

Isn't the history of the future simply that of the synthetic becoming of nature? And isn't it clear, at this point, that the world couldn't care less about all the efforts made to improve it? Thus the portrait of time in becoming, my still lifes!

Frigid wrappers, beautiful and full of emptiness. A breathtaking void, equal only to the void caused in us by the sudden lack of something that belonged to us and that we ardently desired. The still lifes, in a certain sense, negate painting and its age-old purpose: to represent. Painting finally gets beyond the embarrassing, obsolete task of narration. Through analysis – which lies in the complex operation of eliminating the superfluous – it is possible to identify the area of pure apparition, to trigger the epiphany. All possible images are still lifes.

Today a much better representation of the world is probably that of the thousands of photographers and video makers, each with his or her little big universe, “all by myself”, which combined with the others forms a large tapestry of the era.

It would be better if artworks referred, as much as possible, to themselves (and naturally to the programmatic lines of their makers), if the connections between were structural and poetic in nature. The undoubtedly interesting questions of the environment, of consensus, of “through whom” – if we look closely at the way things have gone – seem to wind up gutting the works and weakening the artists. The fact that power celebrates itself is nothing new. This has always been its most successful trick.

The end of History, tomb of the formal values and theoretical sustenance of the hysterical datum, seems to be taking longer than predicted, and at present our interest is focused, at best, on the near future. Self-reference is still the only safe haven, whether the work is produced by an individual or a society. Reality is autistic. Just as language transforms itself into metalanguage, or to put it better, with a line by Valerio Magrelli: “We speak, by now, only of speech”, so painting can only re-paint, cover with a layer of colour, the painting that no longer exists.

Therefore I declare the value – conceptually running against the trend – of my choice to use painting as a means of expression, or to be more precise as an inexpressive means.

In my work the ideas are mine, like the project and the refining of the technical procedure; the practical realization, on the other hand, is often the work of a team, shared with experienced assistants. My paintings are, first of all, reflection and stylistic exercise. The aim, essentially, to please. I have chosen not to produce, or put on the market, an excessive number of works. My work remains work for a selected audience, it is represented in good and excellent Italian collections.

If I were to have to identify an ideal lineage to which to connect my research, limiting the range to 20<sup>th</sup>-century Italy, it would seem almost obvious to begin with figures like Morandi, Sironi, Carrà, for the formal rigour of their work, then passing through the conceptual universe of Burri e Fontana, and arriving at the mathematically perfect work of De Dominicis. The sense of this itinerary can be seen in the fundamental idea that the artwork is, essentially, tangible proof of a logic operation and a calculation that have proved to be exact, as well as an intellectual contrivance.

In the past the pairing that best described art was substantially Thought and Form, and we shouldn't be too hasty about declaring these terms obsolete. Some people today, justifiably, have replaced them with the freer expression Thought and Behaviour, a formula clearly derived from Duchamp, ideally suited to those who choose not to formalize. But it is clear that if we want to be at least partially coherent, we must say: nothing to formalize, nothing to sell.

I once read an attractive and insidious slogan that comes to mind now and again: “Contradictions are everywhere”. As if to say it is useless to insist upon the story of coherence and other such sentimentality; only the fact counts. In the case of artists, for example, what counts is being in the right situations. We can't help but admit that this reasoning contains a significant amount of good

sense and even truth. It's clear that what counts is being there, and "how" this is done can become a truly secondary issue. This undermines the idea of the "author" and its authoritarian discipline. Just wasted time and energy.

Acquaintance with the things of art and culture in general can open our eyes to formal and structural questions, to issues of social and epochal needs, and all this can get you closer to an original result. But inspiration is a natural gift, and if isn't a profound part of you your work will always be lacking something. Inspiration is also the thing that will place you in conflict with most of the society, no one can stand inspiration in others. In the past – until the historical and modern avant-gardes – artists often took on an anti-bourgeois attitude of **ethical superiority**, they represented a lofty model for society, capable of giving up the flattering rewards of money and success, because they were sustained by **higher** values (the Sun Kings were always few and far between). Today the role of the artist seems to be that of someone who embodies merits and faults of the society. He isn't better than others.

The art world is a pyramid structure: the further you advance the smaller the circle, and it is not just a question of career. One's personal path is often detached from individuals will, it is part of a larger plan. For example: never before as today have personal ambitions gone hand with national ambitions. Claude Monet said, "il faut décourager les arts", which is a nice remark, profound and worldly. It is probable, in fact, that the word "no" is precisely the thing that unblocks complex situation, rather than "yes". The word no, within certain limits – in truth not so easy to define – provokes suspension, freezes events, saving us from pitfalls. In love, for example, the solution and seduction often are the result of following a strategic no with an unexpected yes, without calculation and without conditions.