

con il patrocinio



## GIANCARLO SANGREGORIO **100 ANNI** (1925-2025)

### La pietra il legno i luoghi

A journey through the works and places of the sculptor

*Project conceived and curated by Lorella Giudici and Francesca Marcellini*

#### Press Conference

Monday 7 April, 11 am

Gallerie d'Italia – Milan

via Manzoni, 10

#### Speakers

**Giovanni Morale**, Deputy Director Gallerie d'Italia – Milan

**Francesca Caruso**, Councilor for Culture of the Lombardy Region

**Tommaso Sacchi**, Councilor for Culture of the Municipality of Milan

**Angelo Crespi**, General Director of the Pinacoteca di Brera, Palazzo Citterio and the Braidense National Library

**Francesca Marcellini**, President of the Fondazione Sangregorio

**Lorella Giudici**, Art Historian and Scientific Director of the Fondazione Sangregorio

**Patrizia Asproni**, Art and Culture Representative of the Fondazione Cariplo

**Andrea Mascetti**, Board of Directors of the Fondazione Sangregorio

*press release, 7.04.2025*

To mark the **centenary of the birth** of Milanese sculptor **Giancarlo Sangregorio** (1925-2013) and to highlight his long creative career, the Foundation that bears his name presents the ambitious project '*Giancarlo Sangregorio: 100 years (1925–2025): Stone, Wood, Locations. A Journey Among the Sculptor's Works and Locations*'. Conceived and curated by **Lorella Giudici** and **Francesca Marcellini**, this artistic, cultural and environmental itinerary comprises themed exhibitions, events and investigations.

To assist the public in discovering the works of the great artist, a free, specially designed new *app*, '*fsg-app*', available from April 16, provides a dynamic, intuitive, interactive medium that transforms artistic discovery into a connective experience with the landscape and the fabric of the city, enabling a continuous dialogue on art, the natural environment and history.

Fondazione Sangregorio has chosen Milan, the artist's birthplace, as the starting point for celebrating Sangregorio's centenary, as well as locations on the Lombard and Piedmont shores of Lago Maggiore where he lived and worked, although his sculptures are also held in public and private collections around the world.

si ringraziano



INTESA SANPAOLO

Fondazione CARIPLO

Pinacoteca di Brera

GRANDE BRERA MILANO

MA\*GA

ARCHIVFUTURI Festival degli Archivi del Contemporaneo

mu seci

Museo della Permanente



Fondazione Visconti di San Vito Olona



AsiloBianco

CENTRO ARTISTICO ALIK CAVALIERE



con il patrocinio



During the press conference at **11:00 on Monday, 7 April** at the **Gallerie d'Italia** in Milan, this ambitious project will be illustrated together with the presentation of the *app*. The event has the **patronage** of the **Lombardy Region** and the **Municipality of Milan**, the support of **Fondazione Cariplo**, and the involvement of prestigious institutions, among them **Palazzo Citterio**, **Pinacoteca di Brera**, **Gallerie d'Italia**, **MUSEC**, **Museo della Permanente**, **MA\*GA**, **Università degli Studi dell'Insubria**, and a network of municipalities and organisations linked to the area where the artist lived and worked.

The project is not simply an exhibition but an innovative proposal based on the knowledge that Sangregorio believed **sculpture**, and art in general, **should communicate with nature and humanity** along a path punctuated by surprising connections, insights, and a shared sense of awe.

With this in mind, the centenary has been envisaged as a journey through space and time, linking the works to the locations in which they were conceived and created, or where they have since been installed.

The **heart** of the initiative is **Fondazione Sangregorio** in Sesto Calende, where guided tours of the sculptor's house-museum have been planned. One of the themes explored is Sangregorio's relationship with the artists whose work he collected, among them Fontana, Baj, Rotella, Scanavino, Dova, Raciti, Azuma, Vago and many others. This theme will be explored more deeply in an exhibition at the Foundation during the summer, in spaces newly refurbished thanks to the support of Fondazione Cariplo.

The itinerary linked to the city of **Milan** includes visits to public spaces where several monumental sculptures are installed, among them the large *Itinerario nel vuoto* (1983) in centrally located Via Clerici. The preparatory study for this work, held by Gallerie d'Italia, is on display to mark the centenary anniversary. On temporary exhibit at Palazzo Citterio is *Genesi di una stirpe* (1959), one of Sangregorio's first bronzes on the theme of the void. The balcony of the Pinacoteca di Brera hosts four works, from *Uomo con agnello* (1947) to *Fortezza* (1996). At the Cimitero Monumentale, two marble groups, one in grey Boden granite, demonstrate Sangregorio's commitment to reinterpreting stone art. *Tempesta* (1963–1964), one of two large sculptures installed in the public gardens in Via delle Forze Armate, was exhibited at the XXXII Venice Biennale in 1964. In the via Rogoredo park, three blocks of Angera stone form *Monumento alla Resistenza*, an example of Sangregorio's focus on humanity.

Among initiatives organised to celebrate the sculptor's work, the Museo della Permanente collection is exhibiting *Incontri imprevisti* (1997); Centro Artistico Alik Cavaliere documents the period when Cavaliere and Sangregorio shared a studio; and Cento Amici del Libro, an historic association of bibliophiles based at the Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, is dedicating its 2025 artist's book to Sangregorio, created using movable type from the Archivio Tipografico in Turin.

si ringraziano



con il patrocinio



In addition, the Alfa Romeo Museum located at Arese in the metropolitan district of Milan is showing a trophy it houses, made by Sangregorio in 1968.

The itinerary extends to Switzerland, where the **Museo delle Culture in Lugano (MUSEC)** showcases Sangregorio's activity as a connoisseur and collector of **ethnographic art** with two extremely rare Oceanic masks from its prestigious collection. Similar examples are also held by the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Also on display is *Figure-archetipi* (1986–1987), one of Sangregorio's works inspired by the theme of primitivism and representative of the iconic development of a research project begun in the 1980s.

Many sculptures are present in locations on the **shores of Lake Maggiore**, among them Sesto Calende, whose cultural department has prepared an iconographic itinerary of fifteen panels installed across the urban area and in villages beside places of historical and artistic interest. Also involved are the municipalities of Arona, Taino, Ispra, Angera, Cunardo and Cocquio Trevisago, as far as **Varese** and Castello di Masnago. Sponsored by the Varese municipality, in the Sala Veratti of the Civic Museums is an exhibition of cellulose *Impronte*, an original search for form in the thickness of paper. The Università degli Studi dell'Insubria, which has a bronze in its collection, documents a particular line of research in the form of several graphic works, and also presents a selection of the Foundation's archive documents revealing Sangregorio's link to the city, which began in 1949 when he won the historic Varese City Prize.

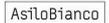
Very dear to Sangregorio and part of the special itinerary is **Valle Vigezzo**, where outside the 18th-century oratory of San Giulio in Druogno can be found a nucleus of works that the artist titled *Giardino di Montagna* (Mountain Garden), one of the few parks dedicated to the work of a single sculptor.

Other notable works by Sangregorio have been on permanent display for some time at Castello Visconti di San Vito in **Somma Lombardo**, and the nearby Palazzo Viani Visconti has housed a substantial group of monumental sculptures since 2008.

Several locations offer **specific insights** on themes such as myth, light, alchemy, travel, humanity, nature, materials, and, as Sangregorio called them, 'places of the heart'. The *Quattro Punti Cardinali* park in Taino (designed by Giò Pomodoro) contains Sangregorio's sculpture *Ruota di Mola* (2009–2010), while a forthcoming exhibition to mark the centenary will also present the cycle *Il Mulino del Patriarca*, a striking series of polystyrene panels which illuminate the artist's interest in **ancient crafts and trades and the Campionesse tradition**.

At Palazzo Torielli in Ameno, among the hills of Lake Orta, the theme of travel is developed in the soft forms of the *Feltri*, evoked by the expanses of the Eurasian steppes that inspired Sangregorio. In works from the MA\*GA in Gallarate, he explores the concept of light, which he refers to in his notes as 'Lombard light'.

si ringraziano



con il patrocinio



Numerous collateral events will take place in the following months, including thematic guided tours, experiential visits, shows, concerts and cultural meetings.

The project is complemented by a catalogue raisonné representing more than a thousand works. Published by Skira, the book is **edited by Elena Pontiggia** and contains extensive biographical reconstruction by **Lorella Giudici**.

### Biographical notes

Giancarlo Sangregorio was born in Milan in 1925. He began sculpting in stone as a self-taught artist, fascinated by the material of the Ossola quarries, where he spent long periods of time. After completing high school, he attended sculpture courses at the Brera Academy in Milan under the guidance of Marino Marini.

He made his debut in 1948, taking part in the First Biennial of Sacred Art at the Palazzo del Broletto in Novara. In 1949 he participated in the Premio Internazionale Città di Varese at Villa Mirabello, and in 1950 he entered the Contemporary Art Competition at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome. Between 1950 and 1958 he often stayed in Versilia, working on marble from the Apuan Alps, sculpting figures and firing ceramics in the Viareggio kilns. He also undertook extensive trips abroad, particularly to Paris where he had a studio.

His first solo exhibition was at Galleria Colonna in Milan in 1952. From then on, he took part in most major national and international art events, including the Quadriennale in Rome (1955), the Venice Biennale (1956–1964) and the Carrara Sculpture Biennale (1957–1967, 1969–1973).

In the 1960s he embarked on an intense exhibition programme throughout Europe, including Brussels, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, Locarno, Basel, Cologne and Freiburg.

His interest in primitive arts brought him closer to Dogon Africa, encountering in Mali the cultural phenomenon of masks. After exploring Africa, a trip to Oceania took him along the Sepik River, where he discovered the work of New Guinea sculptors.

At the beginning of the 1970s, he made his first linen and cotton cellulose imprints, inspired by the forms his sculptures created when impressed into wet paper. These investigations continued into the 2000s.

Giancarlo Sangregorio lived and worked in his house-studio in Sesto Calende until his death in 2013. The premises are now the headquarters of the Foundation he wanted to establish in order to support and disseminate his work.

### Project coordinates

**Title** GIANCARLO SANGREGORIO. 100 ANNI (1925-2025). La pietra il legno i luoghi.

A journey through the sculptor's works and places.

**Conceived and curated by** Lorella Giudici and Francesca Marcellini

**Main venues** Milan, Varese, Lugano, locations on the Lombard and Piedmontese shores of Lake Maggiore

**Date** April - December 2025

**Public info** [info@fondazioneangregorio.it](mailto:info@fondazioneangregorio.it) – [www.fondazioneangregoriogiancarlo.it](http://www.fondazioneangregoriogiancarlo.it)

si ringraziano



con il patrocinio  
 Regione  
Lombardia



**Press office**  
**IBC Irma Bianchi Communication**  
Via Arena 16/1 – Milano  
tel. +39 02 8940 4694 – [info@irmabianchi.it](mailto:info@irmabianchi.it)  
Texts and images downloadable at  
[www.irmabianchi.it](http://www.irmabianchi.it)

si ringraziano

