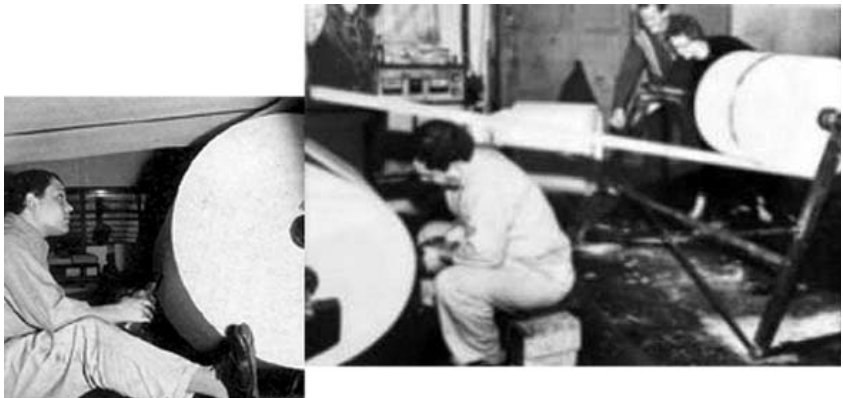


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## PIECES OF INFINITY

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On the afternoon of July 4th, 1960, between 4:00 and 6:55 p.m., Piero Manzoni executed a line with a length of 7200 meters at a printer's workshop in Herning, Denmark, and enclosed it in a lead cylinder made up of square plates. This line was the first of the series "Linea di lunghezza infinita" (Line of Infinite Length). After completion, each further line will be tightly rolled together, enclosed in a vacuum-tight stainless-steel container, and will be placed in each of the principal cities around the world, until the sum of the "Line of Infinite Length" had reached the length of the earth's circumference.

## PIECES OF INFINITY

*"(...) a surface that simply is: (...) Even if this undefined surface (uniquely alive) cannot in fact be infinite because of the material contingent of the work, it certainly is unfinishable, repeatable to infinity, and has a continuity that remains unresolved. This is more obvious in the "Lines". (...) the line develops only in length: it runs to infinity: its only dimension is time. It goes without saying that a line is not a horizon or a symbol, and that its value lies not in the degree to which it is more or less beautiful, but in the extent to which it is more or less a line: its existence lies in this (...)" Piero Manzoni*

From 1959 to 1961, Piero Manzoni produced lines of various lengths, between 1.76 and 1140 meters. These lines were enclosed in black cardboard cartons and labeled with length and date. Parallel to the "Linea" series, in 1960, he began with the series "Linea di lunghezza infinita" ("Line of Infinite Length"). His intention with this work was to overcome the conflict between the insufficiency of the limited surface and the metric extension of the lines. By describing the individually defined limit, the limit of the entire world defines itself. His actions and statements are metaphors of the significance of what is undefinable and definable, of

the timeline and the time of the line, of the absence of limitation of line and time, of the relativity of space and time due to the infinity of their extent and span. Now, the time of the line is enclosed in a container. The infinity of time is defined using a human dimension, the measurement of the line in meters and centimeters and the duration of creating it in minutes. The time of the line is enclosed within itself, within the limits of its transformation, and the limit of time is thus defined by linearity. In this manner, the invisible is linked to the visible, one becomes aware of time through the line, the line reflects time.

*"The nature of the Linea is eternal and infinite, (...) I put the Linea in a container so that people can buy the idea of the Linea. I sell an idea, an idea closed in a container." Piero Manzoni*

Manzoni creates specimens of infinity with clearly defined lines in order to define eternity. His idea can be understood as interaction between unlimited time and unlimited space. However, if the time of the line has a relationship to a space corresponding to human measure, the line can change its achromatic meaning through human movement, i.e. the stretching of time. The sequence of the modeled lines at a place is enclosed in a cylinder as metaphor of architectural thought.

Via the atmosphere in the interior space of the cylinder, the viewer sensorily perceives the physical length of the line individually. This can be compared with the way lines with physically identical lengths are rolled together in differently tight ways. The interrelation between cylinder and the modeled lines or lines to be modeled can be seen as the beginning of an architectural process: the change in perception of the physically defined object due to the experienceable surroundings.

*"Time is something different from what the hands of a clock measure, and the line does not measure meters or kilometers, (...)" Piero Manzoni*

The condition of a line is movement, perceived differently in its physical length by its surroundings, with the individually perceived length of the line influencing the feeling of time in which the line is physically experienced. Experienceable space is created by the interaction of line of movement with its surroundings.

The essence of movement is the physical reaction to the individual perception of what is seen. The perception of the line intrinsically existent in nature follows the unconscious movement along this line. Thus, the conscious enclosure of a specimen of the "infinite line of movement at a place" in a "cylinder", i.e. the transformation of this line within the human dimension, becomes an architectural procedure in as far as the line of the expected movement is again converted, via its transformation, to an intrinsic state.

A perfectly completed space does not exist. It's not about the sequence of the cylinder, but about how the states of the rolled-up lines in a cylinder are experienced and how this experience unfolds. Each space awaits its individual experience.

*"(...): in total space dimensions do not exist. "": but are constructed at all times.*