

CORRADO DE BENEDICTIS'S "ARTISTIC NOVEL"

We cannot fully understand an artist, whoever he is, if we don't take in, at a careful omniscient glance, his entire creative existence, reading it backwards to reconstruct the plots of the inevitable technical speculative development that have led him to his last results. Whoever doesn't carry on such a survey is like an explorer that declares to know a river and, departing from its source, often covers spaces of heterogeneous topography, without following all its course. And, with regard to Corrado De Benedictis's painting, I think I can state that his creative flow has moistened changeable shores of existence, at times sunlit by the gloomy shade of melancholy, in a perpetual movement and never in the same way, interactively, in a way that his feeling influenced his poetics and his art affected the vicissitudes of life, in terms of mutual exchange.

Therefore reading the artistic "novel" of the Author, reconstructing and interpreting the pictorial language expressed in his works in various "periods", means telling the evolutionary story of a soul that showed itself on a canvas, the only place where inwardness has found its Epiphany.

And certainly it is a matter of an inner world in a perpetual research of an ideal of "beauty", since the extreme visual pleasantness of his works, both of those belonging to the figurative period, as those created after the author's overcoming of the figure. I can undoubtedly state that, even in the consciousness of the subjectivity of his aesthetic taste, at the basis of Corrado De Benedictis's activity there is an extreme care in every single work, as if each of them was absolutely the first one or the last one. At a first glance, even if quick and not supported by any critical reflexion, our Author's works are first of all "beautiful", since they reflect a precise aesthetic conception. If most of the actual artists, in order to emerge, rely on the "scandal" provoked by disagreeable images, often produced by a chromatic dissonance, De Benedictis pursues the opposite aim since his primary objective is his work's pleasantness, to say that in a human universe which is already ugly in itself because spoiled by individual and collective selfishness, it's Art's task to re-balance the human feeling guiding it back to an idea of beauty which seems to be lost forever. Obviously this conception can be considered partially a variance with the almost sole march of the flock of contemporary "artists", that mostly browse on the meadows of the so-called "installations", having abandoned canvas and brushes (even if many of them never used them also if they knew how to) out of regard for a "conceptualism" that to express itself makes use of materials of varied nature. And, in art, this undoubtedly represents the sprouted fruit on the branches of minimalism, in a time dominated by the culture of survival, as Christopher Lash says, that induce the creative self to repress itself because it feels under siege: this is a psychological trap where De Benedictis doesn't fall. In fact, with the passing of time, his works assume a greater and greater chromatic consistence and force, while sizes appear so gigantic that they dilate in "museum" measurements certainly unsuitable for the small spaces of modern residences. Therefore we can notice a sort of reaction against minimalism, besides a taste for "beauty" elevated to value of reference, with the progressive

abandonment of figure for an intuitive more than conceptual investigation, on the dimension hidden beyond Maya's Veil of appearances.

This is an inevitable landing, if we consider that even through the lines of the figurative production we can deduce a longing for what is beyond, for the invisible behind the manifest, as the cycle of nude women gives evidence. Central is the research of beauty through chromatic combination, with the insertion of the figure sketched but not characterized, within extremely fascinating atmospheres. The creative purpose, with all evidence, is not at all to withdraw and to propose again "reality": the works of this cycle are to be considered true profane icons, within whose spaces there is the image not simply of woman but the sublimated idea of woman. The inspirer principle of this period is Eros, "the principle of pleasure", that represents, according to Freud, the Mover of human action, besides that of creative action. And sublimation doesn't save not even the landscapes and dead natures; on this subject we must underline that De Benedictis entrusts only colour with the task to "design" the subjects, thus revealing a certain inclination to an impressionist taste, even if revisited and reconverted through the language of contemporaneity.

As regards to the so-called informal production, even if I would like to invent the neologism "a-formal", with little possibility of mistake, that Corrado De Benedictis nourishes will to dress reality with oneiric clothes, through an introspective investigation that leads him to dig inside the true source of every artistic creativity, that is to say the unconscious, whose ordinary language is undoubtedly dream, that usually makes use of chromatic words and, to all appearances, chaotic ones to express itself and its principles. And it is also true that the Author, aware of the fallacy of the human sensorial perception, goes in search of the noumenon that is hidden in the external Epiphany of the phenomenon, the not visible through the folding of knowledge, in other words the reality that hides beyond the horizon that the human eye takes in.

Portraits of the human soul, on one side, and portraits of the world's soul, that is the Universe, on the other side, through the use of the microscope, in a parallel inquiry in the most hidden labyrinths of the microcosm and in the infinite spaces of the macrocosm; a gnoseological journey that, probably, cannot find any destination, but that leads the artist to halts and goals which are worthy of being reached.

Michele Miscia