

linguistico, la Transavanguardia ha portato una liberazione da una certa autoriflessione dell'opera che la rendeva a volte sterile, a favore di una dinamicità e di una dimensione ludica e di piacevolezza del gesto del guardare che si era andata persa. Ma se ogni cosa che apporta un'apertura è la benvenuta certamente la schematizzazione che ne è seguita non faceva che riproporre l'ennesimo cliché da applicare per vendere il proprio prodotto.

Mi rendo conto che si riesce a dare per lo più un ritratto in negativo, definendo principalmente quello che questa generazione non è, ma credo che sia importante non ingabbiarla in schemi analoghi a quelli da cui ha preso decisamente le distanze. Leggerezza, rapidità, esattezza, visibilità, molteplicità, questi sono tra i pochi termini (presi naturalmente in prestito dalle *Lezioni americane* di Calvino) con cui ci si può orientare per avventurarsi tra le immagini di questo CD-ROM in cui ognuno può crearsi un percorso nel panorama dell'arte che è stata esposta a Milano. Un modo per affiancare l'attività espositiva fatta di una serie di piccole iniziative, con una grande rassegna itinerante da visitare comodamente a casa, senza pregiudizi. Un mezzo utile anche ad un pubblico straniero che nella quasi totalità ha ignorato l'arte italiana degli ultimi quindici anni, forse proprio per la mancanza di una seria programmazione culturale/espositiva da parte di musei (quei pochi che ci sono) e istituzioni, che non hanno creato nessun evento che abbia stimolato curiosità né per i semplici turisti né per gli operatori del settore, chiudendo in questo modo le porte alla maggior parte dei possibili scambi e alla circolazione di idee. Questo CD-ROM è un passo in controtendenza quindi (speriamo uno dei primi), dove l'istituzione collabora attivamente con gli spazi non-profit, per diffondere la ricerca artistica e stimolarne l'attività.

Roberto Pinto

Introduction

by Roberto Pinto

The artists considered in this CD-ROM belong to the generation who started exhibiting in the eighties and nineties. This time cutting is not just a random choice, nor is it given by the criteria dictated by the Progetto Giovani of the City Council of Milan that compelled to focus on the young people active in Milan. I rather believe that a line can be drawn (with the usual bit of random, necessary when one tries to define time limits or terrestrial co-ordinates in which to cage artists or movements) which roughly includes a generation that did not participate in the 1968 protest movement, nor in the student movements of the late seventies; a generation that arose just after the international success of Arte Povera and then of the Transavantgarde. These movements prepared the starting conditions for the following generation of artists. Equally, the focus on Milan is not arbitrary, since this town represents a landmark for the artists of this new generation, thanks to the presence of a few galleries that were established in the same years with a will to present the "new" and proved to be capable to absorb these new talents.

After a conceptual phase and a consequent revival of painting these artists found themselves in a territory that had no definite borderlines anymore, nor any "apparent" barriers to overcome or to oppose. They were like "lost" in a wide field of work and research that could be fertile and insidious at the same time. Since the time in which ideology was so important was over, there was a tendency to "non judgement" regarding these works (this was also the case for those who produced the works), which were accepted without any discussion, claiming their position within the art world only because of some easy reference or alleged poeticalness. It has often been said that everything

was right, everything was possible, but even if that might have been a limitation for many artists belonging to this generation, we should not ignore the evident advantages and opportunities for experimentation that this situation offered. Once everything is accepted, there is no stereotype to be followed (nor to be fought); rather, everything can be "sampled" and used: from minimalism to figuration, from the Italian tradition to the foreign avant-gardes. At the same time, artists were not expected anymore to act as heroes or shamans, nor to pretend to have any final statements to establish.

These artists therefore dissociated themselves from the utopia, in which the sixties and seventies were envelopped, about the possibility to develop an artistic language, new and intelligible to everyone at the same time. While the movements of conceptual art and Arte Povera were increasingly interested in investigating the problems at the roots of artistic work, and particularly the linguistic aspect, the Transavantgarde brought a liberation from a certain self-reflection of the artwork that had often made it sterile, in favour of a dynamism and a playful dimension, as well as the pleasure of looking at things that had gone lost. However, even if every new approach is welcome, certainly the system of schemes

that followed caused nothing else than to reintroduce the umpteenth cliché to apply in order to sell one's product.

I understand that this is mostly a negative portrait. However, I think that for this generation it is particularly important not to be caged into those schemes it decisively distanced itself from. Lightness, rapidity, exactness, visibility, multiplicity, these are some of the few terms (loaned from Calvino's *Lezioni americane*, of course) in which one can find one's bearings to venture into the images of this CD-ROM and to explore the Milanese art panorama through one's own itinerary. Offering a large touring review to be visited comfortably at home, the CD-ROM is a way of integrating a scarce exhibition activity consisting of a series of small initiatives rather than a cultural programme developed by museums (the few we have) and institutions. In the last fifteen years no event has been realised that could stimulate the curiosity either of simple tourists or of the art world, with the effect that Italian art has been nearly totally ignored by the foreign public. This CD-ROM is therefore a step offbeat (hopefully one of the first), and an example of an institution actively collaborating with non-profit spaces to spread and foster artistic research and activity.

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