

WALLS OF WORKS ON PAPER

Since 1999, as well as working on canvas, I have been painting with oil pastels and oil sticks on fine grain, 100% cotton, 300mm, 18 x 26cm Arches watercolour paper. I always paint on the paper horizontally. Virtually every day I apply a colour to at least one piece of paper. Each work is composed of three layers of colour. Very occasionally I add a fourth or fifth layer. Almost all of the works begin with a layer of red. Sometimes I let the preceding layer dry before adding the next and so at least a week goes by between applying one layer and another. Sometimes, however, the two layers mix and the underlying colour seeps into the subsequent one.

On the table where I paint I maintain a certain sense of order. On the left I place the paper I am painting on, around which are the pastels and sticks divided into zones according to their colours: greens, blues, reds, purples, and a few yellows and whites that I need mainly for lightening the other colours. On the right are 12 pieces of rectangular 3x4 paper. A further four are placed vertically on the back wall. The 12 pieces of paper are those on which I am working. The other four are those I consider finished that are waiting to dry.

Once dry, I hang the piece of paper on the wall to my right with metal pins (four, one at each corner) in order of completion. Once filled, the wall is made up of 112 pieces of paper: eight pieces widthways and 14 vertically. Once the wall is completed, I move all the pieces to the left-hand side of the table, keeping them in the same order after dating, signing and numbering them, so that they can have more time to dry. It takes me about a year to complete a wall with this number of works. When another wall is ready, I place the first group of works under greaseproof paper and put them in boxes. And so on, ad infinitum, or at least until I will stop producing them.

For some time now I have been exhibiting these works on paper as walls, just like I do in my studio, even though I always think of them as individual pieces. I hang them with the same pins, but only at the two top corners. So far, the size of the installations has been determined by the quantity of works on paper that I have produced up to that point and by the dimensions of the wall of the space where the installation is being exhibited. I have always exhibited the pieces in a purely chronological order. Thus they have been displayed like pages from a diary that can be read like a piece of writing going from left to right, consistently, emphasising the passing of time.

To date I have created the following installations: the first was at the Florence Lynch Gallery in New York in 2001. This was half a wall that began from high up and stopped at about one metre from the ground. The pieces were of different sizes and proportions and created a whole that was a little shapeless. During that time I was still working on different formats and continuing to work through a phase of experimentation without knowing what I was looking for. In reality this work was the embryonic form of that which came later.

I created the second installation a few months later at the Bacca Gallery in San Francisco (2001). Here I managed to define more precisely the choice of format, sticking with it over the following years. This was a precise rectangle, each piece the same size and fairly distant from one another.

In 2004 at the CCNOA space in Brussels, in a collective exhibition, I had an enormous horizontal wall at my disposition. I decided to 'cut' the space in half with a strip; a vertical

column 3 works wide and 17 high. The distance between one work and another was about one centimetre and this was the case with all the subsequent installations.

At the Galleria Rubin in Milan in 2005, on the other hand, I built a sort of enormous door in the middle of a wall. This time, however, there were 60 larger works.

The latest installation was at the Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa at Palazzetto Tito in Venice in March 2006. Here the number of works on paper coincided precisely with the size of the wall. There were 300 pieces: 15 widthways and 20 vertically. 'My time', or rather the number of pieces I had produced up until that precise moment corresponded with that specific place, with the dimensions of that particular wall.

I want to continue producing these pieces, at least for a while, and continue installing them in different spaces. Different places will determine new layouts and new orders; like a mass, magma, a material that is continually reconstructed in a new form. In the future I would like to reorganise the exhibitive order of the single pieces according to other criteria and, in some cases, get other people to intervene in establishing a new way of ordering them (as I did for example in San Francisco with the help of Giordano Pozzi). For example, they could be ordered according to all the purple pieces, or all the green pieces, on a chromatic scale, all the vertical rectangles together, all the horizontal rectangles together, a new numeric order, and so on. The criteria for ordering the pieces are arbitrary and infinite. Chronological order is not necessary and time can acquire a new meaning in a different context.

At some point I would also like to produce a publication that discusses these experiences and document these writings that develop like diaries but which can also take on different forms.

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