

7 Questions for Maria Morganti, by Lucas L'Hermitte

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*1 Maria, your painting is a cavalcade of colours: do you happen to gallop and forget everything?*

The rhythm of my painting is very simple and constant: one colour a day. No more. It is determined by a vital rhythm. It is like breathing. Respiratory frequency is marked by fullness and emptiness. Every single respiratory cycle that lasts one minute is composed of a phase of a short inspiration and a long expiration phase.

A minute of respiration is like a day of my painting: I touch the canvas with the brush (short phase), I look at it and I listen to what I have done (long phase).

It is therefore difficult to think of galloping because breathing would become gasping.

*2 In your painting, through the succession of colours, the past almost disappears – do you sometimes have regrets?*

The colour I use to paint always comes from inside the same bowl. The bowl is always wet and alive. The colour never dries. Every day I add a colour to the one from the day before. I never start from scratch. The new colour contains a part of the previous one and it slowly changes over time.

Every thing I see before my eyes, every colour that is formed in the bowl is accepted and transferred onto the canvas. There is no waste, no error. Everything becomes part of the extant colour.

There is always a trace of every colour that is spread on the paintings, both in the top part of the “Sedimentations” and in the “Diaries”; nothing is ever cancelled out.

There are never regrets: everything is accepted as a normal way of things.

*3 As far as I know, in your large-size paintings, yellow never appears in a final step, are you afraid of yellow? Do you think as I do that it is a hollow colour?*

The final colour always has origins in the leftover substance, and as yellow is a light colour it is difficult for it to form if it is contaminated by other colours. It is a colour that should be used when it is almost pure. When I add yellow to the bowl it almost always becomes green, orange, bright purple, etc.

*4 Often in your paintings I have seen a red calling a green and vice versa. Obviously you agree with the fact that both are complementary. Or is it only by chance?*

I would say that most of the time it is by chance, because the sequence of colours is determined by their natural development. Sometimes I respond to something, to a colour due to its contrast, and sometimes due to its dissonance, harmony, complementary nature, etc.

*5 In your individual paintings, do you plan in advance the number of your layers, the selection of colours and their order?*

The number of layers in the “Sedimentations” is determined by the quantity of time devoted to that work and by the substance more than the colour. I stop when I see that a substance with a certain consistency has formed rather than because of the perceptive effect of the colour.

*6 The upper part of your paintings is a dialogue of remembrance; in this dialogue can one speak of repentance?*

Rather than remembrance, we could call it a continuous presence of the present. It is like being a constant witness to the act that happens. Basically, what I do is create the conditions for the thing to happen, so that the event takes place. I don't feel like speaking about repentance. You can't regret something that is taking place, but only something that has already happened.

*7 Maria, very often in your paintings I can hear the underlayers crying... Do you hear them too?*

I don't know if they cry. None of them disappears. There is space for all of them; nothing is eliminated. They all share the space; it's just that one has the task of being the final layer, at least for a while. Sometimes I take up works after years and start layering again, so there is no permanence or absolute fixity to any of them.