

Corporeal

Giorgio Verzotti (1995)

Galleria A arte Studio Invernizzi, Milano.

"In my works, including the most recent ones, there is a geometric scheme and continuous experimentation with colour. In this period, in addition to the need to animate the surfaces in order to give them greater plasticity. I have felt a desire to further soften the forms. I want to give the impression of penetrating the soft crevices in the surface, as if they were dunes blown by the wind in the desert."

With this statement in 1986, Pino Pinelli introduces us to the nature of his artistic experimentation, which has continued to be a basic feature of his output, despite the addition of new themes every year. The above observations are, therefore, extremely pertinent to his most recent works, which, in a sense, tend to take them to extremes. Not only does the geometrical scheme persist in a latent form, but it exhibits itself with authority, and intervenes in the very conformation of the work. As with all of Pinelli's output, this is entirely constructed, and, in the process of the construction, the geometrical order is established, for example, in the fold of one of the edges. Turned out from the plane towards space, the fold is not merely the formative imprint of the geometry, but it is also the implementation of a normative hypothesis.

Constructed on an exact vertical, it evokes the rigid edge of the code-picture that the work clearly incorporates as a part of itself, but with which it immediately engages in a dialectic of negation. In works executed shortly before, the fold ran along the two vertical edges of what is thus defined as the picture, which the artist involves, referring to its shape - this functions as an "authority" - only to contradict it at once.

In fact, in Pinelli's pluralistic universe, this picture appears to be divided into two symmetrical entities that themselves contrast with any

hypothesis of uniqueness, where, obviously, the single unit, One, is valid as an ideological stipulation.

It contrasts with it, but does not cancel it - rather it evokes it, and allows it to be present, showing it to be one of the factors in the dialectic. In fact, Pinelli is not interested in a rigid stance (that is, being on one side or another of painting...), but in transformation, in the change in values and functions - although these are always within the limits of painting.

In his more recent works, painting drifts away from its prescriptive code, and returns to dynamize the environment to which it relates. A single raised, solid edge anchors the work to its canonical definition. From this, the picture plane, which had always been perceived as a set of fragments - as plurality, in fact - expands longitudinally. The dynamization of the environment is linked to the largely diagonal arrangement of the components of the work, so that, at first glance, they appear to be paths or dynamic vectors.

In fact, the work itself is constructed along longitudinal lines. It bears the evident traces of manual intervention in the form of superimposed grooves running the length of the whole picture plane; these are obtained with palette knives or other suitable tools. As always, for Pinelli, painting is an entirely manual operation that involves mixing powders and water, handling and shaping the malleable material that derives from this, the abolition of the support, and everything that we know, and have already said, from the seventies onwards....

Since the segment became a fragment in the mid-eighties, the manual component has become vitally important in his pictorial procedure; displayed to the point of becoming almost theaterized, it has become one of the constants of his work. It involves animation of the surfaces to give them greater plasticity. It is a way of allowing the need for an impulse to emerge. In the works of the seventies, this was negated or just hinted at (in the imperfections of the painted canvases), and it is a way of allowing us to become aware of the time element in his work - in other words, the procedural element that in those works was, in my opinion, resolved by the rhythm of modules.

Now, the manual component also has the function of dialectically opposing the ever-present need for rules. The grooves declare themselves to be the artist's gestures; they even seem to be fingerprints, and

this is attested by a presence that is emphasized to the point of irony (but Pinelli speaks of something like a brushstroke seen under a microscope, as if he were attempting to reveal the atomic structure of the painting...). At the same time, the way they are disposed on the plane - parallel or perpendicular to it - until they fill it with orderly schemes, is an evident sign of the thought controlling the praxis.

As always, the colour is chosen from the rigorous interplay between primary colours, and between whites, blacks and greys (by the latter are meant the sum of all the possible colours) and, in this case, bright red. In all of Pinelli's works, colour, when it appears, plays the role of emotional intensity, and imbues the work with energy. This energy content is even more evident in his most recent works, and in those that I am describing, thanks to their emphasis on the materials, as Giovanni Maria Accame has already noted: "The energy in these works is provided by the concentration of colour - that is, by the intensity of the colours, which are mostly applied to a shaped surface, so that, once again, the sensation of colour is added to the tactile one. The colour is not surface painting, but a condensate of material. It is the absorption and regeneration of the pigment, which is deposited, is mixed, and then combines with the plastic form."

Combining with the painting: there is perhaps no better way of describing the whole of Pinelli's output and its coherent development. Thus, from monochromatic severity to an explosion of colour, from modular forms to the extreme freedom of the shaped fragments, right up to the appearance of the manual component - as I have already mentioned - his work has undergone many changes. But its basic features have remained constant, especially the concept of pictorial expression as a total dimension, in which it is not possible to maintain the distinction between reason and impulsiveness for long.

With the airbrush, spraying the paint into the crevices repeatedly, into the wrinkles of which the work is, in a sense, wholly composed, thinking of the desert dunes....

Therefore, the image, the concept of the body and corporeality become the common ground on which the conflicting requirements eventually meet: this allows the rigorous construction of a grammar of sensuality, rather than a "discourse on painting".