

The liquid entity of color, the freedom of the image

By Matteo Galbiati

The most obvious and taken for granted matter of painting always remains the fascinating and alchemical matter of color. Painting-whatever technique one adopts and whatever tool one utilizes to work it has, precisely in the exclusive use of color and chromatic substance, something urgent and enigmatic; it is the epicenter of all the tensions expressively stretched to configure, in the ultimate image of the work, the assertive weight of ideas, thoughts, emotions that seek, in this physical externalization, to incarnate themselves as a declarative entity, a powerful and ever-rising testimony of new postulates and suggestions.

The recognition we give to artists is precisely that they know how to shape thought in the physical world and transform it into art with the substances of their craft. Painting, then, knows how to make itself increasingly dynamic, never the same as itself, always at the center of the incessant becoming of the perceptual flux that feeds interpretations, readings and differing visions, dictated by the relationship of strong - and mysterious in its deep intimacy - empathy that is established, from time to time, with the work, the artist and the ultimate gaze of the observer.

To look broadly and critically at the work that Antonella Quacchia has engaged in over time, and to extricate it from the slanderousness of the episodic nature of the pleasure of distraction and entertainment to which detractors might appeal, I believe a correlative coherence must be identified that unites, in the connectivity of her artistic-aesthetic practice, the different moments of her expressiveness, the phases and cycles of production that have given course and follow-up to works, at times, quite different from each other.

The budding spontaneity of her series and families of works must be placed at the center of an action that takes advantage precisely of the broad freedom of experimentation untethered by logics of belonging and/or affiliations, without even tying itself to the dialectics of homages or evocative references, because it succeeds in always and unequivocally being itself and, while having models to refer to, puts them in the background, leaving its action the privilege of telling and recounting itself. In this sense one can read a common thread that runs through every work and finds its dynamic and living epicenter precisely in the way she treats and animates the color that in her vibrates, veers, stratifies, floods, solidifies, covers, reveals, ... The "painted" image emancipates her passion already from its coming to life within the boundaries, wide and open, where it meets the intention, where the urge to say becomes pressing and, gathered together in a "frenzy" drawn to create, finds the way to translate itself into that artistic artifact in which this emotional flow remains alive and present. The maintenance of *pathos*, certainly not in a sense of melodramatic or theatricality that does not belong to Quacchia at all, within the work is dictated by the *imprinting* with which the artist receives and listens to the "moves" of color itself. The chromatic material, opaque or transparent, painted or worked "bodily" in resin or plexiglass, allows the parameters of its vivid and pungent expressiveness to be bestowed upon the gaze of the beholder.

From an informal sequel to the most pop evidences, Quacchia has tamed the lava consistency of color and liquefied it to make it emotionally ductile, versatile in finding the right way to narrate poems, to probe unexpected universes, to explore every narrative juncture of her articulate creation. That is why she assumes in her a kind of liquid entity, exclusive and characterizing, capable of re-modeling, kneading and stretching in modes - even if only in appearance - so different from each other.

The significant point of balance for all works lies precisely in the masterful unawareness of practicing one's expressive freedom without particularisms, without limitations, without restraints that constrain those precise choices of language that would otherwise compromise the sincerity of

the codes established by the artist. There is no excess and surplus in her images because the pictorial value and pictoriality, understood in each with an enlarged and dispersed, fractioned and untied spontaneity, is to such an independent degree that, in the weight of her hand, the different intentions know how to find the most correct ways to become a method. An original, eclectic, genuine method, but denoted by that energetic movement, full of driving and propulsive forces, which also has an origin in the numerous and intense life experiences - personal and professional - which positively charge a conception of art in which the vocation and conviction of a love always cradled through a noble wisdom acquired and conquered along the way are fully entitled. The varied collection of her pictorial writing aims to be an environment, a territory of mobilization and never just an icon in the strict sense of the term: the value of her own humanity reinforces the "liberal" purpose with which her "artistic objects" function in the gazes of others beyond their own matter represented.

The power of her color is that, in fact, to act as a connective agent that transfigures a reality and, by transforming it through the action of different unprecedented shades, creates the field where reason and feeling, idea and practice, beginning and end, aspirations and achievements come together in a union of *possibilities that are still possible*. In the intricate and sharp formal solutions her artist's soul collects fragments of the world, of those places in which she has been present and to which she is now a witness, whose most intense and fantastic echo she wants to gather.

Imagination is one of the other tools at the service of her chromatics that reread not only nature, but also art history, living environments and the dynamism of experiences made, or yet to be made, to the point of caressing the eventuality, romantically expected, of dreams. They live in her nuances, on the one hand dreamlike and on the other tangible, in a thoughtful union between the two with the wisdom of scientific rigor, tamed in turn by the iron discipline of enchantment and wonder.

We cannot then but yield to the tempering of her works, so different, yet so logically related, and strengthen the final declarative identity of each of them. Those expectations cannot be closed in the theater of represented fiction; it is color that always wins with its free truth, which has in itself the ability to keep alive the extravagance of experiences that in life, in one way or another, one always has.