

Negative Capability – Paintings

Carla Accardi, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Peter Halley, Reinhard Mucha, Giulio Paolini, Anetta Mona Chisa & Lucia Tkáčová

Curated by Lorenzo Bruni and Giovanni Iovane

20th June – 07th December 2013

“I mean Negative Capability, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason”.

John Keats, 1817

“...al volgere lo sguardo altrove in attesa dell'immagine”.

Giulio Paolini, 2012

Ironically, the theory of “negative capability” characterized by the active figures of “Agency” and the opposite “Structure,” is discussed more within sociologic and philosophic disciplines than in the fields of visual art and literature.

Firstly used by the Romantic poet John Keats, the negative capability practice has never belonged to contemporary critical landscape, except for its connection with the First Modernism, through the “displaced subject” of Baudelaire writings.

Nevertheless, it is possible to uncover a sort of “negative dialectic of painting” “as practice of doing”, in favour of an exquisitely conceptual dimension. The works of art, therefore, that emerge from this type of attitude, do not aim to occupy a position in reality, instead they intend to escape from it (in an antagonistic form, “resistant”, like expressed in the theories of the *Negative Capability*) and, at the same time, aim to double it.

The group show: *Negative Capability – paintings*, curated by Lorenzo Bruni and Giovanni Iovane, will focus specifically on the role and the function that can be conferred to contemporary artistic experiences; as modality to rephrase a new balance of things and not only to draw it.

The curatorial approach, born from the will to investigate historical codes, which are used to interpret the abstract language with two different shades of meaning: one aspect is linked to the interruption of opinion from the point of view of the representation of reality. This orientation for instance brought **Giulio Paolini** (Genova, Italia, 1940), to consider the “historical codes of representation” in order to investigate the essence - and the absence. **Richard Mucha** (Dusseldorf, Germania, 1950), had taken to the extreme consequences of dialectical relation, introducing an autobiographical dimension by which he manipulated the elements that constitute the museum institution and its reason for being. The other aspect is associated with a strong and negative strength towards politic, which appears in **Pier Paolo Calzolari** (Bologna, Italia, 1950), through a poetic dimension, which sublimates the everyday dimension. **Anetta Mona Chisa** (Nadlac, Romania, 1975) & **Lucia Tkáčová** (Banska Stiavnica, Slovakia, 1977) prevail a reflection about bases of the common sense, that allow an awareness on what can be considered “normal” from a social point of view.

These two aspects are joint by a radical reflection about codes of *abstract representability*, semantically existent in the art works of all the artists shown, and that in **Carla Accardi** (Trapani, Italia, 1924) and **Peter Halley** (New York City, USA, 1953) they take a formal reflection about the negation of the reality and awareness of painting media: surface and colour stratification.

Created for Galleria Astuni, the project's starting point was developed from Carla Accardi's artwork: *Orizzonte*, composed by a sequence of fifteen canvases, that form a “horizon line”, which is mental rather than formal. The choice of artists' artworks and their relation to each other, will highlight the need not to create a different space, but instead to create a device of comparison about culture's contemporary codes, allowing people to notice and re-elaborate the same signs they “meet” and “share”.

A theoretical book *Negative Capability-Paintings*, written by Lorenzo Bruni and Giovanni Iovane (published by Silvana Editoriale) will follow the show. The presentation will take place at Galleria Astuni in October 2013.