

**MARIA MORGANTI**  
**RUMINATING: THOUGHTS (1980-2018)**  
**Text readed 20 December 2019**

What do you do first: touch or think?

Does the direct relationship with the subject come first or are you spurred on by an idea?

What comes first: concept or form?

What is the relationship between the support I am working on, the space that contains me and me (my physical, sensorial and mental body)?

How to deal with the space?

Directly, without trying to reconstruct an illusory space. I attack the canvas thus...with gestures, contrails of my movements.

A substance that should make you want to touch it.

A two-way dialogue that excludes me.

Thinking and focusing on a single problem.

Seeing as I am always influenced by size and position, when I want chaos I turn the supporting structure around.

I lose myself in the space.

I paint with my eyes shut.

In this first work phase (from 1980 to 1982) I experimented, though without forcing myself, without going against my personality, in the most natural way possible. I was looking for the painting style that suited my inclinations and this is why at first I refused to judge or decide what was beautiful and what was ugly. Later, however, I betrayed myself by cataloguing.

Now I am beginning to understand and to be more organised, but it is my undisciplined nature that blocks almost any compositional and formal possibility of order and organisation.

I don't know. I move without knowing where to go and what to do. I move in the dark, fumbling around. I don't manage to stay within the limits of the format and break down barriers.

I modify while creating the painting. Invention happens without a project and occurs at the moment in which I directly measure myself against the practice.

I work in two phases: in the first I work with all my senses apart from sight. The eye discovers later, during the second phase.

Now I am also interested in the visual result. At first I was only interested in touching without looking.

I started to look because I realised there was a contradiction: I carried out an exclusively instinctive act with my body, but I only understood it later through my eyes.

I have a desire for physical contact with the substance. How can I touch the paintings?

Respecting my own instinct. The first sign can never be cancelled out.

This is where the gesture gets complicated...and begins to create forms.

I am still unsure about colours. The most certain ones are red and blue.

Transparent colours get on my nerves.

There are three colours that I can't get away from: black-grey, blue and red.

It's always important for me to write stuff. Getting it down on a piece of paper is like fixing time.

Here in New York I can sense a greater opening up towards others. If you don't open yourself up to conversation then you are alone.

Single, diptych, triptych or repetition? Opening, leaving, creating rhythm. Moving forward.

Conversation with C. R.

Try moving the centre. Focus on the detail.

The means I choose is the self-portrait. C. says: "Try considering yourself as an object. That way the conception of space changes not as a representation but as a sensation.

For example, a chair and me = feeling horizontal"

In the first phase of the work I start energetically and use up all my physical power; later comes the more cerebral and slower moment of reflection. First there's an energetic moment of aggression on the canvas and then a long meditation: a slow dialogue of reflection and physical pleasure in looking at it. Notes, annotations, small leaps onto other small works...

Too much instinct without ideas is no good...

Maybe I should not try to "understand" the canvas so quickly.

The small purple brushstroke at the centre of the large painting has resolved the entire painting.

Everything that precedes the moment of the "gesture", which prepares for the gesture itself.

Conversation with J. Z.

Atmosphere: it takes you inside and then returns to the first layer of the painting. My paintings are not atmospheric. They take you inside and that's that.

In the new (red and blue) painting I have some problems on the bottom left side. It is clear with this type of drawing that I am trying to enclose certain lines in this circle that want to burst out and escape...

I have tried to make an effort and force myself to take down the drawing, the form of the circle with this structural movement, but I always go back to the circular.

Painting is possibly the form of art that takes the most time to resolve itself. There are painters who find solutions only towards the end of their lives.

I have a tendency to expand myself and leave the painting. It's as if the painting were a fragment of something broader.

Up until now I "constructed" the painting. The next work I do will be to cancel it. There will only be a few signs that will reappear from underneath.

The big space is a problem because I tend to divide it.

Attention, being careful to ensure that if the colours are associated then they lead to other symbols.

Making a colour that is all mine.  
Klein's blue, Maria's red.

The only colour that doesn't give me any problems is red.

After my conversations with F. I began working by looking inside myself without taking anything from outside.

I am beginning to look at what I have done instinctively for years without thinking about it. I am beginning to understand what belongs to me and what doesn't.

Now the thought is being created, the awareness of the thing and what I have done.

Bringing everything out, refusing nothing of what there is.

The important thing is to begin, not how but just begin.

In the relationship with creating the thing, always retrace one's steps, never completely losing oneself in the thought.

I'm beginning to understand what Cezanne means when he says that an artist paints the same painting all his life.

I don't want to invent; I want to become. I want to understand what painting is for me.

Listening. Listening to myself. Listening to the painting. Listening to the other for what they do.

21 April 1985, Studio School, Mel Bochner criticises my work. "Your works say too little about painting. Lots of ideas, but...you need to look at contemporary art more. Look at the first works by Kandinsky, who as well as having great ideas had instinct. You're not painting. You come from Italian arte povera."

A year ago I told S. that I wanted to work in the circle.

I dig. I pull out. I plod. Looking, searching.

Torment.

It was great looking this time, remaining passive and seeing things change on their own... I didn't make any effort to change anything. It happened by itself.

Witnessing what I do. Being an observer of things that are done and that change. Waiting to see what happens.

I manage to paint one colour a day.

Yes, perhaps my painting springs from sculpture, seeing as the first substance I touched was clay.

Perhaps colour is the only free part of myself and it doesn't want to have any precise reference to the exterior. It is a colour that comes from within, an interior that I create and only years later does it appear...

Colour = substance

The space I am thinking of is an interior space, an intimate world. It is the body inside. A concavity.

There are two ways of painting:

- 1 - the substance that is mixed, that becomes one, magma. (Soutine)
- 2 - one layer on top of the other; one declaration on top of another. (Hoffmann)

(Naturally transparency also exists, but this doesn't interest me in the slightest.)

Who knows how much time I'll have put in before I can start taking out; how much I'll have to fill in before I can empty out.

Form is made of substance.

The beginning, or rather how to begin, doesn't interest me. It is how to proceed once you're already inside and moving forward.

Emptiness. Breathing. Listening to my breath. In the silence I feel my body. I feel myself. And I want to paint myself. Go inside, Maria!

Thriving on change. Transforming myself via reality.

Taking something and putting it into the next painting.

I understand through painting.

Chance, errors creep into the painting.

Allowing time to sediment on things.

It came to me suddenly years ago. Now I resume point by point and understand.

Painting is like standing in front of a mirror.

Collaborating. I'd like to create a piece with another artist...

Protecting myself from words, from definitions, from talking about the work...I want to defend my intimacy from the simplification that comes from talking about it.

One day, if I am inside, sooner or later something will come...

I know how to make a "beautiful" work to present and have a good response, but here there are no shortcuts or escape routes...in order for it to make sense I have to do something that doesn't necessarily produce something that will be understood in its external form...

Sooner or later I'll find a way for the form to be understood...

What I don't see is more interesting than what I see...what I intuit is there.

There are kinds of veils...maybe I need to eliminate one or two veils to show the work? Or maybe it's a question of how much to leave uncovered...

I make the colour in the same bowl. Every colour is thus made using a part of the previous one. And there's no turning back. I can't repeat a colour used previously. There's always something new.

Thriving on change. Transforming through reality.

Painting tends to become a daily practice. I have to make sure it doesn't become a habit. I have to add some thoughts to the mix.

Sometimes I only need the idea of a thing. The idea is also a reality.

The only painting process is not that of continuing to layer with continuity.  
The process can also happen directly in the mind and then suddenly be measured in reality.

It's important to maintain some continuity with the painting and not leave it for too long.

I have to find my style.

Two movements: one cuts across the surface from left to right or from top to bottom; the other one passes through the layers. It's like a lung that breathes. It is the space between one layer of colour and the other.

Embracing. The perspective focus lies behind the nape, behind the eyes. I find myself inside.

The colour below returns and reaches the surfaces. Sponge paintings. (L.P.)

Finding. Looking for something that already exists. Not inventing, but discovering. Remembering everything that is already within.

Lengthy times that have something to do with life cycles... You can predict, but you still can't foresee.

Belonging to a culture. Being from a certain place. Territoriality.

Conversation with my mum: the difference between Italians, Mediterranean culture (intuition and synthesis) and Germans, Anglo-Saxons (analytical, getting hold of a point and taking it to the extreme). Where could Freud and psychoanalysis exist?

Feeling like I'm part of the world.

The painting isn't made of colour; it is colour. The substance of the painting is colour. I don't remember a colour but all the substance together that produces a sum of a certain colour.

I use a red that isn't red, but is the red substance that emanates from that given colour.

The place I want to stay in is a peninsula, attached to the land by a strip that keeps me connected to others, to life, and yet it is an island that leads to isolation...an island that makes me feel that my relationship with the land is behind me.

The line: the meeting between the land and the sky, between the sea and the sky.  
The line isn't drawn but is the encounter between two surfaces.

I don't know inspiration... It's more a sedimentation of ideas than that these ideas suddenly become clear and want to come out.

How to take up the thread of conversation again?  
Putting in relation things that I have already pulled out.

From silent paintings to singing paintings...

Biological rhythms.

At a certain point everything that has been deposited slowly over time suddenly becomes something. Everything is condensed and concentrated right there.

Finally, after a long break, I went back to my studio.  
I recognise my paintings. I can paint.

The conclusion, the cancelling out, the final gesture that has covered everything and destroyed everything; that which lay beneath now becomes the original gesture for a new beginning.

It's a final, simple gesture, clear and full of memories of everything that it has brought with it. It is the synthesis of everything I have put into the painting in these years.

I have to have the courage to see this ending as a beginning.

It's as though I am back at mark 1. But it is a 1 that comes from the total of 1+1+1+1+1+1...

Now the centre is spreading to the edges of the painting. Everything happens in the tiny space remaining on the edges of the canvas. Between this large central shape and the periphery.

A huge embrace.

What I am looking at is still an internal space. I go inside. It's not like I am in a tunnel, but in a space that widens when you are in it.

I want to concentrate more on one place. I want to narrow the field of action even more.

There are archetypes that have kept returning in my work over the years. Tondos, semi-circles, tunnels, erasings, large brushstrokes...

I don't see a linear route but a circular one. Rather than being horizontal (a story, history) or vertical (spiritual), it has a circular route, returning to itself.

Sometimes the brushstrokes – the forms – follow the same direction and move slightly, closing themselves within a closed and internal spiral or circular movement.

At other times an interference changes the movement. A brushstroke plonks itself down opposite, in a counter position, almost like a cancellation.

The more I work with the colour, the wider the form gets. The form becomes a space of colour.

From outside to in.

An invitation to enter.

A light that comes from the inside.

Recognising.

I can't paint too many paintings, because I need time to get to know them.

Interiority. Emotionality. Digging inside. Knowing. Knowing oneself. Recognising oneself. Listening to oneself. Creating an independent thought.

Detaching from oneself. Distancing from oneself.

The monologue is mortal. It needs an interlocutor.

There's continuity between one thought and another. The point of contact that links one story to another. The thought and the life of one person linked to another.

Rather than talking to others about my work, I listen to what they have to say.

Reaching emptiness? Stopping?

"... Not to write – what a long way there is to go before arriving at that point, and it is never sure; it is never either a recompense or a punishment. One must just write, in uncertainty and in necessity..."

(Maurice Blanchot "The Writing of the Disaster")

Maria, let your hand move freely on the canvas fluidly and in all directions.

"... for them (painters) subject is only a pretext for painting..." (Zola)

"Her attitude is that of contemplation: in fact she opens up to herself, to her inner world in order to listen to it...in the hope of finding a central theme. It is the impersonal fil rouge of true human nature, if I can call it that (...) it is in the inner world that she rediscovers the image of the universe in its entirety, in its integrity. It is in ourselves that we find Satan and God simultaneously. And they fight within us." (From an interview with Ionesco)

*Providing the image of that society in which everyone is their own master, whilst contributing to the common good.*  
(Starobinski on Rousseau)

Continual references to the past and comparisons with the present.

A centre no longer exists. The nucleus has moved. The balance lies in the movement and continual transformation.

"No doubt Bremond remembered from Mallarmé and Valéry (both virtuosi of fragmentation) that an extreme purism proceeds by destruction and that words acquire a fresh aura of sense by being torn from their established contexts."  
(Edgar Wind)

Fragmentariness, the incompleteness of the conclusion.

Discovering we are not alone. Discovering things that have already been thought. Keeping in touch with the world. Participating in the things of the world. Circulating, communicating.

Forgetting ourselves.

Closing in on ourselves in order to be more open to the world.

I am getting ready for a period of isolation and concentration.

Knowing how to wait and do nothing, to see what happens next.

Preparing for constant work.

This painting is in the foreground. The ball looms. It does not hide. It is uncovered. It is exposed. It comes forward. It presents itself. It is a presence.

I want to give the colour independence. It has to live for itself.

Painting the evidence.

Letting things be does not mean indiscriminately taking on everything that presents itself. A selection and recognition process is necessary.

Living in peace.

Painting time. The duration.

Painting with time in time.

An act of perseverance.

Different rhythms. Alternating between fast and slow phases.

Going back to it. Lengthy times.

Studio visit with Z. S.

Professionalism, or the relationship one's work has with the outside world is typical of our time. The artist manager, the artist who manages herself, has to know how to impose herself freely. Professionalism has to correspond to the work. Our self-image has to correspond to the actual work. If the work is fake then everything crumbles. If it is real, then you just have to wait and then something will happen.

Studio visit with L.P.

Believe in your work. Enjoy your work. Don't believe in the art world. View that relationship from a distance, as if you were at the theatre. See it as entertainment. Detach yourself from it. Your real work is what you do in the studio. And don't believe it if you think it's OK. They are soap bubbles. Think about the more long-lasting, authentic things in life. Paint with a feeling of tranquillity. Experience your relationship with the system with dignity, distance and enjoyment. You have to be free to make choices. Don't waste time looking for it elsewhere. Take advantage of opportunities. Participate, say who you are but then let others ask for you and seek you out.

The artist's tactic has to be that of going outside to attract others into the studio. Let the work do the talking. Add nothing. Let the other person start.

"You just need to relax and not press. If there's something in you, it'll come out."

(From Woody Allen's film "Alice")

Dilated, lengthy times. In time.

If I work for too long, meaning for too many hours, I don't work well and get confused. My time lasts in instants. It is short and concentrated, not long and dilated.

"I do not wish to say that quickness is a value in itself. Narrative time can also be delaying, cyclic, or motionless. In any case, a story is an operation carried out on the length of time involved, an enchantment that acts on the passing of time, either contracting or dilating it. (...) I have always searched for the equivalent of some inner energy, some motion of the mind. (...) A writer's work has to take account of many rhythms: Vulcan's and Mercury's, a message of urgency obtained by dint of patient and meticulous adjustments and an intuition so instantaneous that, when formulated, it acquires the finality of something that could never have been done otherwise. But it is also the rhythm of time that passes with no other aim than to let feelings and thoughts settle down, mature, and shed all impatience or ephemeral contingency."

(In "Quickness" in Italo Calvino's "Six Memos for the Next Millennium")

It probably has something to do with inverting the order: bringing into view something that lies beneath and vice versa.

I have been travelling down two opposing and parallel paths for years. On the one hand there's a concentric space that goes inside, is on different levels and insinuates itself deeply. On the other there's a frontal, clear space all on one level. Perhaps at a certain point these two parts will converge and unite in one place.

Everything has to happen naturally, without being forced.

"A musician once said: In art, truth and reality begin when one no longer understands what one is doing or what one knows, and when there remains an energy that is all the stronger for being constrained, controlled and compressed. It is therefore necessary to present oneself with the greatest humility: white, pure and candid with a mind as if empty, in a spiritual state analogous to that of a communicant approaching the Lord's Table. Obviously it is necessary to have all of one's experience behind one, but to preserve the freshness of one's instincts..."

(Matisse)



Where does this tondo, this circle, this stomach, spring from?

They are dilations of a central nucleus. The fulcrum is the centre. It floats. It gathers everything and carries it towards the centre with a gesture. It underlines the painting's interior. There is a slight asymmetry. An arch is created. A niche, a vault, a cupola? The tondo lengthens and rests on the base of the painting; the arch stays at the top. It is connected to the ground, to the force of gravity. It is stabilised.

"The painter can show either an exterior or an interior, but he cannot integrate both aspects of the same thing in the same image. (...) In being to some extent spatially unfathomable, an interior like that of the Pantheon strengthens its mysterious, unworldly character. (...) Instead of leaving the occupant in a boundless world, an interior encloses him like a womb – an experience that can be reassuring or oppressive. The world of the interior can be totally encompassed; it is surveyable, more nearly relatable than the outside to the size and power of a human being, and is therefore susceptible to his domination. (...) Consequently, an interior reveals its typical character most clearly when its walls or ceilings, or both, are concavely rounded. Since convexity enhances figure character, concave boundaries define the hollow of the room as the dominant volume."

(Arnheim, "The Dynamics of Architectural Form")

On the difference between the internal and external transformation of organic bodies.

"Internally, what governs is the need for space. On the contrary, the exterior follows completely different principles. It creates symmetry. (...) The organism manifests its own particular I in the space that surrounds it." (Swiss zoologist Adolf Portmann "Entlasst die natur den Menschen")

"Seen from the inside, without exteriority, being can only be round." (Bachelard in "The Poetics of Space")

"... these "observed" modern artists always paint the same painting. Why don't they decide once and for all to create just one work in their lives? Perhaps when they are already old, at the height of experience or perhaps when they are young. They can thus dedicate to reflection all the years they have left to live..." (from one of dad's stories)

Always insisting on the same point. Reconfirming. Reinforcing. Training and building the muscle.

Only monograph exhibitions make any sense.

I want to understand the internal logic of a system.

Holes, cavities, fissures. Something is opening.

Not all doughnuts have a hole.

"Has there ever been a painter who painted in the strictest sense of the word, who painted how she wanted to paint? Everyone paints what they see, or rather everyone paints as well as they can." (Suzanne Valadon)

"Why do I always forget what you are like (or what I'm like) and fall for you again?" (Wim Wenders)

I don't understand what experimentation means. Everything I go through is not a rehearsal for something final. I am already on my path.

How can I resolve the space around the tondo? What is the space outside the circle? I am beginning to feel the tightness of the ball. How can I widen it? Will the ball get so wide that it will disappear? I am inside. I can no longer see the edges.

When I have wet clay in my hand I can continue to transform the shape. The colour of my painting has to be like this.

I would like to paint inside a space. Nobody ever paints the inside because you can't see it; you can't see it because it's inside.

Lately it is I who have changed and not the work. I also want to see the work change.

Listening to L. B. talking about Simone Weil.

The mind's activity is never directed towards the production of objects. It has been busy trying to understand not as an objective but as an experience of thought.

Putting myself at the centre and thinking.

Opening the window and knowing how to leave on my own.

Working with art means moving, searching and not necessarily finding.

"How horrible the perfection of everything that has been done is.

(...) in my life I have never read a single book from cover to cover, my way of reading is that of being a highly talented leafer, in other words someone who prefers leafing to reading, and so I leaf through dozens, sometimes hundreds of pages before reading even one, but when this man reads a page, he reads it with the most incomparable depth and intense passion for reading that you can imagine."

(Thomas Bernhard in "On Reading")

There's always time to paint! Get out for a bit, Maria! Even if you can't find the solution right now, something will come to you.

"Art is made up, not of artist's intentions, but of works of art. The most voluminous collection of commentaries and memoirs, written by artists whose understanding of the problems of form is fully equalled by their understanding of words, could never replace the meanest work of art. In order to exist at all, a work of art must be tangible. It must renounce thought, must become dimensional, must both measure and qualify space. It is in this very turning outward that its inmost principle resides."

(Henri Focillon in "The Life of Forms")

Reading Clarice Lispector's "The Passion According to G.H."

Leaving oneself. Opening up to the world. Interaction with things, with the exterior. "I don't want to validate myself in what I've experienced, but I want to reinvent myself. Validating myself and considering myself authentic, I'd be lost because I wouldn't know where to insert my new way of being. It's difficult to lose oneself", abandon oneself. You have to forget that you want to find. Trying to find means being organised, defining yourself, limiting yourself. I don't want to be a closed form, I don't want to close myself up, I don't want to confine myself. Disorganised, not defined. I want to be limitless, I want to be at one with things. "If I am brave, I will let myself get lost."

Abandoning myself to disorientation. Allowing myself to be guided by what will happen. Experiencing my own breadth. "Yet as an adult, will I have the childlike bravery to get lost? Getting lost means looking and not even knowing what to do with what is found. (...) Have I got the courage to resist giving myself a form? (...) Have I got the courage not to compose and not to organise? The courage to let myself be guided by something I don't know and towards something I don't know".

Losing ideas in order to move forward. Created things exist that are always what they are. The primordial substance is always that and never changes. Culture tries to organise and delimit things, but the nature of those same things ensures that they do not change. Culture blocks the vital process. It tries to block the vital process of reality. It's just that those things have continued to be the complete origin even today.

"At times we manifest the inexpressive, in art and in physical love as well. Manifesting the inexpressive means creating. Because when art is at a high level it touches the inexpressive, whereas the worst art is expressive."

Expressing oneself for everyone.

There are periods in which I fill a whole wall with works on paper. I am full of ideas. I see them all in front of me.

The form of the space of the painting broadens until it almost fills the edge of the painting.

I plod on, looking, searching... A feeling of intolerance. Contradictions in the painting. I don't know what I'm doing. What should I put in?

I'd like to paint like my father wrote.

Scribbling daily, using pages of a daily diary (which contain impressions of his experience, memory, readings, etc). Everything is composed in one work. But how can I do this with painting?

This is the first time I've felt any form of definition as such a huge limitation. Any word that encloses my work within a formula, a label, a definition, finishes my work. It ends and it limits movement, transformation and the freedom necessary for research.

This having to name or call my work something inhibits me. Even if I only have to use the word "painting" I am blocked. In order to move and not stay still, to work, I mustn't think of the form or the result. No confines, no line that closes, but moving between limitless areas.

I'd like to see the form, the thing that is constructed on the canvas through my body. The form not as a mental idea, but as something directly formed on the canvas itself. The time I spend with the canvas is what makes the painting.

I think of an interior space. I think of an intimate space, of an internal light that shows what there is.

"The complete notion of inner experience only enters the consciousness after it has found a language that the individual understands." (Nietzsche)

I paint the inside. I paint the inside of me, the concave part of my body. But this interior only exists in relation to the exterior.

I am what I experience. Everything happens at the centre, in the middle, inside, in the depths. The fulcrum is the centre.

"A book, even a fragmentary one, has a centre which attracts it. This centre is not fixed, but is displaced by the pressure of the book and circumstances of its composition. Yet it is also a fixed centre which, if it is genuine, displaces itself, while remaining the same and becoming always more central, more hidden, more uncertain and more imperious." (Blanchot)

I want my body to totally adhere to the canvas.

"Full participation in what one is doing is the essential condition of pleasure. Partial participation leaves us divided and conflicted." (Lowen)

"There is nothing in the skin that is not in the bones."  
(Goethe, "Faust")

Preparing the body and mind for work. Clearing, lightening. Emptying and distracting oneself from what's outside: a distracted, un-concentrated concentration.

When I feel forced I feel ill. Forced by my mind to act in a certain way. And thus the only solution, the only way out is illness. It is an obligated condition in which I am forced to change a stale situation. Make a change. I force myself to rethink. It's like a cancelling out in order to start from scratch. It gives me the chance to distance myself from the outside and have a filtered relationship with reality.

The form has returned.

Impetuous.

The form as an organism that grows, widens, narrows, takes its position, etc.

There is no cancelling. I don't start from scratch again... I continue from one painting to another.

"To show your true ability is always, in a sense, to surpass the limits of your ability, to go a little beyond them: to dare, to seek, to invent; it is at such a moment that new talents are revealed, discovered and realised." (Simone De Beauvoir)

If someone asked me how I want my substance to be, what I want to achieve with that technique, I would reply that I don't care. I am interested in the substance reacting freely, regardless. I can only control it up to a certain point, after that the meaning of the painting is allowing it to exist

"Many years of her existence she had spent at the window, watching the things that past and those that stayed still. But in fact she did not see so much as hear the life inside her. (...) One day she split into two, grew restless, started going out to look for herself. She went to places where men and women met. Everyone said: fortunately she has woken, life is short, one needs to make the most of it, she used to be lacklustre, now she is somebody."  
(Clarice Lispector in "Near to the Wild Heart")

"Within the world there is no place for other creations. There is just an opportunity for reintegration and continuity. Everything that could exist already exists. Nothing else can be created but revealed."  
(Clarice Lispector in "Near to the Wild Heart")

"...things happened without her making them up..."  
(Clarice Lispector in "Near to the Wild Heart")

I think I use blue to understand red better.  
A blue square surrounded by red. Blue held by red. Blue equals nucleus. Blue space supported by red.

I need to keep two discourses moving in parallel: painting and thinking about what I am doing through the painting.

Glimpsing. Seeing through, seeing between things. A fissure. Behind something that partially covers it. Chinks, apertures, ajar, half open.  
Seeing between the bodies, the palaces, the clouds, the mountains...

Everything has to merge in a single space. I would like a studio-container, a gatherer...

I can never reproduce the same paintings. When something is done I can no longer get close to it in the same way. It is impossible to recreate something.

I let the colours mix and muddy...

"I was telling Edouard this evening that instead of doing as the majority does, which makes progress in life's war with the aid of reading, I only read to find confirmation in what I do." (Delacroix)

From red to blue. From inside to out.

Maybe it's not even about going from inside to out. Or maybe I'm already out. Maybe it's just a question of finding the contact between inside and out: the limit that is not a limit, the border that is not a border, division, separation that is not separation.  
Maybe it's a question of finding the meaning of continuity between the body and what lies outside. Maybe it's a question of feeling at one with things.

I need to find new ways to say the same things. The things are always the same.

Grouping together. Getting together. Feeling part of a community.

When I paint I don't look. When I look things get obfuscated.

I insist on using the same colours and let the colours get mixed up with each other. In the same day I superimpose lots of wet colours, even those that are opposites: blue on red, red on green, etc.

At first the work started from a physical relationship, free of the body in the space. Then it focused on me, on my body, on my heart, my brain, my breathing, my muscles, the awareness of my body and my body from within. Now I only paint if I am distracted from my body and myself. I paint as long as I don't think about myself, if I look outside of myself, far from myself. I paint if I look for what I don't know. I only paint if I forget myself.

Once I didn't have a project. One brushstroke led to another. Then the space became concave. Now I have taken on forms that come out of me naturally. They are clear images, intuitions that throw themselves on the canvas from the start and then all the subsequent phases are concentrated on it, on constructing and honing what I painted with clarity in the first instance.

Before I looked for certainties. Now I find doubts and uncertainties.

A feeling of loss.

Continuity, not rifts.

Insistently, obsessively... the image is focused and continues to repeat...increasingly precise...always the same thing over and over... Understanding it... Insisting that the thing emerge, that the form is imposed. The form pulsates. It narrows and widens... Like a beating heart...

Often when I look at my paintings from a while back, I wonder how I made them. I can no longer remember the internal logic of the moment I created it. I now realise that I have moved on. I can't do now something that I did then.

The systems change:

When I painted the red paintings I always used the same bowl and gradually added the colour.

With the paintings from 1987 I always added white to pale colours.

In 1989-90 in New York I completely covered the underlying colour. In 1990 I mixed the colour directly on the canvas, I made it emerge from below and even used my fingers to scratch the surface.

Changing how I paint, I head towards something I don't know and gradually I recognise myself... After I have understood clearly and the thing has become a repetitive system I feel I have exhausted it, I feel I have got to the heart of it and then I move on to something else.

Exile. Isolation. Intimacy. I choose a place to stay. I choose the painting as a place to stay and to think. I think alone. And then I share.

I like putting people together, aggregating others. I get others to talk. I express myself through others. I am what I put into relationships with others.

I try to paint a portrait of my dad.

Giving form. Making something exist for the sake of existing.

I am writing with my dad's pen, which was my grandfather's pen.

Thanks, dad, for all the words you left me through your diaries. I am rediscovering myself through you. I am rediscovering the innermost part that I thought I had lost and could not find. We'll see what happens when I go back to my studio in two months' time.

For a while, I should forget about the rest of the world. I have to accept what comes from within me. I have to stay in solitude and leave myself again. Perhaps my mum's female philosophical discourse and staying with my dad's diaries can help me.

Reading my dad's diary, I realise that he was constantly changing throughout his life. He wasn't imperturbable to the things he experienced. They marked him and gradually changed him...

I have to manage to find that strictness and constancy in cultivating a relationship with my work and myself, like dad did through his diaries.

I have to be able to do something with dad's writings. It's right that I should publish them and introduce others to his work. It's my responsibility as a daughter.

I try to simplify. I give up something in order to reach a clearer, stronger and more precise form.  
I forego certain forms and colours.

This is what I would like to have in my studio: a Frau armchair or sofa, a nice comfortable little armchair where I could paint, some collapsible chairs if I want people over, a good lighting system on the ceiling, a cooking area, a shower, a drawing table, a little table to prepare my colours, a dining table, a computer table, a desk, bookcases for magazines, catalogues and books, shelves for music, a piece of furniture for my work equipment, a chest of drawers for my drawings, a picture gallery, an archivist, dad's photos.

Putting two very similar colours that have two different origins together. For example an emerald green and a blue-green that together navigate in a sea of red.

In order to produce and to feel good I need a fixed abode where I can stay away from everyone. I need a studio.

Annotation.

I don't give a damn about technique. I get no pleasure from playing with the substance, with colours. The end justifies the means. Everything is conceived for the final object: the fact that something forms and exists.

Here in Verona I'm working in the same room where my dad wrote at his little desk on which there were: a photo of me aged 18 and a rose he picked in the garden in a nineteenth-century vase. I look out of the window he looked out from.

"I'm not writing for the sheer joy of writing; so many things have happened to me that I must write if I am not to lose my reason... I've taken on this task to keep me from staring into the gloom and being frightened..."  
(Marlen Haushofer, "The Wall")

Layer upon layer...a change of heart or an affirmation?

It's as though I had been painting for years whilst holding my breath... Now I lift my head up and look.

Thinking in metaphors. Here are the movements:

I spew out ideas.

I take the skin from my body and place it in front of me.

The dialogue with another person begins: the painting. I listen and reply.

I enter myself and paint the concave space of my body, as though I were eliminating the bones and standing inside in their place.

I cut the membrane, cut my body and leave.

Cuts, fissures, doors, windows.

I leave traces of my body.  
You listen to my paintings; you don't look at them.

"The metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally. Without it any of our experiences and conceptual operations would be impossible. Metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action (we even act metaphorically!)." (George Lakoff and Mark Johnson "Metaphors We Live By")

An entirely internal development. The work continues to change within an inner process with its own rules. This is why it's important to understand the beginning. How and from what did I begin? At the same time this question is irrelevant because the beginning is only a pretext for getting started. Perhaps the meaning lies in the development.

I'm interested in studio visits. They shorten distances. They lead to the intimacy of the organism...

It's the responsibility of the artist to produce and contextualise her work.

I have to be careful not to work too much on a painting. The painting time has to be brief. Then I have to immerse myself in life.

I can't take out and I can't turn back. I can only add and move forward.

Among the first works I made, there was this idea of extracting the essential structure from artists' paintings to transform it into my painting. What if I went back to the beginning and took this other route? Then my work would follow another course.

Instead of photographing it, I try to do a drawing of each painting in order to categorise it and understand it.

It is more what you don't see than what you do see in the painting.

Keeping a diary while I work is handy.

I try to organise the space where I work into areas: one for writing, one for drawing, one for reading, one for listening to music, one for resting, one for painting, and so on.

You don't choose to become a painter. You don't choose to become an abstract artist... it enters you from somewhere and then the discourse evolves.

Art Omi, studio visit with R. N.

What's the question you ask when you add layers? What's your intention? It's the direct and minimal presence of the painting that interests me. And that it is presented clearly. I'm not interested in understanding through various stages, of reading the various passages. I'm interested in the final presence of the painting.

What I'm interested in is the transition, the non-finiteness and not the definition.

Alternatively, these rectangles, these figures, these spaces, are covered in sequence. It is as though they were trying to find a place, to expand. They are slightly superimposed and sometimes a large form that covers all the others is born.

I'm careful not to empty too much and empty it of meaning. I have to go back to putting things inside the paintings. I need, I fill, I dirty, I put ideas inside... I need to complicate the space.

I feel; I recount.

I want to bring artists together. I want to open my studio to do things with other artists...

Now there's a central lump, a nucleus, in the paintings. The space rotates around it.

Green paintings. I am painting green and purple paintings. Water and lavender.

Basically, it's as though I am writing a story through my work.

It isn't necessarily a linear story. There can be second thoughts, contradictions and ebbs.

Finding the subject.

It's the time I devote to doing, the continuity of doing something over time that gives meaning to things. When I don't touch the substance I am full of doubts.

My story in relation to the collective story. Connecting myself to Luca's work. "Altrochemestre"

Mixing. Going crazy.

"Memories are gossip; memory is collective."

(Lalla Romano)

I feel closer to the experiences of the 1970s than to those of my contemporaries.

Devoting myself to people I think are important, who love my work.

Collecting and then cataloguing.

What is it that pushes the work forward?

A figure – a presence – emerges.

The final draft is like a cancelling that is imposed like a subject. Incumbent.

That which cancels should produce emptiness, but seeing as the cancelling is done through a colour, or rather with a substance that has its consistency, it actually produces fullness. It is thus not a cancelling but an addition.

It's as though this "figure" moved a little with each passage until finding its perfect collocation. It's like a dog that snuggles in its bed to create a place in the warmth, a place for itself. It snuggles, it settles and it finds the right position.

What you can glimpse behind the final "figure" are the various stages, the various positions to reach the right collocation.

(Who knows, maybe later I could empty the centre and make the background emerge.)

There are loads of layers. I go from a red to a green to a blue and so on.

The central cancelling out is pushing towards the limits of the painting.

The subject of the work is not the painting itself. The paintings are traces of the thought that continues to activate choices and traces of physical movement. I no longer think of the painting as an absolute object in which everything is concentrated. The thought is fluid and passes from one painting to another.

Things happen to me. I let them happen freely and I listen to them. Thoughts come from the actual work.

"Otherwise we would concentrate on ourselves too much, only and always by thinking about our places can we really see something else." (Claudio Magris talking about Svevo in Trieste)



Meeting with R. R.

"In your paintings there is a sense of the tide that comes and goes."

A group of paintings that form a cycle create a discourse between them. Groups of beings that accompany you for a while, following the same thoughts and moods.

"Everything tells me that I need a more solitary life. The loveliest and most precious moments are slipping away in amusements which, in truth, bring me nothing but boredom. (...) Think of the blessings that await you, not of the emptiness that drives you to seek constant distraction. Think of having peace of mind and a reliable memory, of the self-control that a well-ordered life will bring, think of health will not be ruined by the endless concessions to the passing excesses that other people's society entails, I think of uninterrupted work and plenty of it."

(From Delacroix's Journal)

Listening to R. P. talking about Maria Zambrano.

Doing out of necessity.

What I couldn't not do.

I'm here.

Being in the relationship with one's solitude.

This is why I communicate. I communicate this relationship that each individual has with his or her life. This is what giving shape means: communicating.

The radical condition of the human being, the condition of the exile, the being thrown into one's own existence.

Continuing due to inertia. Roused by laziness.

Not putting myself at the centre but at the side.

Forgetting myself.

Sedimentation. Leaving traces of my existence every day.

It's incredible seeing how the work changes in front of my eyes. I do that thing at that moment because I can't do anything else. At that moment it's impossible for me to think that the thing will be something else and that it will change. I wonder if I will ever manage to change the work and transform it because in that instant I can't think or do anything else.

Then all by itself at a certain point and without me even noticing it, the work changes.

The small paintings are lumps of colour.

Form and time: two categories that are never fixed.

Ordering time.

Giving oneself time.

Regulating one's time.

The time of doing.

Time as a substance of the work.

Making work one's lived time.

The passing of time.

Do not stop the image. The image develops from one painting to another. Don't look and stop; do and move forward.

It pushes upwards. Everything tightens and pushes into a small fissure at the top. Compression.

Squeezing.

I trace the borders with my arm, the maximum of my breadth.

The confines of the pictorial space are determined by the movement of my body. I circumscribe the space I am in. I create my confines. I delimit the space I am in. I de-limit.

The conjunction point between the two parts, the two confines: a circular movement.

There are two ways of reading the space: one is the formal one of the first impact; the second is when you enter inside it and it's about the doughiness of the painting, the density of the substance. It lets you see what lies below and how it is made.

Everything happens at the edges. Almost as though I don't want to deal with what's at the centre, but only with what's between the inside and the outside on the periphery.

Moving between. Moving through. Filtering. The hole. The interval.

But what can I do with this emptiness in the middle? Does it exist only if there are two fullnesses?

How can I increase this small part that lies in the middle? How can I give it more importance?

I transport the colours from one painting to another.

Repetition that is never the same.

Disappearing from the studio. (See Kabakov's "The Man Who Flew into Space from His Apartment")

At a certain point the painting starts to live its own life, to have its independence from me. But this finiteness is arbitrary because it's connected to that given moment of my path. It can also be that after a long period of time I decide to return to the painting and change it.

Paintings are taken up again after some time.

Unlike a few years ago, now I paint lots of paintings at the same time.

Before, I wanted to be absolute and considered the relationship with the canvas as totalitarian. But now I feel freer to let a colour slide from one canvas to another.

I add a little colour at a time... It is over lengthy time that you see its transformation. Time passes and transforms.

The similarity gives meaning to the continuity.

Digging inside. Digging inside of myself. Connecting myself. Connecting with myself in relation to the outside. I am in this world. What does being contemporary to my time mean?

One thing leads to another in a consequential movement.

Leaving one point and creating the discourse. Moving in space through time.

A walk. Is it a horizontal and linear progression? Or a labyrinthine progression that envelops itself?

A substance that flows fluidly or a substance that every now and then creates lumps?

Why do I sometimes apply the colour in a circular way and at others vertically or horizontally?

Being part of a community. Being with others. A group of artists. Letting artists speak.

A single uninterrupted work.

Alternation: a time of doing and a time of stopping and thinking.

Being in a marginal position gives a feeling of freedom.

Reaching an end that does not arrive.

Failure in the sense that what I've reached is not what I've been looking for.

Having an intention. No, acting out of inertia.

I've got the feeling that my work has been in relation to a thought outside of me. I've got the feeling that I can share what I do with others. It wasn't like that for years.

I don't know if it's me who's changed or the outside world that has become more receptive to what I do.

In this precise moment I feel part of the context I live in (but that doesn't mean it will always be like this).

Slowly I find my measurements. I adapt to my dimensions.

Reading Magritte: I don't know what I am doing... if a critic wants to explain it to me...

Incompleteness. Unfinished.

I relate to the extremity of the painting; the painting as object.

It's a metaphorical space, not a real one. A breath.

Two aspects:

- Repetition. Seriality. The thought that crosses horizontally from one point to another.

- Uniqueness. Superimposition. The thought that is concentrated in one place and becomes denser.

I don't look; I do. I leave imprints and traces.

Another aspect of painting is looking, understanding and then absorbing it in the discourse...

A single colour. A final image determined by many others that happened beforehand.

Cancellation-affirmation. Cancellation-total.

Sometimes it is more described and the various layers can be glimpsed; sometimes it isn't.

The horizons have risen. It's almost a monochrome...

The work isn't autobiographical.

I create a place to stay, to be. I paint to be in one place.

"Perpetual desire".

My painting is the documentation of my time.

For me, having an exhibition is equivalent to reorganising the material I've produced.

All this can take on various forms: solitary (a separate and unique painting compared to another); consequential (one thing leads to another); serial (a thought is developed horizontally and is distributed over many points); dialogue (one thing is juxtaposed to another).

"Dialogues" is the title of the New York exhibition.

I have an intuition. I keep it with me for a while and let it sediment. If it lasts for a while then it slowly re-emerges, I make it come out and I put it into the work. I move forward and transform.

Showing the process.

Equal, but different.

You find differences through insisting, through staying inside something.

The hand that rests on the sheet of paper moves from left to right as though writing. It starts as a curve and then leaves the paper in a straight line.

I arrive where I arrive.

I let things happen.

You don't have to make a choice.

Various things can coexist simultaneously.

You don't have to work on one painting at a time.

Let contradictions emerge.

Let different realities coexist in the same space.

Private existence is totally connected to collective existence.

That edge, that trim at the top of the painting...

(A. V.)

Try writing your own story in relation to "history"...

(A. C.)

"Becoming the subject in the age of the death of the subject."

(Luisa Passerini)

Inter-subjectivity. Abandoning self-referentiality to open up to the other.

Subjectivity in relation to other subjects.

Inside, inside, always further inside.

Painting from behind.

"I do not think that my work is only writing books, but also publishing them. A book is like a child, you have defend its life."

(Joseph Conrad)

Creating a substance.

I don't understand expressions and words like imagination, imagine or invent. Instead I understand: I'll start from here; I'll start on my own, staying in the experience.

I don't understand what reproduce means, or trying to reproduce a colour that I imagine or that I see in reality. Instead I understand what I see in front of me and what I come across.

My relationship with art is connected to experience. It's about entering inside.

It's time that determines the space.

First there was a centripetal movement towards the interior.

But now I feel like I'm in a centrifugal movement towards the exterior.

Expansion, growth, adding: you don't accumulate; you expand and broaden...

Overtuning chronological consequentiality.

Everything can be mixed up and reorganised.

A man who always throws himself into a hole. (Murakami)

The emptiness that fills.

The ephemeral that goes by. I see what goes by through the trace of its passage.

Boccioni's states of mind. Colour, emotion.

This latest series of paintings over the last few years (which are almost monochromes in which the process is revealed in the upper edge of the painting) have allowed me to expand. They have made me want to meet other materials and to work with others...

Something arises from the encounter with the substance.

The work using Plasticine comes from a desire to spread...

How can I stay in nature? How can I take my pictorial gesture outside?

The first impulse is to return to the earth, to the clay and then spread the earth.

An idea for a work:

To create a work determined by the quantity of substance, the quantity of substance that can be held in the hand or on the tip of the brush.

The surface of the painting is covered by the substance. If there isn't enough substance then the surface remains partially uncovered.

Dream:

Last night I dreamt that my paintings crumbled right before my eyes. The whole painting detached from the surface and slid in flakes towards the floor. I found myself before white, untouched surfaces.

An idea of flowing. A thing that leads to another in a continuous line of transformation.

What's the beginning? Red.

Imprecision. Imprecision gives me a sense of freedom.

Useless and necessary.

Fissure, injury, crack, cavity, separation.

Closing the wound, entering the fissure.

A cut, two surfaces. Were the two entities created for the fissure that divides them or do the two entities create the cavity at the centre?

A separate encounter.

Looking out of the corner of my eye.

If I had to work in the three-dimensional space I would do what Gordon Matta-Clark does. I'd penetrate the space and cut through it.

Reaching the depths. Using up all the colour. Coming to the bottom of the bowl.

"She couldn't read, her thoughts got in the way."

(Peter Handke, "A Sorrow Beyond Dreams")

Patina = layers of paint

“Art comes from looking inside as much as looking outside.”  
(L. P.)

I think in colours. I speak through colours. I write with colours.

Constructing my own measure and dimension.

I want to build a place to stay in, where I can place myself, where I can let things move forward with their natural rhythm...

A secluded place where I can be and listen to myself.

Descending into life.

Staying inside and outside, coming and going.

The diary is an interrupted flow and outside history but at the same time the diary is an intimate place that crosses with history.

A suspension. An emptiness. And then starting over.

Adding paint to paint.

It's not enough to create a language. You then have to see how to include it in what surrounds you...

The problem isn't inventing something new, but arriving at something that is already there, that someone has already arrived at before me.

Letting the colour flow.

Letting things slide and flow. Keeping a certain distance between my emotions and me.

“A star always in the making.”  
(Maria Zambrano)

The passing of time. Accumulation. Staying inside. Being in the process. Being in life. Affections. Relationships with others. Listening. Being listened to. Continuing. Going, leaving. The emotional wave. Opening. Opening up to others. The delimitation of your own space, of your own form. Striving towards. The emotiveness that boils over. Keeping to myself and then moving towards the outside, towards others.

With the passing of time things stay next to each other and then reverberate in the space.

An idea for an exhibition: jumping from one place to another, from one fragment to another. Bouncing. Juxtaposing. Combining. Putting in relation.

Like dad, I write one single sentence that lasts my whole life, without even a full stop or a comma.

Imprecision. Not matching.

An imprecise, vague exactness.

I want to put myself in the corner, in a crack.

Texts that have no beginning or end.

"When I placed the works side by side, I understood that the paintings had a thematic connection. And as soon as they were placed together, an echo seemed to cross through all of them and they looked different from how they had been planned individually. It was like a symphony, as though I had tried to paint a fresco." (Edvard Munch)

Here's how I paint: without thinking. Above thought, losing my memory, forgetting about myself.

The archive. There's a reason for each stage. Everything is archived and nothing is eliminated.

One thing inside another.

One thing follows another.

I don't throw anything away. I work with the leftovers, with what remains.

Evidence.

Seeing yourself in something that already exists.

Seeing a correspondence. Rediscovering yourself.

I'm not interested in inventing but finding, recognising something that is already there.

A substance that becomes another substance: an alchemic process.

A way of thinking that slips inside another.

It can't be what it isn't. A staying inside oneself and then the thing, the thing comes forward and takes shape.

I can't decide what I am but I can't be what I am not. You become and that's that.

The edge. The border between the substance and me.

Touching. Being touched by the substance. Feeling the edges through contact with the substance. Being contained.

I've had this relationship with clay first as a child and then through mud therapy. Immersing myself in the earth.

I feel the paint in terms of a three-dimensional substance rather than as two-dimensional and illusory, like a sculptor feels the substance of the sculpture between her hands.

The painting is more similar to a sculpture (even if it's very thin) than a flat surface on which to imagine.

Organic material. Digging. Digging inside the body. Staying inside.

Collecting time.

Collecting as autobiography.

(Chatwin)

Showing yourself and portraying yourself.

Next step?

Cancelling every trace.

The substance that is transformed, that transforms and that transforms me.

Painting as writing. A trace... one step at a time... going... walking... from left to right and then from top to bottom, like in a piece of writing...the stratification of the story...

Remembering through a thin strip at the top of the painting...

Readjusting. Looking at myself again. Keeping myself in check again.

After a long time of confused notes, after years in which I wrote them down, accumulated, I am now beginning to organise a thought... And starting from here, from these words (from 1980 until today 2011).

An organic text that proceeds on the side of the painting... without dating, it goes backwards and forwards...

As time goes by it will bloat and fill.

In the end, there could be fragments put together like collages.

Those artist meetings that lasted for ten years were a fundamental experience. I came out of myself to understand other opinions. It opened me up. Each time I entered inside someone else. I returned to myself enriched. The "inside", my relationship with myself in the studio in close contact with my work, is nourished by the relationship with the outside, the relationship with the others and above all with the relationship with the other artists.

Now I feel as though I have been on a long journey outside... now is the time for isolation... I crave solitude and concentration...

Archive, catalogue, list, organising.

Life enters inside and is formed through colour. In the studio I produce "substance-colour". This substance can create a different meaning every time. It depends on how it is placed in relation with the outside.

This archive, this organised accumulation of experiences is occasionally put in a different order and creates new feelings and stories.

Each single element subsequently takes part in a whole.

How does the thought move in my brain? Haphazardly?

Fragments. Pieces that sometimes unite and find a sort of logic. And I rediscover myself in their wholeness.

"A system that proceeds more due to mediations of subsequent opposites than to rifts."

(F. Cheng)

Moving forward from inertia.

I'm in a phase in which I can't do anything other than chuck substance on top of substance.

It's the studio, the place I go to daily, which determines the work.

The work takes on the dimensions of this space. It expands to the maximum of its possibilities.

I oscillate.

Associations. Similarities. Coincidences. Combinations.

Associations of thought, visual associations.

Recognising a shape.

Writing in the space. Articulating a visual discourse.

It flows like a liquid inside the banks... then every now and then the thought stops and the words (the colours) condense, organise, coagulate and form a lump, a thought...

Doing is thinking. Painting is thinking.

Holding the colour.

Manipulating.



I manipulate the substance. My awareness is always verified through the substance of the form. I continually pass from practice to thought and vice versa. And slowly, slowly I transform and am transformed from within.

I understand myself through what is outside of me. I look for something outside of me that confirms what is inside of me, inside my process...

I like feeling as though I connect with something that exists outside of me.

I am not interested in the uniqueness of what I do but in the equality with the other.

"The painter Degas is once supposed to have remarked to Stéphane Mallarmé, 'I have a wonderful idea for a poem but I can't seem to work it out,' whereupon Mallarmé replied, 'My dear Edgar, poems are not made with ideas, they are made with words.'"

(From Sennett "The Craftsman")

Staying on the margins. Going over the edges.

I proceed with irregular movements. I proceed with continuity, insistence and obsession.

There is no end... I am in the thick of it. I have an experience.

"Like all non-humanist but human geniuses, Gaudenzio needs to feel and move fully within the substance."

(from G. Testori's "Teatro Montano")

On the one hand the method, the long duration, the insistence... on the other the short time of the unexpected, of accidents along the way...

On the one hand slow time, on the other an instant.

Incorporate. Accumulate. Keep everything. Hold.

The work is going towards two extreme and apparently opposite positions:

1- a strong conceptualisation

2- a strong materiality

Materiality does not mean honing the technique or manipulating the material, but the physical relationship with the substance that the colour is made of. The relationship with the substance is concentrated entirely on that bowl overflowing and dirty with colour.

Imprecision is where I feel most free.

Dribbling.

Programming the fluidity and the natural flow of things...

Working with lightness and indolence, lacking concentration... with ease, fluidly, rapt.

" – Oh Jo'! At twenty, I liberated myself from the land because I didn't want to be a slave to my homeland. At thirty I liberated myself from this word artist because I didn't want to be a slave to my talent. (...) I've told you again and again Jò that for me written words are only for playing with..."

Goliarda Sapienza, "The Art of Joy":

Is colour a vehicle of humours? Emotion? Colour via what? Mood. Feeling. Emotion.

The painting. Double impossibility: visual and tactile.

Simultaneousness.

Remainders, dregs.

Laziness.

Things that arise of their own accord. Things that happen.

Predisposing things so that things happen.

*At the edge of the end.*

(Piero)

A painting-pool you can immerse yourself in with your head "above water"...

I am thinking about an installation in which all my "Sedimentations" are hung high up so that the point of view coincides with the line of the story at the top...

Studio visit B.S.

Sample, detail, fragment.

Painting is genetic memory that relates to its history. I can't help placing myself in relation with what has happened. I am in the midst of something that existed previously and something that will exist subsequently, neither the first nor the last.

Everything returns to earth and has its weight.

What do I think about while I work?

I am immersed in the work with lightness and concentration.

Walking.

Recording, not documenting.

Recording with the experience of lateral vision, out of the corner of my eye.

Not in a frontal position in front of the painting, but from the side.

Entering into a mood.

My painting comes from an autobiographical and subjective viewpoint.

The titles in collaboration with a writer...

Uninterrupted research.

A discourse. "The" discourse.

Every so often I reset to zero... I tidy up. I organise so that I can start over. I start afresh, or rather I continue.

I continue punctiliously.

A linearity of time, a cadenced rhythm like a heartbeat.

Accelerate.

Slowing. Braking. Stopping and then starting again.

Discontinuity. Non-linearity of time. Time that folds in on itself and is remoulded.

Going backwards.

Not much substance comes out, but it forms continuously. Like a drop from a dripping tap that gradually fills a container.

The measure I feel is small. There's little quantity.

Error, chance, deviation from a route. Changing the meaning of things. Failure.

The discourse about painting is central. The interpretation lies within the painting... I want these works to start from the paint but with different materials placed alongside the paintings.

I am thinking about the exhibition time as ready-made for my works.

My works are like identities that arise and grow within this space and when they are moved outside they take on a different meaning.

"Farsightedness= the difficulty of focussing on objects, particularly those placed close to the subject, but also those placed at a distance.

With farsightedness, the eye does not focus well at any distance, as though refusing to fix on any level of reality. The fact that generally it is physiologically a little smaller than a normal eye recalls the eye of a child: it almost seems a less developed organ, just as those who have it maintain some childlike traits in their personality. There is an inability to concentrate on an image for long, the compelling need to move on to the next one. Those suffering from farsightedness almost never have a visual distance on which to rest and thus cannot find a life dimension in which they can feel calm, but they are in a continuous state of evasion. Rapid escape from everything seems to be the rule. They are voracious both for images and for life, with the result that they consume all their experiences too quickly and in the end become exhausted."

(From Riza psicosomatica "La psicologia dell'ipemetropia")

The skin of the painting. Peeling off...

With time it can crumple, peel, flake, dry, decompose...

"... is also there in all its stubborn weight and thickness, clinging to the canvas, gathering dust, wrinkling with age."  
(James Elkins in "What Art Is")

Starting from one point and arriving at another.

Walking with my head down.

Moving forward and going back, but never down the same identical street.

Making a cast of the studio. The studio is like the cover of the sedimentation of the colour. I imagine the studio as being able to detach itself from its surfaces and rebuild everything completely from another place.

A concave space that contains.

From the Feldenkrais method:

Attempt a feeling of alternation, a fullness and an emptiness, a movement and a pause, an activity and a non-activity. Intelligent movements are those that lead to a sense of reversibility. Stop occasionally, assimilate and get rid of accumulations.

I have built a space that will fill over time.

Nominate and open. Don't define and close.

Give titles to works. It has to be something very simple that helps people to recognise what that thing is. Then there can be an open subtitle that is more evocative than explanatory, but which helps people to understand.

Heading towards.

Repeating, reiterating, perpetuating, insisting.

Co-presence. Simultaneousness. Different times simultaneously. The memory gets mixed up. There is no before and after.

Everything is present on the canvas. Nothing is cancelled. There's no secret.

Twisting the stratifications... turning and turning the painting.

Occasionally during the fluid process there's a glitch, a clumping, a wall that decelerates... then the wall becomes a barrier and deviates the watercourse. A new rivulet forms. Perhaps it will become a new watercourse? Or maybe it's only a small deviation?

It's all there on the canvas.

Unit of measurement: the route from my home to the studio.

352 footsteps from me to me.

Backwards and forwards, always in the same place. Urged to go but turning back on myself. A coiled movement. (See De Kooning's calligraphic brushstrokes.)

Desire, want, chance, destiny, giving yourself up to the natural process of things, flow, one thing leads to another, urged on by desire, urged on by necessity, laziness, slowness, emotiveness, emotional upset, empathy, thought, distracted concentration, thinking whilst doing, intuitions, associations, striving, introspective, confident, interferences...

Spaces on a human scale.

Mud. The weight of the substance that is deposited in the water.

Venice, the lagoon is like my bowl of colour. Actually, no, it is like the brush cleaner. They both have at the bottom the residue of the substance of the passing of time, the passing of things. Substance accumulates at the bottom.

You always have to feel what you're looking for.

Fragments that aggregate.

I feel small and concentrated.

The density is more important than the breadth.

The work with stones and Plasticene stratifications.

Geological time, the time of the earth and human time, a lifetime.

Two different materials. Two different times that occupy the same space. The same portion. A past time and a present time that reconnect.

Long gestation times that apparently don't bring about a change and then suddenly there's a last-gasp effort, a surge.

The repeated gesture. The daily gesture.

The micro, the macro. Near, far.

I circle around it. Twisting.

It's like I've left my body and were circling around it.

Obsession produces form: dad's diaries, Opalka. Song Dong, Fernando Oreste Nannetti.

Is it possible that once I have constituted all of this scaffolding, this container of my thought and time, I will throw it all up in the air? And work on the concept of disappearance? Will I go from accumulation to annulment? Make and unmake? Make and destroy?

Don't keep anything. Chuck everything away. I'll eliminate any accumulation.

Filling up with substance. Filling. Filling myself. The painting is loaded with substance. It's weighty.

The substance thickens over time. There is a lot of substance.

The substance collapses, flakes, gives way and comes undone.

The substance ages and breaks.

Simplify, but maintain the complexity.

Doubt.

Reopening, discussing. Volver.

Choosing my own interlocutors.

"Writing serves to develop in parallel."

(Le Clézio "Estasi e Materia")

Moving forward and painting blindly, without looking. Without knowing where to go.

"...I leave, but I am not going anywhere – how can I depict this? (...) nothing ever comes (...) On the verge of leaving. But only on that verge. No arrival. (...) whose advance just requires itself, containing its *raison d'être*, its evolution and its end."

(Le Clezio "Estasi e Materia")

Being on the move, glued to reality. Being present, continuing. Remaining within a constant process... I leave and then I re-enter...

More than anything it's about giving a meaning to that repeated gesture that always seems the same as itself. It's about being alert, present...

I don't see, but I feel.

I don't look, but I touch.

Thinking about normality and not about the extraordinary.

I am amazed about the thing that is happening before my very eyes, a little time, every day. This small quantity forms a certain quantity in time.

It is a thickening of the substance.

A thickness of time.

"The sedentary space is thicker, more solid and thus full, whilst the nomadic space is less dense, more liquid and therefore empty."

(Francesco Careri in "Walkscapes")

Don't leave permanent traces.

Stay outside the centre on the margins.

On a human scale: the delimited time of my lifetime, the delimited space of my body. (The studio space?)  
I can only do what is on a scale with my body, that is on my scale, my time and my quantity of time; no more, no less.

A portion of space has formed (home-studio route) and my going, my thought, my doing is established between these two centres...

Staying. Walking inside it.

Thinking while doing, elaborating the thought through the relationship with the substance.

I'm not interested in experimenting. Or rather, I'm not interested in seeing how a substance reacts and improves. I'm interested in letting the substance be and spreading it on a surface. I merely put it there.

I'm not interested in technical know-how, but the understanding of the experience. I don't want to prevent things from happening.

I'm not interested in the substance as a vehicle for saying something else. I'm interested in the substance for what it is. I don't want to transform it, not voluntarily.

Being together with the thing and at a certain point something alchemical happens and the substance becomes something...

A substance (a pigment) that transforms into another substance (the painting): from magma to another shapeless magma.

A decanting.

An association: the sludge, the lagoon bed and the bottom of my brush-cleaning pot.

"But it is entirely in the spirit of alchemical and artistic experiment. The alchemists were drawn to slag and refuse: the loved the suspicious skins that thickened over their stews. They rooted in cinders and picked at ashy heaps. They let their waters rot, and then rummaged in the soft granular sludges that sank to the bottom. More often than not it is the crush or the ash that fascinates them, and not the pellucid colours and volatile oils that comprise the stew itself. Putrefaction, with its Latin name putrefactio, is a nearly universal step in the alchemical work. The clean substance has to degenerate into brackish mould before it produces anything work examining.

Academic painting had a natural affinity with mud and excrement, because of the common use of brown hues and thick varnishes that yellowed and darkened with age."

(James Elkins in "What Painting Is")

What do I do with these words? What is this gabbling and constant intense working with the word that has followed me for years in parallel to the painting, alongside the work with the substance?

I dilute my colour with lots of turpentine. I need to "thin out" the substance... Seeing as my work consists of substance that sediments over a period time, I need "space".

There's a relationship between creating my painting in solitude and meaningful relationships.

My bowl.

A continuous pouring from one container to another. Backwards and forwards, always from the same containers. One colour reclaims itself every time.

Stale dirty water, which is filled and made of itself.

A fluid that doesn't cancel itself out or clean itself, which is murky and remains.

It's always there.

It curves over me.

Balling up.

A centripetal force in the daily ritual. Then, every now and then a tangent line departs that connects with the exterior.

Being witness to an event.

The organic substance comes out of me. It performs here right in front of me.

I create the conditions in which the thing happens.

I don't talk about myself or my individuality.

I construct, I structure a reality with its own logic and its own system of existence.

A thought moulds itself in the substance.

It's as though my paintings had absorbed all the water from the lagoon and the canals of Venice. It's as though the canvases were sponges bathing in the salty water and had absorbed the substance, the colour that the substance of Venice is made of, from the bottom to the top.

Distracted behaviour. Sideways rather than frontally, I move closer with the corner of my eye and indifferently. It's as though I began from the side, from the edges. Then gradually the thing takes up space and time, it takes its space and its time, and is placed in a more central zone, here right before my eyes.

Acting nonchalantly... indifferently... Proceeding with a wide berth. I let the thing start lightly and in time it proceeds. It starts with attempts. It sometimes broadens and takes shape and sometimes it disappears. Things enter inside without me realising. Sometimes something enters into the visual field that wasn't there before or at least which I didn't see before. I recognise it. So I give it space to grow without forcing it. At other times this part returns to its shady area and then disappears again.

I'm looking for the central theme.

A linear logic...

I tidy up. I categorise. I put things in place. I find the meaning.

With the first works it was initially physics of the body. Now it's physics of the mind.

An interior mental space and an objective physical space.

It flows easily.

The infinite painting.

Stratifying the painting. Always keeping it watered like a plant. Keeping it alive.

Putting one layer on top of the other means consolidating. The painting breaks when it is interrupted. I can imagine passing it on... Could someone else after me continue to stratify it?

The thought forms, the substance sediments. It stays closed and takes shape. It stays inside and makes itself known. Then it opens up to others and another substance is created through human relationships.

Always being there, even in the time that doesn't seem to be mine.

Backwards and forwards. Traversing through colour.

A colour that goes beyond the canvas. A canvas that can also be viewed from behind.

The bowl is always alive and wet, while on the canvas the substance dries and crystalises. In the bowl it always has to transform itself, whereas on the canvas it is fixed in one place.

There is a serial nature within the serial nature to the work of the walls and the paper-diaries.

Don't endure. Interact.

On the one hand maintain a strong connection with the inside, inside myself, inside my space; on the other an opening up towards the world and relating to others.

The bowl fills, the bowl empties.

If I deny the past then I also deny the future. If everything is only brought back to the present and there is no perspective it is like denying movement, the possibility of transformation. The present always becomes the past.

And if at some stage this writing to myself opened up towards the outside and I got people to read it?

It can't produce a lot. It can't do a lot... it accumulates slowly because the time of life gathers and accumulates.

The substance is and has to be full, to be felt to its core, thick...

Saying little. Saying less. Doing little. Apathetically. Doing things slowly.

Working in depth rather than on the surface. Working on the thickness of the earth's surface, the terrestrial crust...

Always keeping the thread of the conversation there. Moving forward.

Everything that comes before, everything that comes afterwards.

Doing because you can't do anything but do.

Listening instead of speaking. Recording instead of saying.

Allowing things to enter naturally and fluidly.

Recording reality just as it all is. The reality of one's existence.

Letting chance enter.

A concentration of space, time and humanity.

But then all the existences make sense: this is like that... I speak on behalf of everyone. If I talk about myself I cancel myself out.

Sample. Inventory. List.

It isn't the description of the thing... it is the thing itself.

Dream:

I go back the next morning to my studio and find untouched the sponge that I had immersed in colour for Francesca. As if it had never been touched by the colour. The colour didn't take.

You don't need to invent anything. It's all already there.

It's not about seeing myself in what I do, but of recognising others. More generically it is the thing, the substance of everyone.

It is not uniqueness I produce, but the participation with a shared substance that concerns all of us.

I proceed via continuous fragments.

I mull over the rhythm and the spaces that are created between the things. Between the diaries. Between my time in the studio there's the time outside of the studio...

Emptiness, a pause, but what is full and what is empty?



An unbroken line. Detachments that are actually part of a dotted line... In painting what are the detachments, the pauses, the voids?

I'd like to see an artist who has been successful and who has been able to broaden and expand their work on a bigger scale return to the smaller dimensions of their origins and see what they can put back in... How would they make this small gesture now?

My paintings create a story. They are the story of a process... of a route.

I don't look, I don't see. I feel. I feel around me.

I loaf about, I take time, I waste time, I wander around.

Travelling standing still.

Contradicting myself.

Constructing communal routes.

The fetishism of objects. How to bring inside the objects of my work? What shall I do with all my father's objects?

Somebody asked me: but how does such a clean bright colour always come out of this dirty substance in this bowl?

Linear time (Diary)

Cyclical time (Waters)

Kneaded time (Kneadings)

Accelerated time (Accelerations and Travel Diaries)

A time that slowly and inexorably moves forward. But also a cyclical time because it is always linked to equal rhythms.

A kneaded time that returns to itself. And an accelerated time that suddenly starts running.

Don't leave traces because they remain but because they disappear (like on the water's edge at the beach).

Losing track. Losing your memory. Making yourself lose your memory.

The traces crumble.

How can I consider a work an archive of the memory on the one hand and on the other a work that wants to let go?

"Time itself grows old. (...) To set one's name to a work gives no one a title to be remembered, for who knows how many of the best of men have gone without a trace? The iniquity of oblivion blindly scatters her poppy seed and when wretchedness falls upon us one summer's day like snow, all we wish for is to be forgotten."

(W.G Sebald, "The Rings of Saturn")

Getting out of one's routine. Breaking the routine.

An open structure that can always change.

Always maintaining some ignorance.

Plasticine: a paste that closes a split, a wound?

Starting from one's place and close to one's place.

Staying in proximity.

Patina. Painting on wet. Painting on dry.

What happens when the idea of cataloguing, archiving, preserving the memory, keeping track, is already inserted into the work?

Does making an archive become a tautology?

“What does the archive become when it is inscribed on the body proper? (...) as to any horizon of waiting, the absolute impatience of a desire of memory.”

(Derrida: "Archive Fever")

Tidying up. Organising. Getting everything out and sorting it out.

From an emptying and a cancelling out, you can start over.

You can't keep the world out.

I don't paint a static image but produce a living substance.

For me, painting has something physiological about it. It is closer to a vital function like breathing, eating, pumping blood, expelling.

Now I understand where my relationship with colour comes from: from clay. From when I was a child and went to my Aunt Mini's pottery class.

You don't see the colours of ceramics. I had to choose them for what I imagined they would be like. I chose them at random; I spread them on the surface of the clay and then when they came out of the kiln after the second firing I observed them for what they had become.

Reverse time. A coming and going. Re-kneading. Going over again.

From linear time to kneaded time.

In time. In a consequential time the substance sediments and experience accumulates. Then all of a sudden I find myself in front of it again! I look at it and I go over it again. It changes. It's different from what it was.

“It is only at the end of the book, (...) that my thought will be revealed.”

( Marcel Proust in a letter to Jacques Riviere in Giuliana Giulietti, "Proust e Monet")

Preserving the memory. Reactivating the memory. Reliving the memory through a new experience.

The persistence of the past in the present.

Continuity, not anachronism.

Self-referentiality? Never!

Connecting to reality, to people.

I keep everything. I don't let anything go. Everything remains.

It's all so condensed.

Lots of things happen simultaneously in the studio. Everyone has their own rhythm, their own time. Lots of rivulets flow at the same time. Everyone is independent from everyone else, but information is reciprocally and contagiously passed from one to the other.

Reading Jullien.

The modification divides up, the continuation proceeds. One innovates and the other inherits.

You can't give a name to something that is in continual motion, in continual transformation. You can't nominate something that is transitional and thus indefinable.

You can give a sense only through a verb, an action.

Perceiving the change.

Guide or scatter?

It's about protecting a time that is an end to itself. Basically, this is what my paintings do: they protect, maintain and represent an empty time.

I work "on a process" and not "on a project"!

I have nothing to recount, nothing to tell. I only have to stay inside and let the colour come out.

I keep my habit going.

Leaving via the tangent.

I try to go over it again, but then in reality it leads me elsewhere. Distraction? It's an involuntary act.

I keep everything there in front of me.

What am I doing with all this: the site, the archive. Understanding, objectifying, nominating, looking at myself from outside... Is it because I'm the daughter of a journalist and the wife of a historian?

Accumulating, selecting, savouring, destroying.

Constructing with the remains. Do I keep all the substance that forms? (There's not much) Or eliminate?

Small and dense, not lots and widespread.

A small, dense, concentrated substance.

I can't do something big a diluted.

The time of the existence is concentrated.

My point of view and my son's point of view of me.

Concentrate. Savour. Slowly.

On the one hand, empty and tend to the essence, arrive at nothing; on the other, bring things back inside.

Rarefaction of the space. The meaning of emptiness, of a pause. Giving every single part its own space, its own time.

Putting. Putting one thing on top of another and then crush and cancel everything. Make it disappear? Forget? Eliminate? Create the emptiness? Leaving nothing?

I started from the big, from large dimensions, and I have slowly veered towards the small and restricted: a lump, a compressed and concentrated space.

I find that the only way to deal with the space now is through the fragment, lots of small fragments.

I can't deal with spaces that are too big. The energy is small and concentrated. I am like a dropper who leaves a little at a time, a little concentrated substance.

There is little time; the time of existence is short and the substance that it produces can only be of a certain amount.

I find that the progressive reduction of the physical dimension, the large scale, is an obsolete question. I want to shatter. The large scale denies interiority. It wants to surprise, but it no longer does. It has no impact. It's better to stay within your own dimension and hopefully something will come out of it.

Venice entered my bowl. The lagoon bed, the canal beds are like the bottom of my brush holder. The magma on the bottom formed over time, with time.

The "*Sedimentations*" are like kitchen towel that absorbs the liquid colour of the water from the bottom to the top.

Existence is more important than the work of art. The work is what remains; it is the remainder of existing. It is more what enters and less what leaves. The work is the residue of existence and thus can only be small and condensed.

I head towards an implosion and not a wide and diluted dimension.

A lot is stored and not much is thrown out.

You leave, you return. Circularity. From red to red. Coming and going. Retracing your steps. Not knowing where to go but knowing where to return.

Starting. Finishing. Continuing.

Storing and then emptying. Accumulating and then letting go. Making room. Opening up to another.

My studio: a decompression chamber.

At first there were lots of bowls and then there was only one. The palette has become narrower, focussing on just one point.

I have gradually started thinning down, simplifying.

Have I reached the essence?

A single and simple gesture: spreading one colour at a time onto a surface. It takes me into the meaning of the painting.

A rarefied time.

The quantity is determined by the size, the scale of the space, the capacity and the possibility that it has the space to contain. It can't do more than that.

The number of the paintings inside the rack, the "*Stratifications*" in their container, the "*Diaries*" in the "*Diary Holder*" and so on, always has to be the same. The container fills and empties.

If the paintings aren't sold then I give them to friends. Actually, this is what I really want: to give and distribute them to friends.

Even bookshops full of books have to keep to the same quantity. Books accumulate to a certain point and then they have to be got rid of, eliminated.

To let things enter, you have to let things go.

In large dimensions, the pictorial substance dilutes and becomes less dense.

If it were up to me, at this point I would live by spreading a colour a day and giving everything that comes out of this studio to my friends. All I'd need were for my shelves to be full of a certain amount of works and I'd like to give the excess to my friends.

I barter my time, my colour, in exchange for understanding, sharing and affection.

The colour in the bowl makes itself dirty. Mine is not a pure substance, but is contaminated by what there is in the environment, in the air, in the things I use... Inside the bowl there's dust, hairs, insects, bits of dried colour...

The bowl never gets cleaned. Even the leftover substance goes into it.

Wholly considering the other.

There's no need to write a diary that talks about real life. I live my real life out in the field.

My diary is an abstraction, a detachment from the autobiography. Through colour I talk about an essence and through these words, which reason alongside the relationship with the substance, I reflect on the meaning...

A powerful and compressed emotionality like in a pressure cooker.

A little, but always.

I have to make a little come out at a time, one drop after another, a little at a time, but always with continuity. Otherwise everything would get blocked and burst...

Keeping words.

Keeping colours.

The two Caravaggio canvases in Santa Maria del Popolo measure 230 x 175 cm. Mine are 180 x 160 cm.

I alternate phases in which I dig down or push outwards.

Chance. Deviation.

I am looking for something and instead find something else. And then I find that, too. (Perseverance)

I take the interlocutor into consideration.

Keeping moving.

It is a slow and constant transformation. It's so slow that it appears immobile. Then every now and then, I stop and when I look I realise that something has changed.

It's important never to feel that you are staying still.

Probing the painting.

Questioning the painting.

Disappearing as though camouflaged.

Making myself teeny-tiny and placing myself like mouse droppings on the floorboards at the base of the wall.

My mum says: "I don't write unless I have an interlocutor" (Epistolary form) whereas dad and I talk to ourselves. (Diary form)

You need a certain measure, neither excessive nor meagre. You organise the space to receive the substance that is produced. Never overwhelm it and never empty it.

Keeping and letting go.

Stone: the first support of the painting, the substance that the world is made of.

I like entering inside the stone with my pictorial gesture (Stratifications in the travertine); getting stuck inside (Pellestrine in Istrian stone); placing myself alongside (Fragments of paint with stones).

The stone keeps things inside it; it receives, accepts, embraces and incorporates the painting.

Having interlocutors. Artists? You talk to others. You ask questions. You look for answers and connections...

Basically, it's as though my work were a means of measuring time.

I always return to red on a cyclical basis. Periodically the bowl reverts to being red.

Proceeding.

Recording. Recording the experience. Recording life.

Staying in the shadows allows me to be free and maintain my natural rhythms.

A handful of interlocutors, but good ones. Avoiding the rest.

By "Diary" I mean all of that intimate "writing", which talks to itself and which flows in parallel to the flow of life. This "writing" can take on various shapes: descriptive, chronicle, intimate, psychological. It can happen through different languages: the written word (traditional diaries); signs, hieroglyphics (Nannetti); photography (Nan Goldin, Richter's Atlas); painted numbers (Opalka); colour (painters' journals)...

Expanding.

When everything narrows, when there's no more room to move and see, when our body suffers limitations... the head has to open and broaden to make room for the imagination...

It's about always renewing the experience.

It's all a question of measure. You need to find your own measure.

Whenever I've started working on an idea, or rather on an abstract concept, I never get anywhere. I've realised that it's always been about starting from an experience, from a direct relationship with things. Then the idea intervenes in order to bring out or push towards something.

The things I do (works?) are not provoked by ideas but by desires.

I write (I deposit colour) and then I don't re-read (I don't look again).

The library moves in harmony with my artistic trajectories...

The substance of the painting: stone (it is the same substance the world is made of), ground until it is dust and then kept together with a watery substance...

There are two ways to move: one is a mental movement and the other is a physical journey.

Two separate worlds that flow in parallel. The one helps to understand the other.

Letting out, giving intimacy existence.

The possibility of recognising yourself in someone else's intimacy.

It's not my conscious desire to bring something out.

"A rhythm that is subtracted from the temptation of the end, or rather of the measure."  
(Jean-Luc Nancy in "The Body of Art")

Basically, what I do is nothing more than recording life.

Remaining in a slightly secluded position... The isolated position can even be privileged (if the choice is made freely and isn't imposed by events) because it leads to a distance that helps you to see things. It supports your rhythms. Sometimes just a few or even one interlocutor is all you need to have the feeling of communicating with the outside.

Lingering, letting things fall. Giving the possibility that the thing sediments.

Painting knowing that you can live without it...

"The Diary Holder":

"...there is no archive without consignment in an external place which assures the possibility of memorization, of repetition, of reproduction, or of reimpression...."

(From Jacques Derrida "Archive Fever")

"The Infinite Painting":

"It works to destroy the archive, on the condition of effacing but also with a view to effacing its own "proper" traces."

(From Jacques Derrida "Archive Fever")

I begin my "Narration" with someone else.

"... According to a proven convention the exergue plays with the citation. To cite before the beginning is to give the tone through the resonance of a few words whose meaning should dominate the scene."

(From Jacques Derrida "Archive Fever")

Collecting. Gathering. Archiving.

"Actually, just like every collection, this one is a diary as well: a diary of travels, of course, but also of feelings, states of mind, moods (...) the need to transform the flow of one's own existence into a series of objects saved from dispersal, or into a series of written lines abstracted and crystallized from the continuous flux of thought."

(From Italo Calvino, "Collection of Sand")

Letting intimate movements emerge.

Rule number one: break the rules that you've given yourself. Rebel and disobey yourself.

"I accumulate the past, constantly making out of it and casting into it the present, without giving it the chance to exhaust its own duration."

(From "The Fall Into Time" by E.M. Cioran)

Time: does history go by in blocks or is it an uninterrupted flow? (Reading Le Goff)

Rigour.

Spurred on by a feeling of gratitude.

Freeing the mind, clearing the field in order to begin.

Digging deep down.

From practice to theory, from theory to practice. The philosophy inside the practice, inside the experience.

Lowering the practice into the thought.

Generate, elaborate experience, conserving the memory and always renewing it.

Conserving the experience.

Sometimes I feel that there is no past, just a long present. I don't see in perspective but see everything put in front of me as a single "now".

Conversing. Leaning out towards... lending an ear... listening.... Observing... raising your antennae...  
Then: talk about yourself, explain yourself, reveal yourself...

When you are forced into physical immobility, into the impossibility of seeing with your eyes: open the imagination; open your mind.

Remain invisible.

Erase the memory.

Grinding down all the past time and turning it into a single mush.

The singularity of existence and the plurality of experience.

Distracting ourselves from ourselves.

Experience is filtered and mediated by memory. You can't express the thing while you are experiencing it. It is deposited inside first and then it emerges.  
(See Leopardi, see Proust.)

Working on what I've experienced.

Strong compressed emotiveness. Like in a pressure cooker, it escapes a little at a time, one drop after another. Colour is the expression of a compressed emotiveness. Colour moves from an inside to an outside. I am the go-between for this movement. Emotiveness comes out in the form of material-colour.

You have to touch the work continuously in order to keep it alive. As soon as I detach myself it begins its deterioration. So where's the meaning: in the act, in the intention, in the idea, in the gesture or in the thing itself?

When the detachment takes place, the death of the object-work begins. The sense of the gesture remains.

Looking for a feeling of indifference, of detachment. I need to go further.

Destroy or let go?  
Does it make sense to stop the usury of time?

The spectator is the one who protects, who maintains, who allows the work to continue to exist, adding new meaning every time.

"The voice is the go-between of thought and reality." (Piero)

Thinking about ourselves.  
Forgetting ourselves.

Creating the work from the contact with things outside of me.  
Meeting. Chance.  
Recognising ourselves in others.



Once the colours have come out, once they have become something real and tangible, they start to relate with the other entities-colours which already exist. They reverberate. At times they clash and at others they correspond, and at others they can be distinguished from each other. However, the opposite can also happen: the colours which come out from inside are influenced by those that are already found outside. They therefore absorb the experience of all the ones around them.

The ballast.

I feel myself being pushed down, anchored to the ground, as if the world were a magnet and I were a piece of iron. It is a difficult and heavy movement which leads downwards, making it difficult for me to move.

“Maria, you’re making an inventory of yourself.” (M.S.)

Running away from myself. Disappearing. Making things disappear. On the contrary, never allowing certain works to enter into the cataloguing and archiving process.

Dissolve. Turn into dust. Return to pigment. Arriving at dissolution and the disappearance of the substance.

Breaking the moulds. Leaving myself. Not respecting the rules. Disobeying the archive. Rebellious.  
Making something escape. Hiding it. Keeping it a secret...

An implosion.

Not showing again.

Pulping the substance.

The next step is: dissolving the substance.

The human condition.

Attaching oneself to the world. Adhering to the world. Being indignant.

It is life which determines the work and not the other way around.

A good collector is someone who thinks they are buying a gesture and not an object.

A good critic or curator is someone who acts as a magnet and brings out what is inside.

Giving shape to the shapeless.

Organising chaos.

Throwing into disarray.

Sloth. Laziness. A non-productive time. Staying with others.

Fill. Fill to the brim.

A self-generating work which feeds on what it generates.

An ecosystem which manages to be independent.

Circularity, cyclicity, recovery.

Sticking close by... Staying alongside. Not moving away.

Small and concentrated art. Transportable, nomadic.

I only produce what is in the studio. Don't accumulate more than the space can contain; more than one's life can stand. Only if something leaves, if it goes, does it leave room for something new.  
The quantity is determined by the size of the space. It is thus the space which determines the rhythm and the time.

Notes during the viewing of G. Deleuze's "ABCs":

Making art = constructing worlds which are supported by their meaning, by their method...

Looking at others to look at ourselves...

Not talking about oneself – abstract autobiography. Forgetting ourselves. Looking at ourselves through others, listening to other peoples' biographies...

Making portraits and not self-portraits...

I am interesting in the diaries of others and not in mine. I keep mine, but then I don't read it and I don't look at it again.

Approximate. Incomplete. Non-finite. Unfinished.

Grind. Dissolve. Pulverise and then disperse the dust.

G. Deleuze in "Proust and Signs":

"Each individual expresses the world from a particular point of view. The point of view is difference itself, internal absolute difference. Every subject thus expresses a different world..."

How to go from individual experience to the experience of everyone.

Containment. Compression.

A compressed, contained, held colour...

The studio, my world as a container. Like a concave body which carries its imprints, its moulds, its organs inside it. Parts which detach themselves from the container and go on to reconstruct an interiority elsewhere.

How to show? Take it outside. Install a work, have an exhibition: put the gesture on view.

Keep everything, but then decide to hide and only show a part.

How can I keep a whole together?

Sifting and rummaging (as G. D. Huberman says).

The word. The commentary. The caption.

Using the caption, the written comment, as a tool for positioning the intimate gesture towards the exterior.

Listening to G.D. Huberman.

How does the artist look when she is standing before the painting?

She approaches, she doesn't see; she touches.

She steps back, she looks, she understands what she has done.

Getting closer in order to move away. Getting so close that it is impossible to see, but only touch and then create a distance in order to be aware of what has been done.

What would happen if the independent world that has been self-produced enters into relation with other worlds?

A meteorite which falls? An interruption?

Leaving the method, leaving the template. Disobeying the rules. Moving away from the system.

Going outside the lines. Rebelling against oneself.

Reopening questions.

Having found a system, shatter it, unbalance it. And then take it back and reconstruct it with a new meaning.

Insist. Reiterate.

Transfer time in the space. Allow time to take space.  
The colour expands in the space. One colour after another.

How do I think about my site?

An interiority which opens up towards the exterior. The intimate world determined by traces of my own existence opens up to the external gaze through a window you can peep through. It is like looking through the hole.  
On the other hand, my place, like a tortoise carrying its home on its back in the world, goes out and walks about to meet others.

Open up the imagination. Detach yourself from contingencies. Separate the body from the mind.

Inherit. Inherit a thought. Be a go-between. Continue to take a piece of that person out in the world.

Disperse in the space. Let crumbs fall in the space.

Work with a little.

G. Deleuze:

“The immanent event is actualised in a state of things and of the lived that make it happen.”

A loss of memory, and of the sense of time and space.

Paint. Touch the canvas. Brush. Caress.

The more I close, the more I fix the limits and the more I open up to the imagination.

Venice: local-international.

Experiencing internationality at home. Keeping still. Never moving.

Affirming with an awareness of my own ingenuity.

The conscious representation of your own way of being.

Interpretation and not manipulation.

Staying. Remaining. Not rejecting.

Rebelling. Feeling free. Rejecting. A continual resistance. Small acts of resistance.

Plunging your hands into the substance and then raising your eyes upwards.

It is a question of keeping alive the language which flows in parallel on two levels at the same time: that of painting and that of reflecting on the act of painting.

Making the thought visible.

Distilling. Selecting. Choosing. Pouring with a dropper. Extracting.

For some time now not all the colours which are formed in the bowl end up on the paintings. They are all recorded in diaries and accumulated on the infinite painting, but they are not spread on the sedimentations. The latter have become distillations.

I'm not interested in feeling unique, original, different. I feel alive when I find similarity outside of myself.

Talking about intimacy without saying anything personal. Finding a common subject that concerns everyone.

I haven't said anything about myself in my writing, in my diary.

An archive self-determined by the artist herself, in continual movement and transformation.

The encounter between the land and the sea: the sludge, the mud.

Aunt Mini's clay, the bed of the Venetian lagoon, the muds of Montegrotto, the Pellestrina sea (between sand and water)...

Erasing memory.

Omitting.

Selecting.

Dissolving.

Exhausting.

Forgetting.

Losing one's memory.

Annulling parts of memories.

Losing self-awareness.

Melting.

"... the pursuit of the formless or the unformulated..."

"The image is not an object but a 'process'."

*The Exhausted* (G. Deleuze)

Always keeping open the possibility of making something happen.

Not keeping, not withholding.

Achieving your own trajectory or being interrupted at any time?

The time has come to melt and disperse...

Make the body talk without giving the body words.

"I preferred myself..." "Every soul considered powerful starts with the error of revealing his existence. In exchange of a public gratification he concedes the time needed to make himself perceptible, therefore wasting his dissipated energy to manifest himself and to prepare the satisfaction of others. He goes as far as to compare the crude games of glory to the joy of feeling oneself unique: which is an extraordinary gratification."

(Paul Valéry, *Monsieur Teste*)

I think of the traces that each of us leaves in the small space we move around in every day.

Slowing down.

Floating.

No longer mulling over things. Not withholding, allowing things to slide over me.

Temporary shortcuts.

Coincidences.

Making compact.

Superimposing until dissolving. Consuming.

I would like to be like D. M.'s "violin spider", closed in a tin, capable of living in complete autonomy for extended periods.

Looking for my own interlocutors.

Creating a context to stay in.

In all these years, the actions have multiplied. I segmented time in different parts: water photos, Plasticene stratifications, stones, paper-diaries, etc.

I would like to gradually reach the completion of a single action: generating the colour in the bowl and then throwing it in a bucket which accumulates substance.

Diaries: segmentation of time

Infinite painting: cancellation of time

Sedimentations: concluded parts, one after the other

Bowl: keeping time alive

"If, for example, a series of actions can only be carried out once a day, then a sort of protection is created regarding their infinite segmentation because otherwise it would give rise to the appearance of -other times-..."

"A rhythmic and non-consecutive time"

"... a consecutive time, which in its continuity allows a story."

"... the whole of these operations tends to establish a serial time, without history, an infinite collection of -now-..."

"... a world in itself is formed, which appears to be completely dislocated from and independent of the common one ..."

("The alternation of -now-and-not now- implies a non-cumulative time in which a present precipitates into nothing and regenerates, instantaneously or not, but not without the force of the past and tension of the future intervening.")

"A cyclical, non-linear time: in other words, a wheel of time rather than an arrow."

Elvio Facchinelli, *The Arrow Stops*)

There are things I manage to keep track of and things I don't want to keep track of, that I don't want to archive.

Escaping from the act of archiving.

Who knows? Maybe one day everything will be reduced to what's inside the bowl.

Letting the experience constitute itself.

Determining the act. And then turning back and looking at what took shape.

Historical perspective.

The manifestation of something already implied.

I look at myself from outside: if I look how I move in the studio and the trajectories I make, then I understand what I am doing.

An unnatural gesture made with an effort.

Wabi Sabi

Letting something happen and then time continues to add meaning.

Prolonging the gesture.

Continuing due to inertia.

Unable to stop myself.

Realising the impossibility of continuing but not being able to do otherwise.

Always dragging the action, the thought.

Knowing that the language, the thought is bled dry, but trying to keep it going anyhow.

Honing.

I diminishingly feel the need to write in this notebook. Is it because my thoughts are organising themselves within the narration of the site?

Exhaust. Extinguish.

“But what happens when introspection develops a density that obliterates the world around it?” (From “Counterpoint” De Lillo)

The vase is closed; the bowl is open. The bowl generates; the vase conserves. The vase holds; the bowl proffers. The vase keeps; the bowl offers. The bowl changes; the vase preserves.

Keeping the process open even afterwards. Symbolically passing the bowl on to Piero just like my dad passed his diaries on to me.

On the one hand, sinking one's hands into the substance, the substance of the world; feeling in harmony in a single flow. On the other, remaining aloof and slightly withdrawn.

I produce experience and then I archive it.

Placing my own archive (my own experience) in relation to other archives (other experiences). Going from an individual level to a collective one.

Selecting, sifting, eliminating.

Experiencing the exhibition not as a conclusive moment, but as part of an open thought, as part of the creative process. Using the exhibition as a moment of experimentation and not to show a closed and certain form, in order for others to help me to understand what I am doing.

An exhibition: the documentation of the documentation.

How can I exhibit the minimum? How can I exhibit the residue?

Exhibitions are nothing more than the continuous focussing, the focalisations of problems and of themes that can already all be found in the work. The form of the exhibition is perhaps precisely this: an attempt to highlight these questions with a different point of view each time.

Cristina Campo said of herself: "She wrote little and would like to have written less."

Creating images that don't look like anything.

E. V.'s dedication:

"However, here we could also use the luminous and moving self-description of another exiled poet, Czeslaw Milosz, who wrote while he was staying in California, amongst the 'bowls of colours' of a 'faithful mother tongue' to serve and defend against the 'filthy discord of tortured words' in a boundless space: 'The purpose of poetry is to remind us / how difficult it is to remain just one person, / for our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, / and invisible guests come in and out at will.'

(From Ezio Raimondi "Un'etica del lettore")

Leaving interpretation open.

There are different perceptions of time and lots of different rhythms exist. Each one has its own.

I experience colour as a direct experience and not as a visual perceptive fact.

The Site: showing interiority without filters.

First you let the substance generate itself, you let the thing happen and the experience leave its trace. Then you try to understand and explain it to yourself. Then you offer it to the exterior, to the world. Presenting this system to the world means submitting it to judgment, giving it the possibility of a new transformation, opening it up to criticism, new viewpoints and different interpretations. Basically, this is what my 'An Archive of Time' is about, this is what it talks about: allowing the whole practice, method, thought and body to be judged.

Leaving open the possibility of misunderstanding.

"With contempt"

Leopardi's 'notebook': "...equally ought to appear achieved with supreme lack of effort, one of which qualities can be said precisely to consist in hiding art completely..."

Cristina Campo: "*Sprezzatura* is a moral rhythm, it is the music of an internal grace; I would like to say that it is the time in which the complete freedom of an inflexibly measured destiny shows itself... (...) 'Caress, caress!' is the phrase Chopin pressed on his pupils when they placed their hands on the harpsichord."

Laura Boella in her preface to the Italian edition of Ernst Bloch's "Traces":

"The substance of the narration (...) cannot be burnt or devoured because it has been formed slowly over time, following work akin to that of an artisan, consisting of 'the slow superimposition of a series of thin and transparent layers' (Benjamin)."

Dissolve the memory.

Liquefy the substance.

Forget.

Vanish.

Lead to oblivion.

Empty.

Almost reach immobility. Waste time.

Hardly produce anything, or little. Insufficient.

I quote dad's diary by heart:

Moving from diary writing to epistolary writing. Searching for an interlocutor.

Basically, this is what it is about: my site was conceived like a long intimate open letter sent to an unknown interlocutor, then waiting for a reply.

I think that I 'wrote' the site for a dozen people altogether...

From Antonio Gramsci's "Letters from Prison":

"I generally find it necessary to take up a dialectical or dialogue standpoint, otherwise I don't feel any intellectual stimulation. As I once told you, I do not like throwing stones in the dark; I like to have a concrete interlocutor or adversary; also, I want to create a dialogue in personal relationships."

Avoid having an opinion about everything and above all avoid expressing it at all costs.

Avoid always being productive. Avoid producing too much stuff.

Lots of worlds, lots of life systems, lots of cosmogonies, each one different from the others. Independent and autonomous, they flourish, touch one another, intersect and share. Taking one's world out there.

Fleeing from one's own interpretation, letting the meaning flee...

Looking at things more closely and then broadening one's view.

Use failure as a procedure?

Failing in one's intentions. The form that the work takes does not necessarily have to coincide with one's intentions.

Luisa Muraro: the aim

My archive/site = an ephemeral work.

Always making 'the same' new.

Reactivating the gesture. Renewing the meaning.

Let everything into the archive. The selection is a priori. It is a question of producing little, allowing a little to come out, not allowing that which I consider useless to happen.

It is a question of letting a little concentrated substance out.

Stopping a gesture, holding it, making it the object, archiving it, but at the same time wanting to let it go and disappear.

Keeping alive the possibility of continuing the experience. Keeping alive the meaning, even via a microscopic fragment.

Impermanence. Creating an accumulation of nothing.

Studio visit with C.B.:

There was already the kernel of the site in the 1980 book "La lumaca e la medusa". A system which nourishes itself and is self-generating.

Reading R.P. with mum: a sudden intrusion of the past in the present.



Conversion (from the dictionary): The term conversion suggests the image of a person who, realising they are travelling down the wrong path, decides to retrace their steps and head in a different direction. Conversion is an 'existential' awareness that can occur following a persuasive action by a third party or after considered personal reflection. This is how one decides to change the course of one's life, reorienting one's attitudes and behaviour according to criteria different from those sustained until that moment.

Listening to Michael Fried:

The artist is the first viewer, the first witness of what has formed through her work. Abandoning her work to then return to view it detachedly to try to understand it. It is in this phase that I try to see the initial generative action of the painting in order to visualise the act of painting.

A painting that talks about painting.

Reading Clarice Lispector:

A continuous present; an uninterrupted present. There is a continuously present, contingent time and there is a broader time that has always infinitely existed. I am made of the substance, of the total time of which the world is made, a "neutral" "inexpressive" substance.

Gradually eliminating the thought of what you are doing. Trying to remain in a neutral space, without language. Ensuring that the colour comes out alone, a fluid without words.

It is possible for me to do this only after having been in the process with the thought for a long time and I have tried to understand the meaning of what I was doing. Now all I have to do is forget language.

"Every work of art is based on the emergence of the thought from the substance." (Josef Albers)

The "Sedimentations" are like continual interruptions of a single long and continuative process over time. They scan, make rhythms, and are pauses between two moments.

All this sequence that happens in a linear and consequential way can be turned on its head at any moment as soon as the works are exhibited, each time inventing a new order. A different order, a different form and a different sense of time can be created each time.

I do not like painting in the light. I paint in the shadows. I don't look; I touch.

The touch of the painting. Touching the canvas with the paintbrush. Touching the surface = leaving your imprint.

A creature of habit.

Breaking habits.

Finding a balance between the interior magmatic substance and the tortuous one.

Doing something you can say nothing about.

A continuous intrigue.

Three steps back.

I paint the moment that precedes the pictorial act.

A eulogy to normality.

Everyday life.

Forgetting or voluntarily losing your memory?

I have always obsessively made lists of projects, ideas, things to do, in diary upon diary that never have time to become actual diaries because as soon as something is done I like to erase it.

The colour diaries are diaries that do not say anything, that do not have any narration. A colour does nothing other than express itself.

I want to become dissolvent. Dissolvent in a continuous present. One moment next to another.

"I never want this moment to end."

"Don't worry too much. This too shall pass and, with the right distance and perspective, everything will become less painful."

Always picking up the thread of the discussion exactly at the precise point that I left it.

Fading, diluting, abating, becoming colourless, losing one's memory.

Words no longer used when talking about art: sensation, feeling, state of mind, emotion, intuition, emotivity, sensitivity... Shall we try and get back to using them?

Painting does not use colour, it produces colour.

Exhibiting. Presenting the present. Putting into the world what is outside the world.

Every instant erases the instant that has just gone before it. Every moment cancels itself out. As soon as I have spread the colour I have already left it and moved on.

What will happen in my work over the next few years?

Various very different possibilities are opening up.

If I have the possibility to continue to sell something then will the work proceed slowly, insistently, inexorably?

If the work is greatly-appreciated and opens up good financial possibilities then could it expand, broaden, grow, open?

On the other hand, if everything comes to a standstill and no possibilities open up then would the central nucleus strengthen and continue to exist? These are the verbs to work on: tighten, shrink, slow down, destroy, eliminate, limit...

From "The Apple in the Dark" by Clarice Lispector:

"... from now on I want what is identical and not what is different. You talk too much about things that sparkle; nevertheless, there is an I don't know, which doesn't sparkle. And this is what I want. I want the extravagant beauty of monotony. (...) From now on I want that which is completely the same."

Entering into the flow of time.

Obscuring my subjectivity to let the substance we human beings are made of emerge.

One's own works like goods to exchange. An autonomous form. Escaping "capture".

Looking for a way that helps the gesture to remain free, unhindered by the logic of market and dependence...

Trying to build a system that is self-nourishing, like a kind of ecosystem that renders it truly independent, right to its core. A system that allows me to act in complete autonomy.

Listening to M. B.:

The question has to be: "What can you do with art" rather than "How can I become an artist?"

Not accumulating more than necessary.

Slowing down instead of accelerating. Producing less. Imagining small and concentrated dimensions.

Staying together, creating relationships.

Trying out another time in the work: interrupting, changing direction. Happening. Fracturing.

Being supported and not contradicted. Living in harmony and not in conflict.

Instead of starting from a light background, Tintoretto began with a dark background. He spread the remains of all the colours that were left on his palette onto the canvas.

He did not want to be hemmed in by any definition.

An archive of life.

My studio in the museum atrium: taking something where it isn't usually found.

Over the years a dictionary has been created. Now I can use my words.

Reading C. Lispector:

Living like an unknown person. I would like not to be considered.

First we should understand ourselves well and only then can we relate to the world.

Knowing and understanding oneself through others.

Finding ourselves in others. Recognising ourselves in others. Familiarity.

Equilibrium in painting: that colour is like that and it cannot be anything else.

Listening to G. Agamben:

It never ends. Maybe it pauses.

A process underway never stops happening.

Occupying the smallest possible space. Staying in a nook. Building one's own lair.

A made-to-measure dress, but in a comfortable size.

Secluded, far from the crowd.

Staying detached in order to find concentration in the gesture.

The thing in itself.

"In art it is possible to start again from scratch." (Paul Klee)

Listening to Orson Welles:

Politics is more important than art. The sense of belonging to humanity is more important than being an artist.

It is life that determines art and not vice versa