



Francesca Pola

**PIERO MANZONI AND ZERO
A European Creative Region**

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The book and video documentary *PIERO MANZONI AND ZERO* present the richness and meaning of the artistic relationships between Italy and Europe (particularly, Germany), at the end of the 1950s and in the early 1960s, **around the pivotal figure of Piero Manzoni**. One of the protagonists and catalysers of this revolutionary creative context moving beyond *Informel* into a new form of creativity, internationally known as the ZERO movement, **Manzoni is the forerunner and unexhausted “travelling messenger” of a new geography of relations**. His continuous journeys and activity mark a new transnational perspective: an alternative vision compared to North American art, but also dissimilar to the Parisian milieu. **ZERO operates according to this new geography: it travels through Milan, Rome, Lausanne, Bern, Basel, Düsseldorf, Munich, Frankfurt, London, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Anvers, Copenhagen and Zagreb**. Following different lines and standards and producing a massive exchange of letters, works, exhibitions, publications, these artists establish new creative and at the same time methodical guidelines, as well as new hubs and places that inexorably adopt such guidelines, thus amplifying and spreading their effects.

Retracing Manzoni's European artistic activity as well as his closest authors has been possible thanks to an accurate **research on audio-visual materials, bibliographies, documentaries, and evidences**. Moreover, strictly related to this movement, the book explains a series of important international partnerships between Italy and Europe brought to light through unpublished documents (vintage pictures, original letters, etc.) which form a further contribution on Manzoni's work and twentieth century art.

Included in the book, and –like it– **promoted in collaboration with Fondazione Piero Manzoni**, is the video documentary *PIERO MANZONI AND ZERO*, realized by Zenit Arti Audiovisive, which includes rare excerpts from Francesca Pola’s interviews with many crucial international artists connected to Manzoni and the ZERO movement: Heinz Mack, Otto Piene, Günther Uecker, and Bernard Aubertin, Agostino Bonalumi, Almir Mavignier, Christian Megert, François Morellet, Henk Peeters, herman de vries. Original soundtrack presents first unpublished recording of *A contemporary sound portrait of Piero Manzoni’s Achrome* by composer Andrea Cavallari, performed by pianist Ciro Longobardi.

The international premiere of the video documentary is taking place on 19 October 2018 at 5pm at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf (city which is the birthplace of ZERO), in the context of the ZERO-weekend celebrating two anniversaries: 60 years of ZERO movement and 10 years of ZERO foundation.

Francesca Pola is an Italian art historian, curator, and writer, Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer, and teaches at Università Cattolica and IES Abroad in Milan. She has researched and written extensively about Italian and international art from the 1950s and 1960s, realizing seminal publications on Piero Manzoni, such as *Manzoni Azimut* (Gagosian Gallery, London and Fondazione Piero Manzoni, Milan, 2011), and *Una visione internazionale. Piero Manzoni e Albisola* (Pesci Rossi, Electa, Milan, 2013), among others. She is the Italian member in the International Scientific Advisory Board and Research Group of the ZERO foundation in Düsseldorf, since its founding, and has participated in several related projects, exhibitions and publications. More at www.francescapola.it

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