchio* n.30, Bologna, March 1984, p. 46.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>22</sup> G. Brett, *The Century of Kinaesthesia*, published in the exhibition catalogue for the show *Force Fields*, organized by MACBA Barcelona in association with the Hayward Gallery London, Barcelona 2000, p. 52.

<sup>23</sup> *Storia come filtro della qualità*, op. cit., p. 299

<sup>24</sup> Cfr. M. Carbone, *Il sensibile e l'eccedente*, Guerini Studio, Milan 1996