**Ugo La Pietra**

**biography**

Born in Bussi sul Tirino (Pescara) in 1938, a native of Arpino (Frosinone), he lives and works in Milan where he graduated in Architecture at the Politecnico in 1964. An architect by training, he is an artist, filmmaker, editor, musician, cartoonist and teacher. He has been defininghimself as a researcher in communication systems and in visual arts since 1960, moving simultaneously in the worlds of art and design.

A tireless experimenter, he has crossed different currents (from Informalism and Conceptual Art to Narrative Art and artist’s cinema) and used multiple mediums, conducting research that were embodied in the theory of the “Disequilibrating System” – autonomous expression within Radical Design – and in important sociological themes such as “The Telematic Home” (MoMA, New York, 1972 – Fiera di Milano, 1983), “Real Space / Virtual Space” (Triennale di Milano 1979, 1992), “The eclectic Home” (Abitare il Tempo, 1990), “Beach Culture” (Centro Culturale Cattolica, 1985/95). He has transmitted his work through numerous exhibitions in Italy and abroad, and he has curated several exhibitions at the Triennale di Milano, the Venice Biennale, the Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon, the FRAC Centre in Orléans, the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza, the Fondazione Ragghianti in Lucca, the Fondazione Mudima in Milano and the Museo MA\*GA in Gallarate. He has always critically maintained the humanistic, significant and territorial components of art and design through his works and objects, as well as his work in teaching, theory and publishing.

**Chronology of researches**

**1959/60** He began “sign research” in painting, aimed at salvaging of the “Minimum symbolic experimentation”. **1962** With A. Ferrari, E. Sordini, A. Verga and A. Vermi, he founded the Gruppo del Cenobio. **1968** He designed and created the “Audiovisual Environment” at the XIV Triennale di Milano. **1969** He won the following prizes for painting: I° Premio Termoli, II° Premio Joan Miró, I° Premio Cesare da Sesto. He took part in the IV Week of Painting at the Museum Johanneum in Graz. He created urban intervention for the “Campo Urbano” in Como. **1970** He was invited to the experimental exhibition at the XXXV Venice Biennale. **1971** He designed audiovisual urban tools for Trigon 71 in Graz (Austria). **1972** He took part in the “Italy: The New Domestic Landscape” exhibition at MoMA with “La cellula abitativa;” he developed works for and took part in exhibitions at the “The new writing” area. **1973** He was a founding member of Global Tools. He was invited to the XV Triennale and made the film *La grande* *occasione*. **1973-1975** He became artistic director of the Milanese publishing house Jabik & Colophon. **1975** He won first prize at the Nancy Film Festival. **1976** He took part in the XXXVII Venice Biennale in the “Environment as society” section (E. Crispolti). **1978** He took part in the XXXVIII Venice Biennale in the following sections: “Artist’s cinema” (V. Fagone), “Utopia, the crisis of the architecture. Radical Architecture” (L.V. Masini). **1979** He won the Compasso d’Oro with the project “L’occultamento.” He curated the “Real space / Virtual space” exhibition at the Triennale di Milano. **1980** With Gianfranco Bettetini, he curated the “Chronographies, Special project” exhibition at the XXXIX Venice Biennale. **1981** He co-curated the “Scenographic space in the Italian television” exhibition at the XVI Triennale di Milano. **1983** He curated (with G. Bettetini and A. Grasso) the “The Telematic Home” exhibition at the Fiera di Milano. **1986-1997** He became art director of cultural and experimental exhibitions at the “Living time” event. **1992** He curated the “Life between things and nature” section at the XVIII Triennale di Milano and created the “Mediterranean Landscape” installation at the Musée d’Art Contemporain de Lyon, Quadriennale Internationnale de Design. **1997** He organised the personal exhibition “Fragments,” with objects created in mosaics at the Fortezza da Basso in Florence. **2001** “Mediterranean lands,” a personal exhibition at the Fondazione Ragghianti in Lucca. **2002** “The new territoriality,” at the Rocca Paolina in Perugia. **2005** All of his films were acquired by the Fondazione Cineteca Italiana which organized an exhibition presented by Vittorio Fagone; Luciano Caramel was the curator of his personal exhibition at the Fondazione Umberto Mastroianni in Arpino (FR) and Frosinone. **2007** He took part in exhibitions dedicated to the 1970s at the Museo Villa Croce in Genoa (“Public, actions and ideas in the Seventies in Italy”), at the Triennale di Milano (“Seventies. The long decade of the short century”), and at the Mole Vanvitelliana in Ancona (“Observing the reflected thought”); he created the installations “Sicilian itineraries” and “Unity of the Mediterranean sea” at the Museo del Mediterraneo Fondazione Orestiadi in Gibellina. **2008** He was the subject of a large retrospective at the Fondazione Mudima in Milan, curated by Vittorio Fagone. He participated to the exhibition “International Sculpture in Agliè. Sculpture Nature. Orient Occident” invited by Luciano Caramel. **2009** FRAC Centre in Orléans dedicated a personal exhibition to his architectural works from the 1960s and 1970s; he realized two exhibitions on his work in ceramics at the Museum in Castellamonte and at MIC in Faenza and, in **2010**, at the Museo Hoffmann in Caltagirone; in this year he presented two other exhibition dedicated to his ceramic work in Turin and in Albisola. **2011** He took part in a large retrospective at the Galerie Mercier in Paris; he presented the exhibition “Living the city. Yesterday’s future, for a new territoriality”*,* at the Museo MIAAO, in Turin curated by Enzo Biffi Gentili; he participated in the “Fuori! Arte e spazio urbano 1968-1973” exhibition at the Museo del Novecento in Milan, curated by Silvia Bignami and Alessandra Pioselli. **2012** He participated in the “Goodbye Seventies*”* exhibition at the Palazzo Reale in Milan, and in the “Radical City” exhibition organised by the Archivio di Stato in Turin. Fondazione Mudima dedicated a personal exhibition to him entitled “Living in Milan” which collected his works and interventions in the Milan area. He took part in the exhibition “The Expanded Gaze. Exhibition for Italian artist’s cinema (1912- 2012)” at the Fondazione Rocco Guglielmo in Catanzaro. **2013** He participated in the “In the sign of sign. After the Informal Art. The Cenobio Group” exhibition at the Galleria del Credito Valtellinese (Milan) curated by Luciano Caramel, “Artists in space*”* at the Fondazione Rocco Guglielmo in Catanzaro and in “Environments and Counter Environments. ‘Italy: The New Domestic Landscape,’ MoMA, 1972” at the Graham Foundation in Chicago. He presented the personal exhibitions “Itineraries” at Ca’ di Fra Gallery in Milan and “Trace. My territories” in Ceramic Museum in Mondovì. **2014** Triennale Design Museum in Milan dedicated a personal exhibition to him entitled “Ugo La Pietra. Disequilibrating Design” curated by Angela Rui. He presented the exhibition *”*Inside / Outside*”* at the Galleria Antonia Jannone in Milan. **2015** He presented the personal exhibitions “Green works it out!” at the Galleria Il Chiostro Arte Contemporanea in Saronno, “Textural Structures” at the E3 Gallery in Brescia and he took part at the exhibition “Earthrise” at the PAV in Turin invitated by Marco Scotini. **2016** He won the Compasso d’Oro for his Career. He presented the exhibition “Living is being at home everywhere. Works and researchs in the urban environment 1962-2016” at MA\*GA Museum in Gallarate curated by Marco Meneguzzo; he organized the personal exhibition “Cinque verdi urbani” at Bianconi Gallery in Milan; he realized an urban installation in ceramic for the city of Montelupo Fiorentino fot the project “Materia Prima”. **2017** He realized two solo exhibition “Territori” at Galleria Bianconi in Milan and “Campo Tissurato. I segni e l’urbano” curated by Marco Scotini, at Studio d’Arte Dabbeni in Lugano that also realized a book edited by Archive Books. He is invited by Hans Ulrich Obrist e Christian Boltanski at the exhibition “Take Me (I’m Yours)” that took place at Hangar Bicocca in Milan; Centre Pompidou in Paris exhibits some La Pietra’s works from his permanent collection in the “Nouvel accrochage des collections contemporaines”. **2018** He is invited in some important collective exhibition including “100% Italia” at Museo Ettore Fico in Torino, “Home Futures” at London Design Museum, “Homo Faber” organized by Michelangelo Foundation at Cini Foundation in Venezia, for this exhibition he has realized a mosaic sculpture in collaboration with the mosaic master Giulio Candussio. He participated at “Artissima” (new section called “Sound”) with Studio Dabbeni Lugano with his historical work “Audio casco” (1967) for which he received a honorable mention form the OGR Award jury. He realized an important solo exhibition at CIAC Museum in Foligno. **2019** He made some solo exhibitions and took part to various collective exhibitions including “Resistenza/Resilienza” at PAV in Torino, for which he realized five thematic gazebos dedicated to urban green. He took part to exhibitions and meetings for the 50th anniversary of “Campo urbano” organized by Fondazione Ratti and town of Como. He realized a new stone sculpture for the town of Apricena (Apulia) with the project “Museo Madrepietra”. He realized some installation at Accademia Carrara in Bergamo, and he presented his art films at GAMeC in Bergamo. **2020** He realized an exhibition on his urban art projects called “Arte e territorio” in the museum of Spoleto. Some solo exhibitions have been set up: “Storie di virus” at Corraini Gallery in Mantova presented his drawings about Covid-19 and “Ex voto” at Nuages Gallery in Milano presented some illustrations about ex voto.

**2021** He realized “Segnale / Portale” a new public monumental sculpture in Brufa (Perugia). Fondazione Zimei di Pescara organized a personal exhibition called “Abitare è essere ovunque a casa propria”. ADI Design Museum set up a focus about the project “Occultamento” in the Compasso d’Oro Collection exhibition. He curated “Fittile”, contemporary ceramic art exhibition organized in Triennale di Milano by Fondazione Cologni. He published a book “Erbario” with an exhibition in Casa Museo Boschi di Stefano (Milano). **2022** He received the “63° Bugatti-Segantini International Painting Award” for his career. He received the special award “MAM Maestro d’Arte e Mestiere” for his mentoring work in the Italian craft culture. He realized the exhibition “Ovunque a casa propria” dedicated to his film and video production at Centro Trevi in Bolzano (with a dedicated book). He took part at the 12° International Design Biennal in Saint-Etienne (France). **2023** He receives the Italics d'Oro Award from the Consortium of Italian Galleries Italics. He sets up two solo exhibitions at the ABC Arte gallery in Genoa and Milan. He sets up an exhibition "Abitare la città" at the Ex-Church of San Carpoforo at the invitation of the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. He realizes the exhibition "Urban equipment for the community" at the ADI Design Museum. He realizes the exhibition "Effetto Randomico" at the Sala delle Pietre (Todi) at the invitation of the Beverly Pepper Foundation.

**Teaching**

Since 1964, he has taught at the Architecture Departments in Milan, Pescara, Palermo, Turin and Venice; at the Politecnico di Milano, Design Department; at the Istituto d’Arte in Monza; at ISIA in Faenza; at the Istituto Europeo di Design in Milan; at the NABA in Milan; at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan; from 2000 to 2005 he ran the Progettazione Artistica per l’Impresa department, which he founded, at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan. Since 2009, he has been a professor at the Politecnico di Milano, Design Department and at the NABA in Milan.

He has held workshops and seminars at several universities and academies both in Italy and abroad.

**Selected publications**

*Il sistema disequilibrante*, ed. Toselli, Milan 1970; *La guida alternativa per la città di Milano*, monograph, ed. Progettare Inpiù, Milan 1974/75; *Autoarchiterapia*, ed. Jabik & Colophon,

Milan 1975; *Istruzioni per l’uso della città*, ed. Associazione Culturale Plana, Milan1970; *Spazio reale-Spazio virtuale* (Lo Spazioaudiovisivo nella XIV Triennale di Milano)ed. Marsilio, Venice 1980; *Pro-memoria*, ed.Katà, Milan 1982; *Abitare la città*, ed. Alinea,Florence 1983; *La casa telematica*, ed. Katà,Milan 1984; *Il giardino delle delizie*, ed. Alinea,Florence 1986; *Argomenti per un dizionario del design italiano*, Franco Angeli Editore,Milan 1987; *Gio Ponti l’arte s’innamora dell’industria*, ed. Coliseum, Milan 1988, ed.Rizzoli 1993; *Domesticarte*, ed. Alinea, Florence1988; *Casa Aperta, Giardino all’Italiana* ed. Alinea, Florence 1989; *Ugo La Pietra*,ed. G.G., Barcelona 1991; *Ad Arte*, ed. Alinea,Florence 1995; *Fatto ad Arte*, ed. Triennale diMilano 1997; *Pietre Marmi e Mosaici*, ed. Alinea,Florence 2002; *La vita è una cuccagna*,ed. Alinea, Florence, 2003; *Ad Arte. Tradizione e Innovazione nell’Artigianato Artistico Lombardo*, ed. Cestec, Regione Lombardia,2004/2006; *Globo tissurato. 1965-2007*, ed.Alinea, Florence, 2007; *Abitare la città*, ed.Allemandi, Turin 2011; *Urban furniture for society*, ed. Corraini, Mantua, 2013; *Inside / Outside*, ed. Corraini, Mantua, 2014; Green works it out!, ed. Corraini, Mantua, 2015; *Odori e sapori*, Ed. Galleria Nuages, Milan, 2015; *Living with art. Research and works in the applied arts and in design*, ed. Corraini, Mantua, 2015; *Il Segno randomico. Opere e ricerche 1958/2016*, ed. Silvana editoriale, Milano, 2016; *Campo Tissurato. I Segni e l’urbano*, ed. Archive Books, Berlino, 2017; *Fatto ad arte. Né arte né design (scritti e disegni)*, ed. Marsilio/Fondazione Cologni, Venezia, 2018; *Argomenti per un dizionario del design*, ed. Quodlibet, Macerata, 2019; *Abitare è essere ovunque a casa propria*, Corraini, Mantova, 2019. *Arte e Territorio*, ed. Manfredi, Imola, 2020. *Ex Voto*, ed. Nuages, Milano, 2020. *Storie di virus*, ed. Corraini, Mantova, 2020. *Viaggio sul Reno*, ed Artphilein, Lugano, 2020. *Erbario*, ed. Marinonibooks, Pavia, 2021. *Terre. Artigianato artistico italiano nella ceramica contemporanea*, ed. Marsilio/Fondazione Cologni, Venezia, 2021. *Film e video*, ed. Archivio Ugo La Pietra, Milano, 2022.

**Publishing**

He was editor of “Domus,” “D’ARS” and “AU” magazines. He was creative director of the magazine “Mestieri d’Arte.” He has directed and edited: “In. Argomenti e immagini di Design,” “Global Tools,” “Progettare INPIÙ,” “Brera Flash,” “Fascicolo,” “Area,” “Abitare con Arte,” “Artigianato tra Arte e Design.”