Manzoni founded Azimut Gallery in 1959 with fellow artist Enrico Castellani. Read about the gallery on the O-INSTITUTE’s web-archive, which promotes research and disseminates knowledge about artist networks in the sixties. In 2011, Gagosian Gallery in London celebrated Azimut Gallery, which was open for just one year, with an exhibition.

In 1961, Manzoni created the infamous Artist’s Shit project. The 2020 article “Art or Crap – Literally? Decoding Artist’s Shit by Piero Manzoni” by Balasz Takac dives deeper into the impact of this project on conceptual art.

Manzoni tragically died at the age of 29 from a heart attack in his studio. His impact on contemporary art was not fully realized for decades after his passing. In 1992, Castello di Rivoli-Museo d’Arte Contemporanea held a retrospective. This was followed by one at Serpentine Gallery in London in 1998.

Manzoni at the Tate
Manzoni at Hauser & Wirth
Fondazione Piero Manzoni


Hauser & Wirth took over representation of the Piero Manzoni Foundation in 2017. The gallery’s first exhibition Piero Manzoni: Materials of His Time opened at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles in 2019. The exhibition was curated by Rosalina Pasqualino di Marineo, director of the Piero Manzoni Foundation in Milan, and featured over 70 of the artist’s achrome series.

Avant-garde Italian artist Piero Manzoni had a tragically short career and life, but his lasting impact on conceptual art and the Arte Povera movement in Italy was profound. Manzoni’s *Achrome* works, named for their absence of color, attempt to remove the artist’s hand from the production process. From 1957 until the artist’s sudden death in 1963, Manzoni made the series by soaking canvas in kaolin, a soft, white clay that is the basis of porcelain. Under the weight of the drying clay, the canvas wrinkles and sags outside of the artist’s control. The resulting works are not quite painting or sculpture. Instead, focus is directed to the “uncolored” material qualities of the work. The artist wanted to produce “a white that is not a polar landscape, not a material in evolution or a beautiful material, not a sensation or a symbol or anything else: just a white surface that is simply a white surface and nothing else…”

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