

IKEBANA, Forma Art contemporain Lausanne, 21st of march until 3rd of may 2014

“On the southern banks of Helvetia, mundane but not so much”

by Achille Piotti

To underscore Davide Cascio's latest intellectual and artistic achievements, the exhibition IKEBANA, from the Japanese IKERU “a disciplined art form in which nature and humanity are brought together” is presented by the gallery Forma-ART in Lausanne¹. An homage to the historical fashion of Chinoiserie which “in a broader scope refers to a mixture of Eastern and Western stylistic elements for both the decoration and shape”².

Davide Cascio, a Swiss Italian artist employs geometrical lines in Arts to cut out a new identity in space. Since the very onset, these lines are the key to his work influenced by the esthetic philosophy of design teachers such as Bruno Monguzzi, just to name one. This philosophy carved his path in fine arts from his hometown in Lugano.

Similar to diverted photons leaving a continuous mark on a sensitive plate, the line is the first observable track from the atomic world made of waves. Its direction is but an escaping moment in quantum theory, a question of probabilities which clashes with the certainties of classical physics. It carries doubts on the plausibility of our measurements but opens new frontiers and discoveries in the field of sciences.

The work of Davide Cascio focuses on this doubt surrounding the reality in all its force. Since the beginning of his career, Cascio addresses subjects of intellectual depth exploring the meaning of utopia. In his work he copes with an unattainable world where he treats themes revolving around political theory (understood as the organisation of society), architectural structure (its first plastic and functional proof) and literature (of epical genre in praise of the exploratory spirit). As in the works of San Girolamo, Golem or Polyhedra, the idea of a frontier between narration and reality out-branches into a complex web of literary, philosophical and esthetic references sculpted into an installation made of candid materials and geometrical lines.

Cascio's exploration follows an eclectic course subject to the employment of different visual techniques. He applies iconographic collages to his installations to portray human epics from West to East along the Mediterranean shores. He then sails farther away on the waters of the Atlantic where James Joyce is a prelude to the postmodern age of Aldous Huxley. Throughout his career he dialogues with different traditions starting from his artistic and intellectual journeys to Rome in Italy, Athens in Greece and El Cairo in Egypt. Similar to postcards from his routes, these iconographic collages crop the intimacy of a distant miniaturized world made of warm colors and figurative pictures. In it he employs geometrical lines, typical of Islamic art, to escape the burden of time.

To display his internal anguish, Cascio resorts to structural elements which cope with the idea of human challenge related to the Odyssey, the Italian Dantesque pilgrimage or James Joyce modern Ulysses but also, we may suggest, with the premedieval oriental literature such as the Sufi conference of Birds by Attar of Nishapur. The outcome is his monastic inclination for a world of artistic representation along the lines of Persian miniatures.

His personal journey is similar to the loneliness of another Swiss artist, Alberto Giacometti. It goes along a tortuous path of intricate landscapes where fatigue, contrary to genius, is synonymous of doubt looking after an unstable reality. Davide Cascio commenced his exploration at the front door of Germanic influence, on the southern banks of our Swiss Italian frontiers. However, similar to traveling craftsmen from once upon a time, he continuously drew inspiration from his different experiences, the latest of which is his artistic residence in Paris.

From simple and linear elements of Arte Povera with faded shades of dark to light, typical of Renaissance mannerism, he shifted as a matter of fact to the celebration of plasticity with modern flamboyant colors which surface in a multifaceted reality. In his new approach he departs from questions surrounding the atomic universe to find a new balance of thoughts and poetical colors connected to the perceived material world. His infinitely small universe makes the transition into what physicists call the theory of decoherence. A more classical view where flowering interconnections between visible elements are produced without any instability³.

¹<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikebana>

²<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinoiserie>

³Wojcieh Zureck, Decoherence of the Transition from Quantum to Classical, Physics Today, 44, 1991,10, p.36