

Dictionary

ARCHITECTURE

Architecture is the terrain with which my work is mainly involved. I am basically interested in sacred or commemorative architecture in general, archacological sites, parade grounds, monuments, theatres: the principle places where the physicality of stone becomes other than itself, symbol, evocation, the place where material becomes memory and hence spirit. I travel through a landscape halfway between reason and the transitory, between will and ruins. But while the Novecento wanted to imbue painting with architectural space, I intend to bring the mystery of architecture into painting, to sublimate physical places in virtual places. Just as the architect structures space according to its physical possibilities, so I think of and plan the work as a place to be lived in by the spirit, as its ideal home. So we are not dealing with a painting that has been left an orphan by architecture, but with a painting that, within its own logic as a surface, is thought of as the architecture of visual needs.

ABSTRACTION

Abstraction was and is an intellectual strategy. Since “everything is mind” then everything “belongs to the world of ideas”. And, since all images are the daughters and the mothers of ideas, abstraction can be defined as an aberration.

ACTUALITY

Art wagers with eternity and so is, by its very nature, out-of-date.

I find it completely irrelevant today to pose the problem of the actuality or otherwise of painting. I believe that one of the positive aspects of this particular moment is that, at last, there no longer exists a problem of the avant-garde with respect to language, even though in criticism there still exist waves of attention to “hot” and “cold”, terms which have very little to do with the tensions of art. Languages today cohabit and find their nutrition in each other.

The real problem is that of coherence with respect to languages. There are ideals, interior landscapes, that are better told in one form than in another.

COLOUR

Like form, colour has to be used evocatively. I use colour in which there is a strong sensation of the flow of time, of transformation, colours which are neither pure nor abstract, but that allude or, perhaps, prelude. Colour is the incarnation of light, it is its character, it reveals its emotional qualities.

ENIGMA

The enigma is the satanic son of logic. My journey, as it was for de Chirico, is a search for the mystery of the visible. The work must produce enchantment, that wonder of which the mystics speak and that occurs at the moment in which the spirit enters the labyrinthine play of mirrors, of reflections of the world. At that moment there is no longer a show and an audience, object and subject: one belongs. What is fascinating about de Chirico is his lucidity: to have put the possible, the tangible, right there in front of you without trickery. He allows mystery to appear in a handful of earth which is really there, or else in a shadow which is thrown from outside the painting. He needed nothing more. He has shown us how any silent and solitary object whatsoever is more powerful and explosive than a volcano.

FORM

Form does not exist in itself but only as a cultural and emotional projection. Any modification of it changes its meaning. My form is generated by way of subtraction, purification, and distillation. The importance of subtraction lies in loading the subject with a maximum of sense and concentrating perception on meaning. It is the dramatization of the play of sense. The execution of the work is the moment in which I use all my rational, craftsman-like qualities so as to arrive at the form I was aiming at and at its maximum expressive depth as well. The finish and the fixity of form I aim at are my wager with what is transitory. Every form is symbolically strong. What makes painting more or less evocative is its dramatic plan or, in other words, how it is painted.

GEOMETRY

Geometry is the quintessence of form, though my aim is not geometry in itself but, rather, the reality of its essences. Geometry is a model of possible order for interpreting the

world, it is not a key to the truth. Cèzanne believed that the “secret geometry of things” is the soul of things, as though the geometric perfection of every single thing was the mirror and the model of a universal harmonic order.

LOGIC

Each answer creates new complexities in an infinite game leading directly to the metaphysics of language. This has been taught to us by Conceptualism and by Minimalism, mistakenly interpreted as cold and formalistic trends. In fact, theirs was a troublesome formalism: it is the metaphor of someone digging ever deeper and finding new surfaces...

LIGHT-SHADE

On certain nights where I live in the country, if you look out of the window it is so dark that you cannot see a thing: a kind of black mirror that can only be filled by your spirit. Now, if your house is what is known (history) and the outside is the unknown (the possible), then the threshold dividing them is the place I live in... right there where darkness shadows light. The “world” is everything that happens on the boundary between light and shade, everything that is and might be in my consciousness, quite beyond its demonstrable objectivity. This mysterious boundary, this threshold, becomes form, for me, in painting - and only in painting, with its play of light and shade giving to the image the metaphysical quality of a virtual place. The whole poetic reason for painting is this, otherwise a mere plan would suffice. I try to make people look at the boundary between night and day, testing the limit between being (light) and the possible (non-light, the place where everything can happen). The surface of the painting is the link between these two poles, and the one finds sense in the other through shade. So painting becomes observation points for mystery, cracks in the wall of reality.

PAINTING

If the surface is the irrefutable manifestation of all depths, then painting - which occurs on the surface - is the metaphysical place beyond compare.

POETICS

I live in that no-man's land lying between the classical tension of formal perfection (the harmony of Greek temples) and melancholy, the dramatic perception of the loneliness of the fragment (ruins, the memory of what is irredeemably lost). Ideally I feel I am at a halfway point between Winckelmann and Piranesi, between aspiring to perfection and awareness of the dispersion of fragments.

RULE

If I had to create a coat of arms for my work, I would write shade and light rule, for these are the twin pillars which support my work. My academic studies were in the field of stage design which at least has the merit of thinking of things in relation to a viewpoint outside that of the artist's work: that of the audience. In painting this forces you to be aware of the "other", it obliges you to make your language rational to the highest degree when confronting the problems of seeing in order for the work to be limpid, clear, and essential. The rule, the criterion, is a classical ideal that tends towards order, proportion, harmony of parts, symmetry, nobility of content, rational construction, confrontation with history, and the inextricability of aesthetic and ethical values: all instruments for placing the imaginary in a realistic, "objective" panorama.

SENSE

Things have their reason for existing only at the point when you relate to them by endowing their relationships with sense, and they are ready to slip back into darkness the moment we stop relating to them.

Sense alters in continuation and, in its very mobility, is the soul of my work. The disturbing elusiveness of the art work is born from its ability to illuminate this distance between us and things, this flight from identity.

TIME AND NIGHT

The depth of darkness is infinite, without duration or measure, perhaps it is this sublime terror that makes us reach for light and discover new lands.