

## Mario Nigro

(Pistoia, 1917 – Livorno, 1992)

In an almost legendary journey, Hidetoshi Nagasawa travelled by bicycle from Asia to Italy. In 1954, on the occasion of his solo exhibition at the Casa della Cultura in Livorno, Mario Nigro published a text where he recalls how he achieved a “totally non-objective” expression in 1948. His involvement with abstract language, which included, in 1949, an invitation to be part of the Arte Concreta movement in Milan, corresponded to the artist’s invention of a specific form that initially drew upon his experience with music and knowledge of its rules. As he writes in the same text, “On the basis of these structures I studied plastic elements in their repetitions, variations, simultaneities, and coincidences, thus arriving at the concept of a “total space,” where form and space reciprocally overcome physical two-dimensionality (Malevich’s Constructivism), and where, in this total space, there would still be issues of representation and expression, discovery and invention.” (“Spazio totale,” in *Mario Nigro*, Casa della Cultura, Livorno, 1954). *Spazio totale: divergenze simultanee* (*Total Space: Simultaneous Divergences*), 1954, belongs to this innovative concept, which, beginning in the mid-1960s, would develop into the idea of “total time.” Articulated in a chessboard grid, the work is characterized by an oblique layout and a change of rhythm that, within its formal continuity, leads to the coexistence of two different planes, with a staggering between the upper and lower registers. This mobility coincides with an overcoming of classical rationality and the consequent abandonment of defined parameters, for a condition where uncertainty and doubt prevail. In this sense, the “total space” theorized by the artist corresponds to his capacity to embrace the complexity of the world, accepting, in his own words, “its tragic contents.” (MB)