

SPROVIERI

ALIGHIERO BOETTI Magie Straordinarie

23 heddon street
london w1b 4bq

For Art Basel OVR:20c Sprovieri proposes six seminal works on paper by Alighiero Boetti made with pencil, India ink and envelopes (the well known '*Lavoro postale*') dated 1970 to 1982. The works will be installed at the Gallery in London, while OVR:20c will be live.

In 1988 Boetti described his first twenty years of work: "*I think I placed myself in a position of research, a state of attention and curiosity, which allows me to see many things and having fun with the world. In fact, behind its appearances there is extraordinary magic (Magie Straordinarie): magic of words, magic of numbers... as there is magic in the world of numbers, there's magic in the world of minerals, as well as in that of the animals. All these worlds have been separated and organised in hierarchical order - but I think the truth is, there are no hierarchies as we are always in front of the same thing: the manifestation of a drawing within each thing*". The works offer a contemporary transposition of early subjects and practices revealing how Boetti has continuously developed the energy and innovation of his poetic.

Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani), 1970

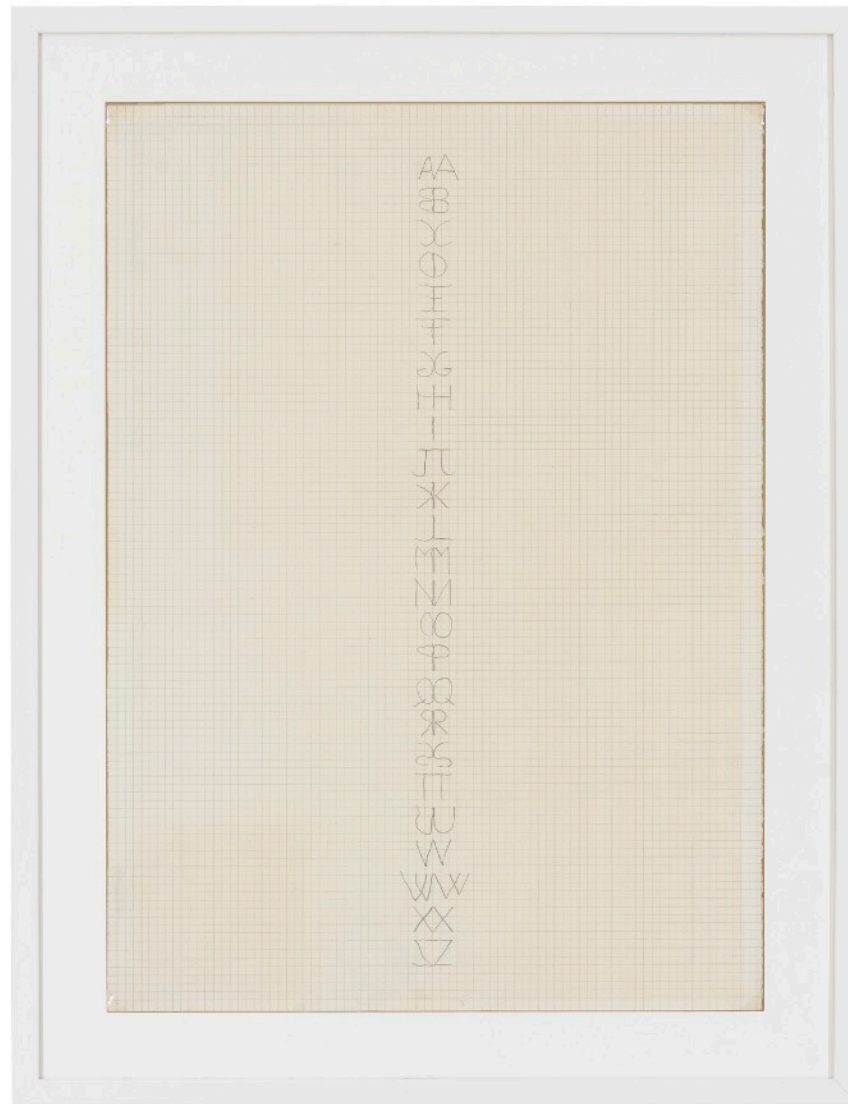
Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione, 1970

Lavoro Postale (La quadratura del dieci), 1972

Millenovecentosettantadue (Calligrafia), 1972

La metà, il doppio e l'unità mancante, 1974

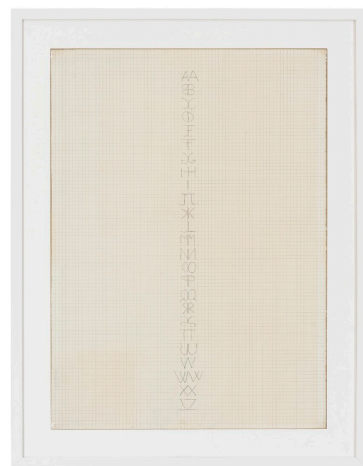
Clessidra, cerniera, viceversa, 1982



Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani), 1970



Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani), 1970 (back)



Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani) expresses Boetti's growing interest in conceptual art and performance. As part of the 1970s video survey *Identifications* organised by Gerry Schum, Boetti stood with his back to the camera and wrote on the wall with both hands simultaneously the sentence 'giovedì ventiquattro settembre mille novecento settanta (Thursday the twentieth of September one thousand nine hundred and seventy)', that day's date. Recalling this performance, in *Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani)* the letters of the alphabet are written in succession with two hands simultaneously.

Alfabeto (Scrittura a due mani), 1970

pencil on squared paper

66 x 48 cm

SIGNATURE

Signed, titled and dated on the reverse: *Io sono mille, io sono un in-divide-tutto, Io sono un asso James Joyce Scrittura a due mani Alighiero Boetti '70*

Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti n.5924

PROVENANCE

Studio Morra, Naples

Valentino Barbierato, Asiago

Private Collection, Italy

Dorotheum, Vienna, 22/11/2016, Lot 747

Private collection, London

EXHIBITIONS

Estrategia de jago, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (October 2011 - February 2012)

Game Plan, Tate Modern, London (February 2012 - May 2012)

Game Plan, MoMA, New York (July 2012 - October 2012)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

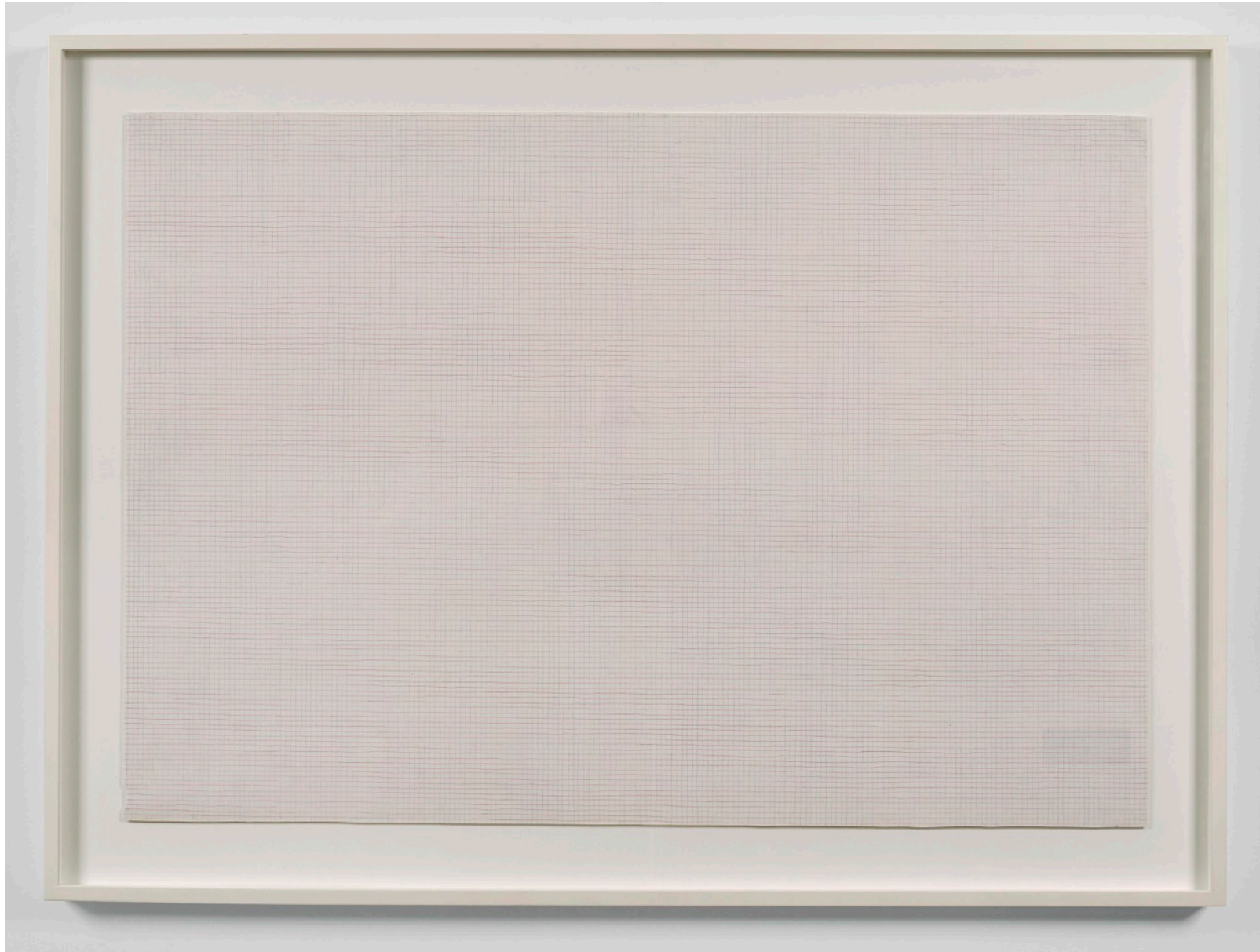
Alighiero Boetti. Catalogo generale, Tomo primo, J.-C.

Ammann, Electa, Milan 2009 (illustrated, p. 275, no. 346)

Alighiero Boetti, Game Plan, Tate Publishing, London 2012

(illustrated, p. 83)

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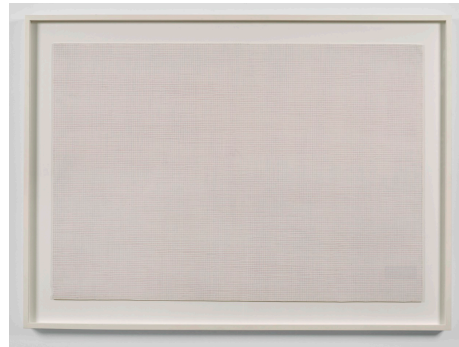
Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'invenzione, 1970

23 heddon street
london w1b 4bq



Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'invenzione, 1970 (back)

23 heddon street
london w1b 4bq



After a short period of time between 1967 and 1968 in which Boetti experiments with materials and forms close to those of the Arte Povera, in 1969 his research takes a new conceptual, independent trajectory with the series *Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione*, of which the artwork is one of the first examples. The title refers to Vivaldi's Opus n. 8, containing twelve concertos which include the Four Seasons, as well as to a type of music played by Boetti himself producing compositions based on the proliferation of numbers as musical rhythms. Boetti retraces the printed lines of the graph paper in red and blue pencil decoding the development of the artistic practice: harmony and invention.

Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Invenzione, 1970
red and blue pencil on graph paper
signed and dated on the reverse
70 x 100 cm

SIGNATURE

Signed and dated on the reverse: *Alighiero Boetti 1970*
Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti n.2084

PROVENANCE

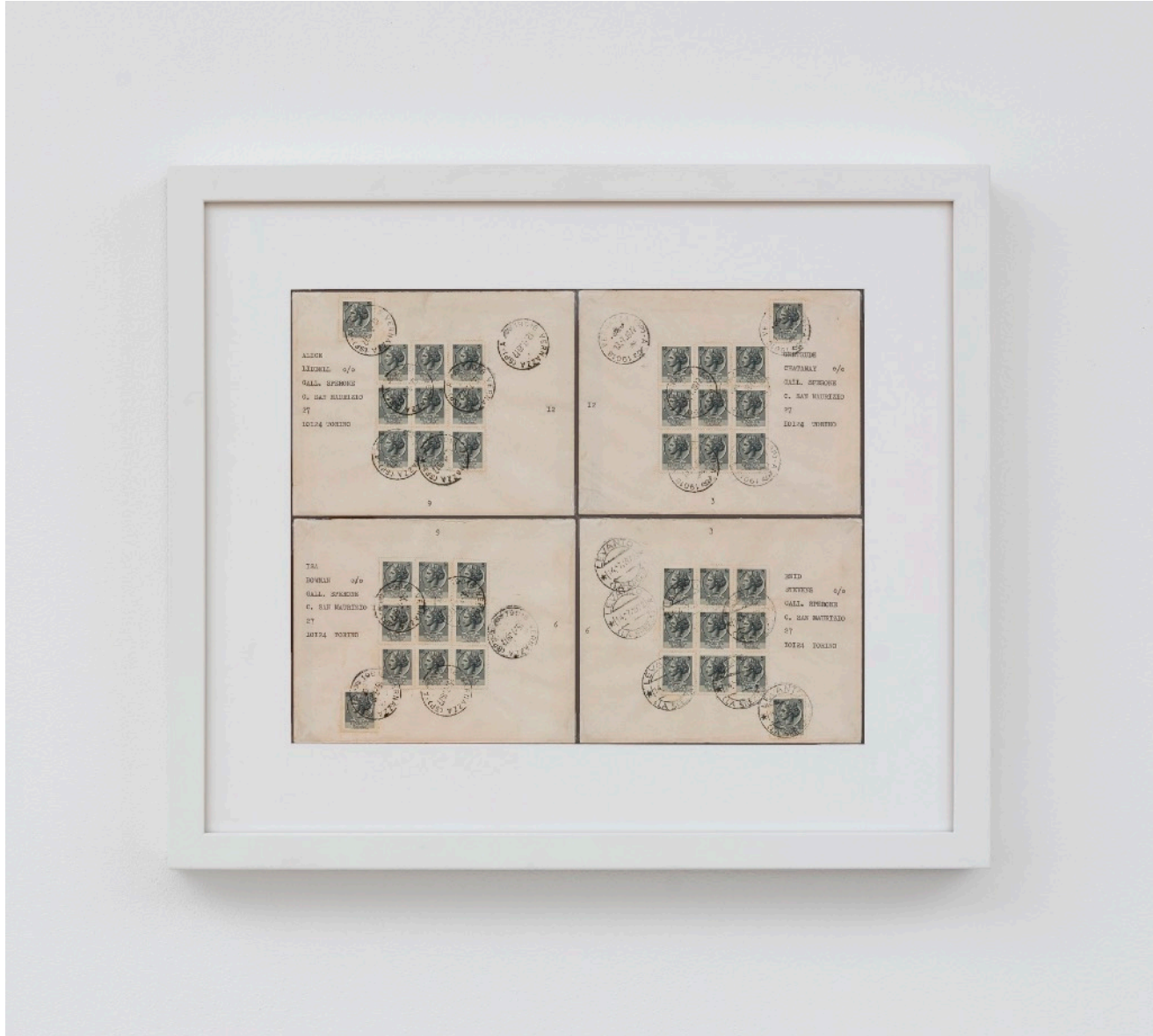
E.P. e I.O. Collection, Rome
Asta Boetto, Genoa, 3 November 2015
Private collection, London

EXHIBITIONS

White Not?, Ersel, Turin, 2015
Alighiero Boetti, Order and Disorder, Mazzoleni, London, 2015
Magie Straordinarie, Sprovieri, London, 2017
Boetti/Salvo, MASI, Lugano, 2017

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alighiero Boetti. Catalogo generale, Tomo primo. Opere 1961-1971, J.-C. Ammann, Milan, Electa, 2009 (illustrated in colour, p. 270 no. 338)
Vivere lavorando giocando, Masi Lugano, Edizioni Casagrande, 2017 (illustrated in colour, p.138)

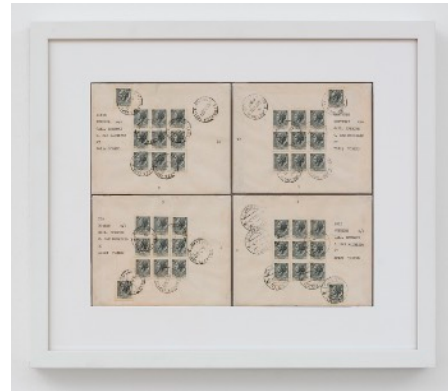


Lavoro Postale (La quadratura del dieci), 1972



Lavoro Postale (La quadratura del dieci), 1972 (back)

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Alighiero Boetti used to send envelopes to relatives, friends, critics, artists and gallerists like Duchamp and Leo Castelli. In *Lavoro Postale (La quadratura del dieci)* 1972, the different positioning of the stamps leads the number of envelopes in the work. "The vital element of the work is the existence of order and disorder. There is an irony in the order represented by the envelopes, with the graphic obliterations by the postal system, the marks left by the rain when being passed from hand to hand...it represents an order invaded by the disorder of everyday life". In this work, the envelopes were sent in July 1972 from Vernazza La Spezia to Galleria Sperone in Turin. Each letter is addressed to characters from the past all of them part of Lewis Carroll's life (such as Gertrude Chataway, his most important child-friend), making these envelopes a testament to the playful performative and participative quality of Boetti's practice.

Lavoro Postale (La quadratura del dieci), 1972

four stamped envelopes (Italian stamps)

each envelope 12 x 15.5 cm

framed 38.7 x 45.1 cm

SIGNATURE

three envelopes printed '*alighiero e boetti vernazza la spezia*' on the reverse

one envelope printed '*a*' and signed '*lighiero e Boetti. Vernazza. (LA SPEZIA)*' on the reverse

Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti 2146

EXHIBITION

Magie Straordinarie, Sprovieri, London, 2017

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alighiero Boetti. Catalogo generale, Tomo secondo. Opere 1972-1979, J.-C. Ammann, Milan, 2012 (illustrated in colour, p. 73 no. 439)



Millenovecentosettantadue (Calligrafia), 1972



Millenovecentosettantadue (Calligrafia), 1972 (back)



Millenovecentosettantadue (Calligrafia), reflects Boetti's fascination for the rigorous, dry and clean look of calligraphy. The year the work was made is its subject: Boetti places the letters of the word 'Millenovecentosettantadue' vertically, in five columns and five lines. The letter 'e' of the first line is missing from the otherwise perfect calligraphic composition, underlining a disruption in the language of art. For the first time Boetti places the letters vertically, preceding the renowned embroidered display of words.

Millenovecentosettantadue (Calligrafia), 1972

ink on paper

50 x 50 cm

SIGNATURE

signed in red ink pen '*Alighiero Boetti*' on the reverse

Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti 2029

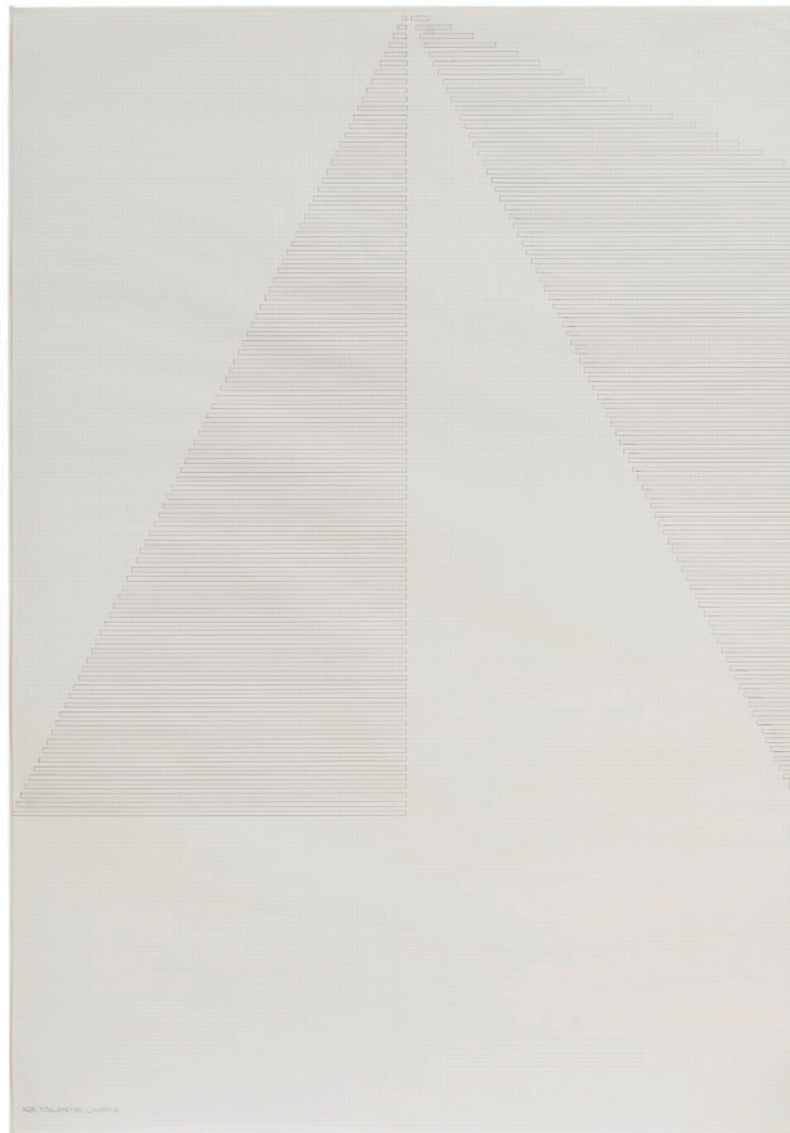
EXHIBITION

Magie Straordinarie, Sprovieri, London, 2017

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alighiero Boetti. Catalogo generale, Tomo secondo. Opere 1972-1979, J.-C. Ammann, Milan, 2012 (illustrated in colour, p. 62 no. 410)

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La metà, il doppio e l'unità mancante, 1974

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The concept of double is a recurrent theme in Boetti's work: "we are in front of a natural reality: it is irrefutable that a biological cell divides itself in two parts, then in four and so on; that we have two legs, two arms, two eyes and so on... It is clear that human beings' existence is based on a binary system - including computers... it is evident that the concept of the couple is one of the archetypal elements of our culture". Double and half are the recurrent couple in Boetti's work; when one becomes a couple it automatically becomes half of what it was before and therefore there is always a missing unit. *La metà, il doppio e l'unità mancante* (1974) visualises this concept using mathematical rules and geometrical schemes. The subject of the double and the binary system is explored in the following years through works that look less mathematical and objective.

La metà, il doppio e l'unità mancante, 1974

pencil on graph paper
100 x 70 cm

SIGNATURE

Initialed, titled and dated 'AEB1974LAMETÀEILDOPPIO'
Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti 1757

PROVENANCE

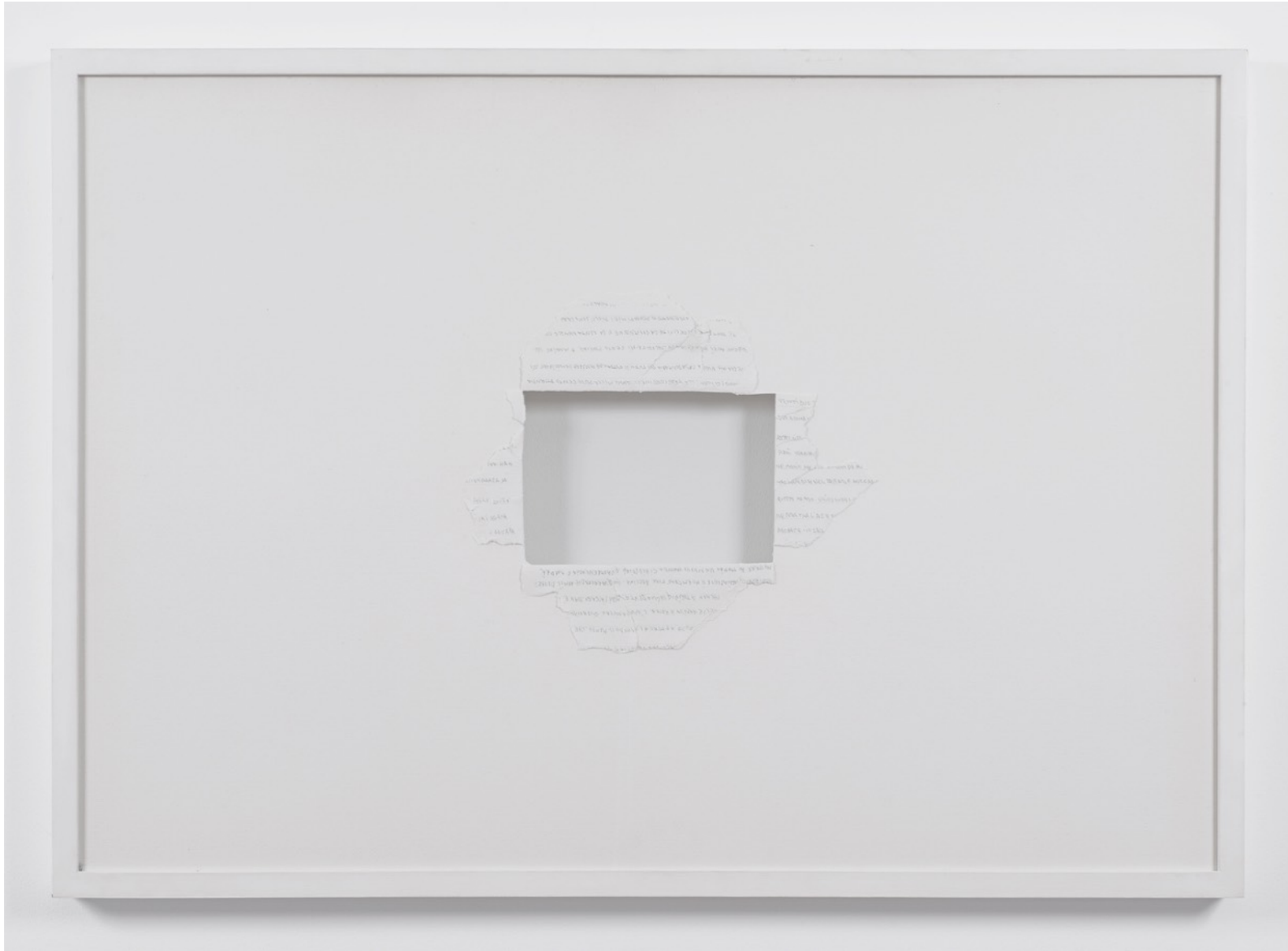
Private collection, Italy
Private collection, London

EXHIBITIONS

Una raccolta italiana, Galleria Civica Modena 16/5/1993
4/7/1993, Musei Civici Varese, sept/oct 1993
Magie Straordinarie, Sprovieri, London, 2017

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I Collezionisti/2. Una raccolta italiana. Galleria Civica di Modena and Nuova Alfa Editoriale, Bologna, 1993 (illustrated full page 97)
Alighiero Boetti. Catalogo generale, Tomo secondo. Opere 1972-1979, J.-C. Ammann, Electa, Milan, 2012 (illustrated in colour, p. 153 no. 615)



Clessidra, cerniera, viceversa, 1982



In *Clessidra, cerniera, viceversa* Alighiero Boetti annotated a series of memories and considerations on a framed sheet with his left hand in a narrow stringed font (according to him writing with the left hand means drawing). The text appears to come from a private diary and to describe complex situations that coincide with the condition of the paper on which it is written. The work is presented from behind, with the four directions of text inverted and difficult to read. The reference in the title to the hourglass can be seen in the triangular shape of the paper scraps or in the turn of the page which confers to the work a connotation of temporality.

Clessidra, Cerniera, Viceversa, 1982

pencil on paper

70 x 100 cm

Signed and dated 1982 on the reverse
Certificate Archive Alighiero Boetti n.4467

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Italy
Sotheby's London, 1/7/2014, Lot 157
Private collection, London

EXHIBITIONS

Magie Straordinarie, Sprovieri, London, 2017
Boetti/Salvo, MASI, Lugano, 2017

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Vivere lavorando giocando, Masi Lugano, Edizioni Casagrande, 2017 (illustrated, p.163)