

Trascendendo (Transcending)

After taking his diploma from the "Venturi" art institute in Modena, north Italy (the city where he currently lives and works), Claudio Secchi began to work in a non-figurative sphere with an expressive use of colour, followed by a long research process where he associated form with the colour, until arriving at more figurative results still featuring the use of pure, bright tints. Around 2005, his artistic path seems to have entered new directions, such that the forms were once again expelled from the canvas and the colour regained a certain freedom, now linked to aspects of illumination: this is the period of the series of skies entitled *Al di là delle Nuvole (Beyond the Clouds)*. The light however is not of a phenomenal nature, linked to atmospheric data, but symbolic: the contrast between light and dark is intended to symbolize the struggle between good and evil.

In 2006 was born, from an oneiric inspiration ("*Everything began with a dream... literally*", as the artist himself admits), the series *Trascendendo (Transcending)*, where the pure incisive colour dialogues with geometric shapes designed to represent a dimension of a transcendental order. Out of this comes a space of representation populated by the free, unpredictable flowing of an extremely personal symbolism, playing on the stylistic re-elaboration of absolute concepts already transmitted in different ways, in the diverse theological images drawn on, from structures and tones.

Unlike other symbolic languages – where the significant metacode simultaneously expresses both its own distance from the contingent, the real, and its ascribability to the sphere of the subjective, as unfathomable and elusive as this might be – in the case of the works of Secchi, the expressive weft is cloaked in characters of universality and inexorableness. It evokes, with a sort of teleological urgency, a paramount sense, something perfected, to be sought far beyond the phenomenal source.

Like a sort of Mandala which encapsulates the very essence of theological reflection, independently of whether we are dealing with Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism or others, the stylistic research of Secchi transversely fixes the terms of the concern. Thus the stylistic elements become *ipso facto* the mental forms of this research, they pursue one another over the ontological terrain dug out of cultural tradition, fertilized by philosophy and irrigated by mathematical speculation, intermingling in an eternal criss-crossing of opposites: the female and male principles, inside and out, the centre and the exterior, the great and the small, the circle and the square, light and dark. The representation has not been already vivified by the illusory aspiration to pinion the Absolute once and for all, but by the inevitability of the continuous and changing relationship with it.

From a technical point of view, the works of Secchi do not make use of images generated by computer, but are brought to life in oil on canvas through slow, patient hand production. An elaboration by computer would in fact have been a hindrance to the whole process, depriving it of that profound sense inherent to the painterly ritual (the choice and preparation of the colour, the priming of the ground, the contact with the canvas, the gesture of painting...), that reflective production process which is to be held as an integral part of the artistic experience of the creator of the *Trascendendo* series.

Gianluca Ruggerini – Gioacchino Toni

Gianluca Ruggerini and Gioacchino Toni: historians and theorists of art, are authors of the essay, *Gli stili nel tempo. Esperienze artistiche ed elementi di costume nell'età moderna (Styles over time. Artistic experiences and elements of costume in the modern age)* Clitt Editions (Rome 2005), where they investigated images of modernity from figurative art to costume. As well as having collaborated in publications of various kinds, the two academics founded and have directed, for almost a decade, the portal "ag52 – artgallery52", where artistic experiences and theoretical reflections intermingle.