

“An empty pot makes an intense sound”

William Shakespeare, Henry v

I have always appreciated the multiple value and the interpretation that the works done by Claudia Canavesi and Nadia Galbiati evoke. I am always surprised by the fact that in the complex situation of their research, everything turns out to be so even and harmonious, with fresh solutions and experiments which are a tribute to their interest and taste.

It seems obvious but it is difficult to find a union in any artist's work, if the artists himself doesn't know what he is looking for precisely. Even if the object of the research seems to be inexplicable, talent is the most important element that will determine the work.

The artistic couple Canavesi-Galbiati, is able, with their passion for the subject, to continually develop an innovative research, without abandoning their formality and poetic expressions. They transmit this expressive confidence in every meeting, on every occasion that we have to observe their works. In this case, during the preparations for this exhibition, I was fascinated by one fact in particular: the meaning they have given to Emptiness.

Emptiness is main subject of their latest intervention, of their big and demanding project in the space in which they have to work. It is such an important empty space that I would have like to cite it in my articles title. I could have represented it graphically, a new experience which is not immediately understood thus in need of interpretation. It may have been a bracket followed by some dots in order to motivate a spaciousness of experience which invades the setting, the senses and the mind. But I would undoubtedly have had more difficulty, - being a writer- in leaving and providing a clear meaning as regards to what they actually do with their work: that is, to describe, transcribe and highlight Emptiness. I left an empty space for the title -excuse my playing around with words-, and I decided to use one of Shakespeare's quotation. Their work is amazing and it must be said.

These two artists believe in the value of the language of the sculpture, which is a live material and tangible body. On the contrary, talking about sculpture and empty space at the same moment could be an absolute paradox. However the first exists thanks to the second and vice versa, in a reciprocal affirmation.

I don't want to go on too much about quality, ability and knowledge of the techniques used; it's obvious that Canavesi and Galbiati's intervention is taken to extremes in this case. Thanks to the space available, their work becomes monumental and, subdividing it in two different parts (even if they are contiguous) on the whole, the artists have recreated a sort of route that leads the viewer to the discovery and to the comprehension of the sculpture.

The first glance leads us to the route structured and projects our attention to a room inside a room: where the walls are created by dry-etched paper and floor is lined with matrix plates. So the result is a viable space, in which we can penetrate to discover that it is a part of a new one which is defined and delimited by the modular repetition of paper and metallic plates.

Using a typical procedure and leaving intact the technical expertise by which they create their works (in this case the engravings and the respective plates), they immediately give another sense, another new configuration, which is superbly executed. The engraving and the respective matrix become a unique whole where there is not just a representation of a surface, but also a building module for the proposal of a setting.

If one walks on the metal plates, infringing the “sacredness” of the artistic piece, it is easily understood that a space that was previously non-existent appears. This is what defines the infinite emptiness that surrounds the work and the work itself.

Canavesi and Galbiati are able to manipulate and influence ones usual perceptions. They guide us into the unknown which is exactly what they focus on. Mixtures and elements which create experience. We are able to perceive Urban spaces, frames of everyday landscapes and life. Thus, the thin layer of iron plates together with their engravings is the first step towards the sculpture, its becomes three-dimensional,

enhancing what isn't there, hence, emptiness. Therefore it is a slight alteration (the engravings in the iron) which announce and amplify what isn't actually there.

The room is a real initiation of what follows: perceiving absence and presence; understanding the connection between fullness and emptiness. The spectator is thus prepared to explore and experience the second setting where the sculptures are both clustered and distant. The structures appear to be isolated, a group of structures is standing there waiting to be explored. We are no longer in a space which is destined to exhibition, we are in the nothing, the emptiness that surrounds and invites us into the abstract city.

This is where we are in touch with Claudia Canavesi and Nadia Galbiati. This is where they transform sculptures by applying and designing architectural elements made of paper, iron, grafite, chalk and stone. We were previously in the emptiness, now we are obliged to reach it. It was previously the project, but it has now become the work of art that ends the story. It was formerly a small dimension that expanded in size, it has now become a large dimension that becomes smaller.

These particular variations and expansions regarding the context are exactly what the two artists focus on. These are the elements which invite the spectator to interact with the sculpture in order to perceive the emptiness. So sculpture with its micro-macro extension is what defines emptiness. Ever more obvious when experienced by the spectator. One space is positive, the other is negative, one space represents the container, the other represents the content. Presence and absence with reciprocal roles. It is impossible to separate the two spaces, one is complementary to the other. All unites and becomes one. Sculptures and emptiness, together with design, projects and accomplishment unite in one act. Music is once again heard in the through the total harmony of the sculptures. Total to anyone and everyone.