

**ILEANA SONNABEND. AN ITALIAN PORTRAIT**

**May 29 – October 2, 2011**

**Peggy Guggenheim Collection**

Considered by many to be among the greatest gallerists of late 20th century contemporary art, Ileana Sonnabend (1914-2007) also brought together a major art collection of her own. The exhibition *Ileana Sonnabend. An Italian Portrait*, on view at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, from May 29 to October 2, 2011, presents works from the Sonnabend Collection, New York, on the theme of Italy: works by Italian artists, and works by international artists which reference Italian culture, tradition, and topography.

Ileana Schapira was born in Bucharest, Romania. Her father was a successful businessman and financial advisor to King Carol II of Romania. She met Leo Krausz (later Castelli) in 1932 and married him a year later. In 1935 they moved to Paris and opened an art gallery there, with René Drouin, before emigrating to New York in 1941. Leo Castelli joined the US army, and Ileana studied at Columbia University, where she met Michael Sonnabend, whom she was to marry in 1959. In the 1940s and 50s the Castellis initiated a collection of art that included works by Piet Mondrian and Jackson Pollock. In 1957 they opened their first art gallery in New York. Together they discovered and exhibited the work of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, and began lifetimes of showing new art, beginning with Neo-dada and Pop Art (Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg and James Rosenquist). Late in 1962 Michael and Ileana Sonnabend opened the Galerie Ileana Sonnabend in Paris, where they exhibited the work of American artists but also the work of several young Italians, beginning with Mario Schifano (1963) and Michelangelo Pistoletto (1964), followed by Gilberto Zorio, Mario Merz and Giovanni Anselmo (1969), Piero Paolo Calzolari (1971), Jannis Kounellis (1972) and others.

In 1970 Ileana Sonnabend opened a gallery in New York, moving in 1971 to the SoHo district, together with the Castelli Gallery, thus spurring a migration of the contemporary art scene in New York. She opened her SoHo gallery with a now-celebrated performance by Gilbert & George. As she continued, through her gallery and collecting, to register new art as it emerged on both the European and the New York scene—Minimalism, Arte Povera, Conceptual Art, performance, Transavanguardia, Neo-Expressionism, Neo-Geo and new photography—she acquired a reputation for her connoisseurship, her appetite for ‘the new’ and for the international character of her gallery.

Peggy Guggenheim (1898-1979) and Ileana Sonnabend had in common that their careers were as both gallerists and collectors. In New York in the 1940s the Castellis frequented Guggenheim’s Art of This Century museum-gallery (1942-47)—about which Castelli remarked “Peggy’s gallery was a sensation...No one realized that Peggy was doing something of epoch-making importance.” The Castellis bought works of art from Guggenheim. However, whereas Guggenheim’s patronage focused on the generation of the American Abstract Expressionists, Ileana Sonnabend promoted subsequent avant-gardes over a fifty-year period, as if in a line of succession from Guggenheim.

Michael and Ileana Sonnabend had strong personal ties to Italy, and to Venice in particular, where for many years they rented an apartment for the summer. Beginning with a sojourn in Rome in 1960, where they were in contact with the ‘Scuola di Piazza del Popolo’ and the dealer Plinio de Martiis, and in 1962 in Venice, where they were befriended by artists, critics and dealers such as Giuseppe Santomaso, Giuseppe Marchiori, Attilio Codognato, Giovanni Camuffo and Carlo

Cardazzo, they formed many close Italian friendships, including Gian Enzo Sperone, Germano Celant, Achille Bonito Oliva, Giuseppe and Giovanna Panza, and the many artists whose works Ileana would exhibit, in Paris and New York. Ileana, with Leo Castelli and Alan Solomon, played an important role in bringing Robert Rauschenberg to the 1964 Venice Biennale, where he won the Grand Prix for Painting—a crucial event in the career of Rauschenberg, in the history of the Venice Biennale and of European and American contemporary art as a whole.

*Ileana Sonnabend. An Italian Portrait* brings together more than 60 works by almost 50 artists, selected by Antonio Homem (director of the Sonnabend Gallery, New York, and adopted son of Ileana Sonnabend). It will include Andy Warhol's portrait of Ileana Sonnabend, works on Italian themes by Rauschenberg and Cy Twombly, works by Italians such as Tano Festa, Lucio Fontana, Mimmo Rotella, Schifano and Piero Manzoni, works by American artists inspired by Italian culture (Jim Dine, James Rosenquist, John Baldessari for example), by artists of the Arte Povera movement (Zorio, Anselmo, Calzolari, Jannis Kounellis, and Merz), by several international photographers (including Bernd and Hilla Becher, Candida Höfer, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Max Becher and Andrea Robbins), and by many others—whether Italian (Giulio Paolini, Luigi Ontani) or not (Bruce Nauman, Anselm Kiefer, Philip Haas, Rona Pondick for example). The exhibition moves beyond its Italian *leitmotif* to a more general survey of the diversity, originality and indeed brilliance of Ileana Sonnabend's career as a promoter and collector of emerging art.

The exhibition is organized by Antonio Homem and Philip Rylands, director of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. The catalogue includes tributes to Ileana Sonnabend by Achille Bonito Oliva and Germano Celant, an interview with Antonio Homem, and catalogue texts by Mario Codognato.

The exhibition has been supported by Intrapresae Collezione Guggenheim and is in collaboration with Corriere della Sera. Hangar Design Group realized the graphic design. Radio Italia is media partner.

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FACT SHEET

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TITLE	<i>Ileana Sonnabend. An Italian Portrait</i>
VENUES AND DATES	Peggy Guggenheim Collection May 29 – October 2, 2011
EXHIBITED WORKS	63 works, comprising paintings, sculpture, works on paper and photography.
CURATORS	The exhibition is organized by Antonio Homem, director of the Sonnabend Gallery, New York and Philip Rylands, director of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.
OVERVIEW	Ileana Sonnabend (Bucharest 1914 – New York, 2007) was a formidable gallerist and collector of contemporary art. She was the first wife of Leo Castelli. This exhibition looks at the Italian component of the Sonnabend collection, not just Italian painting and sculpture but the work of international artists whose art takes into account the traditions and landscape of Italy. Ileana Sonnabend's love of Italy is the thread that ties the works in this exhibition, a love which was expressed through her dedication to building this collection. The exhibition will showcase the works of the great masters of Arte Povera, such as Pistoletto, Zorio, Calzolari, Merz, Anselmo and Kounellis, together with artists such as Fontana, Rotella, Schifano, Manzoni and Festa. Also included are works by American artists Twombly, Rauschenberg, Lichtenstein, Morris and Koons and an array of international photographers, such as Höfer, Sugimoto, Esser and the Bechers.
PUBLICATION	The catalogue, edited by Guggenheim Publications in English and Italian, includes tributes to Ileana Sonnabend by Achille Bonito Oliva and Germano Celant, an interview with Antonio Homem, and catalogue texts by Mario Codognato. Price to public euro 22
ADMISSION TICKET TO THE COLLECTION	Regular euro 12; seniors euro 10 (over 65); students euro 7 (under 26 or with a student ID card); children 0-10 yrs and members free entrance (further information on membership: <a href="mailto:membership@guggenheim-venice.it">membership@guggenheim-venice.it</a> ).  Admission tickets allow the public to visit the temporary exhibition, the permanent collection, the Gianni Mattioli Collection and the Nasher Sculpture Garden. Free guided tours of the temporary exhibitions are daily at 3:30 pm. Reservations are not required.
OPENING HOURS	Daily from 10 am to 6 pm, closed on Tuesday and December 25 and 26
INFORMATION	<a href="mailto:info@guggenheim-venice.it">info@guggenheim-venice.it</a> <a href="http://www.guggenheim-venice.it/peggyg.mobi">www.guggenheim-venice.it/peggyg.mobi</a>

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HOW TO ARRIVE

From Piazzale Roma - Ferrovia (train station): vaporetto no. 2 towards Lido, get off at the Accademia stop (25 minutes); vaporetto no. 1 towards Lido, get off at the Accademia stop (30 minutes). From St. Mark's Square: vaporetto no. 1, 2 towards Piazzale Roma-Ferrovia, get off at Accademia stop (5 minutes).

COMMUNICATION AND

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Please, once published, send the article to: [press@guggenheim-venice.it](mailto:press@guggenheim-venice.it)


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CHECKLIST


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*Ileana Sonnabend. An Italian Portrait*  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice  
May 29 – October 2, 2011

N.	Work	Image
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|----|---|--|
| 1. | <p><b>CARLO ALFANO</b><br/><i>N. 80 (No. 80)</i>, 1973<br/>Acrylic on canvas<br/>66 x 106.7 cm<br/>The Sonnabend Collection</p> |  |
|----|---|--|

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 2. | <p><b>GIOVANNI ANSELMO</b><br/><i>Direzione (Direction)</i>, 1967 – 1968<br/>Stone, compass, glass<br/>17 x 225 x 83 cm<br/>The Sonnabend Collection. On loan to<br/>MADRE (Museo d'Arte Contemporanea<br/>Donna Regina), Naples, Italy</p> |  |
|----|---|---|

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|----|--|--|
| 3. | <p><b>GIOVANNI ANSELMO</b><br/><i>Per un'incisione di indefinite migliaia di<br/>anni (For a Notch in an Indefinite<br/>Number of Thousands of Years)</i>, 1969<br/>Iron bar, pencil inscription<br/>Iron bar: 160 x 9 cm; inscription:<br/>dimensions variable<br/>The Sonnabend Collection</p> |  |
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**ARMAN**

*Portrait of Mike (Michael Sonnabend),*  
1969

4. Accumulation of objects in a Plexiglas box  
25.4 x 69.9 x 69.5 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**JOHN BALDESSARI**

*Strobe Series / Futurist: Dog on Leash*  
(For Balla), 1975

5. Eight black and white photographs  
Each: 28.6 x 28.6 cm;  
overall: 28.6 x 233 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**BERND AND HILLA BECHER**

*Brescia, I, 1986*

6. Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**BERND AND HILLA BECHER**

*Donnas, Valle D' Aosta, I, 1986*

7. Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



8. **BERND AND HILLA BECHER**  
*Mantova, I (Mantua, I)*, 1986  
Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



9. **BERND AND HILLA BECHER**  
*Marcon near Venice, I*, 1986  
Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



10. **BERND AND HILLA BECHER**  
*Padova, I (Padua, I)*, 1986  
Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



11. **BERND AND HILLA BECHER**  
*Quarto d'Altino near Venice, I*, 1986  
Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



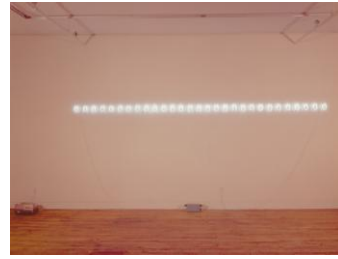
12. **LAWRENCE BECK**  
*Caserta I*, 2010  
Archival pigment print mounted on  
Dibond panel  
148.6 x 180.3 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**PIER PAOLO CALZOLARI**

*Untitled (Zerrose)*, 1970

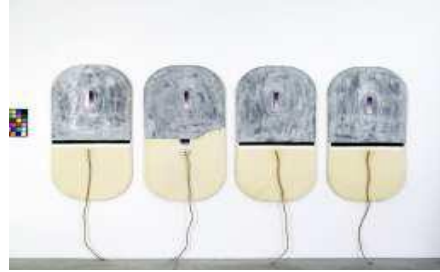
13. Neon with cool white and warm white light, transformer, cassette player with continuous loop  
10 x 429.5 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**JIM DINE**

*Four Designs for a Fountain in Honor of the Painter Balla*, 1961

14. Oil and aluminum paint on canvas, and rope; four panels  
Each: 141 x 68.6 cm; overall: 141 x 308.6 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ELGER ESSER**

*Fondamente Nove, Italien (Fondamente Nove, Italy)*, 2002

15. C-print on Diasec face  
184.2 x 235.3 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ROBERT FEINTUCH**

*Bacchus in the Studio*, 2007

16. Polymer emulsion and oil paint on honeycomb panel  
76.2 x 57 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**TANO FESTA**

*Persiana #3 (New Shutter)*, 1962

17. Oil on panel  
151 x 80 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- LUCIO FONTANA**  
*Concetto Spaziale*, 1966 ca.  
Ceramic  
18. 23 x 23 x 34.3 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- GILBERT & GEORGE**  
*Postcard sculpture (Pompeiiian Frescoes)*, 1976  
19. Postcards on board  
102 x 76.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- PHILIP HAAS**  
*Winter (After Arcimboldo)*, 2010  
20. Painted fiberglass  
91.4 x 56 x 73.7 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- DAVID HOCKNEY**  
*Tidied Up Beach - Viareggio , August*  
1973, 1976  
21. C- print; from the *Twenty Photographic Pictures* portfolio  
17.8 x 24 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CANDIDA HÖFER**

*Biblioteca dei Girolamini Napoli I (Library of the Girolamini, Naples, I), 2009*

22. C-print  
180 x 220.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CLAY KETTER**

*Regina Convergence, 2010*

23. Lightjet C-print mounted on Diasec  
120 x 175 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ANSELM KIEFER**

*Dem Unbekannten Maler (To the Unknown Painter), 1980*

24. Watercolor on paper  
47 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**JEFF KOONS**

*Buster Keaton, 1988*

25. Polychromed wood  
167 x 127 x 68.3 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**JANNIS KOUNELLIS**

*Untitled, 1985*

- Oil painted metal disk with shelf, egg,  
26. blackwall painting  
Wall painting: 183 x 183 cm; disk: 153 cm  
in diameter  
The Sonnabend Collection



**BARRY LE VA**

*Monica – Gray/Black*, 2011

27. Photograph, Xerox copy, printed acetate  
and collage on paper; eleven of forty-five  
pages

Each page: 51.5 x 77.5 cm

The Sonnabend Collection

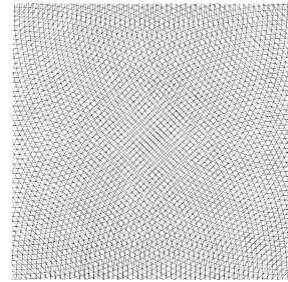


**SOL LEWITT**

*Arcs From Four Corners*, 1971

28. Lead pencil on wall  
Dimensions variable

The Sonnabend Collection



**ROY LICHTENSTEIN**

*Entablature*, 1971

29. Pencil on contact paper, and paper  
71 x 104 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



**PIERO MANZONI**

*Corpo D'Aria (Body of Air)*, 1959

30. Balloon, plastic tube, and plastic-covered  
metal stand in wooden box

Box: 5 x 42 x 12 cm; overall: dimensions  
variable

Private collection



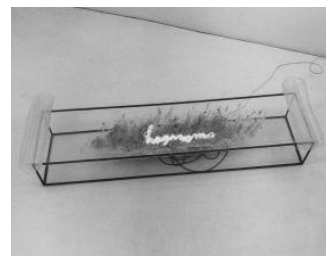
**MARIO MERZ**

*Hagoromo*, 1968

Metal, rubber, wax, and neon tube

31. 190.5 x 25.5 x 38 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



- ROBERT MORRIS**  
32. *Untitled*, 1985-1986  
Encaustic on lead, bronze frame  
100 x 127 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- BRUCE NAUMAN**  
33. *This is the Silver Grotto / White*, 1974  
Graphite, black ink, and tape on three sheets of paper  
45.5 x 187 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- BRUCE NAUMAN**  
34. *You Can't Help Me / White*, 1974  
Graphite, blue crayon, black ink, and tape on three sheets of paper  
45.5 x 187 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- BRUCE NAUMAN**  
35. *I can't hear you / Very Bright Red*, 1974  
Graphite, blue, red and pink crayons, black ink, and tape on three sheets of paper  
45.5 x 145 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



- BRUCE NAUMAN**  
36. *Placate Art / White*, 1974  
Graphite, black ink, and tape on two sheets of paper  
45.5 x 124.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**BRUCE NAUMAN**

*Placate My Art/ Red*, 1974

37. Graphite, red and green crayons, black ink, and tape on two sheets of paper  
45.5 x 124.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CLAES OLDENBURG**

*Vitello Tonnato*, 1962

38. Enamel on muslin soaked in plaster over wire frame, steel plate and kitchen tongs  
10.5 x 60 x 28 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection. On loan to MADRE (Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donna Regina), Naples, Italy



**LUIGI ONTANI**

*Untitled*, 1976

39. Twelve C-prints in artist's frame  
Each: 8.3 x 5.7 cm; overall: 17.2 x 37.5  
The Sonnabend Collection



**GIULIO PAOLINI**

*"Elegia" in una scena di duello ("Elegy" in a Duel Scene)*, 1972

40. Acrylic and crayon on canvas  
200 x 300 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO**

*Uomo seduto (Seated Man)*, 1963

41. Silkscreen on stainless steel polished mirror  
180 x 121 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ANNE AND PATRICK POIRIER**

*Documentation Isola Sacra*, 1973

Photographs and mixed media mounted

42. on paper, thirty-five parts

Each: 25.3 x 18.5 cm;

overall: 126.5 x 129.5 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



**RONA PONDICK**

*Dog*, 1998-2001

Yellow stainless steel; edition of six plus

43. one artist proof

71 x 42 x 81.3 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



**ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG**

*Untitled (Gift to Ileana Sonnabend)*, 1996

44. Solvent transfer and gouache on paper

101.5 x 76.2 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



**ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG**

*Rome Wall (III)*, 1953

45. Gelatin silver print

34 x 34 cm

The Sonnabend Collection



**ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG**

*Untitled (Venetian)*, 1973

Cardboard boxes, resin, tar, paper, and

46. rope

189.2 x 419 x 5 cm

The Sonnabend Collection. On loan to

MADRE (Museo d'Arte Contemporanea

Donna Regina), Naples, Italy



**ANDREA ROBBINS AND MAX BECHER**

*Venice Las Vegas, Meeting Place: Rialto Bridge and Campanile Tower, 2010*

47. Archival inkjet print  
50 x 60 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ANDREA ROBBINS AND MAX BECHER**

*Venice Las Vegas: Bridge of Sighs, 2010*

48. Archival inkjet print  
50 x 60 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**JAMES ROSENQUIST**

*Sliced Bologna, 1968*

Oil on slit Mylar  
259.1 x 266.7 cm

49. The Sonnabend Collection. On loan to  
MART (Museo di Arte Moderna e  
Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto),  
Rovereto, Italy



**CLIFFORD ROSS**

*St. Peter by Giovan Maria Morlaiter, 1996*

50. Archival pigment print  
48.5 x 58.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CLIFFORD ROSS**

*St. Paul by Giovan Maria Morlaiter, 1996*

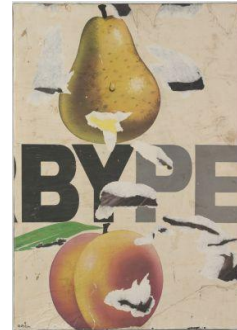
51. Archival pigment print  
48.5 x 58.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**MIMMO ROTELLA**

*Still Life, 1963*

52. Paper collage on fabric  
78.7 x 55.8 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**MARIO SCHIFANO**

*Tempo Moderno (Modern Time), 1962*

53. Enamel and paper on canvas  
180 x 180 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection. On loan to  
MART (Museo di Arte Moderna e  
Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto),  
Rovereto, Italy



**HAIM STEINBACH**

*Untitled (strainer, soap dispenser) 2A, 2009*

54. Plastic laminated wooden shelf, enamel  
and steel strainer, plastic and resin soap  
dispenser  
70.5 x 63 x 38 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**HIROSHI SUGIMOTO**

*Sant'Elia Monument - Giuseppe Terragni, 1998*

55. Gelatin silver print  
60 x 50 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CY TWOMBLY**

*Untitled (New York City), 1956*

56. Oil based housepaint, wax crayon and pencil on canvas  
51 x 122 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**CY TWOMBLY**

*Sperlonga Drawing, 1957*

57. Tempera, pencil, and pastel on paper  
68.5 x 100.3 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**WILHELM von GLOEDEN**

*Untitled, 1900 ca.*

58. Albumen print  
22.9 x 17.5 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ANDY WARHOL**

*Ileana Sonnabend, 1973*

59. Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas  
101.9 x 101.5  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ANDY WARHOL**

*Ileana Sonnabend, 1973*

60. Acrylic and silkscreen on canvas  
101.9 x 101.5  
The Sonnabend Collection



**WILLIAM WEGMAN**

*Cotto*, 1970

61. Black and white photograph  
26.7 x 27 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**ROBERT YARBER**

*Piazza del Popolo (Rome)*, 1995

62. Cibachrome print  
76.7 x 102 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection



**GILBERTO ZORIO**

*Per purificare le parole (For the Purification of Words)*, 1969

63. Terracotta, lamp, alcohol, and rope  
91.5 x 43 x 112 cm  
The Sonnabend Collection

