



*The Art of Cleto Munari*



*The Art of Cleto Munari*

# FOREWORD

## *The Art of Cleto Munari*

Mizuma Gallery is pleased to present *The Art of Cleto Munari*. For the first time in Singapore, this show by artist-designer Cleto Munari in collaboration with leaders of the Transavangarde movement: Mimmo Paladino, Sandro Chia; and world-known architects Alessandro Mendini and Marcello Morandini, highlights the development of “disegno italiano”. This exhibition features unique handmade art furniture and objects, exploring liberal theories between modernism and postmodernism.

As a reaction against the conceptual and minimal art of the 1970s, Munari and the artists of the Transavangarde movement show how the figure is needed to produce a passageway between the serenity of social communication and the turbulence of the artistic act, thus returning to the portrayal of recognisable objects in a rough and violently emotional way using vivid colour harmonies and radical shapes.

Throughout his productive adventure, Cleto Munari has been protecting the idea of the figure as a disruptive event by constructing his very own language that ranges from architecture to jewelry, from décor to decorative objects. He has demonstrated how the contemporary artist who possesses multiple aptitudes can observe the world without feeling the need to manipulate it; how the figure introduces beauty as a defence against the inertia of the daily routine.

# *An Introduction to the Art of Cleto Munari*

*Milenko Prvacki, Artist, Senior Fellow, Office of the President, LASALLE College of the Arts*

By introducing Cleto Munari’s collection of exquisite design in Singapore, we have to address two major issues: how one relates to the relevance of such a sophisticated form of design in relation to contemporary living and positioning toward utilitarian art, and secondly—but equally important—raise the necessity to present to the Singaporean public the great importance of the Italian Transavanguardia, with its influential style a pure and genuine original art movement that reshaped the map of contemporary painting, sculpture and printing within an international frame and indirectly—it resonated internationally—even in contemporary art practice in Southeast Asia.

We all know that Design, above all, represents a synthesis of applied arts, science and philosophy, with its main goal to adapt and subordinate the environment to humankind’s aspirations, so that it becomes more functional and more beautiful. Design changed and evolved through history in relation to technology’s achievements, aesthetics and social needs.

We need to bring as a referral point: Bauhaus. The most important source of modernism and functionalism, it set the principles and criteria that continue even today to influence designers. The Bauhaus movement is detectable by combining handmade objects and fine art, in order to make it available to the general population. It represented, a century ago, a source of modernism and functionalism, and set the principles that still today affect contemporary design and the way we are looking at its impact on everyday life.

A key influence was generated by the style of former designers who contributed to spreading the ideas of the Bauhaus and paved the way for modern design. Walter Gropius envisioned the unity of art and technology, and the influence of the Bauhaus spawned countless significant movements in the artistic community, embraced enthusiastically by some of the world’s most prominent artists of that era: Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, Lyonel Feininger, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky and Josef Albers.

In line with this logic, consequent to its fundamental meaning, the Italian and international designer Cleto Munari also combines handmade objects with fine art and collaborates with great artists, designers and theoreticians, akin to the spirit of the Bauhaus. And this is the only similarity with the well-known modernist movement. Munari follows the same approach but rethinks and reinvents design theory and praxis by collaborating with another eclectic group of artists, architects and theoreticians: Sandro Chia, Mimmo Paladino, Dario Fo, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Carlo Scarpa and Mark Strand. It is not easy to conduct an orchestra with so many good, exceptional and already formed, independent soloists.

But hence, here is the very sensitive place where Munari distinguishes himself from the usual trends, annual styles and seasonal fashions. Munari goes out of the traditional mold makers and banal populist recipes but deliberately and consciously creates a sophisticated play on the edge of the blade, between design and art on one side, and elitism and appeal in another. He knows exactly

the measure of how to balance the relation between functionality, craft and art. Because ultimately Munari’s objects aspire to, and remain in the field of fine arts. It is the pictorial intensity, the subtlety of the lines (coming from original drawings) that leave their statement on his furniture and home accessory collection.

With a great contribution and “help of his friends”, Munari now presents a comprehensive and consistent body of work here in Singapore. And just a reminder to the Singaporean public, his friends are not ordinary collaborators but very well known Italian artists of the Transavanguardia, today’s international names, personalities and works that traced the direction for world’s art practice some 35 years ago. They were all “rebellious” young artists, under the guidance and generous protection of an exquisite intellectual, art-critic and historian: Achille Bonito Oliva.

*“The transience is in the creation of the work, which is never hampered by academic perfectionism, but is always in transit between the creative drive and the stability of the result. Moreover, the image always catches fleeting sensations, such as the witticisms in the work of Chia, the sense of matter in that of Cucchi, the suspension of time in Clemente, the music of color in De Maria, and multipurpose motifs in Paladino. Time as a relentless flow becomes the defining moment of works that contain the embryo of their own supersedence”.*

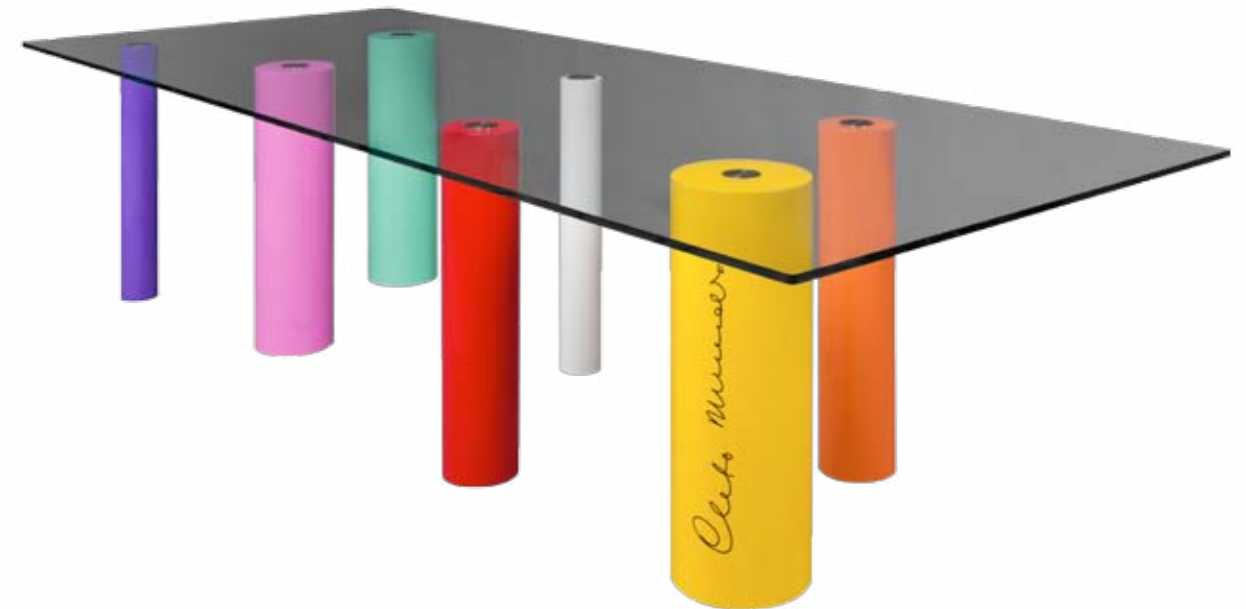
**- Achille Bonito Oliva**

These artists and Munari’s individualism is not compromised in any of the exhibited design works/arts objects/collaborations. It is a leavening process with sensitive and pragmatic results, successful hybrids, “beautiful” and applicable, very much in tune exactly with what the Singaporean public is ready now to follow.



# CLETO MUNARI

(\*1930, GORIZIA) He founded Cleto Munari Design Associates in 1972 with its primary objective the research of image, form and style. In 1985 he opened a studio in Vicenza where, with world famous architects, he created jewellery and objects for his new avantgarde collections, making history in jewellery worldwide. His creations are in many museum collections around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and MoMA, New York.



## Table "Palafitte"

15 mm tempered extra clear crystal. Legs in plastic material and glossy lacquered wood.

6 legs: 260 × 120 × 74 cm

7 legs: 300 × 120 × 74 cm

-

S\$ 12,000 / S\$ 16,000



*Glass Vase "Gonnella"*  
Edition of 1/99  
Murano glass with steel base  
38 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 2,100



*Glass Vase "Fiamme"*  
Edition of 1/99  
Murano glass with steel base  
37 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 2,400



*Glass Vase "Bocche"*  
Edition of 2/99  
Murano glass with steel base  
38.5 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 2,400



Ring in silver 925,  
composed coral,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 6,000



Ring in silver 925,  
black onyx,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 3,700



Ring in silver 925,  
black onyx and enamel,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 7,700



Ring in silver 925,  
crisoprasio and esame,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 5,800



*Glass Vase "Criniera"*  
Edition of 1/49  
Murano glass with steel base  
41.5 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 2,100



*Glass Vase "Cartoccio"*  
Edition of 1/49  
Murano glass with steel base  
36.5 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 1,800



*Glass Vase "Gocce"*  
Edition of 1/49  
Murano glass with steel base  
36 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 2,100



*Glass Vase "Spirale"*  
Edition of 2/49  
Murano glass with steel base  
39.8 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 1,300



Ring in silver 925,  
black onyx,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 2,800



Ring in silver 925,  
black onyx,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 3,700



Ring in silver 925,  
black onyx,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 7,000



Pendent in silver 925,  
enamel,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
S\$ 5,200



Bracelet in silver 925,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 7,000**



Ring in silver 925,  
turquoise,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 2,800**



Ring in silver 925,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 2,800**



Ring in silver 925,  
lapis and composed coral,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 6,000**



Ring in silver 925,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 3,300**



Necklace in silver 925,  
enamel,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 5,200**



Ring in silver 925,  
composed coral,  
gold plated 24  
carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 5,500**



Ring in silver 925, Anello,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 2,100**



Ring in silver 925,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 1/19  
-  
**S\$ 3,000**



Pendent in silver 925,  
mixed composed stones,  
gold plated 24 carat  
Edition 6/19  
-  
**S\$ 4,000**



# ALESSANDRO MENDINI

(\*1931, MILAN) Designer and architect, co-founder of the Domus Academy, he was awarded the Compasso d'oro for design twice in 1979 and 1981. Since 1989 he has designed two underground stations in Naples, the Groningen Museum and the Mendini Gallery. As the creator of the famous "Proust" chair, he continuously pushes the boundaries of what products could be.



*Table "Golden Gate"*

Edition of 3/9

Engraved 15 mm tempered extra clear crystal. Legs in matt lacquered wood.

300 x 120 x 74 cm

-

S\$ 23,000





*Bookcase "San Francisco"*  
Edition of 4/9  
Glossy lacquered wood  
50 x 205 x 260 cm  
-  
S\$ 54,000



*Cabinet "Venice"*  
Edition of 4/9  
Glossy lacquered wood  
40 x 100 x 205 cm  
-  
S\$ 47,000



*Carpet "Milky Way"*

Edition of 1/49

Wool and silk

300 x 400 cm

-

S\$ 32,000



# MIMMO PALADINO

(\*1948, PADULI) First a conceptual photographer, he shifted his attention to figurative painting in the late 70s, and became a central figure of the Transavangarde moment. He was part of the Aperto '80 exhibition curated by Achille Bonito Oliva for the 1980 Venice Biennale. His numerous solo exhibitions have been held in public museums and private galleries worldwide.



*Table "Battle of San Romano"*

Edition of 3/9

Coloured 15 mm tempered extra clear. Legs in painted metal.

360 × 120 × 74 cm

-

S\$ 34,000



*Cabinet "Shield"*

Edition of 24/99

Matt lacquered wood

46 × 120 × 225 cm

-

S\$ 13,500



*Bar Cabinet "Battle of San Romano"*

Edition of 21/99

Golden finished wood decorated with metal inserts.

40 × 70 × 215 cm

-

S\$ 20,000



*Cabinet "Battle of San Romano"*

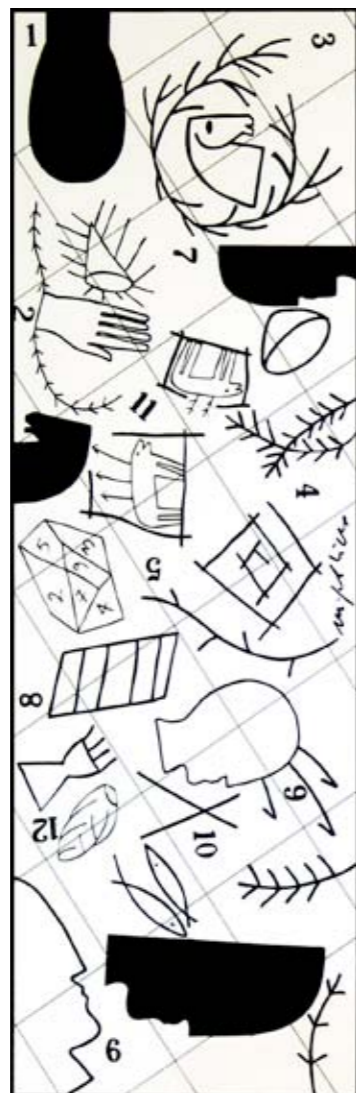
Edition of 24/99

Matt lacquered wood, decorated and painted metal.

50 × 120 × 105 cm

-

S\$ 13,500



*Mirror "Battle of San Romano"*

Mirror with metal support

60 x 180 cm

-

S\$ 2,100



*Carpet "No Name"*

Edition of 1/49

Wool and silk

270 x 350 cm

-

S\$ 24,000



*Ceramic Vase "Veronese by Paladino"*

Ceramic  
40.5 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 1,800



*Glass Vase "White"*

Edition 20/49  
Murano glass  
40.5 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 5,000



*Glass Oval Plate "Murrina"*

Edition of 2/19  
Murano glass  
55 x 45 s 6 cm  
-  
S\$ 3,500



# SANDRO CHIA

(\*1946, FLORENCE) Initially focusing on conceptual art during the 1970s under Yves Klein's influence, painting gained increasing importance for the artist, reflecting tradition and history in a subjective-expressive way. He was part of Documenta 7 and of the 1988 Venice Biennale. A well known and respected artist, his works are in collections worldwide.



*Cabinet "Fantasmino"*

Edition of 15/99

Matt lacquered wood with oval details in black onix

50 × 120 × 105 cm

-

S\$ 10,000



*Mirror "Fantasmino"*

Mirror with wooden support

70 × 140 cm

-

S\$ 3,700



*Carpet "Tree"*

Edition of 1/49  
Wool and silk  
400 × 300 cm  
-  
S\$ 32,000



*Glass Vase "Le Faccette 1"*

Edition of 3/19  
Black and white Murano glass layered and engraved  
32 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 5,000



*Glass Vase "Le Faccette 2"*

Edition of 3/9  
Black and white Murano glass layered and engraved  
25 cm in height  
-  
S\$ 5,000





# MARCELLO MORANDINI

(\*1940, MANTUA) Starting as a graphic designer with Umberto Eco, he participated in the 1965 San Paulo Biennale. He studies the visual representation of movement, producing black and white graphic and plastic works. Awarded the title "Honorary Royal Designer for Industry" by the Royal Society of Arts, London, his works are recognised and collected internationally.



## *Cabinet "Contenuta"*

Edition of 11/99

Matt lacquered wood

55 × 180 × 100 cm

-

S\$ 14,500



*Bench "Posseduta"*

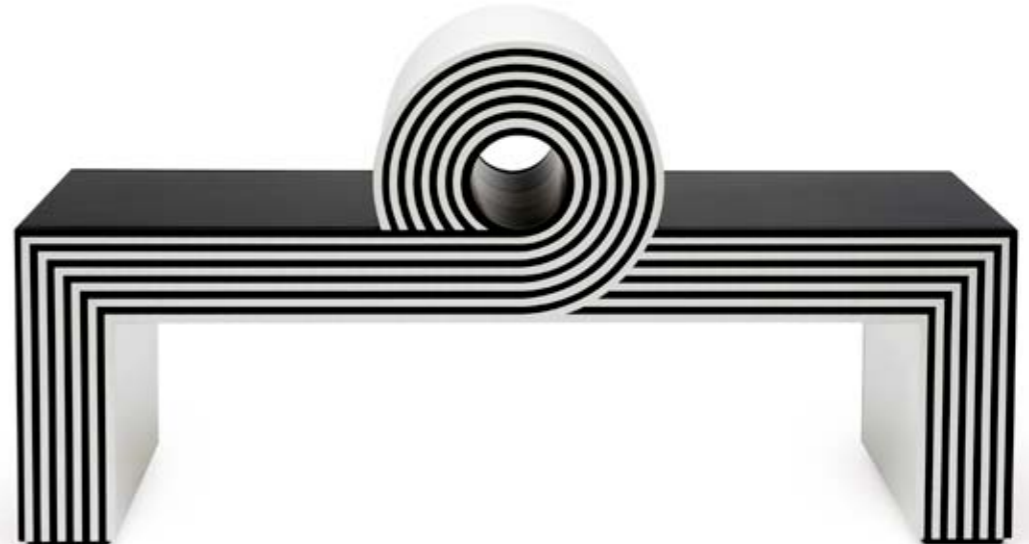
Edition of 21/99

Matt lacquered wood

50 × 135 × 80 cm

-

S\$ 9,000



*Bench "Risoluta"*

Edition of 16/99

Matt lacquered wood

50 × 155 × 80 cm

-

S\$ 9,000



Photo by Roberto Quagli CC BY-SA

# DAVID PALTERER

(\*1949, HAIFA) Naturalized Israeli Italian, the architect and designer lives and works in Florence since 1972. His work ranges from urban planning to interior design. He has taught at various prestigious institutions, such as the Politecnico di Milano, and his works are in museum collections worldwide, including the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, the Fonds national d'art contemporain, Paris, the Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design, Chicago, and the Kunstmuseum, Düsseldorf.



*Glass Vase "Koz"*

Edition of 3/3

Murano glass with golden leaf

50 cm in height

-

S\$ 5,000



*Glass Vase "Veronese by Palterer"*

Edition of 20/49

Murano glass worked with "reticello" technique

44.5 cm in height

-

S\$ 5,000



Cleto Munari invited four world famous architects to design with him five pens to dedicate to five winners of the Nobel Prize in literature.

S\$ 1,000 each

S\$ 5,000 per set



This pen is dedicated to the Nobel prize winner for literature

**NAGIB MAHFOUZ**

Designed by **Toyo Ito**

Available in  
Black & Gold  
Black & Silver



This pen is dedicated to the Nobel prize winner for literature

**TONI MORRISON**

Designed by **Alessandro Mendini**

Available in  
Black & Gold  
Black & Silver



This pen is dedicated to the Nobel prize winner for literature

**WOLE SOYINK**

Designed by **Cleto Munari**

Available in  
Black & Gold  
Yellow & Gold



This pen is dedicated to the Nobel prize winner for literature

**JOSÉ SARAMAGO**

Designed by **Siza Vieira**

Available in  
Black & Gold  
Black & Silver  
Yellow & Gold



This pen is dedicated to the Nobel prize winner for literature

**SAUL BELLOW**

Designed by **Oscar Tusquets Blanca**

Available in  
Red & Gold  
Blue & Silver  
Black & Silver



Please direct all enquiries to the Publisher:

 MIZUMA GALLERY

22 LOCK ROAD #01-34, GILLMAN BARRACKS, SINGAPORE 108939, SINGAPORE

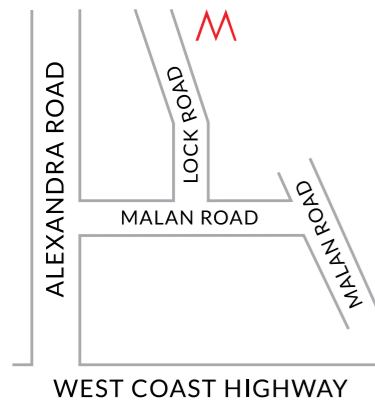
T. +65 6570 2505 F. +65 6570 2506 WWW.MIZUMA.SG INFO@MIZUMA.SG

HOURS: TUE-SAT 11AM-7PM SUN 11AM-6PM

[TWITTER](#) @MIZUMAGALLERYSG

[YOUTUBE.COM/MIZUMAGALLERY](#)

[FACEBOOK.COM/MIZUMAGALLERY](#)



---

GILLMAN BARRACKS

WWW.GILLMANBARRACKS.COM

*Cleo Munoz*

