COMUNICATO STAMPA

PIERO GILARDI
From art to life

curated by **Marco Scotini**

Opening on October 30th 2026, 6 pm
31.10.26 –14.03.27

On Friday, 30th October 2026, as part of Artissima, PAV – Parco Arte Vivente presents *From art to life*, an exhibition curated by Marco Scotini and dedicated to a pivotal period in the career of Piero Gilardi (Turin, 1942–2023), marked by his withdrawal from the conventional art system and his engagement with social movements. The exhibition is the second instalment in a series of monographic exhibitions devoted by PAV to its founding artist, following *Car Crash. Piero Gilardi and Arte Povera* (2023). While the first exhibition explored Gilardi's early work and his initial relationship with the Arte Povera movement in the 1960s, *From Art to Life* traces a trajectory that begins in the 1970s and 1980s and extends to works produced in the 2000s, documenting the decisive shift away from object-based art towards radical forms of social engagement, collective care and political emancipation.

The exhibition spans a rich and complex period characterised by Gilardi's definitive abandonment of the artwork as a consumer commodity and his commitment to artistic work with communities within grassroots movements, total institutions and public squares. From the outset, this journey reveals his founding insight — "art enters life" — and his determination to create participatory initiatives capable of breaking down social and institutional barriers. It highlights the artist's tireless commitment to placing the languages of sculpture and performance at the service of individuals and communities, evolving from a creator of forms into a creative facilitator of collective processes. His radical, analytical thinking led him to choose public space and the street as privileged sites of action, anticipating today's participatory and socially engaged art practices.

The exhibition brings together both the original historical strands and the more recent developments of Gilardi's research: the pioneering initiatives he undertook from 1974 onwards in community centres and counselling centres in Turin, where drawing and sculpture became tools for dialogue and therapeutic integration; the establishment of the community workshop in Turin's Aurora district and the neighbourhood carnival, an aesthetic and social ritual that culminated in 1980 in a large-scale parade and performance aimed at reclaiming public space collectively; and the graphic and sculptural work developed within the Collettivo La Comune, alongside the creation of iconic objects, sculptures and agitprop costumes expressly made for Turin's historic May Day demonstrations, from the Fiat and Teksid workers' marches to the parades of the 2000s. The inclusion of these later works

testifies to the extraordinary continuity of Gilardi's method, demonstrating how masks and satire constitute a recurring visual and expressive language, repeatedly reactivated in response to contemporary civic and social causes.

From Art to Life explores the political and aesthetic maturity of Piero Gilardi, seeking to get to the roots of his work and bring to the fore the fundamental questions underpinning his practice — questions that led, in 2008, to the founding of PAV – Parco Arte Vivente. Today, this experimental centre explores the relationship between art, nature and society as "a lifelong project", offering a permanent space for experimentation and collective participation.

Gilardi's vision of art as a means of transforming society finds a special continuity in the PAV park, where, to coincide with the exhibition opening, *Louise*, an installation by French artist Marie Denis, is presented in collaboration with Galleria Alberta Pane. The work forms part of the outdoor exhibition route, bringing together plant matter and landscape in a poetic dialogue that reaffirms the connection between artistic gesture, ecosystem and public experience.

PIERO GILARDI. From Art to Life is made possible with the support of Compagnia di San Paolo, Fondazione CRT, the City of Turin and the Piedmont Region, in collaboration with Fondazione Centro Studi Piero Gilardi.

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