

maria cristina carlini

Maria Cristina Carlini and the hazardous space of urban everyday life

Only a small number of artists have the endowment and gift a solid creative position in a world that has not yet recovered from the postmodern chaos.

The traces of this chaos do not escape a careful observer, from Sao Paulo to Sydney, Istanbul, Basel, and Venice up to Miami.

At the same time, with optimism it is possible to recognize, notice and appreciate the alternative to artificially produced libertarianism.

This position is quite demanding.

First of all it requires the artist a clear ethical position as well as a wider acceptance of creative and intellectual directives than those of Western Europe, which are imbued with Cartesianism. Furthermore, it becomes clear that aesthetics is not the sole and exclusive scale of values and evaluation of a work of art, but that the factors related to anthropology, sociology, magic and occult sciences should be increasingly included in the value and assessment.

Besides, it has been forgotten - although one is now starting remembering - that the essence of art is much more connected to the "aura" mentioned by Walter Benjamin than to the preset evaluations imposed by aesthetics, which, in the uncertain world of art, represented a prosthesis that allowed a safe passage to the catwalk of art shows and fairs, "Documenta" of this or that, new and old biennial exhibitions, etc.

This short preamble is essential to approach in a free and open way the understanding of Maria Cristina Carlini's artistic position. You can only talk or write about her work if you try to "open it" to the same extent and at the same time at the poetic, environmental and social level, that is, when it sublimates, in its iconic materialization, the mnemonic energy even stronger than that accumulated in Europe throughout the twentieth century.

This is the reason why it is no coincidence that Maria Cristina Carlini started her career in the early seventies of the twentieth century by moulding her own thoughts through clay, this malleable feminine material, to which man has been able to rely since time immemorial and thoroughly his own beliefs, fears and need for a decent social dialogue.

However, the intimacy of pottery production was not sufficient for wider communication.

The need to place her creative energy to the service of visual culture, where the dimension of the social dialogue is more extensive, she has succeeded in filling the hazardous space of urban everyday life with a number of environmental interventions.

The architectural environment assigned and the new spiritual creation on the one hand and the dynamics of urban daily life of the other (as the latest environmental interventions in Paris and Madrid), is usually solved by Maria Cristina Carlini with the installation of an

iconic archetype of the type through which the present one is linked to that of yesterday, not to say with the primordial one.

The artist explains, not without reason, how clay and ceramics intervened in her first encounter with art, which reveals the heat of the Sun and the heat of fire.

Later on, creating with other materials such as iron and lead, she was able to coin and for her thought with fire in the dual paradigm: on the one hand as a contrivance of warmth and confidence, on the other as a powerful expedient of purification and divine illumination.

Maria Cristina Carlini, despite the type of technological process, has always managed to fit the anthropological values and concealed archaism in the final form of the matter she was creating.

It is not important whether it deals with prehistoric Mediterranean archaism or with modern archaism of futurism, what counts is the sound memory sublimated in all her monuments.

We can just deduce that the true function of her work is memory.

Generally, it seems that from the edges of the glittering kitsch of electronic media and from the passive consumption of their “gray” information product a real storm is drawing near to protest against the values artificially created by the virtual world.

A real visual and tactile contact with the matter full of the aura of classicism and with the charge of the avant-garde represents a productive and creative alternative opposing a current cocktail of aesthetic, social, and moral values.

Fortunately, Maria Cristina Carlini is not alone in this “stormy” alternative location. To her name we can also associate, with reason, even Charles Simonds, Anne and Patrick Poirier, Anselm Kiefer, Richard Long, Lucio Fontana and we can even name the “fourth” dimension.

All this means that today we can clearly foresee, unlike the “aesthetic ether” mentioned by Yves Michaud, the universe of new values that can help the human being stop for a moment in his everyday life and think where he has come from and where he is really bound for.

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