

*1983, Jesi, Italia

Mostre Personali :

- 2011 'Patrizio Di Massimo', White Fish Tank, Ancona
- 2010 'Patrizio Di Massimo, The Negus said: Give me the lion keep the stele!', Art 41 Basel, Art Statements, con T293
- 2010 'Patrizio Di Massimo, Col sole in fronte', T293, Napoli
- 2009 'Patrizio Di Massimo', Zilkha Auditorium, Whitechapel Art Gallery, Londra
- 2008 'Patrizio Di Massimo', Italian Wave, Artissima 15, Torino

Mostre Collettive :

- 2011 Extra City, Anversa
- 2011 'Prague Biennale 5', Praga
- 2011 'Eat me', me Collectors Room, Berlino
- 2011 'Talenti emergenti', Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze
- 2011 'Eat me', Mason Rouge, Parigi
- 2011 'Social Identity, Italian Video Art today between ethic and esthetic', Crane Arts, Philadelphia
- 2010 'Reasons', Stedelijk Bureau Museum of Amsterdam
- 2010 'Se vuoi che questa storia continui...', Neon Campobase, Bologna
- 2010 'VideoReport Italia 2008/2009', Galleria Civica di Monfalcone, Monfalcone
- 2010 'More Pricks than Kicks', David Roberts Art Foundation, Londra
- 2010 'SI : Sindrome Italiana, Le Magasin, Grenoble
- 2010 'Evading Customs Milan', Le Dictateur, Milano
- 2010 'Let us compare with mythologies', Witte de With, Rotterdam
- 2010 'You – We + Ablo', Rotonda della Besana, Milano
- 2010 'Low Decò', FAI Villa Necchi Campiglio, Milano
- 2010 '21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° secolo', Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Torino
- 2010 'A Performance Cycle', Nomas Foundation, Roma
- 2010 'Art in the auditorium', Foundation Proa, Buenos Aires
- 2010 'Tristes Tropiques', The Barber Shop and Novo Museo Tropical, Lisbona
- 2010 'Tutta la memoria del mondo', Gam - Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Torino
- 2009 'Disegni Europei', Galleria OREDARIA Arti, Roma
- 2009 'The object of the attack', David Roberts Art Foundation, Londra
- 2009 'Art in the Auditorium', Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo
- 2009 'Degree Show', Slade School of Art, Londra
- 2009 'Playlist', Neon campobase, Bologna
- 2009 'Video!', Henie Onstad Art Centre, Hovikodden
- 2009 'Eppur si muove', Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Guarene
- 2009 'Desiring Necessities', John Hansard Gallery, Southampton
- 2009 'Documents', Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'arte, Torino
- 2009 'Senza rete', Complesso di S. Spirito in Sassia, Roma
- 2008 '...Cast the first stone', Chert Gallery, Berlino
- 2008 'Flux capacitor', Extraspazio Gallery, Roma
- 2008 'The Interim Show', Slade Research Centre, Woburn Square
- 2008 'One of this things is not like the other things', Unosunove, Roma

2008 'The shortest short-story ever written...', Form Content Project Space, Londra

2008 'I desired what you were, I need what you are', Maze Gallery, Torino

2006 'Salon Primo', Museo della Permanente, Milano

2004 'Arrivederci e grazie', Viafarini, Milano

Premi

2008 Artegiothane, Turin and Milan, special mention

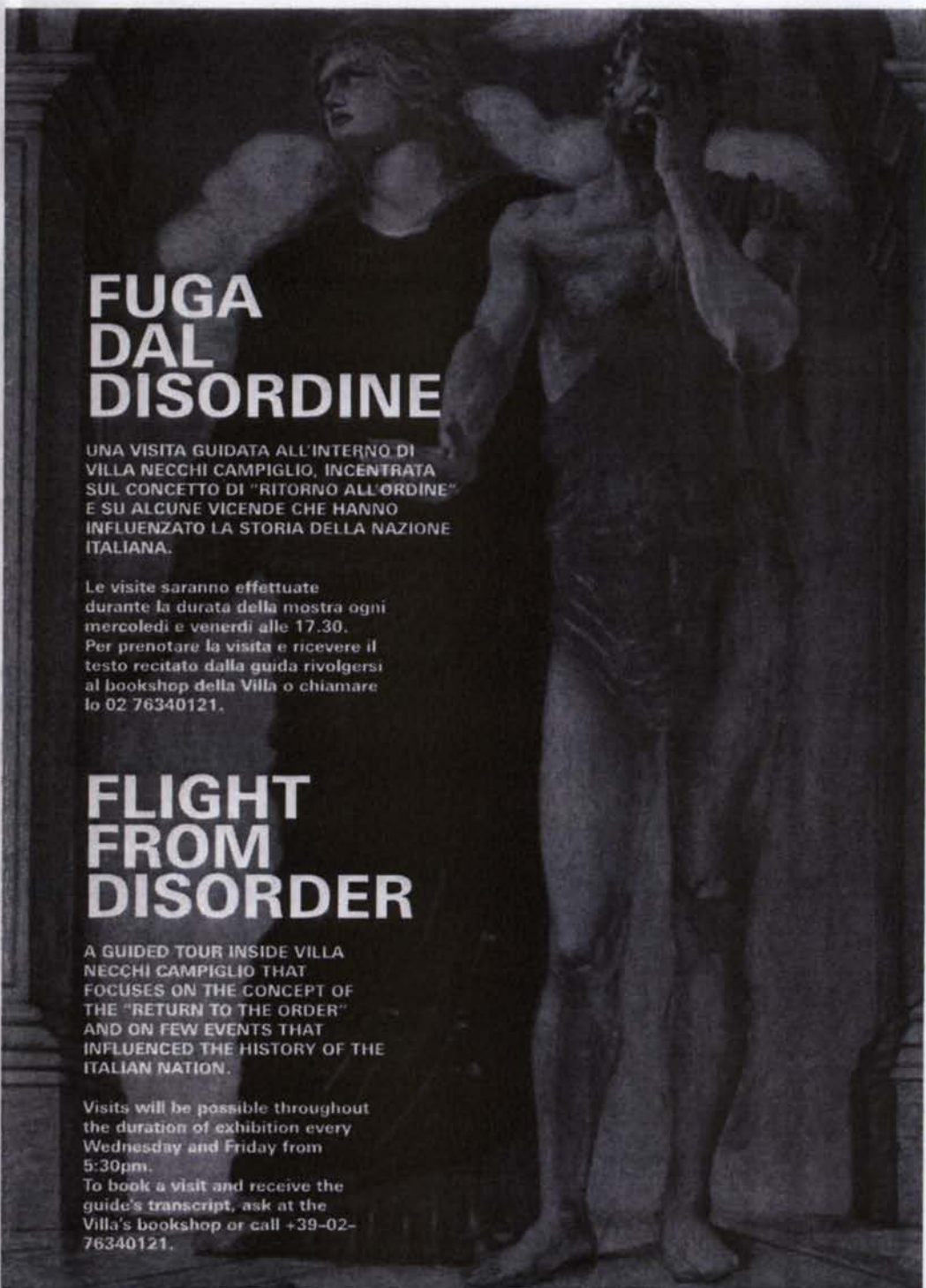
Residenze

2010 'Sommerakademie', Centre Paul Klee, Berna

2009 - 2011 De-Ateliers, Amsterdam

2009 Fondazione Banna Spinola per l'Arte

- 'Performance cycle', Nomas Foundation, Catalogo
- 'Evading Customs Milan', Curated by Guia Cortassa and Barbara Meneghel, Catalogo, Milano, p. 29-39
- 'Low Decò', Curated by A. Rabottini, Catalogue, Villa Necchi Campiglio, Ed. Kaleidoscope Press, Milano, p.30-37
- Marino Fuani, 'Patrizio Di Massimo', Flash Art, 2010, p. 94
- '21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° secolo', curatoda F. Bonami, Catalogue, Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Ed. SRR Press & SIPI spa, Torino, p. 114 - 120
- Rossetti Carla, Exibart.com, April, 20, 2010
- Obrist Ulrich Hans, 'Mor(t)al landscape', Kaleidoscope Magazine, aprile - maggio, 2010, p. 30 – 33
- Caragliano Renata e Cervasio Stella, 'Provocazioni per bianco e nero su video', La Repubblica, aprile, 2010
- Arena Francesco e Di Massimo Patrizio, 'Introducing Francesco Arena e Patrizio Di Massimo', Mousse Magazine, aprile, n. 23, 2010
- Morzone Annalisa, 'Tutta la memoria del mondo alla Gam di Torino', sullarte.it, March, 2010
- Riba Stefano, 'Tutta la memoria del mondo', Exibart.com, Marzo 2010
- Masoero Ada, 'Ritratto d'Italia in una piccola Babele', Il sole 24 ore, Marzo 2010
- Di Massimo Patrizio, 'Trofeo Vivo, Trofeo Morto' Nero Magazine, Inverno 2010, n, 22
- Volpato Elena, 'The Witness, Tutta la memoria del Mondo', Catalogo, GAM Underground Project, Archive Books, 2010
- Degen Natasha, 'Patrizio Di Massimo', Critics' Picks, Artforum.com, accessed September 21, 2009
- Rabottini Alessandro, 'An immense bluff, The Italian artist Patrizio Di Massimo journey to Libya', Kaleidoscope, estate, 2009, n. 2, p. 126 - 129
- Chiodi Stefano, Gianni Ilaria, Menegoi Simone, 'Speciale Arte Italiana', Lo Specchio, La Stampa, giugno, 2009
- Bracewell Michael, Gianni Ilaria, 'Desiring Necessities', Catalogo, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, 2009
- Guerrero Inti, Klering Julia, Vermortel Pieternel, 'Eppur si muove', Catalogo della mostra, 2009
- 'Younger than Jesus: Artist Directory', Phaidon, maggio, 2009, Londra
- Tagliaferro Marco, 'Il Ramo d'oro', Flash Art Italia, aprile - maggio 2009, n. 275
- Gianni Ilaria, 'Ouverture: Patrizio Di Massimo', Flash Art Italia, aprile - maggio 2009, n. 275
- Albanese Flavio, Mascheroni Loredana, 'Recto and Verso, Patrizio Di Massimo, giochi di specchi tra passato e futuro', Domus Magazine, febbraio, 2009, n. 922
- 'Focus London: Artists dictionary', Flash Art International, October, 2008, n. 262
- Gianni Ilaria, Riva Caterina, 'I desired what you were, I need what you are', Catalogo, Galleria Maze, Torino, 2008
- Parisi L., 'Una generazione muta narra la propria storia', La Stampa, Torino, Aprile, 25, 2008
- Pubblicazioni:**
- Patrizio Di Massimo, 'The Negus said: Give me the lion, keep the stele!', Rethinking Marxism, Volume 23
- Patrizio Di Massimo, 'The Negus said: Give me the lion, keep the stele!', Shifter Magazine, n.17
- Patrizio Di Massimo, 'Trofeo Vivo, trofeo morto', Nero Magazine, Inverno 2010
- Patrizio Di Massimo, 'Rhetoric, The figurative meaning of the word and the orth seeking', Catalogo 'Tutta la Memoria del Mondo', GAM Underground Project, Archive Book, 2010
- Patrizio Di Massimo, 'Orientalismo Italiano', Flash Art Italia, n. 277



FUGA DAL DISORDINE

UNA VISITA GUIDATA ALL'INTERNO DI
VILLA NECCHI CAMPIGLIO, INCENTRATA
SUL CONCETTO DI "RITORNO ALL'ORDINE"
E SU ALCUNE VICENDE CHE HANNO
INFLUENZATO LA STORIA DELLA NAZIONE
ITALIANA.

Le visite saranno effettuate
durante la durata della mostra ogni
mercoledì e venerdì alle 17.30.
Per prenotare la visita e ricevere il
testo recitato dalla guida rivolgersi
al bookshop della Villa o chiamare
lo 02 76340121.

FLIGHT FROM DISORDER

A GUIDED TOUR INSIDE VILLA
NECCHI CAMPIGLIO THAT
FOCUSES ON THE CONCEPT OF
THE "RETURN TO THE ORDER"
AND ON FEW EVENTS THAT
INFLUENCED THE HISTORY OF THE
ITALIAN NATION.

Visits will be possible throughout
the duration of exhibition every
Wednesday and Friday from
5:30pm.
To book a visit and receive the
guide's transcript, ask at the
Villa's bookshop or call +39-02-
76340121.

Patrizio Di Massimo

Fuga dal disordine

2010

performance

Performance at 'Low Decò', Villa Necchi Campiglio, 18 maggio - 13 giugno, Milano 2010

Tour Guidato all'interno di Villa Necchi Campiglio a Milano in occasione della mostra 'Low Decò'. Il testo si sviluppa partendo da questo specifico tour che si focalizza sulla vita di Margherita Sarfatti e Italo Balbo insieme a riflessioni sul significato del movimento del 'Ritorno all'ordine'.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Fuga dal disordine

2010

performance

performance at 'Low Decò', Villa Necchi Campiglio, 18 maggio - 13 giugno, Milano 2010

Tour Guidato all'interno di Villa Necchi Campiglio a Milano in occasione della mostra 'Low Decò'. Il testo si sviluppa partendo da questo specifico tour che si focalizza sulla vita di Margherita Sarfatti e Italo Balbo insieme a riflessioni sul significato del movimento del 'Ritorno all'ordine'.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Fuga dal disordine

2010

performance

performance at 'Low Decò', Villa Necchi Campiglio, 18 maggio - 13 giugno, Milano 2010

Tour Guidato all'interno di Villa Necchi Campiglio a Milano in occasione della mostra 'Low Decò'. Il testo si sviluppa partendo da questo specifico tour che si focalizza sulla vita di Margherita Sarfatti e Italo Balbo insieme a riflessioni sul significato del movimento del 'Ritorno all'ordine'.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Fuga dal disordine

2010

performance

performance at 'Low Decò', Villa Necchi Campiglio, 18 maggio - 13 giugno, Milano 2010

Tour Guidato all'interno di Villa Necchi Campiglio a Milano in occasione della mostra 'Low Decò'. Il testo si sviluppa partendo da questo specifico tour che si focalizza sulla vita di Margherita Sarfatti e Italo Balbo insieme a riflessioni sul significato del movimento del 'Ritorno all'ordine'.

Now it happened... one day... that a group of friends – artists – in Milan, were discussing about Italian art and its traditions. Of these artists, one lingered to explain at length the unmistakable character of Italian plastic art over the centuries, the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries: (...) “I think that this century will see Italian painting prevail once again. I believe that in the world, over time, people will continue to say: *Novecento italiano!*”.

Because of this it was liked by many young avant-garde artists, most of whom were soldiers and continued as such during the Fascist period, leading black-shirts for Italy. Thus in Milan the group called “*Novecento italiano*” sprang up with that name as watch word: it was the “*Return to order*.”

“When I returned home, at the end of the inferno, Italy had already erased both him and his ‘other woman,’ me, from memory. Only my two children, Fiammetta and Amedeo, waited for me at Ciampino airport.”

“I would like to have meant more to Italy: to be remembered as the one who, as long as stood by his side, succeeded in making a modern utopia function. But Mussolini had betrayed my idea of Fascism. The failure overwhelmed us all, all of us, and I died alone, still in my house in Como, faithful until the end, to me and my unhappiness.”
Margherita Sarfatti

Oreste, the most ignorant and unwitting figure in the tragedy, stands before us with hands still dirty with blood; on the ground lies a bloody dagger and the man, in the grips of desperate remorse, he brings his hands to his face with a gesture that recalls the iconography of ‘Expulsion from Paradise’. In strong contrast with the figure of her brother, who is characterized by a nudity that leaves him appearing vulnerable, is the even more ambiguous figure of Electra whose body is obscured by the drapery that echoes the Böcklinian figures from de Chirico’s first metaphysical paintings. The woman’s grim face and violently closed fist seem to suggest that Electra is still too absorbed in the now finished vendetta to be able to repent.

Patrizio Di Massimo

Fuga dal disordine

2010

performance

Performance at ‘Low Decò’, Villa Necchi Campiglio, 18 maggio - 13 giugno, Milano 2010

Tour Guidato all'interno di Villa Necchi Campiglio a Milano in occasione della mostra 'Low Decò'. Il testo si sviluppa partendo da questo specifico tour che si focalizza sulla vita di Margherita Sarfatti e Italo Balbo insieme a riflessioni sul significato del movimento del 'Ritorno all'ordine'.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Ben bene

2010

terra e plexiglass

300 x 80 x 80 cm

Installazione presso '21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° secolo', Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Torino

Una Stele di fronte lo spazio della Fondazione è stata costruita facendo un buco nel suolo e mettendo la terra accanto al buco creato. Il buco rimane visibile in quanto stratificazione del suolo.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Ben bene

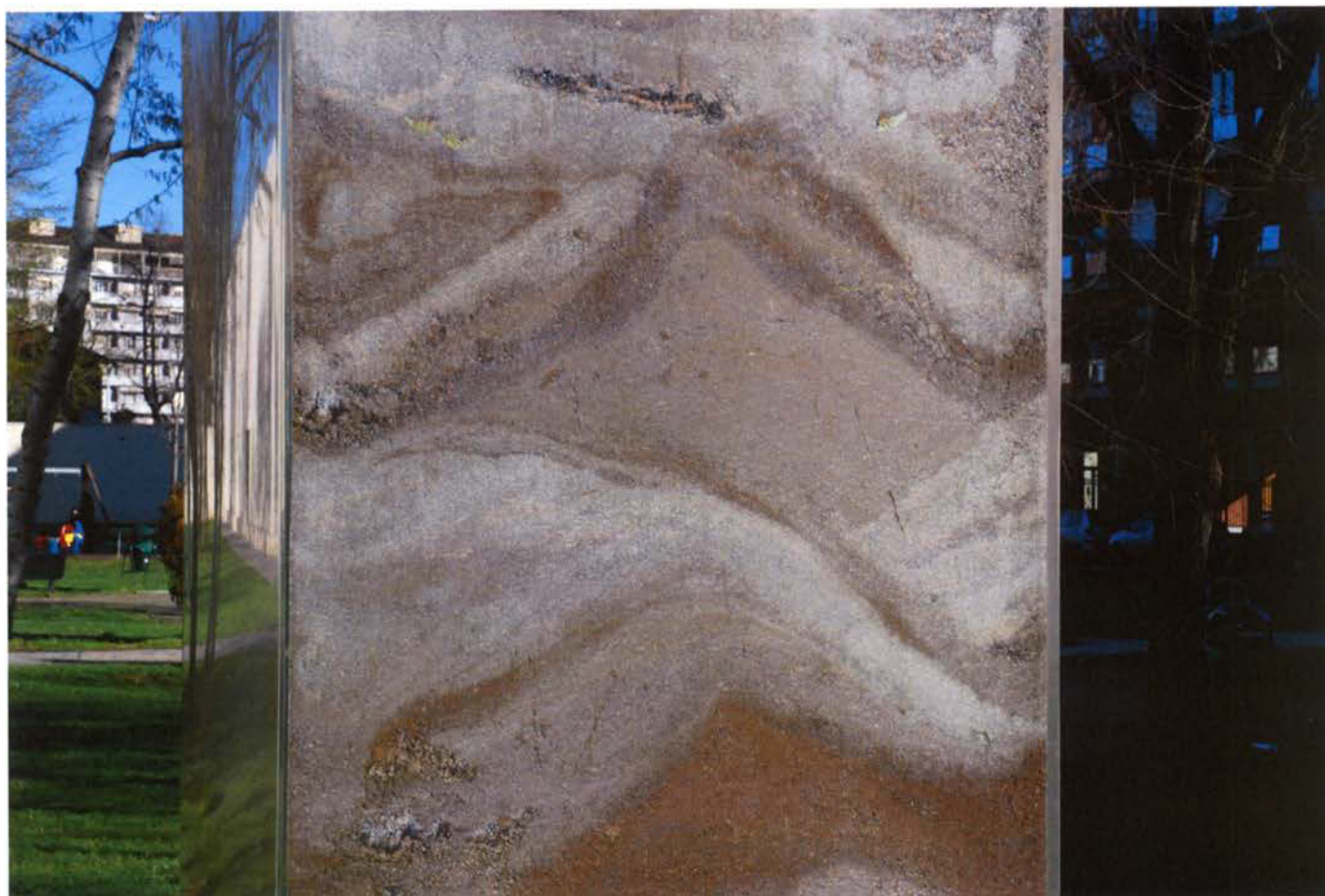
2010

terra e plexiglass

300 x 80 x 80 cm

Installazione presso '21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° secolo', Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Torino

Una Stele di fronte lo spazio della Fondazione è stata costruita facendo un buco nel suolo e mettendo la terra accanto al buco creato. Il buco rimane visibile in quanto stratificazione del suolo.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Ben bene

2010

terra e plexiglass

300 x 80 x 80 cm

Installazione presso '21x21: 21 artisti per il 21° secolo', Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Torino

Una Stele di fronte lo spazio della Fondazione è stata costruita facendo un buco nel suolo e mettendo la terra accanto al buco creato. Il buco rimane visibile in quanto stratificazione del suolo.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (Thoroughbred)

2010

performance

Performance presso l'Accademia di Romaproject con la statua di Marco Aurelio, Roma, 2010
commissionata e prodotta da Nomads Foundation, Rome

Foto Altrospazio

Performance che connette L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma con La scultura di Marco Aurelio, al Campidoglio a Roma. L'evento prevede un cavallo e il suo fantino, ripetutamente percorrono la strada tra lo spazio della galleria e la più vicina piazza con una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (Thoroughbred)

2010

performance

Performance presso l'Accademia di Romaproject con la statua di Marco Aurelio, Roma, 2010
commissionata e prodotta da Nomas Foundation, Rome

Foto Altrospazio

Performance che connette l'Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma con la scultura di Marco Aurelio, al Campidoglio a Roma. L'evento prevede un cavallo e il suo fantino, ripetutamente percorrono la strada tra lo spazio della galleria e la più vicina piazza con una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (Thoroughbred)

2010

performance

Performance presso l'Accademia di Romaproject con la statua di Marco Aurelio, Roma, 2010
commissionata e prodotta da Nomas Foundation, Rome

Foto Altrospazio

Performance che connette L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma con La scultura di Marco Aurelio, al Campidoglio a Roma. L'evento prevede un cavallo e il suo fantino, ripetutamente percorrono la strada tra lo spazio della galleria e la più vicina piazza con una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.

Col Sole in Fronte

T293 – Napoli

20.03.10 – 30.04.10

Col Sole in Fronte si apre al piano terra della galleria col video *Duetti per Cannibali*. Il lavoro è stato commissionato dal Comune di Milano e della Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo con lo scopo di ritrarre un ragazzo Africano, Abdullay Kadal Traore, da anni trasferitosi in Italia. Ho accettato la commissione ma non il fatto di mettermi dietro la camera e riprendere Abdullay come soggetto esotico. Il video si sviluppa quindi come un dialogo, o duetto, dove insieme ragioniamo sulla possibilità di mettere in scena una mia proposta per la commissione, che prima lui accetta e poi rifiuta rivelando il limite intrinseco oltre il quale, anche se entrambi pagati, non siamo disposti ad andare.

Al piano superiore la mostra prosegue con la doppia video-installazione *Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca*. Il disegno che in *Duetti per Cannibali* mostravo ad Abdullay diventa immagine attraverso l'utilizzo di due attori e uno studio fotografico. La video installazione lavora in maniera dicotomica e letterale sul tema della differenza, acquistando il suo vero significato quando è messa in relazione con l'errore d'interpretazione che accompagna le canzoni in questione. *Faccetta Nera* era stata infatti composta per tentare di attribuire all'invasione coloniale d'Etiopia (1935) una motivazione nobile, incitando al connubio tra italiani e abissini, mentre *Faccetta Bianca* come successiva richiesta da parte del regime che non aveva gradito la prima lirica. *Faccetta Bianca* provò quindi a ribaltare tutto questo senza tuttavia ricever il consenso popolare di chi ancora canta *Faccetta Nera* identificando in quel "Nera" il colore di un'ideologia. *Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca*:

*Se tu dall'altipiano guardi il mare / Moretta che sei schiava fra gli schiavi / Vedrai come in un sogno tante navi / E un tricolore sventolar per te / Faccetta nera, bell'abissina / Aspetta e spera che già l'ora si avvicina! / quando saremo insieme a te / noi ti daremo un'altra legge e un altro Re / Faccetta nera, piccola abissina / ti porteremo a Roma, liberata / **DAL SOLE NOSTRO TU SARAI BACIATA** / Sarai in Camicia Nera pure tu / Faccetta nera, sarai Romana / La tua bandiera sarà sol quella italiana! / Noi marceremo insieme a te / E sfileremo avanti al Duce e avanti al Re!*

*Faccetta bianca, quando ti lasciavi / Quel giorno al molo tra il fumo del vapore / E insieme ai legionari m'imbarcai / l'occhio tuo nero fisso era sul cuore / Era commosso al par del cuore mio / Mentre la mano mi diceva addio / Faccetta bianca, amore mio / Pallida, stanca, faccetta addio!" / Faccetta bianca si va dove s'è stati / nella trincea mi torna già alla mente / in mezzo a tanti visi affumicati / **IL TUO VISINO PIÙ DEL SOL SPLENDEnte** / Quasi in contrasto a quelle facce nere, / è fiamma e luce tuo bersagliere / Faccetta bianca, sola mia passione / Verrà quel giorno che con commozione / Ti stringerà al suo petto il bersagliere / E la tua bella faccettina bianca / Si poserà sulla medaglia stanca!*

Al sole, che ancora si dice sia il petrolio dell'Italia, fa riferimento tutta la mostra, alle nostre teste e facce, alla luce di un dialogo serrato tra la società Italiana contemporanea e lo specifico passato coloniale. Attraverso l'utilizzo e la citazione della canzone italiana che intreccia tutti i lavori e manifesta legami storici, culturali e d'immagine. La mostra prosegue poi con una ricca selezione di disegni realizzati durante il 2009.

Infine *Col Sole in Fronte* è questo comunicato stampa, che spiega se stesso come opera all'interno della mostra. Si spiega e si dispiega e tutt'intorno cerca quel posto al sole, che è l'Italia, che dovrebbe essere l'Italia, ma che non è più.

*Và... cuore mio da fiore a fior / con dolcezza e con amor / vai tu per me ... / Và... che la mia felicità / vive sol di realtà vicino a te... / Voglio vivere così / **COL SOLE IN FRONTE** / e felice canto / beatamente... / Voglio vivere e goder / l'aria del monte / perché questo incanto / non costa niente / Ah, ah! Oggi amo ardentemente / quel ruscello impertinente menestrello dell'amor / ah, ah! La fiorita delle piante / tiene allegro sempre il cuor / sai perché? / Voglio vivere così / col sole in fronte / e felice canto / canto per me. / Ah, ah! Oggi amo ardentemente / quel ruscello impertinente / menestrello dell'amor / Ah, ah! La fiorita delle piante / tiene allegro sempre il cuor / sai perché? / Voglio vivere così / col sole in fronte / e felice canto / canto per me!*

Patrizio Di Massimo. Amsterdam. 01/03/10

Col Sole in Fronte

T293 – Napoli

20.03.10 – 30.04.10

Col Sole in Fronte (Italian, With the sun in front of me) begins on the ground floor of the gallery with the video *Duets for Cannibals*. This work was commissioned by Milan City Council and Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation in order to make a portrait of an African boy, Abdullay Kadal Traore, who has been living in Italy for several years. I accepted that request but not standing behind the camera and filming Abdullay as an exotic subject. The video becomes thus a dialogue or a duet in which we reason together about staging my proposal for the commission that he initially accepts and then rejects, revealing the intrinsic limit that we are not disposed to go beyond although we are both paid.

On the first floor, the exhibition continues with a double video installation *Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca* (Italian, Little Black Face, Little White Face). The drawing that I showed to Abdullay in *Duets for Cannibals* becomes an image through the use of two actors and a photography study. The video installation examines the problem of difference with a dichotomic and literal attitude, and it gains its real meaning when is combined with the mistaken interpretation in the songs in question. In fact, *Faccetta Nera* was composed in order to attribute a noble motivation to the Ethiopia's colonial invasion (1935) encouraging the Italian and the Abyssinian to unite; while *Faccetta Bianca* was the subsequent request of the regime that didn't relish the first song. *Faccetta Bianca* attempted to overturn it, however it did not gain a general acceptance among those who still sing *Faccetta Nera* identifying that "Black" as the ideology colour. *Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca*:

*If you look at the sea from the hills/Young negro slave amongst slaves/Like in a dream you will see many ships/
And a tricolour waving for you/Little black face, beautiful Abyssinian/Wait and see the hour coming!/When
we will be with you/We will give you another law and another king/Little black face, beautiful Abyssinian/Our
law is slavery of love/We will take you to Rome freed/YOU WILL BE KISSED BY OUR SUN/and a black shirt
you will be too/Little black face, you will be Roman/Your only flag will be Italian!/We will march together with
you/and parade in front of the Duce and the king*

*Little white face, when I left you/That day on the pier in the steam/With the legionnaires I embarked/And your
black eye gazing at the heart/It was equally moved as mine/While your hand was saying goodbye to me/Little
white face, my love/Goodbye little, pale, tired face!/Little white face, one goes where one's already been/in
the trench, already on my mind again/among so many misty faces/IS YOUR LITTLE FACE, BRIGHTER THAN
THE SUN/Nearly contrasting these black faces/your sharpshooter is a flame and a light/Little white face, my
only passion/The day the sharpshooter will clasp you tightly to his chest with emotion/will come/Little white
face, one goes where one's already been/And your little, beautiful, white face/Will rest on a tired medal!*

The exhibition pertains to the sun, that is said to be Italy's petroleum, to our heads and faces, to the intensive dialogue between the Italian contemporary society and its specific colonial past. The Italian song, through its use and quotation, interweaves all the works in the show and expresses historical, cultural and image ties. The exhibition also includes a rich selection of drawings made in 2009.

Col Sole in Fronte is then this press release that explains itself as an artwork within the exhibition. It explains and extends itself all around looking for that place in the sun which is Italy, which should be Italy, but has never been.

*Go...my heart, from flower to flower/with sweetness and with love/go you for me..../Go...since my happiness/
WITH THE SUN IN FRONT (OF ME)/and happy I sing/blissfully.../I wanna live and enjoy/the air of the
mountain/'cause this enchantment/costs nothing!/Ah, ah! Today I ardently love/that impertinent creek, minstrel
of love/Ah, ah! The blossoming of the trees/keeps in feast this heart/do you know why?/I wanna live like
this/with the sun in front (of me)/and happy I sing/I sing for me!/Ah, ah! Today I ardently love/that impertinent
creek, minstrel of love/Ah, ah! The blossoming of the trees/keeps in feast this heart /do you know why?/I
wanna live like this/ with the sun in front (of me)/and happy I sing/I sing for me!//*

Patrizio Di Massimo. Amsterdam. 01/03/10



Patrizio Di Massimo

Duet for cannibals

2010

HDV video

3'

Commissionato dal comune di Milano per realizzare un ritratto dell'immigrato africano Abdullay Kadal Traore Duetto per Cannibali è un dialogo fra me e lui. Durante il dialogo mostro un mio disegno a Abdullay e gli chiedo se gli piacerebbe fare per la commissione quello che è rappresentato - si tratta di una posizione erotica che dovremmo interpretare entrambi. In primo momento accetta, ma poi si smentisce, indicando il limite oltre cui non siamo disposti ad andare anche se entrambi pagati.



Would you interpret one of these two men?

Patrizio Di Massimo

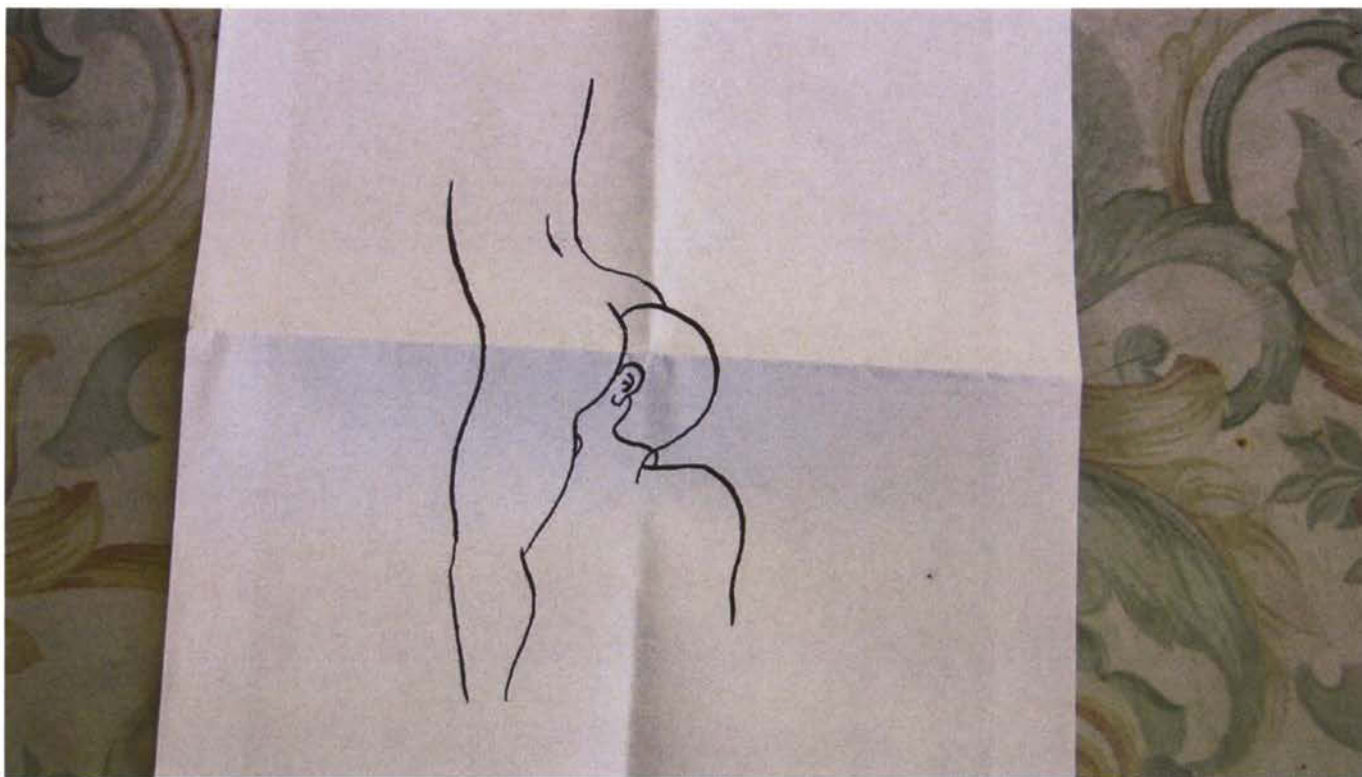
Duet for cannibals

2010

HDV video

3'

Commissionato dal comune di Milano per realizzare un ritratto dell'immigrato africano Abdullay Kadal Traore *Duetto per Cannibali* è un dialogo fra me e lui. Durante il dialogo mostro un mio disegno a Abdullay e gli chiedo se gli piacerebbe fare per la commissione quello che è rappresentato - si tratta di una posizione erotica che dovremmo interpretare entrambi. In primo momento accetta, ma poi si smentisce, indicando il limite oltre cui non siamo disposti ad andare anche se entrambi pagati.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Duet for cannibals

2010

HDV video

3'

Video che documenta il provino, tenuto dall'artista, ad un probabile candidato come protagonista del video ' Faccetta nera, Faccetta bianca'.



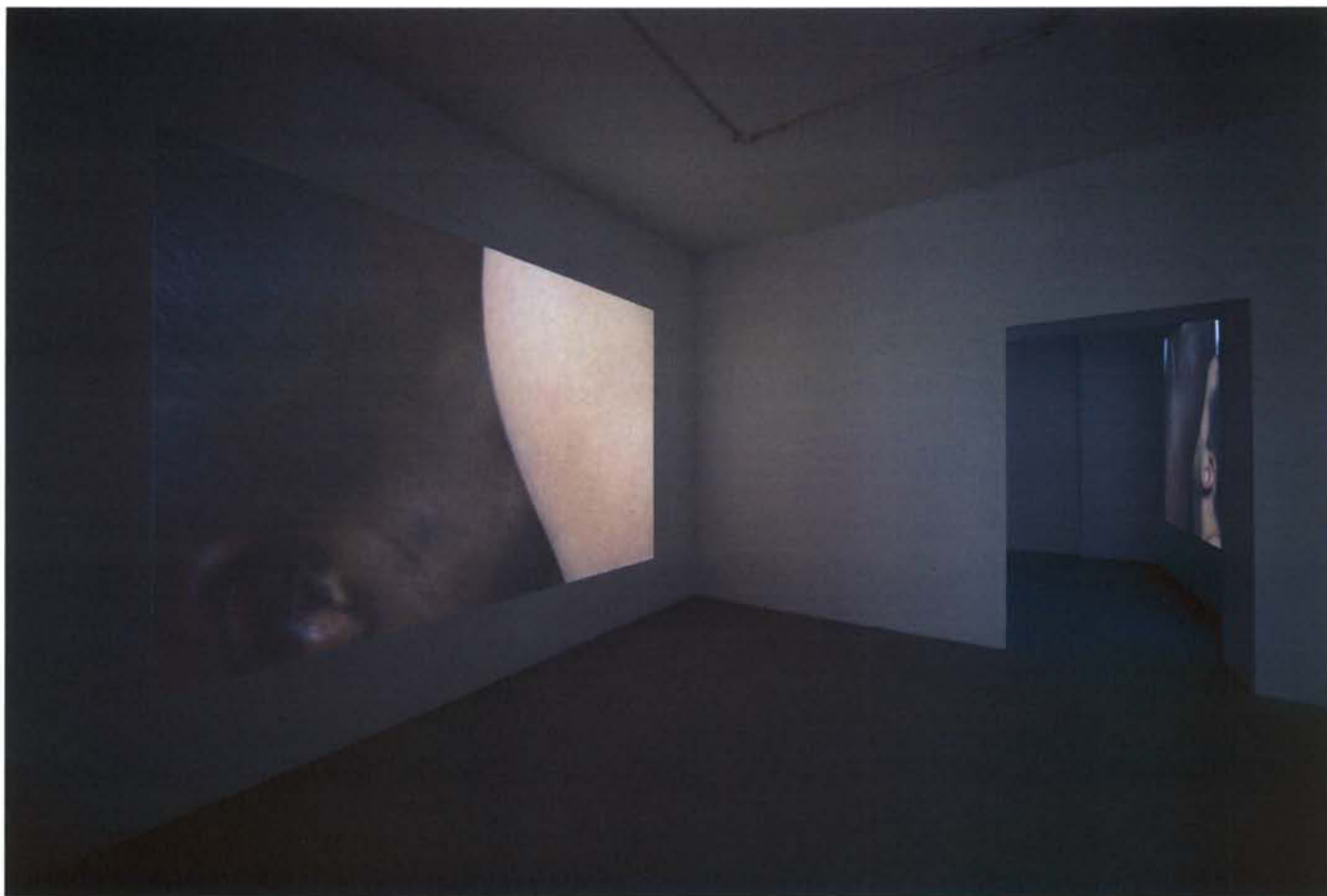
Patrizio Di Massimo

Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca

2010

Installazione presso T293, Napoli, 19 marzo - 30 aprile, 2010

Foto Danilo Donzelli



Patrizio Di Massimo

Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca

2010

doppia video proiezione

3'

Installazione presso T293, Napoli, 19 marzo - 30 aprile, 2010

Foto Danilo Donzelli



Patrizio Di Massimo

Faccetta Nera, Faccetta Bianca

2010

doppia video proiezione

3'

Installazione presso T293, Napoli, 19 marzo - 30 aprile, 2010

Foto Danilo Donzelli

Patrizio Di Massimo, Amsterdam, 04/03/10



Patrizio Di Massimo

Oae

2009

video alta definizione, audio

13' 17"

Un video costruito alternando video footage fatti in Libia nell'estate del 2008 con scene tratte dal film 'Il leone del deserto', una fiction sulla vita di Omar el-Muchtar che è stata censurata in Italia quando è uscita nel 1981.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Oae

2009

video alta definizione, audio

13' 17"

Un video costruito alternando video footage fatti in Libia nell'estate del 2008 con scene tratte dal film 'Il leone del deserto', una fiction sulla vita di Omar el-Muchtar che è stata censurata in Italia quando è uscita nel 1981.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Oae

2009

video alta definizione, audio

13' 17"

Un video costruito alternando video footage fatti in Libia nell'estate del 2008 con scene tratte dal film 'Il leone del deserto', una fiction sulla vita di Omar el-Muchtart che è stata censurata in Italia quando è uscita nel 1981.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Oae

2009

video alta definizione, audio

13' 17"

Installazione presso Eppur si muove, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Guarene, Torino, 10 maggio - 21 giugno, 2009

Un video costruito alternando video footage fatti in Libia nell'estate del 2008 con scene tratte dal film 'Il leone del deserto', una fiction sulla vita di Omar el-Muchtar che è stata censurata in Italia quando è uscita nel 1981.



Patrizio Di Massimo

The secret proceedings in the trial at Benghazi, 15 September 1931

2009

Registrazione audio, Voce John Rayment

33'44'

Questa installazione audio è la lettura del processo fatto a Omar el-Muchtar, il leader della resistenza della Libia, dal governo Italiano prima dell'esecuzione. Questa interrogazione è stata trascritta nel documento che ho trovato solo in inglese tre volte. Ogni trascrizione ha una differente forma retorica (forma diretta, prosa e giuridica) in questo modo sovrapponendo il come narrare gli eventi con il cosa narrare. Il documento diventa la prova che la prova non esiste poiché la retorica usata prende il sopravvento sull'oggettività dell'evento.



Patrizio Di Massimo

The secret proceedings in the trial at Benghazi, 15 September 1931

2009

Registrazione audio, Voce John Rayment

33'44'

Un lavoro audio audio sulle differenti letture del processo segreto al leader della resistenza libica Omar el-Muchtar (Il leone del deserto) da parte degli italiani .

1. HEARING OF THE PRISONER

The fifteenth day of the month of September of the year nineteen hundred and thirty-one in Benghazi in the Investigating Office of the Regional Prison. Before us, Dr Giuseppe G. Franceschino, Investigator, with the Public Prosecutor in the person of Military Lawyer cav. off. Giuseppe Bedendo, Investigating judge, assisted by the undermentioned Clerk, appeared the detainee

OMAR EL MUCTAR

who was questioned as to his personal particulars through the interpreter Mr Giovanni Valenza.

He replied: "My name is Omar El Muctar, son of Aescia ben Mahareb, 73 years old, born at Defna, kabyla Menefa, ailet Brahidan, beit Farhat, married with children, literate, no criminal record, leader of the Senusi zavia at Gsur."

Notified of the offences charged, he replied: "I take note that proceedings have been taken against me with the warrant of capture for offences according to art. 284-285 of the Penal Code."

Accused: "I never submitted to the Italian government: I only had conversations with it. If Hassen Reda had backed me in my demands I would have been with the government."

Accused: "There were two leaders: after the break-up of Hassen's dor I was the only one left. The rebels obeyed me blindly, so that all actions taken by them were ordered by me."

Charged with carrying out torture on our prisoners, he replied: "War is war".

Accused: "I never gave orders that prisoners should be mutilated: I always saw them dead on the battlefield but I never saw that the bodies had been subjected to outrage."

Accused: "It was not I who gave the order to resume hostilities after the pact with the regime, because I was far away. In my opinion it was the Italians who resumed hostilities because they put Saleh El Auami in gaol, and shot our men at Zuetina, who by order of Idris had gone out to collect provisions."

Accused: "In my view, too, the breaking off of negotiations was the fault of the Italian government because it made me fall out with Hassen, who then went to Benghazi: I also wrote to Marshal Badoglio, and having received no answer I went away and resumed guerilla warfare."

Accused: "I was present at a number of battles and cannot therefore specify them."

Accused: "The people of the cities hated me because I brought them bad luck, and I hated them in return because they did not help the cause of their religion, for which alone I fought."

Accused: "I did not give the order to kill the Gubba manager: the Mohafdia, driven by hunger, looted and assassinated with and without my orders."

Accused: "Major Bassi was killed in battle: war is war: all who were in it, since it was permissible, we killed."

Accused: "I admit having given commissions to officers and to chiefs, but only to my subordinates."

Accused: "Because Falid bu Omar had earlier been in the Gbail territory and was therefore able to recognize everything, maybe he persuaded me of the need to name the sottomesso Omar Bubaker Gbail leader of the ailet Musa."

Accused: "Earlier there were continual contacts between the subdued and the rebels: It might also have been that Omar himself put his name forward as leader."

Accused: "Besides Iorio Carmine (Iusuf el Musulmani), condemned by the Military Court at Gialo in December 28 there were no other Italian deserters in the 'duar': there was a certain Omar el Musulmani, also at Gialo, but I do not know whether he was the deserter mentioned to me as being corporal of artillery. There was also a third, whose name I do not know, but likewise I do not know what happened to them."

Accused: "I repeat, I took part in all battles, if sometimes I was not there, the operation was likewise carried out under my orders."

Accused: "As for Lieutenant Aviere Beati, I had given orders that he should be held by Abdulamid el Akbar because he had money: when the Italian government came out with large forces. I do not know what the Mohafdia did to him, for they did not even bother burying their dead, especially in a big battle."

Accused: "Approximately, there were under a thousand men in the 'duar': of these four hundred were mounted."

Accused: "Lieutenant Beati was killed in the wadi, but I do not know whether he was buried."

Accused: "It may be that some Italians at Porto Bardia paid tithes, as happened at Barce, but I could not say who they were. But I was told that the Italian citizens of Barce had paid tithes for having their livestock looked after, though I could not say who they were. Aissa el Aquaeh is a racketeer and I do not know what he received in payment."

Accused: "The collectors of tithes are commanded by the 'Caimacan' and not by me, and are responsible for their actions to him".

Accused: "I heard of the raid carried out against the Fattoria lung: however, I was not there at the time because I was in the Abeidat territory. I do not know who led that raid."

Accused: "I also took part in raids and cannot remember which."

Accused: "We do not have fixed places where we can seek refuge, always keeping on the move by necessity because

of the situations in the Brasa and Abid territories."

Accused: "In order to live, apart from raids, we make a profit from camls, which we send to Egypt, where they are sold, and from the proceeds we buy provisions."

Accused: "The most influential leaders below me are: Abdulamid al Akbar - caiman of the Auaghir dor: there is also commander Osman Sciamo, caiman and commander of the Brahassa-Dorsa dor: Ahmed Musa is caiman and commander of the Ahasa-Abeidat: chief of my tabur is Bubaker Zigri."

Accused: "I admit having been taken with weapons in hand on 8 September last at Zavia Beda on a plan called Got-Illfu, near Slonta: I had still not fired a rifle shot because we were surrounded by government troops."

Accused: "On other occasions I did shoot: does it seem likely to you that I could be in battle without shooting?"

Accused: "About two years ago I was wounded in the right shoulder by an air force bomb - I should say rather the left shoulder. It was a bomb splinter".

Accused: "We had neither cannons nor machine-guns: those we managed to capture were on my orders buried by persons familiar with such places, and not even I know where they are."

Accused: "Abd-el-Gader, from Misurata, whose father's name I do not know, was good with cannons, but I do not know what he is doing in Egypt."

Accused: "My son Mohamed Sahle is thirteen years old: he is in Egypt with the family."

Accused: "I do not know now what will happen to the 'duar', and thus if they will name a successor to me, whose name I cannot foretell or whether they will cross into Egypt."

Accused: "It was not my idea, given Governor Graziani's measures, to cross the frontier: 'I and my men had decided rather to die for our religion."

Accused: "I absolutely deny that there was any intention of surrendering among the rebels."

Accused: "It is true that at other times I prepared a masbhata against those who were intending to leave me, masbhata, which also carried the signature of other leaders. Today it is not like that: we are in the open and anyone who wants to leave us cannot be stopped, and so goes off with his rifle."

Accused: "We do not have any cartridges in store: the Mohafdia sell them and exchange them among themselves. Those who were clever, at the appropriate time, made their arrangements."

Accused: We do not have stores of provisions in caves.

Accused: "I deny that we got fresh supplies from the sea: they came only from Sollum."

Accused: "When the encampments were in their territory we were assisted in every possible way by the subdued and thus with payment of tithes, with shelter in tents and with information about troop movements."

Accused: "I am not sorry for what I did because it was God's will."

Accused: "I am not in correspondence with Idris."

2. TYPEWRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE HEARING OF THE PRISONER

Opening the hearing, Public Prosecutor Bedendo asked for mention to be made that today was the birthday of His Royal Highness the Prince of Piedmont, and in the certainty that he was the loyal spokesman for the feeling of the people, he called for the most heartfelt alala.

Italians and local people rose to their feet applauding at length. When silence was restored and the oath administered to the interpreter, Mr..., the President, Colonel Marinoni, asked the accused for his particulars, and he said his name was OMAR EL MUCHTAR, 74 years old, born at Giarabub, head of the Door; asked if he had any convictions, he replied negatively, as he denied being aware that there were warrants of capture out against him.

After this the Clerk Lieutenant De Cristofano read out the bill of indictment.

Proceedings then continued.

Pres.: "You fought against whom?"

Omar: "I fought against the Italian government."

Pres.: "In how many battles did you take part?"

Omar: "In many, I cannot count them exactly. Also those in which I did not take part were carried out under my orders."

Pres.: "Did you also open fire?"

Omar: "Yes, several times."

Pres.: "Did you give the order to kill Lieutenat Beati?"

Omar: "He had been captured and for some time lived with the dor. One day while I was absent troops of the Italian government came near to the dor and then the mehafdia killed him. War is war, and I do not know whether he was buried."

Pres.: "Did you issue orders for all prisoners to be killed?"

Omar: "I did not give orders for that."

Pres.: "Was it you who gave the orders to kill the men who had gone out to repair the telephone line at Gasr Benighden, thus marking the resumption of hostilities?"

Omar: "Yes, I gave the order to kill these and others."

Pres.: "As well as the escorting carabinieri?"

Omar: "War is war."

Pres.: "Why did you resume hostilities?"

Omar: "The cause of the breakdown was the friction that arose between me and Sidi Reda, in which various people intervened in order to accentuate it. At this point Prosecuting Counsel thanked the interpreter for the work he had done: but finding that his voice was too weak and therefore could not be heard by the chiefs and the Arabs who were sitting in the court, whereas it was the characteristic of military trials that the public should follow the proceedings of the case in order to decide for themselves whether the accused was guilty or otherwise, he requested the President to replace him with Col. Cav. Lombroso."

The President called upon Col. Lombroso and administered the oath.

Pres.: "The court wishes to know for what reasons hostilities were resumed."

Omar: "Because the government came between me and Sidi Reda."

Pres.: "Were you obliged to await the reply to the letter you sent to H. E. Badoglio?"

Omar: "The reply came, but it was without meaning."

Pres.: "And who are you?"

Omar: "I am the representative of Sidi Ahmed ese Scerif: but the documents which prove this statement of mine have been dispersed."

Pres.: "Did you hand out officers' commissions to your mehafdia?"

Omar: "Yes."

Pres.: "Was it you who always gave the battle orders?"

Omar: "As far as the earliest battles were concerned, there were others in command. I gave the orders for those just before the agreement and for those after the agreement. I have been leader for ten years."

Pres.: "How were you captured?"

Omar: "The battle began around Zuuia Beda. I was wounded and fell under my horse which was killed. Government soldiers then captured me."

Pres.: "Did you give your name?"

Omar: "I did, right away."

Pres.: "Did you have your rifle?"

Omar: "I had a rifle and six cartridges."

Pres.: "Did you carry out lootings and raids?"

Omar: "Yes."

Pres.: "Did you order the sottomessi to pay tithes?"

Omar: "At first yes, later no, that is when the people were far away."

P.C.: "The other day the extraordinary war tribunal was summoned at Marsa Brega to try the subdued Omar Bubacher Sabail ailet Musa for having been found in possession of certain documents. I have the honour of showing one of these to you, Mr President. From the document it is clear that the aforementioned Omar Bubacher was named head of the ailet by Omar el Muchtar and authorized to collect tithes, as appeared in the accounts, and to make propaganda for Senusiya. The document bears the date of 17 April 1930 and was subsequent to the resumption of hostilities: it bears the signature and the seal of Omar Muchtar."

The document was handed to the President who made the accused examine it, asking him if he recognized it as his.

Omar: "At one time the tribe paid tithes..."

P.C.: "Don't digress - The date is after things got back to normal?"

Omar: "The Gaoail tribe were placed under Saif ef Fadil and depended on him."

P.C.: "But the signature and the seal are yours? What does the document say?"

Omar: "States that he cannot read but recognizes his signature."

P.C.: "He cannot read. And perhaps the document is written in Italian Instead of in Arabic, or you do not have the spectacles you lost in a recent battle while running away, and which you had the nerve to ask back from the Governor."

After the President had asked the judges, the Prosecuting Counsel and the Defence Counsel if they had any questions for the accused. Captain Lontano asked: 'Have you ever received payment from the Italian government?'

Omar: "No, never."

Defence: "Did you ever fight against the Turks prior to our occupation?"

Omar: "Sometimes."

Defence: "Were you educated by the Senusi?"

Omar: "Since the age of sixteen."

Having completed his questioning of the accused, the President called upon the Prosecuting Counsel Colonel Bedendo, who, amid a respectful silence, began his speech:

THE ADDRESS OF THE PROSECUTING COUNSEL

With that precise perception that so distinguishes H.E., General Graziani, in the preface of his superb little book, in which are reported the meetings held during the stay of H.E. Lesson and journalists in Benghazi, a book, which, being freely distributed, I hope all have read, writes:

"...So we see increasingly every day how the fame of this legendary hero, who always takes flight in times of danger, is on the wane. If on this occasion Omar Muchtar was captured, it was due to the fact that he was surrounded by our brave troops and that the horse which was attempting to carry him away from the battle was killed.

It is not by chance that this trial is being held in the former Arab Parliament, now the Palazzo del Littorio! His Excellency wanted this done so as to demonstrate clearly to everyone how the policy of former times has been superseded. He wished it so that as many Italians and native people as possible could be here to hear the charges leveled against Omar, so that they can honestly and in all conscience judge him, as the court will do.

We could say many things here about Omar el Muchtar, but we wish to limit ourselves and proceed according to the dictates of justice and not according to those based on curiosity and revenge.

This does not mean that the Italian government has abandoned these people to their fate: several times it has chosen the right moment to try for agreements, but your bad faith has always broken such pacts. El Beiada and Gasr Benigdem are shining examples of this, and it is useless today for Omar to excuse himself by saying that he wrote to His Excellency Badoglio and that he did not receive a proper reply.

The powerful Italian government does not traffic its own sovereignty; it makes as many concessions as possible. So much the worse for those who do not appreciate such a gesture."

You have said that you wished to live honestly in this land. But you did not wish it: because you rebelled against the sovereignty of the Italian government.

You gave the order at Gasr Benigdem for the carabinieri supervising the repair work on the telephone line to be killed and tortured, while there was peace between us.

You took advantage of small garrisons to surprise and kill them. You are not a soldier but a bandit who has always lived underground. The true soldier kills his adversary in war, but does not torture him, while you have violated the corpse of our officers and our soldiers. You have killed our wounded. Not one of them has returned to us. You have boasted in a public hearing of having taken part in all battles: even if not present yourself, you gave the orders.

Your men attacked our troops whenever they were in greater numbers, but you always ran away, just as at other times our demagogues incited our workers and kept themselves in hiding so as to escape their just punishment.

And that you always ran away is proved by the statement you made that on another occasion you had also been wounded in the shoulder, whilst escaping, by a bomb splinter dropped by our glorious air force, that air force, which, according to your own words, flushed you out from your caves, from your wades and followed you in your flights.

You have always run away; it is proved by your spectacles, your seal which in other battles stayed in place: those spectacles which during your questioning this morning you had the temerity to ask back.

I do not, however, believe that you had much time left to devote to reading. You gave orders to kill prisoners: you have to answer for these killings. You set your followers against the armed forces of the Italian government, which alone rules this colony, in order to wrench the colony away from the motherland; for this crime you have to answer. You have carried out lootings and raids: you will still have to account for these.

El Beida - Gasr Benigdem, the Giona redoubt, Notary Rognoni, Major Bassi, Lieutenant Beati, Marshal Hubner and dozens and dozens of other crimes: these are your glories. For them you shall soon answer.

You have said God has this time abandoned you: if he has failed you, human justice has caught up with you.

You have no remorse for what you have done, for the conditions in which you have placed the people of this country. So be it: you are responsible.

I ask that the court, having decided that the accused is responsible for the crimes of which he is charged, should condemn him for the most serious crime of all, namely that of having taken up arms to wrench this colony from the motherland, pronouncing the death penalty which will take in the other sentences imposed for the lesser crimes.

The Public Prosecutor's demand was received with a general murmur of approval, which was immediately suppressed by the President.

The Defence Counsel, being called upon, asked that the court should take into account the age of the defendant and his religious fanaticism, and that it should give him the benefit of general mitigating circumstances.

Having asked the defendant if he had anything else to say in his defence, and obtained a negative reply, the court reti

red to the council chamber. After half an hour it returned to the courtroom, where, in a respectful silence, the President read the sentence whereby Omar el Muchtar was found guilty of the crimes charged against him and condemned him to death.

After the interpreter had translated the sentence to the defendant, the latter said: "From God we have come and to God we must return!"; to which the public Prosecutor added: "Very well, carabinieri, take him out."

The public files out slowly, commenting favorably on the sentence.

3. RECORD OF THE HEARING OF THE PRISONER

The year one thousand nine hundred and thirty-one on the fifteenth day of the ninth month of September in Benghazi at 17.00 hours and in the Palazzo del Littorio summoned to the Special Tribunal for the Defence of the State

Constituted of Messrs:

Lt. Col. Fantieri Marinoni Cav. Umberto (Presidente f.f.) in substitution for the official legitimately prevented Avv. Romano Dott. Francesco (Rapporteur of the Bench), Maj. Comm. M. Delitalia Cav. Gonario (Regular Judge), Seniore M.V.S.N. Manzoni Cav. Giovanni (Regular Judge), Seniore M.V.S.N. Mendolia Cav. Michele (Regular Judge).

The temporary replacement of the regular official legitimately prevented, to plead the case, assisted by Sig. Lt. of Inf S.P.E. De Cristofano Edoardo (Military Clerk f.f.)

AGAINST

OMAR EL MUCTAR son of Aescia ben Mahareb, 73 years old, born at Defna, Kabyle Mnefa, ailet Brahidan, beit Farhatn, married with children, literate, no previous convictions, leader of the Senusi zavia at Gsur.

Arrested 12/9/1931. IX

CHARGED

of the crimes provided for and set down in Art. 284-285-286-575-576 n. 3-62 n. 2-4-6-10 for having from 1911 up to the date of his capture which occurred on the day of 11 September 1931 south of Slonta, organized and directed the rebellion against the forces of the Italian state in the territory of this colony, participating in ambushes against isolated units of our troops, in numerous battles, in looting and raids, committing murder under the sole impulse of evil brutality, carrying out torture and acting cruelly against various persons, with the purpose of bringing about devastation and havoc, and detaching the colony from the motherland.

The public having been given free access to the court of hearing, the accused stands in the dock, guarded by the military, but free and unshackled.

Also present are the Public Prosecutor in the person of Sig. Bedendo Cav. Uff. Dr. Giuseppe regio. V. Avvocato Militare, and the Defence, in the person of Captain of Artillery Lontano sig. Roberto.

The President pronounces the hearing open.

The interpreter Signor Nasri Hermes is present.

The President questions him on his private particulars, and he replies:

I am Nasri Hermes, formerly Michele, 53 years old, born at Diar bekir (Mesopotamia), head of the translation office of the government of Cyrenaica.

The President administers the oath to him, issues the required warning, making him repeat the following statement aloud:

"I swear to translate faithfully the questions asked through me and to report the answer faithfully."

The President questions the accused through the interpreter as to his particulars and the latter gives them as mentioned above; he then warns him to make sure he can be properly heard.

It is noted at this point, that at the request of the Public Prosecutor, since the interpreter Nasri in indisposed, he should be replaced by Cav. Lumbroso di Aronne and Maria Gandus, born in Tunis on 27/2/1891, industrialist.

The clerk reads the bill of indictment which is translated to the defendant by the interpreter.

The president administers the oath to him, issues the required warning, making him repeat the following statement aloud:

"I swear to translate faithfully the questions asked through me and to report the answer faithfully."

The Clerk reads the trial documents relating to the case, included in the records on page 2.

After these are read the President has the documents translated by the interpreter since the accused does not understand the Italian language, then questions the accused about the facts contained in them: the accused replies in explanation and the interpreter translates.

It is noted that the accused replies in accordance with the written interrogation, stating that he is the leader of the Cyrenaican rebellion and, as such, author and instigator of all the crimes committed in the colony in the past ten years, the period during which he was the effective leader of the rebellion.

Accused: I have been the leader of the rebellion for about ten years.

It is noted that to each specific charge the accused answers:

'It is useless for you to ask me single facts: Whatever has been committed against Italy and the Italians for the past ten years was willed and permitted by me, whenever I did not personally take part in the acts themselves.

Accused: The raids, too, were ordered by me and some of them carried out by me.

The president calls upon the Public Prosecutor.

The Public Prosecutor, being called upon, concludes by appealing to the Tribunal, having found the accused guilty of the crimes as charged, to condemn him to death, with due consequences.

The Defence, in its turn, concludes by asking the Tribunal to exercise clemency to the accused.

Having called upon the accused for the last time, the President declares the hearing closed, and the Tribunal withdraws to the Council Chamber to consider the verdict.

When the Tribunal returns shortly afterwards to the court, the President reads aloud the judgment in front of all those in the case. The sentence is translated by the interpreter.

From which these minutes are drawn up and signed as follows:

THE MILITARY CLERK

signed. Edoardo De Cristofano

THE PRESIDENT

(Lt. Col. Marinoni Cav. Umberto)

signed. Umberto Marinoni

P.C.C.

Military Clerk f.f.

signed.



Patrizio Di Massimo

From the left: As every artist I am first of all a painter of women, Four men, The secret proceedings in the trial at Benghazi
2009

otto disegni su carta con cornice, suono, speakers

84 x 56 cm (ciascuno), 33'44'

Installazione presso GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Torino, 24 febbraio – 09 maggio, 2010



Patrizio Di Massimo

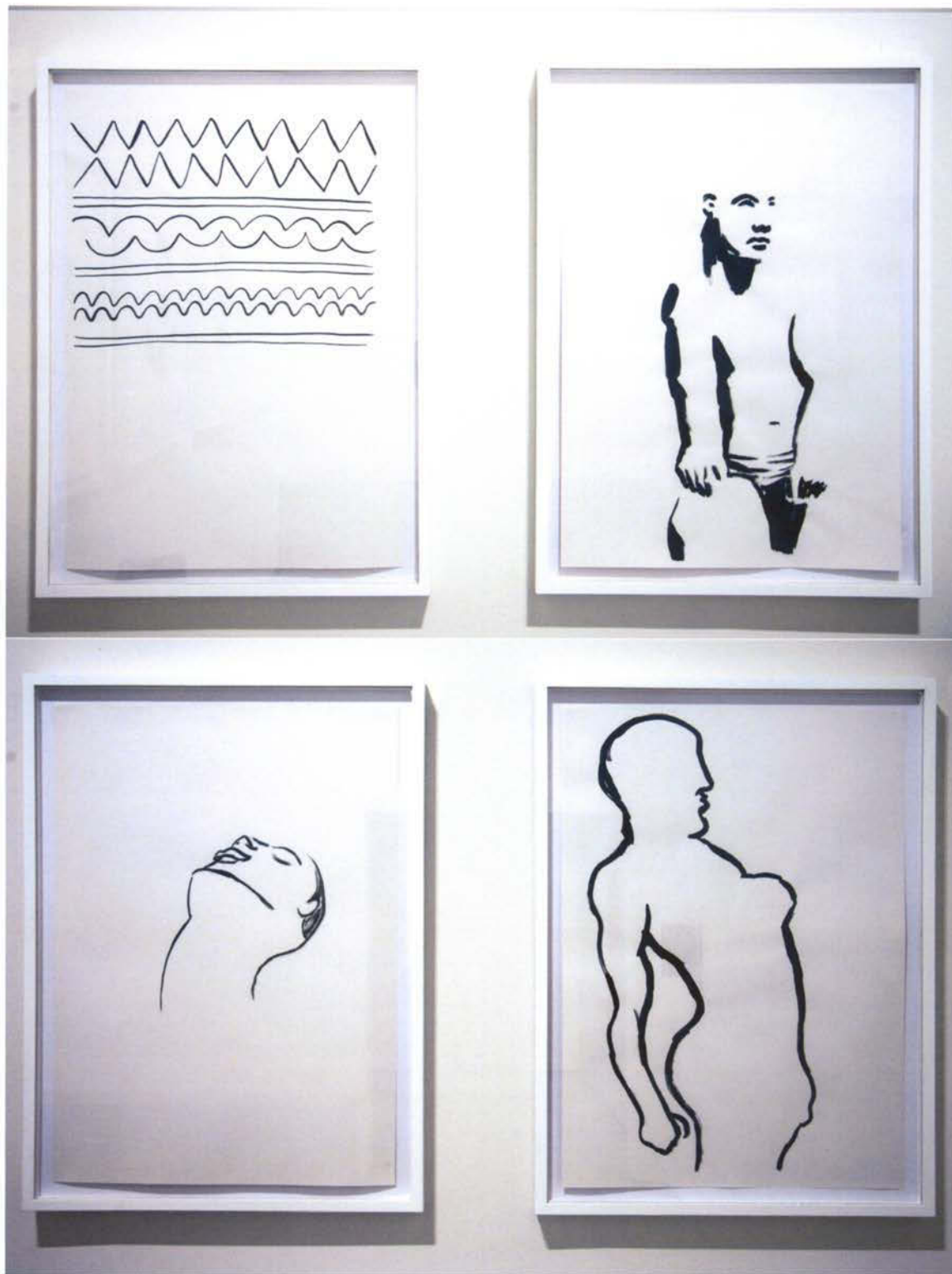
As every artist I'm first of all a painter of women (detail)

2009

inchiostro su carta (4 disegni)

84 x 56 cm each (ciascuno)

Il titolo dell'opera è una citazione di una affermazione di Pablo Picasso. Questi disegni si ispirano sia al cubismo che alla corrente del ritorno all'ordine.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Four men

2009

inchiostro su carta (4 disegni)

84 x 56 cm (ciascuno)



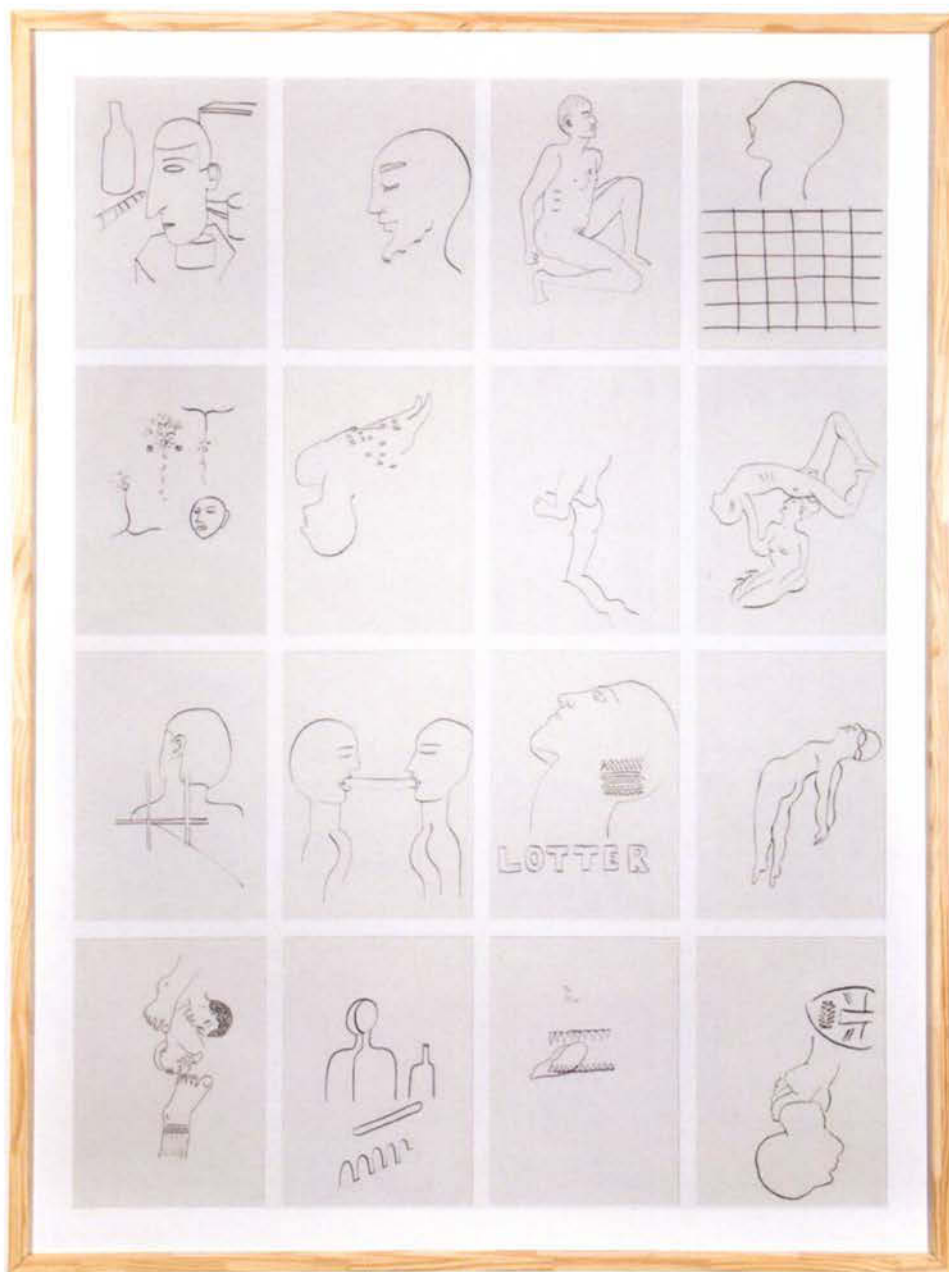
Patrizio Di Massimo

Disegni vari realizzati nel 2009

2009

Inchiostro su carta

21 x 29,7 cm (ciascuno), 130 x 100 cm (con cornice)



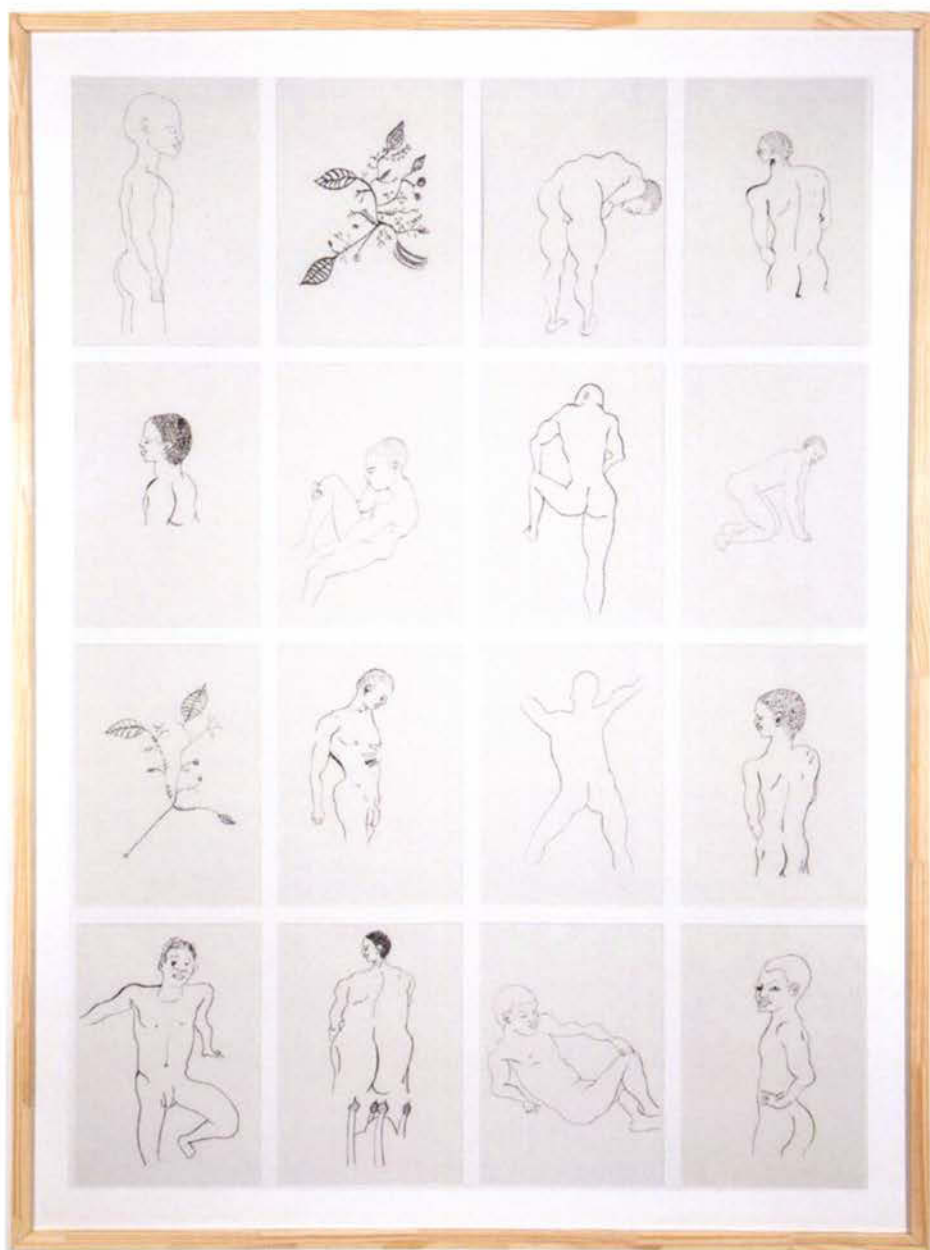
Patrizio Di Massimo

Disegni vari realizzati nel 2009

2009

Inchiostro su carta

21 x 29,7 cm (ciascuno), 130 x 100 cm (con cornice)



Patrizio Di Massimo

Disegni vari realizzati nel 2009

2009

Inchiostro su carta

21 x 29,7 cm (ciascuno), 130 x 100 cm (con cornice)



Patrizio Di Massimo

Ten little niggers

2009

inchiostro su carta

29,7 x 21 cm (ciascuno)

Una serie di venti disegni ispirati dalla iconografia coloniale. Il titolo è tratto dal racconto di Agatha Christie che è stato tradotto come 'dieci piccoli indiani' per motivi razziali.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Col Sole in Fronte

2010

Installazione presso T293, Napoli, 19 marzo - 30 aprile, 2010

Foto Danilo Donzelli



Patrizio Di Massimo

Tripolis

2008 - ongoing

stampa alla gelatina d'argento

100 x 150 cm

Immagine scattata nel quartiere italiano di Tripoli. Il nome Tripoli viene dal greco Tri Polis, Tre Città.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Tripolis

2008 - ongoing

stampa alla gelatina d'argento

100 x 150 cm

Installazione presso GAM - Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Torino, 25 febbraio – 05 marzo, 2010

Immagine scattata nel quartiere italiano di Tripoli. Il nome Tripoli viene dal greco Tri Polis, Tre Città.



Patrizio Di Massimo

But how many... how many times do I have to tell you that?

2008

immagine digitale trovata su internet

dimensioni variabili

Il lavoro è un regalo ideato per quindici amici - l'immagine è stata inviata per email e può essere stampata o lasciata come file. Ogni titolo finisce con il nome del destinatario.



Patrizio Di Massimo

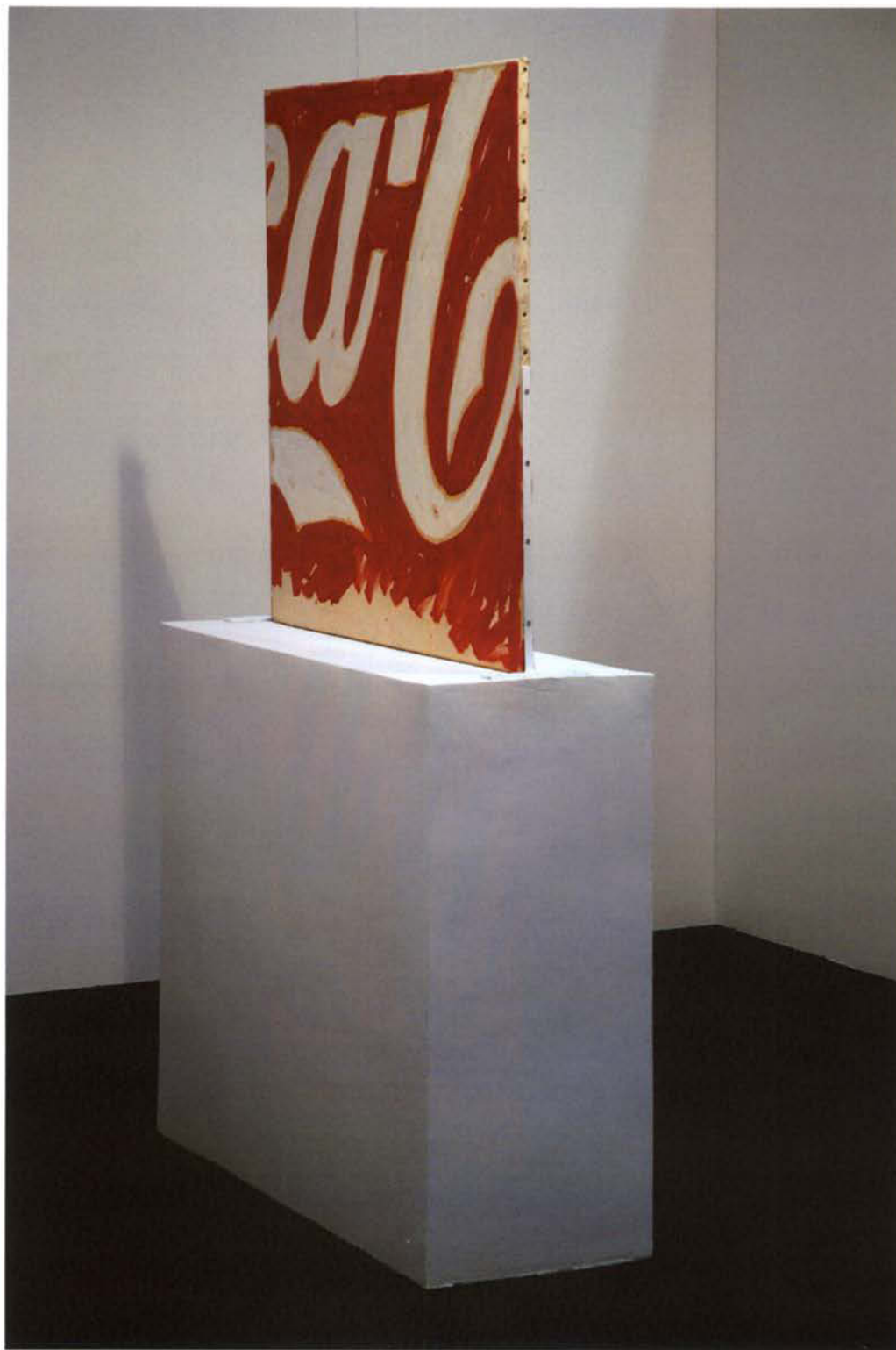
Leptis Magna, sono nato qui

2008

99 x 99 cm

Installazione presso Italian wave, Artissima, Torino, 2008

Probabile dipinto di Mario Schifano (*Leptis Magna, Libya* 1934 - Roma, Italia 1998) comprato per 350 euro il 12 ottobre del 2008 al mercato di Porta Portese a Roma, da una bancarella di un rigattiere. Il dipinto misura 99 x 99 cm e la firma dell'artista è sul retro.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Leptis Magna, sono nato qui

2008

Installazione presso Italian wave, Artissima, Torino, 2008

Probabile dipinto di Mario Schifano (Leptis Magna, Libya 1934 - Roma, Italia 1998) comprato per 350 euro il 12 ottobre del 2008 al mercato di Porta Portese a Roma, da una bancarella di un rigattiere. Il dipinto misura 99 x 99 cm e la firma dell'artista è sul retro.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Leptis Magna, sono nato qui

2008

99 x 99 cm

Installazione presso Italian wave, Artissima, Torino, 2008

Probabile dipinto di Mario Schifano (Leptis Magna, Libya 1934 - Roma, Italia 1998) comprato per 350 euro il 12 ottobre del 2008 al mercato di Porta Portese a Roma, da una bancarella di un rigattiere. Il dipinto misura 99 x 99 cm e la firma dell'artista è sul retro.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (pureblood)

2008

performance

Performance presso FormContent project space con la stazione di Bank, Londra, 2008
commissionata e prodotta da FormContent Project Space, London

Foto Balthazar Serreau

La performance connette il Form Content project space con Bank Station. L'evento coinvolge un cavallo e il suo cavaliere che ripetutamente coprono un percorso tra la galleria e la piazza più vicina in cui si trova una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (pureblood)

2008

performance

Performance presso FormContent project space con la stazione di Bank, Londra, 2008
commissionata e prodotta da FormContent Project Space, London

Foto Balthazar Serreau

La performance connette il Form Content project space con Bank Station. L'evento coinvolge un cavallo e il suo cavaliere che ripetutamente coprono un percorso tra la galleria e la piazza più vicina in cui si trova una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled (pureblood)

2008

performance

Performance presso FormContent project space con la stazione di Bank, Londra, 2008
commissionata e prodotta da FormContent Project Space, London

Foto Balthazar Serreau

La performance connette il Form Content project space con Bank Station. L'evento coinvolge un cavallo e il suo cavaliere che ripetutamente coprono un percorso tra la galleria e la piazza più vicina in cui si trova una scultura equestre. L'evento è visibile solo al di fuori dello spazio espositivo nei pochi secondi che il cavallo passa di fronte allo spettatore.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Untitled

2008

carboncino su tela, collage

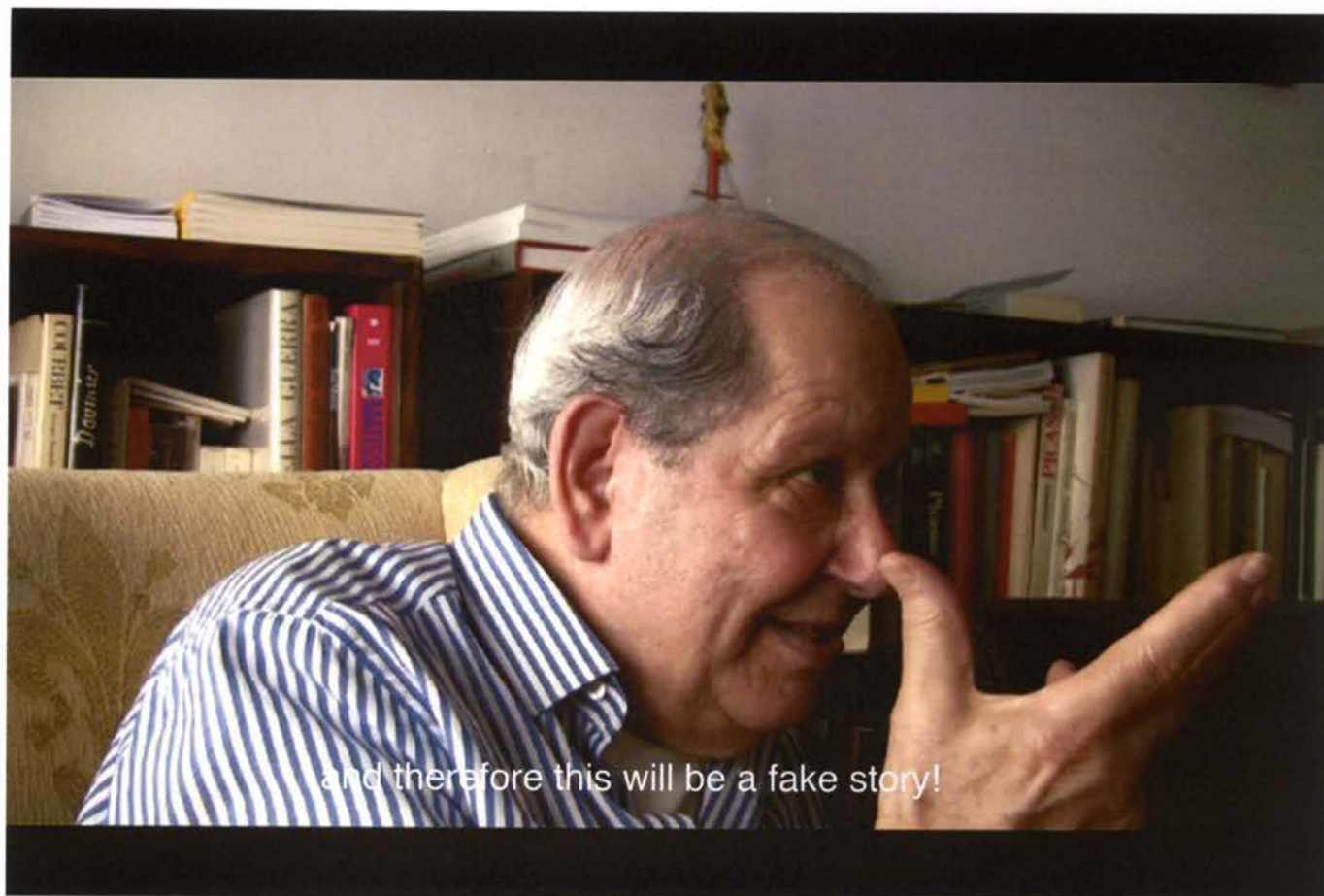
100 x 70 cm



Patrizio Di Massimo
PELO & CONTROPELO
2007

video HD
33' 44''

Pelo & Contropelo è un documentario epico sulla vita e il lavoro dell'artista Pino Pascali. Il video è realizzato senza nessun documento preso dal passato ma con interviste e foto fatte nel 2007. Questo video è nato come l'ultimo capito della mio saggio finale all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Milano intitolato 'Senza Orfanità'.



Patrizio Di Massimo
PELO & CONTROPELO
2007

video HD

33' 44"

Pelo & Contropelo è un documentario epico sulla vita e il lavoro dell'artista Pino Pascali. Il video è realizzato senza nessun documento preso dal passato ma con interviste e foto fatte nel 2007. Questo video è nato come l'ultimo capitolo della mia saggio finale all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Milano intitolato 'Senza Orfanità'.



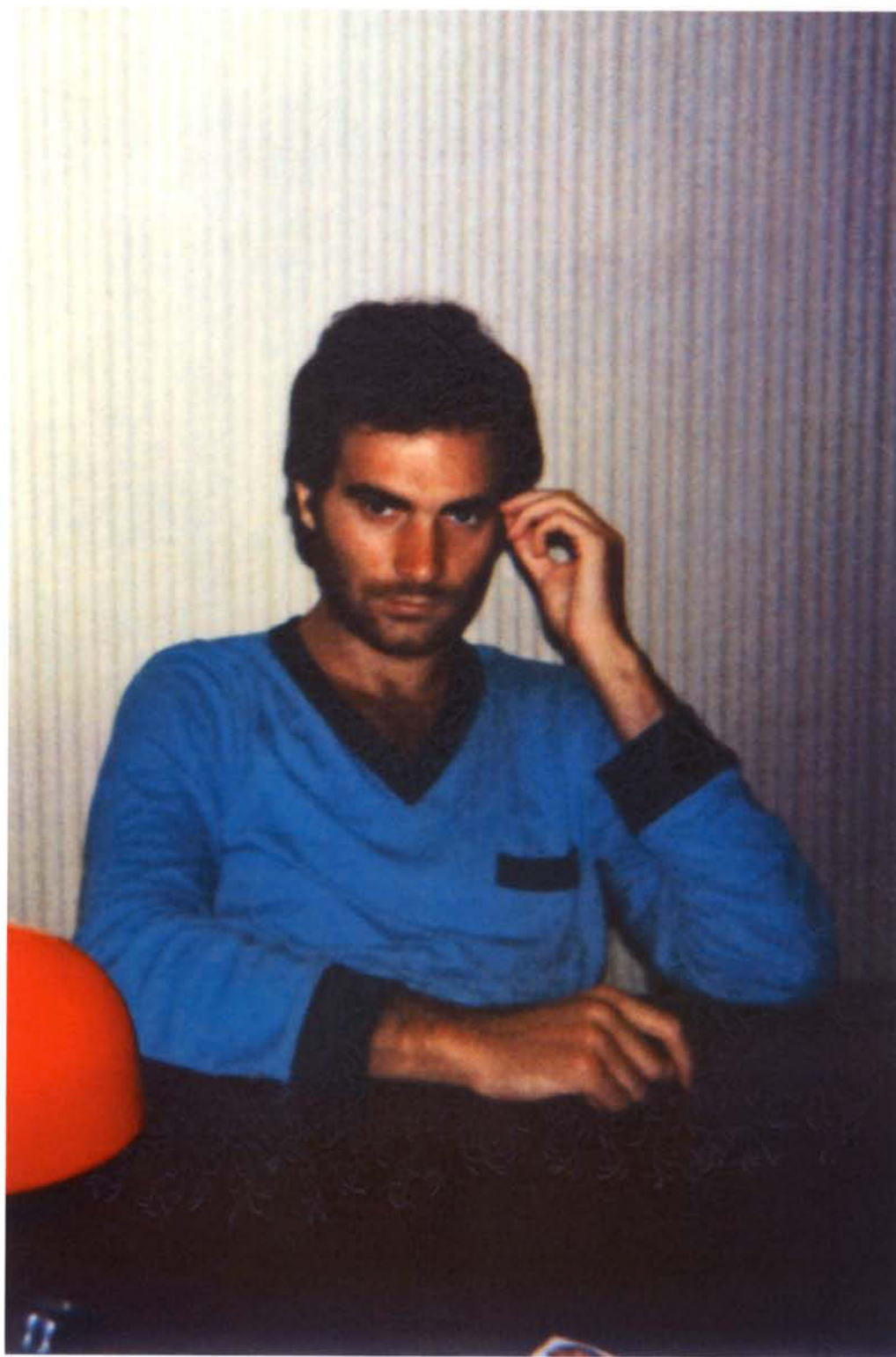
Patrizio Di Massimo
PELO & CONTROPELO

2007

video HD

33' 44"

Pelo & Contropelo è un documentario epico sulla vita e il lavoro dell'artista Pino Pascali. Il video è realizzato senza nessun documento preso dal passato ma con interviste e foto fatte nel 2007. Questo video è nato come l'ultimo capito della mio saggio finale all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Milano intitolato 'Senza Orfanità'.



Patrizio Di Massimo

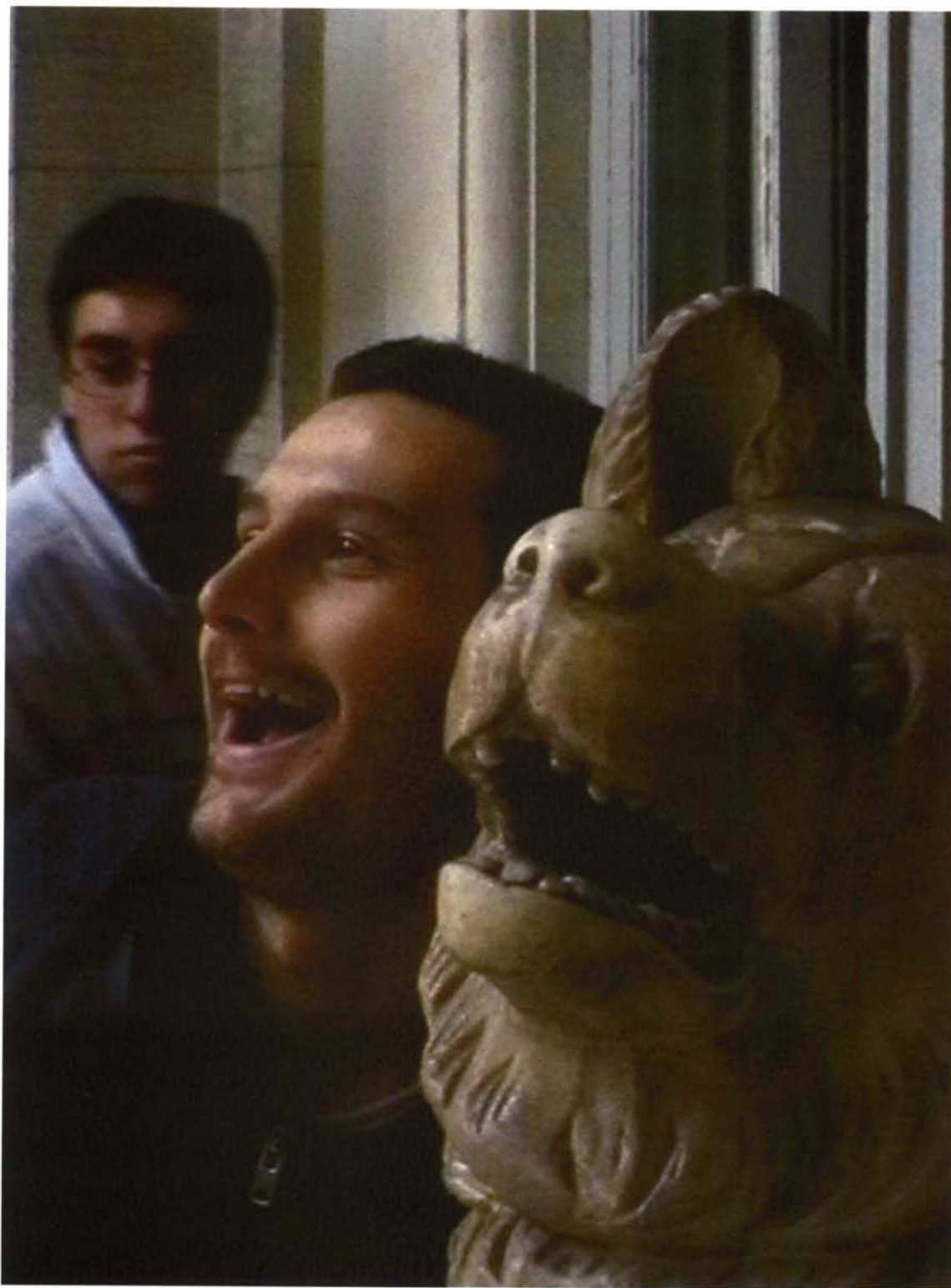
Untitled (my father emulating me)

2007

fotografia a colori

18 x 13 cm

Una fotografia degli anni 70 ritrae il padre dell'artista quando aveva la stessa età dell'autore al momento del ritrovamento della foto.



Patrizio Di Massimo

Succedette a Roma

2006

stampa a colori da fermo immagine

74 x 100 cm

Un'immagine che documenta una performance avvenuta presso i Musei Vaticani. Un uomo posa accanto ad una statua antica e la emula creando una foto souvenir.

IL PAESAGGIO MORALE ITALIANO

Text by Patrizio Di Massimo, 2010

Giorgio de Chirico chiamava l'Italia "una fatalità geografica". Antonio Stoppani "il bel paese", ma allo stesso tempo sottotitolava che "tutti gli incanti della natura non valgono un affetto"¹. Io nel 2007 ho scritto un testo, Senza Orfanità, all'interno del quale compilai un capitolo intitolato Tra Ventimiglia e Tripoli. Era il momento della ricerca dedicato al paesaggio italiano concepito come quel luogo esistente tra due punti geografici estremi. Il francese: l'allogeno in casa. E poi l'Italia africana: che in realtà arrivava molto più in basso – fino a Mogadiscio, fino a Mombasa.

Da lì nacque la voglia di partire per Tripoli - alla ricerca di una regione del modo da poter chiamare "Italia fuori dall'Italia". Una volta arrivato però mi sono reso conto che ne sapevo poco delle espansioni e delle affermazioni di se stessi tramite gli imperialismi e che la differenza tra egemonia e dominio è sottile ma allo stesso tempo non trascurabile. Dovetti anche ammettere che lo spirito antropologico che aveva portato gli inglesi fino in Cina mancava nell'attitudine italiana. Che in molti casi questo paesaggio orientale si reificava come un'amnesia collettiva e che quando una storia è cancellata il paesaggio stesso diviene ceco e muto.

Fu come un abbaglio: vedere tracce della cultura Italiana inserite nella porta del continente nero; immaginare le vite di migliaia di connazionali impegnati in una lotta vana supportata da fantasie esotiche; capire il ruolo della memoria nella formazione del paesaggio storico; ma soprattutto vedermi e sentirmi come il rottame di un'ideologia vecchia ed opprimente. Un abbaglio così intenso che mal mi riuscì di riprendere con la camera il visto e il vissuto. Ma la ragion del fare, si sa, non è sempre la ragion del vivere.

Orientalismo Italiano è diventata così, dopo Senza Orfanità, la mia seconda grande ricerca. Un'analisi tutta indirizzata a capire come si erano sviluppati i rapporti tra Italia e oriente nei secoli e come questi rapporti avevano influenzato di ritorno il paesaggio Italiano in tutte le sue accezioni:

Il Concilio di Vienne del 1312 che istituì le cattedre di lingua Araba, ebraica e Siriaca nelle università Italiane - perché si sa: l'apprendimento dell'Arabo è il più efficace strumento di conversione dei "maomettani"; le Repubbliche Marinare: che aprirono i cancelli all'oriente Arabo in una sconfinata serie di scambi economici, commerciali e culturali; Venezia, che divenne la più orientale delle città in occidente e che si può a buon diritto definire più Bizantina che Italiana; le crociate, da quelle dei pezzenti a quelle escatologiche e metafisiche, da quelle del bene contro il male a quelle irrazionali e oscurantiste; il grande esploratore Marco Polo e il grande evangelizzatore Matteo Ricci - personalità che cambiarono per sempre la conformazione del loro e nostro occidente; infine l'Africa: Etiopia, Somalia, Eritrea e Libia; la formazione dell'imperialismo straccione e poi la fulminea decolonizzazione; ed infine la netta differenza tra egemonia e dominio.

Ed è proprio questa differenza che caratterizza più di ogni altra cosa il significato di Orientalismo Italiano. Non si può infatti mai parlare di egemonia considerando il rapporto tra l'Italia e gli stati colonizzati perché non abbiamo mai veramente meritato il rispetto di questi popoli. Egemonia culturale, come Gramsci ce la suggerisce, dovrebbe essere la compiuta capacità di direzione cui il colonizzato si dimette. In assenza di questa, e con il solo uso della forza, si ha una rozza e primitiva fase di sforzo – il dominio. L'insediamento in Africa non fu facile per gli Italiani – sconfitta di Adua, interminabili lotte nel Sahara – e proprio da questo nacque la posizione autoritaria di dominazione forzata.

Quando nel 1931 l'impero Italiano impiccò e uccise Omar el-Muchtar, il leader della resistenza Libica da tutti chiamato "Leone del deserto", questa esasperazione era al suo apice di ferocia. Ci vollero venti anni di battaglie e finalmente l'atto era compiuto: la Libia era Italiana. Contro-voglia, contro-mano. El-Muchtar fu pubblicamente ucciso e il suo passaggio all'aldilà sanciva la morte di un paesaggio Italiano onesto e pulito. Il suo finto processo sanciva l'inizio di una storia moderna che sarebbe durata pochi anni, appunto dal 15 settembre 1931 fino al 10 giugno 1940 quando si dichiarò guerra contro Francia ed Inghilterra.

Ma il crimine coloniale è qualcosa di cui va chiesto perdono? Il fatto di non essere stati in grado di egemonizzare ma solo di dominare (seppur per pochi anni) ci rende più colpevoli di Inglesi e Francesi?

Nelle parole di Gramsci: "La linea di uno stato egemonico non "oscilla", perché esso stesso determina la volontà altrui e non è determinato, perché la linea politica è fondata su ciò che vi è di permanente e non di casuale e immediato e nei propri interessi e in quelli delle altre forze che concorrono in modo decisivo a formare un sistema e un equilibrio"². Questo significa che non ha poi così senso ritrattare le proprie posizioni a un secolo di distanza se la nazione è stata puramente egemonica. Ma appunto non è questo il nostro caso.

Come dominanti forse dovremmo cominciare a parlare di paesaggio morale Italiano. Silvio Berlusconi è l'unico politico Europeo che abbia fin'ora chiesto perdono per i crimini di guerra coloniali e l'unico che abbia voluto portare a termine le restituzioni di artefatti rubati e scippati dai suoi antenati condannando il dominio in terra dominata. La cosa è interessante – se non addirittura mozzafiato per chi come me è così appassionato alla questione. Che cosa significa questo?

Significa che il nostro paesaggio morale attuale è molto diverso dagli altri. Da un lato il nostro tardo-imperialismo è rimasto un argomento oscuro e dall'altro il post-colonialismo non si è mai sviluppato né come materia accademica né artistica per via della mancanza di dialogo con i luoghi occupati. Però oggi si arriva a chiedere perdono senza aver mai di fatto affrontato i veri doveri che come stato si aveva nei confronti dei popoli Libici, Etiopici, Eritrei e Somali. Insomma, non c'è post-colonialismo ma ci sono scuse coloniali, il che suona un po' come una doppia beffa espressa con mezza fatica.

Certo si dice che tra Gheddafi e Berlusconi ci sia alla base una trattativa sulla compartecipazione tra TV pubblica araba e nuove produzioni di film pan-arabici. E che la costruzione dell'autostrada che collegherà la Tunisia all'Egitto, connettendo il paesaggio Libico da ovest ad est, così come la promessa di annullare la tratta dei migranti sul canal di Sicilia siano i veri motivi di questo ripensamento ad hoc.

Ma ora io non vorrei fare a meno della spensieratezza e dell'innocenza. E potrei chiedermi, a buon diritto, cosa c'entro io con questa storia? Nulla di personale in effetti. Nulla di parentale dal quale dover tirare le somme ma solo un approccio del tutto collettivo alla Storia e al suo paesaggio morale perché forse, in effetti, "L'innocenza è una colpa"³.

1 Antonio Stoppani, *Il bel paese, Conversazioni sulle bellezze naturali*, Lampi di stampa Editore, p. 59, Milano, 2004

2 Antonio Gramsci, *Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica e sullo stato moderno*, p. 167 e 168, Editori Riuniti, Roma, 1991

3 Pier Paolo Pasolini, da *La sequenza del fiore di carta di Amore e Rabbia*, 1968

TROFEO VIVO, TROFEO MORTO

Text by Patrizio Di Massimo, 2009

The first time I came across Pino Pascali I was sixteen years old. It was during a Sunday outing at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome – one of the few places where his works are on display. I saw *Primo piano di labbra* [Red Lips] and *Dinosauro che riposa* [Sleeping Dinosaur]. From that moment on, to me Pascali was the power of image, impetus, his own absurd tragedy.

Many artists of my generation live in the edification of a recent past. This indicates an awareness that a radical discourse on the language of art is not necessarily the moments of history. It's like treating our "fathers" like trophies, reifying memory. Hung up on the wall, we observe them. I don't think this attitude is nostalgic because I believe that a work about an artist of the past necessarily implicates research into and the comprehension of the space which that artist occupies in the present. This spirit of the times seems to be quite evident, and in a recent article published in *Frieze*, Jan Verwoert writes: "this is not supposed to sound too morbid – but the generation that opened up crucial possibilities for the present in the 1960s and '70s is about to reach a critical age. Some of its members are already dead. How are we going to express our indebtedness to them? More artists' estates will come into circulation, or are already doing so. Who is going to take care of them, and how?"

I would like to talk about Pascali beginning at the end: when, a few months before his death, the 34th edition of the Venice Biennale opened and many of the participating artists were protesting and closing the galleries where their works were on display to the public. It was 1968; the world was in upheaval because of the student revolts, begun as a protest to the Vietnam War first in the United States and then later arriving in Europe. Dissent had taken hold also in Italy and there had been violent conflicts between the police and architecture students of Valle Giulia (seat of the architecture department of the University of Rome) a few days before the opening of the Biennale. The Fine Arts Academy in Venice was occupied and discontent had instilled a duty to protest among the artists of the Biennale. Led by Emilio Vedova and Luigi Nono, they demonstrated in the city. They were contesting the context. Fabio Sargentini, who I met while shooting my documentary *Pelo & Contropelo*, relates that Pascali responded to the request to close his exhibition room with these words: "If they don't let me show my works I'm going to smash their heads in!"

In the months prior to the opening of the Biennale, Pascali had worked on his new works intensely, day and night, and didn't want to have to censure them. For this reason he spoke in Saint Mark's Square, in front of hundreds of protesting students, in order to explain his "dissent from the dissent". His position was clear: these displayed objects had an intrinsic political value more potent than any closed door. Pascali had faith in his works and didn't want the "politically" to kill the "being political by nature" of his work. He declared an awareness that every "ends to" is nothing more than an easy publicity trap that periodically repeats itself, at the service of one philosophy or another, of one mind or another. But in the end he, too, closed his exhibition room – perhaps he didn't want to become one of those trophies hung on the wall, similar to his sculptures.

It seems to me, however, that Pascali's consideration of his works as agents of social transformation had always been present. Immediately after leaving the Fine Arts Academy in Rome, he began working as a set designer and publicist for "Lodolo Film" and for RAI, the Italian national public television. He created, among other things, the subscription campaign for RAI Radiotelefortuna with a series of new drawings entitled *Africa*. The images are of a clear colonial inspiration: Gorilla, Aborigine, Rhinoceros, Lion, Witch-doctor, Whale, Crocodile, Masks, Leopard with Prey, Tanned Skin, Shark. With these drawings, Pascali showed on TV images belonging to a forgotten Italian history: the African colonization, that place in the sun so longed for, its beasts and exoticisms. It was the black continent that entered into every Italian home, the journey to the other that bared all and penetrated to inside an unwittingly post-colonial society that was currently living its economic boom. Boom!

This becomes even more interesting and evident if we think about dates: Pino was born in 1935, the exact year in which Mussolini invaded Ethiopia and so provided a beginning to the preparations towards World War II. All Pascali is a little like this: the projection of his childhood onto his works. We can, in fact, read his weapon series in this way – the game of the artist growing up during the war – and so too for the "fake sculptures" and trophies – metaphors of a conquest to hold up, a past to bring back, a future to invent. The trophies are risks, misadventures, cruelties, and also the three-dimensional transposition of the drawings inspired by Africa. Alive, the animals that had inspired the Radiotelefortuna campaign became war relics and colonial reliquaries of a battle won with difficulty. In actuality, they transformed into semi-abstractions because their forms were now evocative. Rhinoceros or dragon? Giraffe or phoenix? Face or ass? Pascali becomes the metaphor of the hunter of archetypal and mysterious images. In this series he never fully abandons himself to the use of a simple material used in

its purity; there is always something stacy in the way in which these works take on the characteristics of an intrinsic reality. These objects, having been constructed with shaped canvases, make their construction process the load-bearing spirit of the work. They declare themselves sculptures but they are empty inside and unexpectedly light. One of them is the most tautologically successful: it's entitled *Decapitazione della scultura* [The decapitation of sculpture] and is the decapitation of the medium itself because it's constructed with materials antithetical to those of sculpture.

During the exhibition *Revort 1* in Palermo (1965), Pascali declared: "An Italian artist can not be but an isolated phenomenon in revolt against a phantom situation of a mummified and anti-historical puppet civilization." There is, in this sentence, the artist that I love. It's not only the presence of an object to take care of, nor an estate to run, but the human and social drive that becomes aesthetic gesture. It's the confidence, the faith even, that art can contribute to creating change in the bosom of contemporary Italian society. The works are in revolt, the artist is the platform. It's difficult today to think that such an attitude and faith can still have value within an embalmed society like the one we're living in. And it's not that all artists have to feed their own work with this hope. But we do, in fact, have to face up to the mind of a father like Pascali. A trophy of intentions, dead for some, alive for others. I don't believe in Manichean explanations, even less so in one-liners that would provide a solution of opinions. Pino taught us the value of the artwork as creature, the only extremely political form of expression. Creature that is neither dissent nor assent, neither silence nor chatter, but the will to be a healthy scandal in the middle of a sad institutional context.

When Pascali died in September 1968, it was felt strongly by everyone in the Italian art world. Alighiero Boetti said: "In 1968 Pascali split his head open with a motorcycle; I split mine on small squares (referring to his works of that period)". Vittorio Rubiu, perhaps one of the most talented critics of contemporary art in those years, decided to concentrate only on modern art, so strong was his sorrow for the loss of his friend. It was he who told me that in the days preceding Pascali's death, when he was in hospital, many artists, critics and museum directors went to visit him. For the first time his mother and father understood that their son was somebody important. Tragedies, when they are so absurd, metabolise badly because they are neither good nor evil, neither everything nor nothing, just human thoughts that establish their own limits.

ITALIAN ORIENTALISM

Mum, the Turks are coming!

Text by Patrizio Di Massimo, 2009

Flavio Gioia's story is this: the humanist Flavio Biondo, "middle-age" term inventor, wrote that the compass invention should have been dated around the year 1300. For a mistake in the transcription of the text from Latin to Italian instead of being passed "it is said by Flavio that the compass was invented..." it became "by Flavio, it is said, the compass was invented...". So, Flavio Gioia has been created all in a sudden and its monument today face the sea in the ex-maritime Republic of Amalfi (South Italy) with engraved the text: "Flavio Gioia, the compass inventor". In reality Chinese invented the compass much time before that Amalfi's navigators discovered it.

Other than this anecdote between Amalfi and the compass how many other times the exchanges between Italy and the Orient developed cultural conformation that was completely new?

Edward Said published in 1978 a book entitled *Orientalism* in which he defined this term 1) as the block of disciplines that study costumes, literature, history of Oriental population, 2) as a style of thought founded on a clear distinction between the Orient and the Occident, 3) as the block of the institutions created by the west with the finality to manage its relationship with the Orient. Managing based on reports between economical, political, military and cultural situations. In his text Said speaks about England and France as the true protagonists in the exchange of information with the Orient, but he also apologizes not to take into account the contribution to Orientalism of Germany, Holland and Italy. So it is born the research of what I liked to define as Italian Orientalism and that here I propose in small part.

For me it is the construction of a personal "inventory", exactly as it was previous research: "the beginning of the critic elaboration is the conscience of what you are, 'know your self' as product of the historical process happened till now and that left in your self an infinity of traces that you accepted without categorize them. It is important to do such an inventory at the beginning (Antonio Gramsci)".

It smells like old these times in Italy to quote Gramsci. But the analysis that he makes on hegemonic national powers is much considered both in England and in France. These nations use this concept to understand their imperialistic relationship with the Orient. What can be useful for, instead, Gramsci's concept of hegemony in Italy when our African past has been forgotten? Colonial imperialism developed also in Italy even if in schools it is not studied so much, in universities just a little bit more and a movie that clearly describes it was censored (*Lion of the desert*, 1981, Moustapha Akkad).

This historical phenomenon was almost deleted and as a consequence the post-colonial culture that may create the respect for the other through its historic and cultural recognition is missing. If in France and in England integration tried and tries to pass (with enormous difficulties) through such a recognition in my native land how does it structure it self?

In the "beautiful country" we have to contribute to the discourse between ourselves because no Libyan, Eritrean or Somali was allowed to enter in the Italian cultural debate. Differently for Indians in England (Salman Rushdie, Anish Kapoor), or for Algerians for France (Franz Fanon, Adel Abdessemed). But why it didn't happen to Italy? Italian Orientalism's story is quite long, it begins from the maritime republics, but to understand what this term means nowadays we have to understand how cultural exchange between the Orient and Italy evolved after colonies and why, during the decolonization, there has been a regurgitation and a negation of imperialism in it self.

Italian identity was created much later then in other European countries, when, with the formation of the Italian Reign (1861), the long season of the little states in fight against each other ended. The Reign suddenly declared it-self imperial country, expecting that "place in the sun" that Italians were asking with much conviction. Colonialism in Africa started and with it began also the initial phase of our capitalism. In point of fact Italian capital was far away from being enough to have given to the nation richness to justify the passage to the imperialistic phase. But, even if Italy was too poor to conquer other civilizations, the weakness of its economic system didn't stop it because the government concentrate its attention more on the contrast it had with the other capitalistic states with which was competing. The true reason for the colonial action is for Italy the pure prestige: the desire to show it self strong as much as those nations that formed themselves years and years before and that had undertaken an hegemonic path long time before.

In those years spread out the definition, for Italian's behaviour, of "Ragamuffin Imperialism". Definition that underlines that poverty and will of conquering could stay together, but also forwarding future events: various

African military defeats. The land settlement in Africa was anything but easy and in between one defeat and the other, panicked, Italy will be the only nation to use gas and other torture techniques to subdue indigenous people.

But, evoking big actions of the past or holy recalls Italy guaranteed that violent action was good action, with a high aim (D'Annunzio, Marinetti). If England was celebrating "British civilizing mission" and France the diffusion of "big principles", for Italy the big evocation was the image of Rome, to diffuse and install around the conquerable world.

Fascism made this demand evident and created all a series of "Orientalist" institutions as the various societies, congresses and expositions all of colonial dimension. But then, all these institution that in Said thought are the base for the creation of a post-colonial culture why have been vomited and forgotten from the next politics?

The structural weakness of the Italian economic system that in those years was invested by the will of international prestige showed all its fragility during the battle on conquer that, arising the blame of the international community, were turning in vain. The consequent failure of Rome's restoration took of the alibi to reality: conquered land's exploitation. During the period of decolonization and after it was preferred to forget everything: from a side the right wing, the part whose aspiration was Rome's restoration, was living a moment of deep shame towards to whole world for the committed crimes; from the other side the left wing had often promulgated the proletarian aspect of the colonization (lands for no-property-people) e preferred not to let remember.

On the African slope the governments that settled in loco, as the regime of the Libyan Jamahirija, became strongly anti-Italians (often supported by English protectorates) and didn't allow further admixtures impeding their conational to study or to transfer in Italy. They also defied Italian iconography of that time in a sort of colonizer iconoclasy that deleted many of the traces of the goods things Italian did in architecture and urbanism.

Italian Orientalism is therefore a ghost. If before the Italian Reign the relationship with the orient was profitable, mercantile, fascinating and erotic, after the formation of Italian identity it became will to brutally subject the other to define the superiority of a civilization over the other. The incapacity to occupy lands then pushed everybody to forget an action that was humiliating in it self and that with ancient Rome had just a little to do. So, decolonization was just a speedy embargo and speedy was also memory to reset and digest the badly done. Furthermore it is a nowadays actuality the rejection in the Sicily canal of those immigrants people that today start exactly from Libya.

So, Italy still conserve its "race" almost intact and always shout, or often, "Mum the Turks are coming!"

RHETORIC THE FIGURATIVE MEANING OF THE WORD & THE WORTH SEEKING

Text by Patrizio Di Massimo, 2009

'In some remote corner of the universe that is poured out in countless flickering solar systems, there once was a star on which clever animals invented ' rhetoric. The interpretation of this word changed during the centuries and its broad and extensive meaning gave birth to many theories. According to the today dictionary, the significance we attribute to rhetoric can be described as follows: "the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, esp. the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques" .

Often associated with the use of language in the oratory and literary arts rhetoric had a wide development during the Greek era, especially through Aristotle. Then, through the Romans ages, the middle ages and the renaissance it maintained an important role in the composing methodology of the speech/text. It has been during the second half of the eighteen-century that rhetoric entered in oblivion for a while, that is when came to life a way of thinking poetry and literature that was spontaneous and unconditioned by rhetorical rules : Romanticism. Such an attitude removed rhetoric from the interests of culture until the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche brought it back at the center of the philosophical discussion.

It is the aim of this text to trace a descriptive and explicative line for the interpretation of the word rhetoric through the lenses of contemporary philosophy and historiography. Starting from Nietzsche and his re-discover of the rhetoric arts in relationship with knowledge and truth I will then analyze the ideas of Roland Barthes and Hayden White. They, influenced by the skeptical and nihilist view of Nietzsche, will consider rhetoric and historiography as synonyms because, they believe, there is no difference between imaginary history and what really happened. On the contrary I will then analyze Arnaldo Momigliano and Carlo Ginzburg's idea of rhetoric. They, skeptical on the skepticism of the formers, will try to recollect rhetoric to the Aristotelian view considering evidence and proof their fundamental core. During the drafting of the text I will create some connections between these theories and the works of some contemporary artists (as footnotes). I will try to show that the wide field of rhetoric jumps over the use of language in oratory and literature and that suddenly invades the field of visual tropes: the word has a precious figurative sense .

"For rhetoric is the essence of Nietzsche's philosophy " and the collection of lecture notes composed for his courses at the University of Basel during 1872-73 called 'Ancient rhetoric' shows his interest upon the topic since the beginning of his life's work. Nietzsche made a broad study on Greek rhetoric relating it to a will that "arises among people who still live in mythic images and who have not yet experienced the unqualified need of historical accuracy: they would rather be persuaded than instructed ". These studies led him to some conclusions on the relationship between rhetoric and language: he argued that full and essential knowledge of the world cannot be had because consciousness does not grasp things, instead it grasps impulses or imperfect copies of things, and these impulses are represented only through images. These images are not things in their-self but instead a kind of manner in which we interpret them. Furthermore the impulses, gained through sensation and experience, are signs in themselves and because of this 'language is rhetoric '. But this means that language conveys an attitude or opinion, a partial view rather than an essential knowledge of the thing. In this perspective there is no way for escaping: language is always rhetorical and there is no unrhetorical naturalness of language.

In Nietzsche's words: [...] we think only in the form of language [...] we cease to think when we refuse to do so under the constraint of language; we barely reach the doubt that sees this limitation as a limitation. Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off .

The implication of this statement is that concepts are closely related to the language in which they are portrayed and that therefore rhetoric takes a central position in the shaping of knowledge. But because our knowledge and ethics are grounded in language use, they turn out to be always partial; there are no absolute truths because our experience and knowledge are linguistically based. Language is in Nietzsche's view always partial, transferable and reversible in its relationship with reality. It is partial because language never expresses something completely but displays only some characteristics that appear prominent, therefore language is a synecdochic or partial representation of things. It is transferable because words can be assigned new meanings metaphorically, they demonstrate a transferability that is not true of the things represented. Reversible because signs can substitute cause and effect metonymically, language reverses the nature of the things or procedures, as they actually exist.

Nietzsche gives to rhetoric a broad and extensive meaning that confine with the research for truth - even if in his philosophy at the end it fails to reveal truth. Rhetoric is a big set that contains, or is reduced to, language – but

because language just gives as a mere copy of the reality it is constraining and deceptive. As we know the tool of rhetoric is the figure of speech, classified in schemes and tropes. What Nietzsche argues is that all words are tropes in themselves from the beginning and this is the reason why words are never concerned with truth. They instead express, from their origin, a mediated interpretation of the thing. More, he affirms that the existence of so many languages is the demonstration of the reliability of the word (otherwise there would not be so many languages). Nietzsche's own questions are: 'do terms coincide with things? Is language the adequate expression of all realities? What is a word?'

At this point the distinction between truth and lies arises for the first time and the question is 'what is truth?' (The research for truth will be a central point in the theorization of rhetoric also for the historians Momigliano and Ginzburg, two authors I will quote in this text in a while). Nietzsche's answer is mediated by the following consideration: the "thing-in-itself" (disinterested truth) is incomprehensible to the creator of language and not worth seeking, therefore this mysterious X of the thing appears before as a nerve stimulus, then as an image (the first metaphor) and subsequently it is reshaped as a sound (the second metaphor). What we have is nothing if not metaphor of things that do not correspond at all to the original entities: all words are tropes. To the question 'what is truth?' here it is Nietzsche's answer: *A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations which were poetically and rhetorically heightened, transferred, and adorned, and after long use seem solid, canonical, and binding to a nation. Truths are illusions about which it has been forgotten that they are illusions, worn-out metaphors without sensory impact, coins which have lost their image and now can be used only as metal, and no longer as coins.*

Now, there is a consideration I'd like to do according the way Nietzsche describes our perception of truth. In rhetoric there is a trope called catachresis that can be explained as a normalized figure of speech used to designate something that has no precise terminology on its own. They are usually old metaphors and metonymies no more considered as such and, as John Milton so elegantly phrased it, catachresis is all about 'blind mouths'. A catachresis is the moment in which we use a trope without thinking it is a trope because in our living it became normal and common. Does it not seem to be similar to the analysis Nietzsche makes of our perception of reality? Could we state that for Nietzsche truth is nothing more than a catachresis? Can a figure of speech have such a prominent role in our worth seeking? Is truth a table's leg?

In the research for truth and in the thousand-year diatribe between form and content Nietzsche gave back to rhetoric a central position. His interest in the topic, as a consequence, influenced most of the twentieth-century philosophy. A basic premise for the understanding of rhetoric today is the indivisibility of means from meaning. How one says something conveys meaning as much as What one says something. This long diatribe raised from the dichotomy Content and Form finds many interesting aspects in rhetoric history, and the interesting fact is that Rhetoric always worked in the connection between the two concepts. If What and How was called from Greeks respectively Logos and Lexis, from Romans Res and Verba, in a more technical way they are called from rhetoricians Topics of inventions (concerned with what is said) and Figures of speech (ways of speaking). It is in the relation between these two spheres that lay the interest in studying rhetoric, in the comprehension that a figure of speech always turns out to be microcosms of the more substantive topics of invention.

I should here also make a distinction between the words rhetoric and rhetorics (distinction that I will not use in my own text). According to Paolo Valesio's Silence and Listening the former stay for 'the whole of phenomena to be described' and the latter for 'the systematic description and analysis of those phenomena'. From this distinction then comes that between rhetor (the speaker/writer and listener/reader) and rhetorician (the speaker/writer and listener/reader that in a systematic way are taken in the discourses decoding). For contemporary rhetoricians today the classical understanding of rhetoric is limited: persuasion does not solely depend on communication but turns depending on meaning and the way this meaning is constructed and conveyed draws on a wide body of critical and social theory, philosophy and problems in social science methodology. This rhetoricians' insistence in declaring that words and their expression are on par with the ideals and ideas of abstract philosophy has put rhetoric at odds with religion, philosophy and science.

Because of its significance I quickly want to quote a passage of the famous and moving essay 'Las Meninas' in which Michel Foucault closely relates to Nietzsche's view of rhetoric: *But the relation of language to painting is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's term: it is in the vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying; the space where they achieve their splendor is not that deployed by our eyes but that defined by the sequential elements of syntax.*

Keeping in mind the reduction of rhetoric to language made by Nietzsche it is clear how such skeptical view influenced Foucault idea that in no way what we see can be explained, reassumed or conveyed by what we say

(The impossibility of grasping reality through the use of language is the starting point to what is called Nietzsche's nihilism). 'Representing must be understood in the strict sense: language represents thought as thought represent itself'. But, how can language represent thought? It is evident that for Foucault language is, just to use a metaphor, like a dog that bites his own tail and that, for a cause inherent to its own origin, remain tautological expressing nothing more than it-self.

The research for truth that philosophers carry on finds in the connection with historiography one of its developments. Truth is a finality of philosophy and truth is a finality of historiography. We should not be astonished in discovering, so, that most of the philosophical discussion upon rhetoric and language focuses on the meaning of historiography. It is the aim of this science to give a method on the writing of historical essays and the creation of such a method is shaped by the words: evidence and proof. These two words recollect us to the problem raised by Nietzsche about truth and lying that have a central position in the rhetoric study.

Among the postmodern philosophy that from Nietzsche got under way it is of extreme importance in our discourse the vision of Roland Barthes and Hayden White. Both of them actuated a reduction between historiography and rhetoric creating a crucial weapon in the attack against positivism. Through a way of presenting facts that is conveyed by linguistic expedients they attempt to convince their audience that effectiveness more than truth is the finality of the worth seeking. Their outstanding and revolutionary view can be summed up saying that for them historians work creates a self contained textual world the relationship of the which can not be examined with an extra textual world, furthermore that historical texts and fictional texts share, and it is a must, a common rhetorical dimension.

Roland Barthes starting question for the writing of his essay called 'The discourse of history' published on 'Comparative criticism' is (paraphrased): does the narration of past events (historiography) – generally subject to the sanction of historical 'science' – really differ from imaginary narration as we find it in the epic, the novel and the drama? In his skeptical view Barthes open a doubt on the credibility of the historians work in the moment in which they assure a transition from the utterance to the act of uttering. He claims that through the use of different 'shifters' (generally figures of speech), that can change the speed or the chronological time of the discourse, the historian can compose a text that expresses his own subjectivity. As a consequence, this text has a own time – different from the reality – than could be called the 'paper-time'. In Barthes' words: *To sum up, the presence in historical narration of explicit signs of uttering would represent an attempt to 'dechronologize' the 'thread' of history and to restore, even though it may merely be a matter of reminiscence or nostalgia, a form of time that is complex, parametric and not in the least linear: a form of time whose spatial depths recall the mythic time of the ancient cosmogonies, which was also linked in its essence to the words of the poet and the soothsayer.*

Here we can recollect with Nietzsche's sentence, quoted at the beginning of this essay, that rhetoric 'arises among people who still live in mythic images and who have not yet experienced the unqualified need of historical accuracy: they would rather be persuaded than instructed'. Barthes says even that positivist history shares the situation of schizophrenic discourse for the reason that both are incapable of submitting an utterance to a negative transformation. He introduces the concept of 'units of content' that are what is spoken of in the history; we called them before 'Topics of invention'. These units are classified in existents (things that are) and occurrents (things that happen) and they can be intended as sets of terms, topics and themes that make oscillates the historical discourse between the pole of indices or the one of functions. If it is the indexical units (the indices) that predominate history is conveyed through a metaphorical form and borders upon the lyrical and the symbolic. When, instead, it is the functional units that predominate, history takes on a metonymic form and becomes a close relation of the epic.

Barthes' theory is that the essence of the historical discourse is imaginary, an elaboration always based on ideology. As Nietzsche's disciple his idea is that because language is involved in the description of the fact, the fact can only be defined in a tautological fashion. By this consideration, on reverse, the fact can only have an existence based on language and the narrative structure becomes at once the sign and the proof of reality. 'Historical narration is dying because the sign of History from now on is no longer the real, but the intelligible'.

Close to Barthes' theory there is Hayden White who arrived to conclude that history-writing, like any other form of literature, construct reality by choosing specific modes of discourse and that the historian is like any other narrators: as the rhetorician he is characterized by his modes of speech. White, in his theorization upon the use of language, reduced the modes of speech to four: the metaphor, that was in use between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the metonymy, in use during the eighteenth century and the synecdoche in use during the nineteenth century, while now we are supposed to be in the ironic age (or, better, in the last period of the ironic age that is characterized by irony about irony). Even if this four basic figures may seem to be few for the variety of attitudes of the nineteenth-century White enriches and complicates his analysis by combining them with literary genres, such as comedy or epic. In his theory this classification is connected with the social attitudes of indivi-

dual historians and each rhetorical category corresponds to the way of acting of the story-teller. The events are, for White, organized by the story-teller because an historical event is an event capable of being described in such a way like if it can be an element of a story. As a consequence an event is only what can be put into a story .

If Nietzsche and the thinkers that started from him to formulate their thought overturned the relationship between rhetoric and truth in a radical skeptical direction we have a compensation in the work of the historians Arnaldo Momigliano and Carlo Ginzburg who tried, instead, to redirect it towards Aristotle and Quintilian, rhetoricians that had actuated a strong unification between evidence and rhetoric.

Arnaldo Momigliano main point in his idea of historiography is that 'historians are supposed to be discoverers of truth'. The research for truth is, therefore, a common denominator in the relationship between rhetoric and history writing but, if for Nietzsche it is impossible to convey truth through language and if for Barthes and White language (in the sense of the composition of the discourse - rhetorical expedients) and historiography are both fictional, for Momigliano the point of contact between language and history writing is in a new and safe evidence. In Momigliano's words: *But I have good reason to distrust any historian who has nothing new to say or who produces novelties, either in facts or in interpretations, which I discover to be unreliable. Historians are supposed to be discoverers of truths. No doubt they must turn their research into some sort of story before being called historians. But their stories must be true stories. [...] History is no epic, history is no novel, history is no propaganda because in these literary genres control of the evidence is optional, not compulsory .*

We already analyzed the epic and the novel in the connection with history writing through Barthes and White, and now I would focus on propaganda. It is a common deviation of the word rhetoric today to be intended as pathetic. In reality, as we analyzed through all this text these two words share no content. So, why are they usually related to each other in the common speaking? The reason why is that usually rhetorical expedients are used under propaganda to better spread out the dogmas of a regime, the strong image of a dictator and the graphic characteristics of its own communication. Such propaganda art tends to be considered rhetorical by high culture, art bent to power, and for this reason the term rhetoric and pathetic as been seen synonyms for a long time.

The introduction of a safe and new evidence that Momigliano expresses every historian should be concerned with is, nevertheless, the point of contact between history and truth, a point of contact that creates an absence of rhetoric. Such evidence, so important in order to give back to historiography trust, can be both explained or interpreted: 'explaining means recognizing as authentic the motives the actors give for their own actions, whereas interpreting means replacing the explanations provided by the actors with our own explanations' . If this evidence can be proved it means that stories are true and that therefore they can become histories, non-fictional. 'Therefore the historian not only has to make sense of the event but also has to make sure that it was an event' .

Here we can link the work of Carlo Ginzburg briefly making an example he brings us in his book 'History, rhetoric, and proof': the donation of Constantine. The donation is a forged Roman imperial edict that has been written around the VIII century but that until the renaissance, the time in which Lorenzo Valla discovered the truth, was considered an original edict of 314. In this edict the emperor Constantine would give to Pope Silvestro I dominion over many lands (the temporal power). The historian Lorenzo Valla discovered the edict had been written many years after that period, as a document of the validity of the Catholic Church power over material goods. What happened then regarding the edict is not concerning this text but what is important for us is how Valla discovered the truth. He made a meticulous work upon language (the roman) comparing the vocabulary of the two different periods: the one in which the event should have had place and the one in which, instead, the forged document had been created. He discovered mistakes, and through this evidence, through this proof, he could demonstrate the fakeness of the Constantine donation. When Ginzburg gives us such an example, overstepping different times and different stories , he shows the existence connection between the use of language and the research for truth. In this way he reveals us the importance of language as a proof – as to say: rhetoric and proof are strongly interweaved.

His theory is opposed to the fact that fictional narratives are comparable to historical narratives. Ginzburg thinks that knowledge is possible and that the path to reach it is through the use of sources or proofs that would lead the historian to a correct use of rhetoric. But he differentiate his attitude from that of the positivist that look at proofs as at direct explanations of the fact. Ginzburg apply to these sources the metaphor of distorting mirrors, underlying that who approach them as offers of immediate access to reality is to be considered rudimentary, who approach them as windows is, I was just saying, the prototype of the positivist, while who look at them as fences obstructing vision is the skeptical. Ginzburg tries to recollect historiography to Aristotle often repeating that 'Aristotle detects a rational core within rhetoric: proofs' . In his opinion the reduction between rhetoric and historiography (that of Barthes and White) must be rejected rediscovering Aristotle's central argument: proofs are rhetoric fundamental core. This rational core is for Ginzburg centered in enthymemes , the same enthymemes that we find in the classical Aristotelian rhetoric. Briefly, Aristotle divides rhetoric in three groups: deliberative,

epideictic and judiciary. Respectively related to future, present and past and the proof of which are the example, the amplification and the enthymeme.

The image of the historian proposed by Ginzburg implies working methods that are more realistic and much more complex than the one we usually apply. He suggests a solution that would transfer to the actuality of research the tension between narration and documentation in a purpose that is to show that the discussion upon rhetoric (and therefore about history and truth) touches a question that concerns us all: 'the coexistence and clash between cultures'.

This is for us a crucial point that brings the whole discourse on a different level: that of our time. Are we still leaving in the postmodernist era or have we already crossed its frontiers? Nevertheless postmodernism means after modernism and as we know modernism is a western invention. The contemporary time, that of the post-globalization is instead a clash of cultures that moved the centre of the cultural discussion over new lands and this is probably the strongest cause of what we could reputedly see as the end of postmodernism. In past times western civilization felt the right to impose their law, their customs and their values (often through propaganda) on people from other cultures with various justifications: from right and duty, because linked to a civilization that deemed itself superior, or simply because of the right of the more powerful. Nowadays the necessity for coexistence is instead bringing to the impossibility of colonizing through space the other. The next territory to be conquered seems therefore to be time, time intended as history. And, who can do it better than the worth seeking?

1. On truth and lying in an extra-moral sense, Friedrich Nietzsche, p. 246, (F.N. on language and rhetoric edited by Gilman, Blair, Parent)
2. From the English dictionary
3. It is in the manifest of the English romanticism that Wordsworth explains the idea of a poetry that should be a spontaneous bubbling over of powerful sentiments and that should get rid of poetic diction
4. Hans Blumenberg, *Work on Myth*, p. 272
5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ancient rhetoric*, p. 3
6. *Ibidem*, p. 23
7. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Will to power*, p. 522
8. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On truth and lying in an extra-moral sense*, p. 248, (F.N. on language and rhetoric edited by Gilman, Blair, Parent)
9. *Ibidem*, p. 68
10. Example of catachresis: a table's leg
11. Michel Foucault, *The order of things*, Chapter 1, *Las Meninas*, p. 9
12. *Ibidem*, Chapter 4, *Speaking*, p. 78
13. From the English dictionary: the study of historical writing - the writing of history
14. Roland Barthes, *The discourse of history*, *Comparative criticism*, p. 10
15. *Ibidem*, p. 14
16. Hayden White (born 1928) is an historian. He is currently professor at the university of California, Santa Cruz, and at Stanford University
17. Arnaldo Momigliano was an Italian historian well known for his work on historiography, he taught many years at the University College of London and at Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa
18. Arnaldo Momigliano, *The rhetoric of history*, *Comparative Criticism*, p. 260
19. Arnaldo Momigliano, *The rhetoric of history*, *Comparative criticism*, p. 265
20. *Ibidem*, p. 266
21. Lorenzo (or Laurentius) Valla (1406 – August 1, 1457) was an Italian humanist, rhetorician, and educator
22. Carlo Ginzburg, *History, Rhetoric and Proof*, Chapter 1, p. 54
23. From <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Figures/E/enthymeme.htm>: The informal method of reasoning typical of rhetorical discourse. The enthymeme is sometimes defined as a "truncated syllogism" since either the major or minor premise found in that more formal method of reasoning is left implied. The enthymeme typically occurs as a conclusion coupled with a reason
24. Carlo Ginzburg, *History, Rhetoric and Proof*, Introduction, p. 2

