

Giovanni Anselmo
« 2039 anni » 1970
incisione nella carta

Giovanni Anselmo
« pietra alleggerita » 1969
pietra - cavo d'acciaio
collez. Alda Sassi Anselmo - Torino

Giovanni Anselmo
Lato destro, 1971
Galleria Multipli, Torino

[ENGLISH TEXT]

In 1966 I screwed on a wooden base some iron rods that reached as high as possible until their equilibrium hung precariously between the law of gravity and the strenght of coesion of iron. When I don't use a wooden base I bend the iron so that it reaches the ground enabling the iron to hold its vertical position by balancing its weight. In this manner, at the least shifting in the air it can signal its own energy by its movements. The traditional object is reduced to a minimum, or anyhow it exists only as a function to tension, to energy.

In 1967 I had some *Masses* built that had as a goal that of creating an energy situation. You can see this in the piece *Untitled* (cube with level), it deals with two parallelepiped of wood covered with black formica and superimposed (placed on top of each-other) so as to form a cube; in their joining points I lodged some steel wedges that I use to center the air bubble or livella applied in the center of the top plane. The cube then looses all its actual value remaining only an energy situation. In the same period of 1967 among other pieces I realized a work called *Direction* composed of a mass (also in wood covered in black formica, void inside, with a triangular base measuring 200 cm x 200 cm x 70, and 70 in height) on which I applied a magnified needle that orients the mass depending on the directional strenght of the earts magnetic field. This work, like others that preceeded and followed, begins where it stands and ends there where the earths magnetic fields begin, in the center of the earth, etc., that in turn link us to other poles and centers of the universe.

A second *Direction* is then built on the floor of the exhibition Prospect '68 of Düsseldorf and the RA3 of Amalfi in the same year; I take a canvas cloth of 3 m x 6 m completely soaked in water and drag it on the ground till I have a trail that follows the

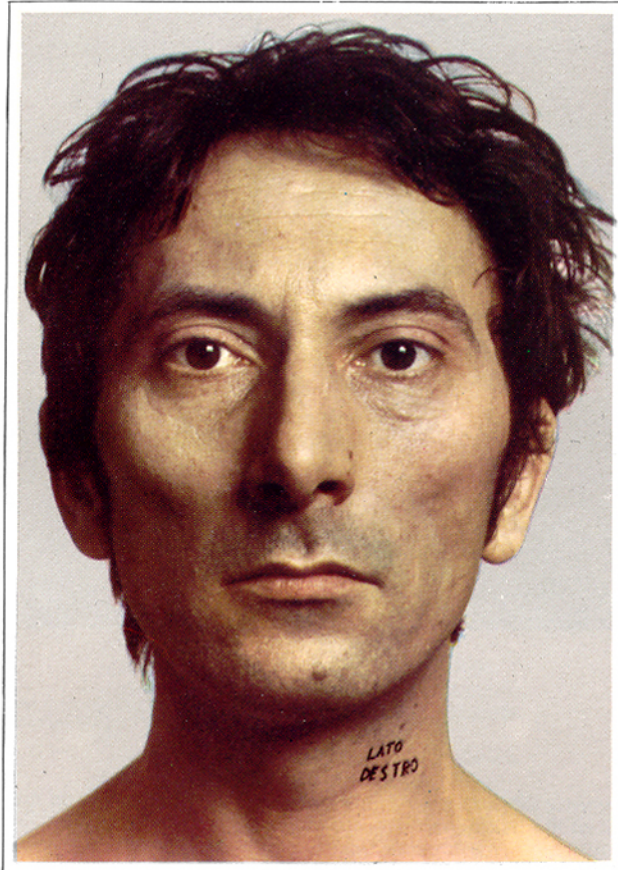
direction given by a magnetic needle held in a glass container. There is also another *Direction* built in the same manner as the others, where I used a huge stone found in the shop of a craftman who worked for cemeteries. I have used the stone here because the universe is not only bulk but also weight, the stane interests me because of its weight. In 1968 I built my *Drinking structure*, *Eating structure*, and the *Torsions* in which various materials are used for properties other than just their weight. In *Drinking structure* the cotton, because of its absorbent property, is used to drain water from a steel container, I wanted to realize a piece that would immediately explain itself by exteriorating what it contains inside.

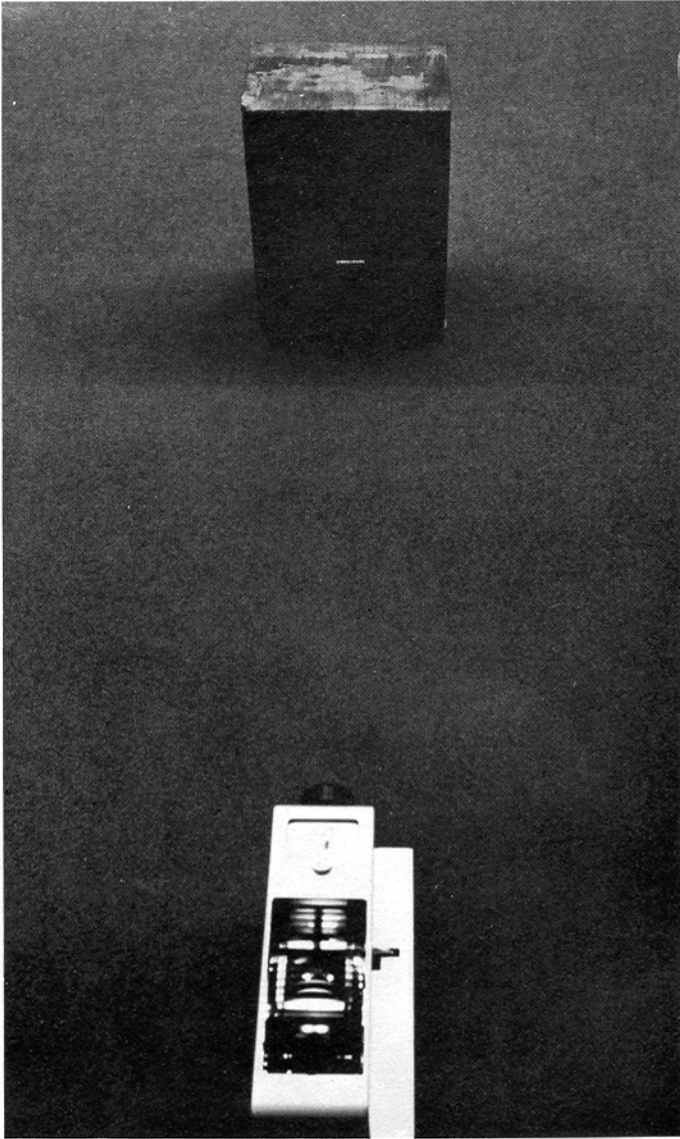
In *Torsion* (I've done two, one in cement, leather and wood, the other in iron and fustian) the energy I transmit to the piece by doing a contorsive movement — and that I press on the work due to the weight of iron or cement bar until I detach myself from the piece — this energy is then immediately returned to me in relationship to the extension of the real force in the return movement.

In the *Structure that Eats* (eating structure) there is a small granite block tied to a larger block (I've had both levelled so as to be perfectly smooth). The smaller block falls to the ground when all the vegetables that are pressed between the two blocks diminish in volume by dehydration. To allow the structure to stand, the vegetables have to be replaced frequently with fresh ones.

In 1969, thinking about time and duration, I build these works: *An incision for an indefinite thousands of years*, *Toward infinity* and *Untitled*.

In the first work the round section bar (1.80 m. height, 1.5 tons weight, covered with grease) is stood against a wall, it is an



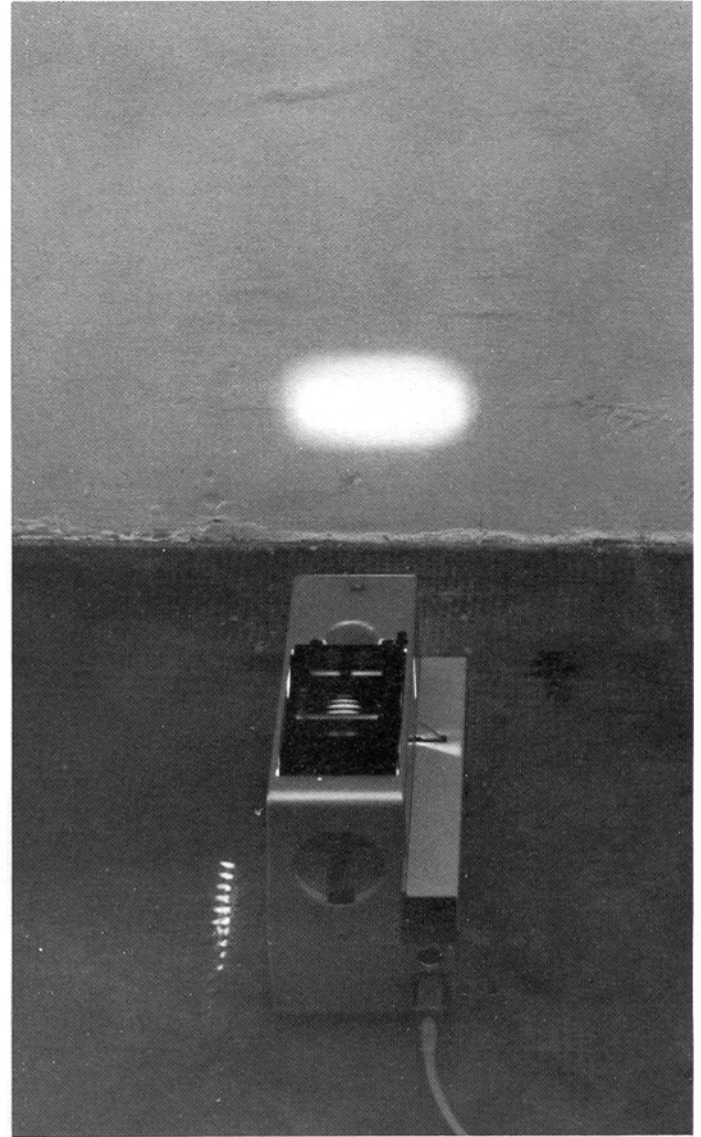


Giovanni Anselmo
 « Dissolvenza » 1970
 proiettore - diapositiva - ferro
 cm. 20 x 32 x 34
 collez. Michelangelo Pistoletto
 Torino

instrument that permits the idea of time to register itself; that is through the oxidation of the iron on one end of the bar that is left ungreased: therefore the consequence is a constant shortening of the bar with the passing of time, and meanwhile the weight of the bar will trace a definite incision on the wall.

In the piece *Untitled* (made up of a block of anthracite on which a lighted lamp is placed) I am moved by the following consideration: anthracite was once a vegetable, a reptile, or something organic and living before the earth's crust buried many aspects of life, taking them away from light. The lamp placed on the anthracite annuls the time lapse occurred between the present and what it once was. The work *Toward infinity* stops time. It consists of an iron block covered with a layer of grease or transparent varnish, weighing nearly a ton and having carved on its top plane «toward infinity». The block can remain intact through infinity if it continues to remain protected.

I built in that period, though the project was a year old, the two structures *Neon in Cement* and *Stone Made Lighter*. The first work deals with neon tubes that cross in full length various cement bars that imprison a light still living though placed in a constricted space. The second work deals again with the law of gravity. A stone weighing 75 kg. is suspended as high as possible hooked on a steel cable to a wall. Because of a certain physical law the stone removed from the center of the earth results imperceptibly lighter, therefore we can assume that placed in the highest point of the universe, for example, between earth and sun, it would loose



Giovanni Anselmo
 « infinito » 1971
 proiettore con fuoco su infinito
 diapositiva con scritta infinito

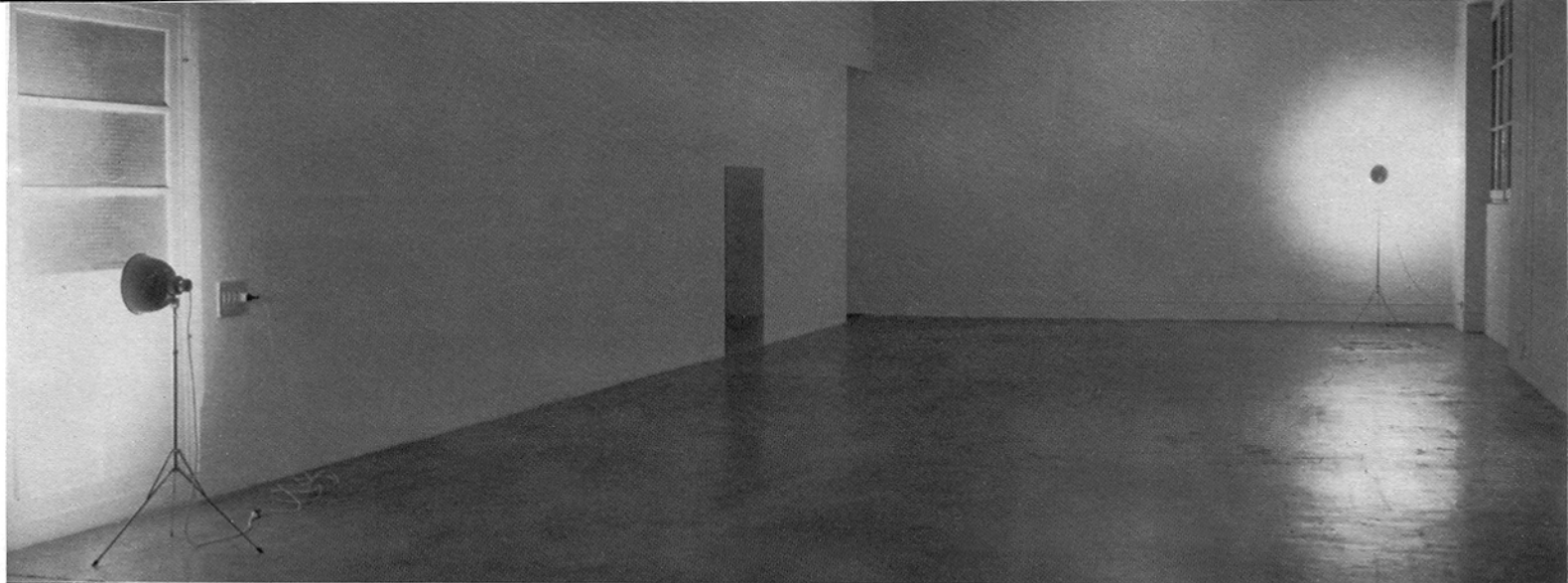
totally its weight and could then identify itself with the idea of flight.

In 1970 having to realize a page for «Studio International» and finding myself before a blank page I carved with a sharp point the life span of paper itself. Paper is an idea that realized itself beginning from 123 a. C.; it was discovered in China and brought to Europe by the Arabs; the energy of this idea is so power full that, though generations come and go, paper will continue to concretize itself through us and will continue until all the paper will be used. Because of all this consistency I could not help myself from carving the sheet of paper exactly as you would a rock, or iron.

Also the works *Earth line*, *Dissolvenza* and *Right side* are of 1970. The first consists of earth glued on a wall so as to form a parallel line to the floor, at a certain distance from the physical earth that we walk on. This *Earth line* is not the earth we step on but it is the point that in this moment relates the earth with me, with action, my energy, my considerations, and therefore it is placed on the wall. It is earth+glue+wall+me.

The idea of dissolution in *Dissolvenza* is realized with a block of iron weighing more than a ton that until it disappears (by oxidation) will permit the written phrase emitted from a projector to manifest itself.

In *Right side* the photograph of my face is stamped in color, life size, by inverting the negative so that my right eye corresponds to the right eye of the viewer. The goal is to make the point of view



Giovanni Anselmo
« tutto » 1971 (particolare)
incisione nel legno - lampada
collez. G.E. Sperone - Torino



Giovanni Anselmo
« tutto » 1971 (particolare)
incisione nel muro - lampada
collez. G.E. Sperone - Torino

of the spectator coincide with my own point of view. Belonging to 1971 are the works *Shortened Sky*, *Photograph of infinity through the sky and infinity* and *Infinity*. *Shortened Sky* consists of an iron rod placed vertically to the floor with on top the incision «shortened sky» and the column of sky that always vertically departs from the top of the rod towards the highest point, towards infinity. The distance of an indefinite point in the sky and where the rod now stands was a longer distance before we placed the rod there, because the sky now ends on the top of the rod where the incision is written, and not anymore on the ground. The infinity of the sky therefore results shortened. The work *Photograph of infinity through the sky* is a photo taken with the camera placed in the direction of the sky, focused on infinity, and then developed to its maximum possibility. The photo (in color) is then stood on the floor and backed against a wall

by a piece of glass of the same dimension. In *Infinity* the projector is focused on infinity, it projects the word «infinity» on a surface where it cannot be read, therefore to read «infinity» one must go to a point that is infinite. In the work TUTTO (ALL) I begin with the idea of totality, instead of realizing this idea of totality in one point referring it, for example, only to the wooden frame of a window, or the cement of a wall, or whatever other point in whatever other place, I realize it in two points; TUT (AL) is wood (carved on the wood) and TO (L) on wall (with an incision on the wall). On each of these two points I throw the light of a lamp that signals their presence and keeps their totality suspended. I therefore obtain in this manner two points part of the idea of all that revert me back to all the untouched points and bring me closer to the TUTTO more than if I indicated it with just one point.