



TEFAF ONLINE

280 MASTERPIECES

NOVEMBER 1-4

On the occasion of **TEFAF 2020 online edition**, Tornabuoni Art is delighted to present ***Tutto (Everything)***, a museum-quality work by **Alighiero Boetti**, produced one year after the artist began his *Tutto* series that spanned until the early 1990s.

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Preview: 30 - 31 October
Public days: 1 - 4 November

“Tutto [Everything] is the height of theory, the height of conceptualism. I tell my collaborators to simply: ‘draw everything’ – only these words. It’s impossible to see all the figures in these tapestries – there is an infinite number of them.”

Alighiero Boetti



Alighiero Boetti, *Tutto*, 1988-89, embroidery on cloth, 97 x 134,5 cm (38,18 x 52,95 inch)

ABOUT THE *TUTTO*

The work's conceptual origin can be traced back to the now vanished artwork *Pack* (1967) which focused on the phenomenon of how large wandering masses of ice form themselves out of agglomerated smaller masses. A second key element in *Tutto's* creation is his work *Perdita d'identità* (Loss of Identity), 1980, a cluster of figures drawn on paper about which Boetti said: "If you toss a round poker chip in amongst other round chips, you can no longer distinguish it, but if you throw a square one in, you can find it immediately. However, if you mix the round and square ones in a single field, you can no longer identify the chips that you throw, either the round or the square ones."



The fundamental concept of *Tutto* is to combine different recognisable cultural symbols and shapes, mixing their own identities inside a *Tutto*, an everything – a large field. The artwork consists in the juxtaposition of different woven shapes, following a specific rule: no objects of the same colour can touch. The work offers a multiplicity of forms, shapes and colours to the viewer, where the eye wanders across the embroidery to encounter a guitar, a waving hand, a pipe, a shark, a gun, a brush, a letter, with some of them being very much subjective: is a round object, a sun, a ball or an eye? One can look at this work many times and keep discovering new elements, new stories, as if it were an endless game of coloured riddles. The concepts of harmony, loss of identity and the blurring of borders between abstraction and figuration art are at the core of this work, considered the pinnacle of Alighiero Boetti's embroidery art.



As often in Alighiero Boetti's creative process, the concept is born in the artist's mind, drawn by his hand and later executed by an assistant - in this case Afghan embroiderers, refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan.

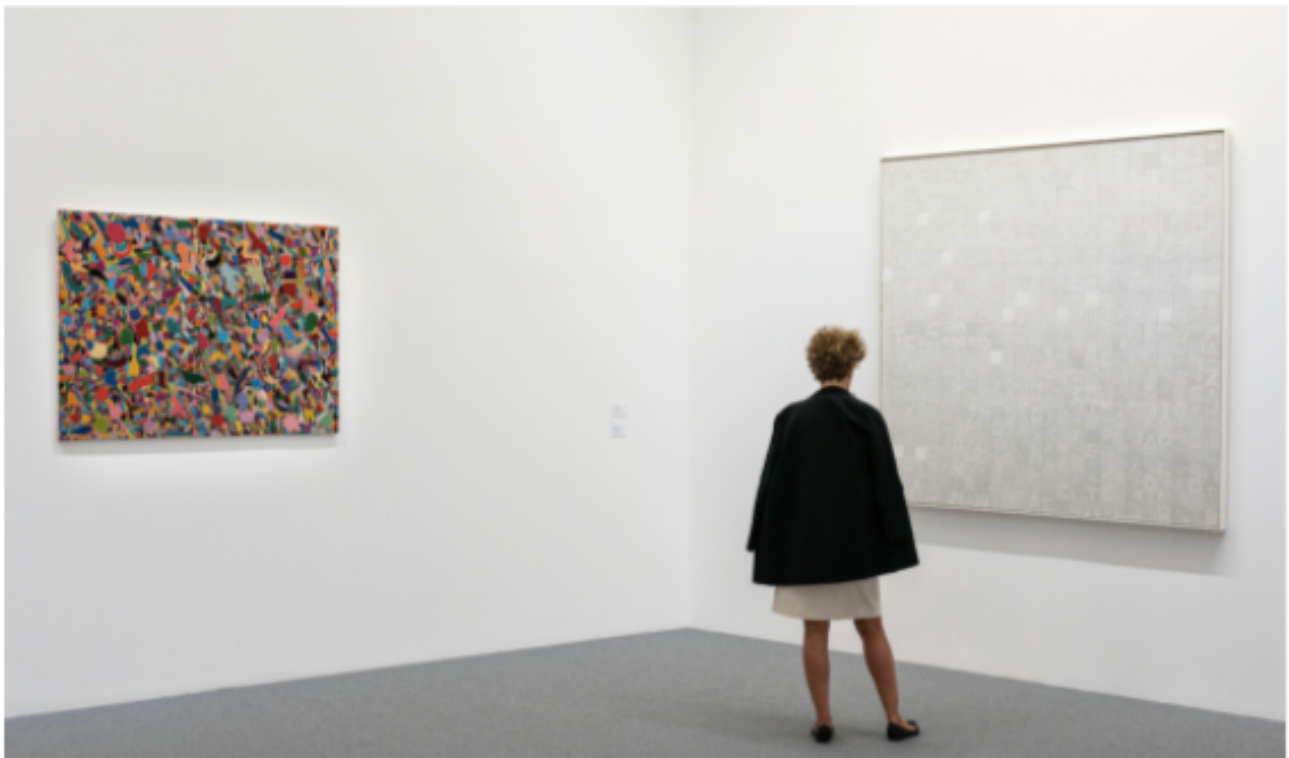
In an interview with Daniela de Dominicis in 1989, he explained: "With the tapestries, the manual collaboration is relatively good for the quality of the embroidery and obviously for the choice of colour. This is carried out by Afghan women who have a long cultural tradition in this field. Tapestry and rug production stopped in the 1920s, and mine were the first works they attempted after such a long time. These women have extraordinary taste in the choice of colour. I simply tell them, 'There are hundreds of colours. Use them all.' I would not have been able to follow the colour choices. I have the good fortune to work with a cultural heritage of a thousand years old, and when I produce a hundred tapestries with the same phrase, they are made by a hundred different women, each one with her own personal taste. I sometimes feel I have set up something like 'Santa's workshop'! For example, someone rang my doorbell a few minutes ago; [...] it could just as well have been the postman delivering tapestries from Kabul, commissioned two or three years ago...I don't even remember exactly. When I open the parcel, there is always something wonderful inside. But even more, it is a very complicated process: it takes ten months to finish it, to fill in the empty edges with a hundred colours that must not encroach on one another, and which must be all worked with the same quality of yarn."



EXHIBITION VIEWS



MINIMUM/MAXIMUM, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, 2017



MINIMUM/MAXIMUM, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, 2017

“During his long journeys and stays in foreign countries, Boetti, the nomad, experienced many cultures and in each one, he felt completely at home. But these different universes are equally at home in his work, as well”.

Laura Cherubini, 1992

“Tutto stands as a kind of substantive end-point in Boetti’s oeuvre... Tutto is the sum of all human experiences and things, while nevertheless remaining only a section cut from the large whole that is the world. Tutto is the language of the world, forms and colours, languages and signs. Tutto stands for the impossibility of consciously perceiving everything visible. Tutto links the organic to the inorganic world. Tutto is the order in disorder and the disorder in order. Tutto is the symbolic unity of body and mind, the connection of East and West, South and North. Tutto is a symbol for unlimited human creativity. Tutto is the fragment and the multiplicity of the world. Tutto is the structure of both macrocosm and microcosm”.

Rolf Lauter, 1993

“...The word ‘tutto’ (everything) does not only refer to every shape and form, every number, every concept, but also to a method, to the precise and ancient technique that, despite its scientific aspect, and all its power to determine and define, not in the sense of closing, but of opening up... opening up to framing the impossible, the invisible, or more simply, the secret”.

Gian Battista Salerno, 1996

“This is the absolute metaphor of the process of an artist who would burn forms and shapes to give them life. Standing firm in the midst of their incessant movement, to obtain a laborious, although fantastical, systolic and diastolic rhythm, where every static element evaporates, dissolved in the drifting form that is nourished by the pulse of life”.

Germano Celant, 2001

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