

Eliseo Mattiacci

(Cagli, Pesaro-Urbino, 1940)

Cultura mummificata (Mummified Culture), 1972, is made up of a series of books cast in aluminum, scattered freely on the floor. Like evidence of a remote past, the installation seems to convey the image of a mysteriously abandoned library. However it betrays more than one contradiction: the books are closed and “mute,” the words they should convey cannot be intuited and nor do their covers bear any information. Like a memory no longer accessible, the function of the books in the context of the transmission of knowledge is stopped and enclosed in a time that stands still. Casually overturned on the floor, the books seem like fragments of an unstable construction, an anti-monument that doesn't celebrate anything except its own precariousness. Themes related to the dissemination of culture and communication are further examined in *Alfabeti primari (Primary Alphabets)*, *Planisfero con fusi orari (Planisphere with Cast Hours)* and *Progetto totale (Total Project)* – other works that the artist originally exhibited along with *Cultura mummificata* at the 1972 Venice Biennale.

It is impossible, however, to restrict Mattiacci's research to one theme or a limited selection of arguments. His long career is characterized by a continuous flow of energy, which significantly began with public actions that encourage the participation of spectators, and within which the temporal dimension helps to heighten the work's sense of process and its ephemeral nature. In 1967 his sculpture *Tube (Tube)* arrived at the exhibition space only after having been transported along the streets of Rome, while in *Percorso (Journey)*, 1969, he used a road roller to smooth out dirt placed on the gallery floor. The work is action, according to a physical mobility that seeks contact with the reality of the world and welcomes its freedom. An organic passage to another dimension, from the everyday to the cosmic, is thus evident in his later works, seeking a relationship with mental processes and philosophical ideas. (MB)