

Like a Rolling Stone - Mineral residue from Lucio Fontanas Garden provides unexpected proof of authenticity

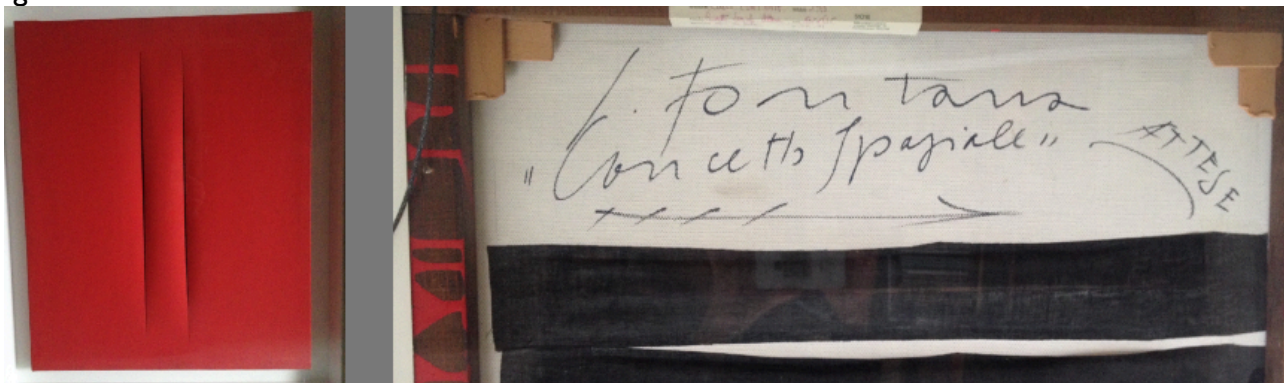
Studies in Fontana authenticity, Vol. I

It is well known that Lucio Fontana produced his slashed canvasses in his studio in Corso Monforte 23 in Milan in batches. He would usually order a shipment of ca. 8 pre-prepared frames, colour those in his preferred monochromatic shades and cut them using his Stanley knife while the paint was not yet fully dry. (For details, see Pia Gottschaller, Lucio Fontana - The Artist's Materials, 2012, Getty Publications).

It has never been noted before, that his specific production process left material traces on the works, albeit on non-rainy days only.

When thoroughly examining a currently hotly debated work (fig. A) made in 1964, I most unexpectedly found strange little grey objects embedded in the paint residue on the frame on the back side, one side only.

fig. A



A phone call to Fontana's former assistant, Hisachika Takahashi, provided the inspiration needed to figure out what this was. He mentioned that on sunny days the frames were put out to dry in the courtyard. Several photographs of Lucio following this process were readily available online (fig.B)

fig. B



I procured a few tiny stones from under the tree Lucio had leaned the frames against (fig.C) in situ. They proved to be an exact match to the ones found on the backside of the contested work.

fig.C



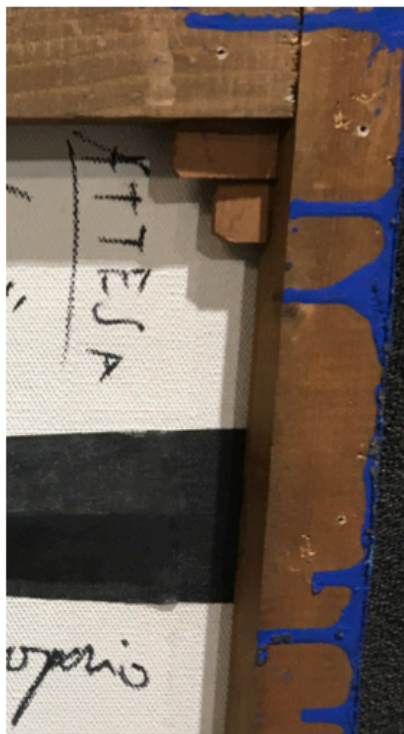
Close examination of several other recently sold other Taglios revealed identical stones on one side of the frame, embedded in the paint noses on the backside, too. (fig.D) It can hence be presumed, that this material evidence - so far ignored by the Fondazione Fontana in their regularly published "opinions" (Landgericht München, Germany) - will help to provide badly needed proof of origin beyond personal views of participants in future discussions.

fig. D

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