

**From “Clara Ghelli. Natura naturans” - To Franz Marc and Vasilij Kandinski
Istituto di Cultura Gennanica. Bologna, 18 October - 6 November 1992**

... The show is articulated as a real story and it is as if the fabula proceeds at the same pace as the analysis. Every change allows the painter to push herself a step beyond, to proceed in the decomposition of an object (in this case the naturalistic element of the trees) bringing to partial conclusion (any artistic search is never concluded) a personal artistic choice. And if in other works the name of Kandinski of the fauve period in which he exhibited in Munich with the New Association arises spontaneously for the colouristic datum and for the thick brushstroke, it is instead from Franz Marc that this path, entirely immersed in the analysis of Nature, takes its start.

... Art and nature meet on the ground of freedom. And if the references to the Philosophy of Nature inevitably lead to the channel of German culture, the path of Clara Ghelli leads to the essentiality of the absence of colour. In the analytical course of her artistic production, the clarification of form is the affirmation of subjectivity.

Valerio Dehò

**From “Clara Ghelli. Fragments of space”
Art Gallery l’Ariete. Bologna, 4 - 23 February 1995**

... From the meditation on the paths of the art, that imprinted the genesis of the preceding works, in which was also openly expounded a component of expressionist nature, the artist has arrived at a painting that, although supported by an internal continuum, uses every aspect of reference to focus the syntactic connections that involve the dialect with the space. The original meditation on art, in which the relationship subject-object was founded upon an intrinsic empathy, has surrendered the field to a more rational analysis, more mental, in a sort of focusing of single fragments that carp themselves on the pictorial surface isolated by the context that has created them: single constructive units producing a compositional nomadism that investigates the object, extrapolates sections of it, traces, flashes until it composes new connections, new dynamic possibilities. The wall, then, becomes the container of metamorphic spaces in fieri, of a continuous cognitive process that makes of the decomposition (and successive composition) its own creative germ.

... The emotionalism of the gesture, that is sensed also in the brushstroke, doesn’t hesitate to make itself an instrument of the mental fire that agitates the most recent works, already overshadowed with open evidence in the works of only one year ago, the after of a restless thickening and penetration of levels. Then, the space has begun to crumble more and more and the poetic of the fragment has taken the upper hand: the analysis has become more scrupulous, to submit every element to an act of inspection, to reveal the implicit, larvate potential of it. “Vacuum packed”, unhinged by its own origin, the object has thus assumed autonomy of life and of “thought”, becoming the fertile interlocutor of further creative racemes and components, in a process of camouflage and revelation of the elements in which the audience is also found involved, to investigate the agglomerating mechanisms subtended to the space-time interplay put into action by the artist.

Monica Miretti

From “Traces of memory in the work of Clara Ghelli” Palazzo della Comunità of Medicina. Medicina (BO), 13 September - 6 October 1996

... In the case of Ghelli, it emerges with strength her ability to manage the new function of painting to produce creative energy: the problem - it is known – was posed by the Historical Avant-garde and has involved the theme of the capillary and, we say, “democratic” diffusion of the creative abilities of every single individual. With this problem the greatest artists of the XXcentury have been measured, from Boccioni to Kandinski, from Pollock to Vedova. These artists, furthermore, taught to immortalize with the impetuous gesture of colour on canvas the space of the unutterability of the mind (or, why not? Of the “soul”?). Ghelli - in her work - and memory, particularly all the works dedicated to the Spatial Projections, or to the series of Forms in Movement, has elaborated a sort of geography of the look. A kind of grammar of the sight that, in times of crisis of the fabulation, finds again, in the agile pictorial means, the enchantment of instituting a space-time diary of mnesic paths.

Paola Serra Zanetti

**From “Clara Ghelli. The phenomenon is the soul; the crowd is the face”
Sala dell’Affresco - Complesso of the Baraccano. Bologna, 31 January – 21 February 1998**

... In her artist existence Clara Ghelli, from the very beginning posed a very important question: that is the change, the mobility, the comparing of her sensitivity (her being) to the external world. Some people, in short, exist (Ghelli is among these) who ask themselves the question of understanding: in a clear and definitive way. The studios of the beginning of the century had to speak of the soul and of the phenomenon: but one century (even though brief) away from them, we are forced to say that if the medium is the message, also the soul is the phenomenon. The crowd that surrounds the soul is not an indistinct unit (precisely: unit) but a series of fragments, of chopped and indistinguishable phenomena, endless singularities that crowd our solitudes. From external that they were, the structures of the story and the picture have made themselves carrying and speaking structures; the fragmentation of the look declared its weakness (or its strength?) really exhibiting its forming inside the composition. This decomposition can be accepted as datum of fact (as many artists, even famous, do) or run through again along its underground line, or at least kept in mi. From here, therefore, the faces of Ghelli, that cannot be, historically, oval and all round portraits but fragmented angles, where the background plays hide and seek with the expressions of the face, with its form, with its inserting itself in the existing one. These faces, we can also suppose [or hypothesis, are residuals of forms, are the “invitations to the face”, that suddenly the eye distinguishes in the interplay of the decompositions, as if even the most obstinate persecutor of images didn’t succeed in decolorizing the underlying forms, resistant and blunt.

Gregorio Scalise

From Clara Ghelli “At the mirror” - Teatro del Navile. Bologna, 6 May – 2 June 2000

... Now however the work of Ghelli is enriched by a new element that is set in clear dialectic with the theme of the face and it becomes mirror of memory. Her latest interventions are built in fact on a meditated bipolarity: their structure welcomes the suggestion of the past through the recovery of “passages” - memories of infancy? Of the time that was? - taken from the most classic disneyian cartoons. These icons of the past, traces extrapolated by ancient narrations, are moments fixed on the surface of the work where they create screeching, they instigate thoughts, they make emotions resurface.

... And then another change is perceived: the changing of the temporal dimension. The staticity of the dip removed from the cartoon is an instant of history abducted to the past, to the inexorable flow of life that engraves the face and it imbues the soul. The memory, it is known, is selective, a kind of mental zapping that takes with it only fragments. But it is in the dialectics between memory and thought that life proceeds.

Monica Miretti

From Clara Ghelli “Two faced images” - Rocca dei Bentivoglio. Bazzano, 7 September - 13 October 2002

... We are facing of a sort of embryonic phase in which the figure (the faces or the cartoons) is not yet formed in her parts, is not yet rationalized. This is the reign of the pure form and of colour, released by every representative wish inborn in the figurative images. But really the colour acts as the adhesive of the whole composition since, although being spread in the ample and flat background painting of the cartoons and shaded, almost “frayed”, in the abstract zone, it almost never changes the tonal stamp giving an evident fundamental unity to the work. So, under more care of observation, the two spaces reveal themselves as the two faces of a same image broken up, shattered, as deprived of sense on the one side, rationalized and immediately enjoyable in its descriptive simplicity (and it is not by chance that the cartoon is an image without depth, without shadings) on the other. In these pictures the rational and the irrational part of art face each other; here we recognize the origin and the definitive resolution of the figure; here are the yin and the yang of the painting.

Lorenza Miretti

From Clara Ghelli to Marco Pasini “Occhi a tre mani” Monzuno, 28 June -18 July 2003

... The structuring of the images within rigorous parameters permits an autonomous freedom to organize the marks and the contours, in which the colour, accurately calibrated, has the function of conceptual affirmation, visual and existential. At this point, an evident parallelism is noticed between the way of structuring the forms, lent by futurist and cubist aesthetics, and the composition of the cartoonist’s frame, in which the vignettes upset the traditional reading order. Enveloping one inside the other, the images provoke effects that recall the subdivision of fields and of planes of the language of photography and cinema. Further, the lateral inclination of the faces painted by Clara evoke the tilting, relative to the horizon, of the imaginary movie camera. Here, then, materialize the hands and the eyes, the two fundamental anatomical parts for the artist, that synthesize, in the projectual unity of the work, the digital dimension and, above all, the visual dominion. In fact, the figural seriality of the eyes and of the concentrated expressions are founded upon a complete philosophy of the eye. A theoretical and practical choice of the pure visibility that, according to the Michelangiolesque rule, advises to keep the practice in the hands, but in the eyes the compass, the T-square and judgment.

Vladimiro Zocca