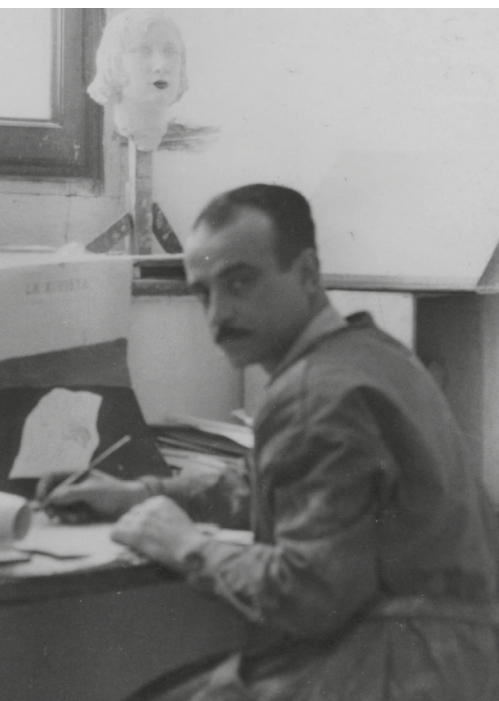




HOTEL
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HOTEL PRINCIPE DI SAVOIA

In the footsteps of
legendary artists

Fontana

From our landmark of Milanese elegance, take a bespoke walking tour following in the footsteps of one of Milan's most legendary artists.

LET THE DISCOVERY BEGIN

Fontana – Slashing Space



LUCIO FONTANA, L'ATTESA, 1964

Photo by Ugo Mulas

It took Lucio Fontana a single gesture to revolutionise the history of art. However, his iconic slashes on canvas, better known as ‘tagli’ or ‘cuts’, are the painstaking culmination of a pioneering 30-year career exploring themes of light and perception, space and infinity.

Metaphorically ‘slashing space’, Fontana would slice through his canvas with the flick of a Stanley knife and an equally sharp determination, with the cut acting as a portal to limitless space. For the first time, viewers didn’t just merely *look* at a sculpture on a pedestal or a painting hung on a wall but saw *through* it and *beyond* it.

His works became concepts rather than just objects – going as far as naming all of his artworks from the 1940s onward ‘Concetti Spaziali’ or ‘Spatial Concepts’. Indeed, man’s perception of space and the universe obsessed him, and he produced a mesmerising series of about 1,500 cuts from 1958 up until his death in 1968. Transcending tradition and embracing technology, he blended painting, sculpture and architecture in an entirely novel way. With boundless imagination, Fontana created art for the modern age and Milan became the epicentre for his journey.

Fighting tradition and critics who often misunderstood him, Fontana's path spans some of the most transformative decades of the 20th Century. Our story takes us from his birth in 1899 in Rosario, Argentina, from an Italian father and Argentine mother, to his beginnings as a sculptor in Milan in the late 1920s, all the way through to Italy's economic boom of the 1950s.

Akin to a modern renaissance and led by a sense of renewal and optimism, Milan welcomed young artists, architects, and designers to drag it out of its post-war ravages and give rise to a thriving new city.

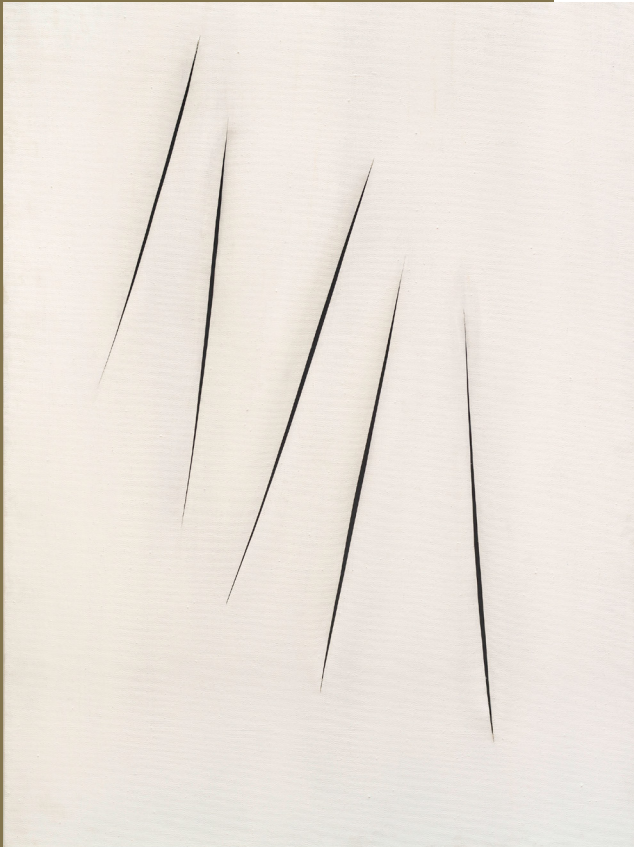
From Hotel Principe di Savoia's rooftop terrace overlooking the city, Fontana's story plunges you into the very heart of Milan. The nearby Brera district – home to the prestigious Arts Academy where he studied, as well as endless bars and art supplies stores – is still the stomping ground of budding artists to this day.

The courtyard of his legendary studio provides the backdrop for his creative process, leading us to the Duomo, where its lace-like Gothic design complements Fontana's glorious 'Neon structure', suspended on the top floor of the adjacent Museo del Novecento. Made from 100m/328ft of neon tube, Fontana's prominence in the city is nowhere more apparent.



LUCIO FONTANA, NEON STRUCTURE MADE FOR THE
9TH MILAN TRIENNIAL, 1951

Museo del Novecento, Sala Fontana, Milan
Photo by Thomas Pagani



LUCIO FONTANA, CONCETTO SPAZIALE, ATTESE, 1965

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

Following his father's profession as a commemorative sculptor, Fontana's innovative spirit led him to the Brera Academy in Milan, where he would graduate in 1929 and shortly after open a studio. Despite being considered best in class and his teacher's worthiest heir, Fontana would vigorously seek to distance himself from traditional academic schooling.

With his signature moustache and tailored suit, he would have been a rather elegant presence in the city. Speaking a combination of Italian, Milanese dialect, Spanish and French – often mixing the languages together – his determination, playfulness, and boisterous manner truly set him apart.

Rebelliously rejecting academic teachings, much to the disappointment of his teacher, he audaciously slathered jet-black tar onto his first sculpture out of the academy. This seminal work, a major turning point, was part of his first solo show held at the Galleria Il Milione in 1930 – which just happened to be opposite the academy.

What began as a short trip to Argentina in 1940, became a seven-year long stay. Teaching at art schools, his ground-breaking ideas began to take shape. Eager to make his own mark in Milan, he finally returned in 1947 – only to discover his studio had been destroyed by Allied bombs.

With a clean slate and renewed tenacity, Fontana sought to give form in Milan to the ideas he developed in Argentina. A period of boundless experimentation followed: from works illuminated by black lights providing constellations of florescent flashes in pitch-dark rooms, to monumentally-scaled neon lights – an industrial material rarely used before in artistic contexts.

He captured and reflected light by puncturing canvasses, tearing them apart, whilst ceaselessly investigating new materials and media; from ceramics to bronze, mosaics to Murano stones and hammered metal sheets. He also ventured into jewellery, fashion, and even projected artworks on national television in an age where it was still something of an inexplicable novelty.

From Paris to London, Tokyo to New York, along with a slew of exhibitions around the world, collectors began competing for his work. Fontana had truly reached for the stars and Milan proved to be a perfect launchpad for his journey.

Enjoy a private tour created exclusively for guests of Milan's Hotel Principe di Savoia. Your passionate, knowledgeable guide has over 10 years of experience in the art world and can adapt the content to you. All levels of interest can follow in the footsteps of this legendary artist, from the mildly curious to Fontana enthusiasts.



LUCIO FONTANA, CONCETTO SPAZIALE, 1956
Casa Museo Boschi Di Stefano, Milano

Fontana – Slashing Space includes:

TWO-NIGHT STAY IN A ROOM OR SUITE
FOR TWO PEOPLE
FULL BREAKFAST
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Offer subject to availability and terms & conditions.

For a supplement, tours can be extended from two hours to a full day or over two half days on request. As an optional extra, a trip can also be arranged to visit the Museo del Novecento and Casa Museo Boschi Di Stefano (additional cost for transportation and entry applies).

IMAGE CREDITS:

Lucio Fontana in his studio on Via de Amicis, Milan, 1933.

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Lucio Fontana, L'Attesa, 1964. Photo Ugo Mulas.

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Lucio Fontana, Neon structure made for the 9th Milan Triennial, 1951.

Museo del Novecento, Sala Fontana, Milan.

Photo courtesy of Thomas Pagani & Museo del Novecento, Milan. © Comune di Milano.

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Lucio Fontana, Concetto spaziale, Attese, 1965.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation Gift, Fondazione Lucio Fontana, 1988,

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Lucio Fontana, Concetto spaziale. 1956.

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