

Pino Pinelli.

Giorgio Bonomi (2005)

Galleria Santo Ficara Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Firenze

In the 1970s Pittura Analitica [Analytical Painting] at times with the precision of a surgeon sectioned the totality of the painting into its constitutive, programmatic and institutive, physical and conceptual elements. In France the artists who felt these demands came together in a group called Support / Surface which was the frame of the painting with its canvas that could be exhibited alone without canvas, without composition, without or with one colour or with repeated elementary elements in so far as all of these work modalities only signified a reflection treating the structural elements of paintings. Other artists in Italy, Britain, Germany and Holland preferred to concentrate on colour, often on its monochromaticity. And others concentrated on the sign, reduced to the minimum, to the point of becoming merely an indicated small line.

Pinelli, while 'organically' part of this artistic environment, moved in another direction to which he would always remain faithful, albeit with some modifications which time, the situation and new drives brought about. For Pinelli, in having abolished, "broken" both the canvas and the frame, the support became the wall itself and colour - in some way rendered a mass in its three-dimensional composition - spread out, diffused and disseminated itself on the wall...

And so symbolically colour, from being an "abstract" concept, became "concrete", not due to light that permits the spectrum but due to the concentration of the material which from coloured matter was transmuted in mass of colour. Elsewhere we have talked about "ontology of colour", founded on the Parmenidean idea of Being, all full within itself and lacking nothing.

Repulsion and attraction which we also find in the works of the

most simple structure, as in those made up of only two elements.

Attraction and repulsion which we can also see in the phenomenal part of the work: that is, on the outer surface of the artistic artifact, on its skin. This presents itself as soft and sensual velvet to the eye but disdainfully rough to the touch.

A "colour/mass" and not a "mass of colour", the latter being typical of Expressionism from its origins to the most recent "neo-" currents whereas the colour/mass - and not fortuitously, given its entirely conceptual foundation - prefers the minimalist monochrome.

If at the beginning the artist disseminated "forms" of various colours - although every individual form is absolutely monochrome - subsequently the colours were concentrated on Mondrian's rigid prescriptions: red, blue, yellow, black, white and grey. The work was usually monochrome even if composed of more than one piece while on other occasions the elements could be of a different colour although always identical to the inside of the single part. In whatever case, the range was rigidly that of Mondrian.

The monochrome is one of the great discoveries of contemporary art with "precedents" such as Turner and Monet. Rather than being a technique it is a philosophy, a poetic. A single colour can express concepts, sensations and emotions that are as strong and profound as a work produced with a multicoloured palette. If the colour is given by hand then on the surface we can see the artist's uncertainties and decisions, his drives and thoughts. If instead it is applied mechanically then that sense of coldness or great warmth deriving from the work produced in this way almost freezes or 'scorches' the observer with all the intellectual and sensorial consequences that result from this.

Pinelli's colour is always serene, it is "Mediterranean", it doesn't embody drama. The same dialectic of attraction/repulsion comes about in a context of tranquil aulicism, his rhythms are moderated, his process slow but continuous, with neither waste nor sudden or unexpected inversions.

The same passing from the straight line to the curved, from a Euclidean to a fractal geometry - that is, from regular forms like the

square or the rectangle to more serrated/jagged and broken profiles, even if within a context of formal polygonal normality - takes place without upheavals or shocks, indicating the certainty of a procedure that advances by way of progressive accumulations and not by way of contradictions.

It is precisely one of the last "forms" preferred and used by Pinelli - the "cross" or, better, the "X" - that permits greater composition and interpretation complexity due to a multiplicity of reasons: with this form the artist is able to create his largest works, capable of infinitely multiplying without those limits - if only in the sense of perceptive taste - which other forms impose.

This form contains a vast series of symbolisms which also unconsciously are reflected upon the work: if it is the "cross" then this gives the symbol of suffering - and in antiquity even of torture; and it becomes a sign of nobility, recognition and acknowledgement (in the Orders of Knighthood, for example, it is a form that presents itself with a well-defined centre while, at the same time, it has four vectors that either "escape" in opposite directions or else "converge" in that intersection which is the centre).

If we look at the cross as an "X" then we see that this letter of the alphabet, with its passage from the Greek and Latin to various modern alphabets, takes on the meaning of indetermination and the uncompleted, in mathematics although also in the common sense - person "X", for example. In Cartesian axes the horizontal line (the abscissa) is indicated with the "X" and Pinelli's works are tendentially developed on horizontality. In fact, even when the linear dissemination which always moves from left to right tends to move upwards, the last element or last elements suggest a sort of gliding (and horizontality also more efficaciously renders that sense of aulic calm we mentioned above), Finally, one cannot forget that the "X" is the conventional sign of parity, of equilibrium, an element to be found in all of Pinelli's work and the result of couplings/flankings, of formal education and measure.

It is not fortuitous that Pinelli's first significant work - dating to 1976 - was created with the breakage of the painting of which

the four straight lines of the perimeter remained on the wall, wood covered with flannel. And now one of his most pregnant works of his recent production is a sort of "recomposition" of the painting, even if in formal terms it appears quite close to the one of 1976. The "recomposition" should certainly not be understood as the retrieval of the flat and entire surface but should be seen in the sense that the two elements - which in being suitably profiled make up the work - are flanked by way of a strong magnetic attraction, inside leaving a 'vacuum' which is not indeterminate but shaped in the form of the Greek cross. In this way, at least for the present, the circle seems to close.

Given how Pinelli's path progresses as linearly as the symbolic contents are able to be developed - always to be found in a work of art that has "sense" - not only in virtue of the artist's maturation but also and above all due to the transformations which positively or negatively reality undergoes, one has to underline this same coherence: if during the 1970s the contents appeared more "formalistic" (and they had to be given that it was precisely the "substance" of the forms that was being questioned), today with a "form" acquired and convinced in its solidity it is the aspects of "content" - albeit hidden in the unconscious - which are evidenced to the greatest degree and which enrich the work of the artist and the mind... not to mention the eye of the observer.