

MARIO MERZ *evidenza di 987*

Antonio Tucci Russo and Mario Merz, Mulino Feyles, Turin, 1978 - Photo © Paolo Mussat Sartor

The Tenant Next Door

When I moved from my first site in Via Fratelli Calandra in Turin to Mulino Feyles, I had the feeling that something would change in my approach to art. The new location offered the opportunity to create a cohabitation between artist and gallery owner, a sort of umbilical cord that would last for fifteen years, on the same floor – the third – of Corso Tassoni 56.

I knew that Mario and Marisa Merz were looking for a studio, and Mulino Feyles, with its ample space, satisfied the needs of both the gallery and them. An almost daily dialogue of growth, enthusiasm and conflict matured, allowing for a series of epoch-making exhibitions of great intensity and visual impact.

Thus, in 1976, *Tavolo a spirale per festino di giornali datati il giorno del festino* was born, an installation with a spiral table and bundles of fruit and vegetables, inserted between packs of newspapers separated by glass and a sequence of neon numbers from one to 10946 from the Fibonacci series. It represented a strong image that was both pictorial and sculptural at the same time.

In 1978 we produced *Evidenza di 987*, to which the title of the ongoing exhibition refers. For the first time, the large igloo with a diameter of six metres enabled visitors to go inside and, thanks to the transparency, see the glass panes resting on the structure and the red car door visually projected onto the wall canvas that contained traces of paint together with some tree branches resting on the canvas itself. "The total art of a nomadic artist", as Harald Szeemann had written, became concrete.

Dear Mario,

this exhibition is intended as a testimony to that privileged collaboration with you as an artist and friend.

Antonio Tucci Russo

Torre Pellice, March 2022

We would like to thank the Fondazione Merz and the private collections for their loans.