

THE COLOUR HAPPENS, IT IS NOT PROVEKED

COLOUR – SUBSTANCE

Colour is the substance that existence is made of. Substance-colour leaves traces of its passage. My work has nothing to do with colour as a visual perception but as a physical substance. I do not paint a static image but produce living substance. For me, painting has something physiological about it. It is closer to a vital function like breathing, eating, excreting. The mass produced during existence is made and accumulated before me, outside of me. From the interior to the exterior: the emotive, fragile, vulnerable substance becomes external substance.

COLOUR TRANSMITTER

It is really hard for me to consider colour from the point of view of someone looking at it. I feel I am in the position of someone who makes colour or rather someone who is the transmitter who makes colour happen and become a concrete, tangible substance. It's not that I think I am a creator or an inventor, but merely a transmitter, an intermediary who connects an inside with an outside. It is as though I am creating the conditions for something to happen before my eyes. It is as though I am not looking at the colour, but merely releasing it.

THE BOWL

The palette is reduced to the minimum. There is just one place where the colour forms: the bowl. Every day in the studio I head towards it and add a colour to the one that is left over from the day before. I never use a pure colour, I always start with what I find inside the bowl. I find what is left over from the previous day after I have painted on a canvas. Every day I add a new colour, making it dirty with another one and slowly transforming it over time. I do not construct the colour. The colour evolves. I do not plan the colour; I head towards something and use what I find on the way.

The substance is transformed, consumed and does not accumulate. It always renews itself. The bowl never empties, but always stays wet and alive. It is like keeping a plant alive.

There is only one bowl. There are lots of canvases.

SEDIMENTATION

One layer is placed on top of another. The gesture is always the same: spread a fluid substance on a two-dimensional surface, until I've covered all

of it but not completely. The process declares itself: at the top is a border that recounts the passage of all the colours that have led me to that last layer. Every *Sedimentation* is like a fragment of a painting that develops over time and which is painted ad infinitum.

THE DIARY

This is a stick of painted wood, 10-cm-high and one-metre long. The first colour covers the entire surface, then 2cm of the first layer is left visible before the second starts and so on until the entire surface is covered. The work finishes when the available space finishes. The diary holds a trace of everything that has happened in the bowl and documents between three and five months of my time. It is a diary of colours rather than words. The rhythm is one colour a day.

THE DIARY HOLDER

Once finished, these *Diaries* are then stored in a steel structure that I call a *Diary Holder*.

This object becomes a sort of holder, an archive of my time that contains the *Diaries* painted so far and those that I still have to paint.

I imagined all the time that I have left to live and I accumulated a quantity of wood that corresponds to that time.

At first the painted part is small and the bare part is big. Over the years this object has gradually filled with colour.

It is as though I have built a space that I will continue to fill with my life. The sense is not of death, of the end, of closure, but of a physical and temporal space that lets the normal flow of things flow through colour.

THE INFINITE PAINTING

Since 2006 every day the same colour is also applied to the *Infinite Painting*. Every previous colour is cancelled out by the subsequent layer.

The colour is a substance with a certain consistency. Lots of micro-layers of paint spread on a two-dimensional surface create a three-dimensional object. The painting thickens and broadens over time. It is a substance that accumulates and takes up space and is heavy and cumbersome.

Lots of colours, lots of layers over time constitute a single body, a single substance-colour.

GREY (THE MUD)

All the colours come from the sludge and end up in the sludge.

After painting, the brush returns to soak in its container full of turpentine: a dirty broth that keeps the brush alive.

Over time, a muddy mass forms at the bottom of the container, accumulating substance. The bottom of the brush-holder is like the bottom of the Venetian canals.

It is a dirty, greyish substance that contains all the remainders of colours within it.

My colours are not bright; they are dull. They are dirty, not clean. They are contaminated, not pure. They contain all the previous colours. Each colour always seems to contain that grey.

Every day the brush emerges from this sludge, from this primordial unifying substance, and spreads on the surface one colour at a time.

Every time a limpid, strong and bright grey colour emerges from this grey and becomes a colour that is crystalised on the canvas. It creates its own identity, becomes independent, it rises up, distinguishes itself and becomes something in itself.

Then, when it returns to the container, the single colour is cancelled out in the grey, in the union of all the colours.

I AM RED

Every painting starts with a layer of red. I always start with red and never from a white canvas. I imprint the canvas with the substance I am made of. The red is me. It is like a memory I have to keep. For a long time I have felt that red is the colour that painting is made of. For a sculptor the colour of clay is grey or that of marble is white. For years I only worked with red, without wanting it to be the only colour. Then I went inside, and the deeper I went the more I became aware of the varieties. I found red-blue, red-yellow, red-red, orange, red-carmine, etc. This is where I got the impression that things – colours – can never be repeated. And in those similarities I got used to listening to the subtlest differences.

MONOCHROME OR POLYCHROME?

Colour doesn't exist, colours exist.

One colour leads to another. There is no waste, no error. Everything that is created in the bowl is considered, kept and spread on a surface.

Every colour is already a whole, but at the same time it is a fragment of a larger organism that is created over time.

Every colour is a precise but provisional point.

Today there is this colour and it can only be this colour, but tomorrow there is another one.

Today it is this olive green and tomorrow it will be that lavender blue, but today it could also be this aubergine purple and tomorrow that ochre yellow or today this greenish blue like the lagoon water in summer and tomorrow the same greenish blue muddled with a drop of black.

It is possible for a work to remain unfinished; it could be taken up again at any time. It is thus a non-absolute abandonment and therefore lacks drama. We can always go back to things.

THE COLOUR HAPPENS, IT IS NOT PROVOKE

You cannot plan a form. Things take the shape they need to take and become what they want. Sometimes they take on an image that does not necessarily correspond to their essence. The image that represents them is not always connected with what is in their past.

In my case, the work took a fairly ambiguous form. It is a contradiction in terms. From the outside it spoke of monochrome, cleanliness, precision, completeness, but I know that what I feel is polychrome, dirtiness, indefiniteness and transition. I am aware that it is misleading but you cannot force anything. I can only follow the natural flow of things, without forcing anything. The event happens; it is not provoked. You cannot simulate or represent the idea of time passing; you can just stay with it and support it. The process is more important than the conclusion. The meaning occurs during – not before or after.

The painting is a living organism. The painting is like a membrane or a skin. It is thin, thin and composed of lots of very fine and fragile threads. It can dry, excoriate, become scaly, display swellings and bubbles that can burst and detach. Like skin, it is destined to age. We cannot know how quickly, how much and when it will age. Things have their natural development. Like our human condition, it is at the mercy of factors beyond our control. It can become something else. It can change. We can decide to try to keep it young for as long as possible, but time passes over it nevertheless.

The work that signifies material left as a trace of experience or existence is destined to decompose and transform.

I like to think of this time that passes as a continuous creation of the work, or rather a natural continuation of the material's change.

