

The Continuity in the New

by Federico Sardella, 2017

On the occasion of this second exhibition of Antonella Zazzera's works in the space of Giuliano Papalini and Nunzia Palma, the artist presents eight sculptures realized in the course of this year, specifically conceived. As always is done, these works are designed according to the spaces in which they will be shown, calibrating both the moments of pause that separate them from each other and as well as the possible juxtapositions and grouped together moments. In the well-developed bibliography related to her work, of which in the successive pages one could find a partial confirmation, many have reported how Antonella Zazzera's sculptures, although characterized by an evident three-dimensionality, have nothing to do with classical sculpture in the round. In fact, these are sculptural groups whose invoice characteristics lead them to settle within the range of the relief, or of the high relief... In principle, they are wall sculptures. There are due exceptions, however. Just think of the very large Armonici that hang on the wall, that go beyond and curving themselves extend to the soil. Or think also of those works, part of the same series, expressly built to be shown on the ground, on the floor as well as the grass, without the need of any base, both inside and outside. For the outside works in particular, where, in particular, the natural light makes the surfaces fiery, vibrating and intent on continuous variations, in color and in trends. If the material that the artist adopts in an almost exclusive way makes possible these very particular superficial changes that dematerialize the work until it makes a mirage of itself, or an image of light, its specific weight is clearly destroyed by the light... from the same weight of the light, which makes itself felt in the depths of the sculpture.

The work is thus also an experience, an unrepeatable event. It will always reveal itself differently, in the different moments of irradiation which involve an infinite range of tonal possibilities. The viewer can therefore appreciate the variegated surfaces which are rich in discovers, thanks to feelings of darkness, pervaded by the weighty lightness of light. The choice of the relief also presupposes an inevitable evaluation by the artist about the viewing possibilities of the work, especially if particularly jutting out. This is true that when Antonella, at the very moment when she finishes a work and photographically documents it, ultimately suggests a favorite point of view from that angle. Even with *Naturalia 57A17*, made with enameled aluminum wires and the only work on display placed on pedestal, though one is allowed to turn around it, this possibility is often taken from the viewer. In fact, one should not overlook the exhibition choice made in the past to show similar works hanging on the wall... That said, given the evident relationship with the wall and Antonella Zazzera's sculptures, and considering the pictorial aspect that rippling explodes in signs and traces on the surfaces of the works as well as taking note of the titles given to the most recent works, I must ask the reason for this "return to painting."

Antonella Zazzera: In 2015, I finished a work, the *Armonico C/S CCXLIII*, whose weave has a more pictorial aspect than previous ones, and where the sign component is very strong. To escape from the idea of a clear-cut and precise space, in favor of an open space, with undefined margins, the upper and lower parts are slightly frayed, as if to make the perimeter of the work as less defined as possible.

Federico Sardella: In sharp contrast with this work's edge and its partial absence of definition, the design that differentiates the surface is, on the contrary, very defined.

A.Z.: Many different threads, of different tones, from light to dark, determine the fields of forces. It took me several years to complete this work, which I started in 2009, and ended, as I told you, in 2015.

F.S.: This sculpture is gifted with thickness, but unlike how you often work, it is not curved, not even slightly at the margins. It has the appearance of a "picture," and I seem to perceive a strong structural affinity (given its title) with your Carte/Scultura in copper and cellulose wires.

A.Z.: Following the Armonico C/S CCXLIII, I decided to call the consequent works, not by chance, Quadri. These are works that have been sedimented for a long time, as well as meditated for a long time. From the moment that I started this work, born from the Armonico, in the years that I used to finish it, the Carte/Scultura took shape. After this experience was defined, the Quadri was born ... like the Carte/Scultura, even these works can be of geometric type, where the structure is sharp and verifiable, or free, when the whole is clearly less rectilinear. For me, it is a further confirmation of how sculpture can be done, deepening the most pictorial part of the materials.

F.S.: More than once, you have explained to me that your progress is born in the pictorial context. Your first experiences are in fact linked to painting and drawing, and your references are often painters... The Quadri, this new series of works, are a further validation of the circularity of your work. They are very demanding pieces, which must be made with due care: set up, left to sediment, revisited and then again revisited in the long and dilatable time that distinguishes their unfolding. Like painting, they need a coat of a homogeneous background, on which meters and meters of copper wires are added, without ever intertwining them. The weighted sedimentation process that generates the work, which gives it body and thickness, provides that the filaments have a dominance of verticals, interrupted and exploited by the final design.

A.Z.: The background from which I begin is always homogeneous, as if it were a blank canvas, both for the Quadri of Geometric type as well as those of Free type. Then, starting from this condition of neutrality, I build the design that will determine the trend and the type of the work, which is then the same design given by the indications of signs and light that describe the Carte/Scultura. The seams, which stop the threads, respect their direction and block the instant in which the work is considered completed, to be then overlapped, almost canceled by the light that will enliven the individual threads and the entire surface.

These brand new works make palpable that undeniable, thick, limpid pictorial covering that, since the beginning, since the construction of the first copper wire sculptures, governs the surfaces of all the works. Even where juxtapositions and sinuosities make the shape of the work the most striking component, it is instead in the surface that, in reality, the profound differences between work and work are concealed. Often in the works it is precisely the treatment of the surface that varies; painting and sculpture live together. Even the Armonici differ radically from each other, for having forms, everything considered, more often similar. Although forms can be similar, the design always changes. Unlike the Armonici, whose sinuous and captivating shape distracts from the design, in the Quadri, having reduced the form to a field and giving up evolutions and curves, Antonella Zazzera highlights all that is inside the work, its surface and that which she herself describes as a pictorial background.