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Marcello De Angelis

Ask the Skin

Personal exhibition dedicated to the artist's recent works

Curated by Ilaria Bignotti

IAGA Contemporary Art

Strada Cloșca n. 9-11, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

From Thursday, June 22, to Saturday, July 29, 2023

Opening

Thursday June 22, 2023, at 6.00 pm

The exhibition can be visited for free from Tuesday to Saturday, from 2.00 to 6.00 pm and by appointment.

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IAGA Contemporary Art dedicates a new solo exhibition to the artist Marcello De Angelis (Villafranca, 1977), proposing a selection of recent and very recent works made with the new technique to which the artist has been working for several years: the "*Mould Painting*". This consists in making paintings obtained by using expanded polyethylene boards, which become real "moulds" with the help of which the acrylic is stretched and layered on the surface of the canvas, obtaining moulds full of material memory, monochrome backgrounds that vibrate according to the light source projected on the work itself.

A slow and very delicate process that opens up even to the chance, understood as a possibility given by the lack of total control that De Angelis can exercise during the imprinting: thus, the artist experiences, slowly, day by day, what happens in this processing of the colour that is arranged on

the surface “imprinted” by already existing surfaces, chosen on the basis of the texture that characterizes them and which will thus be transposed into the pictorial field.

The process of execution is then very slow: the artist allows each chromatic level to layer and solidify on the support, verifying how the incidence of light causes the colour to fade differently on the canvas. He draws elaborate designs in advance to anticipate how the compositional parts will be arranged, from the arrangement of colours to the tracing of marks that frame and cross the painting, he numbers the various elements that make up his diptychs and polyptychs, given that the rhythmic score is another fundamental aspect of De Angelis’ work.

Time then marks the pictorial material through its rhythmic traces and imprints, left on the surface of the work, and organizes itself in the paintings conceived as a harmonious composition of the emblematic tables: playing on the theme of the square, the rhombus and the rectangle that brings De Angelis’s work together, from a historical point of view, that of the great avant-gardes of the 20th century, from De Stijl to Suprematism, from the issue of colour in French *Pointillisme* and in Italian *Divisionism* to the optical and segnic tables of the Sixties, from concretism to the dissemination of the work in space, to the great abstraction from overseas, to the mystical adventure of Barnett Newman, to the absolute rigour of Ad Reinhardt, to the chromatic balance of Frank Stella.

We find an echo of all this in his large-scale works, entitled “*Squares*” (2022), and designed in rhomboid shape, like tables in which different colours, many of them new to De Angelis’s language (reds, oranges, greens), are arranged to transform the perception of geometries, making them islands in an ocean of pictorial experimentation. The eye must therefore perform slow approaches, after the shock of the perceptive beauty, in order to understand all variations and rhythmic, compositional and chromatic pulsations that De Angelis’ careful painting is able to suggest.

Something similar happens in the two works entitled “*Stripes*” (2022) which, as De Angelis explicitly stated, evoke the central “zippers” in Newman’s paintings, visual fields in which the viewer is immersed with his/her eye and, at the same time, with the body, the latter becoming the vehicle of a transcendental path of contemplative vision.

Similarly in “*Innesti*” (2022), the artist takes on the challenge of using a new colour, a bright and iridescent pink: the result is an effective fusion between the spiritual meditation component provided by monochrome, which changes and reverberates in the space of vision, and the more rational component through which the artist “engraves” small dark blue lines in the visual field, crossing the monochrome appearance of the pink.

Another fascinating source of inspiration for De Angelis is architecture, or rather, the traces left by the foundations - or what remains of them - of architecture in the ground: the three canvases entitled “*Fondamenta*” (2022) are seductive variations on black that, overlapping and articulating into interwoven rectangles, create a network of concentric geometric images, vibrating outwards from the visual field and thickening into a possible core.

In other works, such as the diptych "*Morphé*" (2022), on a bronze background the artist grafts in a lateral position, a clear, vivid blue rectangle is inserted, furrowed by a rhythmic and repeated undulation. This is the result of a simple PVC sheathing film, which is precisely the material stamp of the painting on the work.

Gold and even silver return in other large paintings on display, such as in "*Saut dans la Vide*", work that shines with all possible shades of silver - a colour very dear to De Angelis, recurring also in the acclaimed earlier cycles made with the technique called *Injection Painting* - and in the centre there is a blue pictorial monolith: the colour thickens on the upper horizontal side of the work, and as it flows into the centre of the work, it gradually dilutes, meeting the silver background, to be lost in tiny fragments.

On display are also three great polyptychs entitled "*Polittico delle maschere*" / "*Polyptych of Masks*" (2022). The graphic design, carefully studied, provides that on corresponding white, silver or black pictorial fields, whose surface evokes the seductive graininess of the epidermis, a central line crosses the monochrome and inserts, enlarged, the detail of each of the fingers of the artist's hand, from the thumb to the little finger, from right to left. The result consists of works which protect the most intimate signs of our identity, unique and inimitable.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue containing all the works on display.

Marcello De Angelis

Marcello De Angelis (Villafranca, 1977) currently lives and works in Villafranca di Verona.

He graduated in Industrial Design at the Politecnico di Milano.

Since 2001 he has developed his own painting technique, renamed "Injection painting", which consists in painting using an injection syringe. His artistic research is aimed at bridling the pictorial matter within a logical and rational order, metaphor of the passage of time.

He developed several cycles while maintaining the technical-pictorial process: over the years his artistic research has found expression in different sectors of the visual arts and has expanded in a changing way: not only painting, but also sculpture, artist books, mail art and installations. In 2017, he began experimenting with "mould painting", a technique that consists of making a cast of acrylic from expanded polyethylene sheets. Through this process he develops large monochrome color fields that vibrate as the light source varies.

Among recent exhibitions: *BOCCONI ART GALLERY*, Campus Bocconi (2022); *TIME FRAME*, Palazzo Libera of Villa Lagarina Trento (2020); *I PROGETTI DELLA NATURA*, at the National Archaeological Museum of Mantua (2018).

IAGA Contemporary Art

IAGA Contemporary Art Gallery was founded in 2014, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in the Transylvanian region, by Alberto Perobelli, entrepreneur and collector of modern and contemporary art: starting from the acquisition of the works of the great masters of the Italian post-war period after the Second World War, through his activity in Romania, began to deepen the research and languages of young local artists and founded the project of a gallery to give voice to their works, in a careful and original dialogue with artists from other Eastern European countries, without forgetting the young Italians and the middle-aged.

From 2014 until now, the result is an intense activity of the gallery, coordinated by Rosalba Di Pierro, Gallery Manager, hosting six exhibitions a year and with an active participation in art fairs in Northeast European countries, with a careful presence at Italian fairs.

Ilaria Bignotti

Born in Brescia, in January 1979, Ilaria Bignotti holds a PhD in Research in Theories and History of the Arts and is the Scientific Curator of the Archives and Artistic Fields; she is an independent curator and art critic.

She is part of the Curatorial Committee of ArteJeans, a project for contemporary arts for the establishment of a Museum-Archive of Jeans in Genoa (from 2020 to the present).

She is part of the Scientific Committee of the MoRE Museum, a museum of rejected and unrealized art projects (since 2011-present).

She is a specialist in the history of modern and contemporary art (19th, 20th and 21st centuries) for the new "Dell'Arte" course by DeAgostini Scuola, lasting five years, dedicated to Higher Secondary Schools and Universities, signed by Ernesto Luciano Francalanci (first edition 2021).

From 2003 to the present, she has designed and organized international exhibition projects, working for long periods and continuously with museums, institutions and foundations, in Italy and abroad.

She is a Visiting Professor and Lecturer at Italian and International Universities.

She is an expert in modern and contemporary art for the Brescia Court.

From 2003 to the present, she has published over a hundred books, including catalogues of modern and contemporary art for clean exhibitions; she has written several essays and contributions in scientific monographs and dedicated catalogues.