

## CRITICAL TEXT by Stefano Zecchi

It is difficult to explore the female universe: it has a symbolic complexity that does not belong to the male one. "Symbolism" is a concept that indicates a valence of meanings that eludes a precise determination of value, it is an opening to continuous references of meaning, like an astral constellation that seems well defined at first glance and then deludes itself into its possibility of being caught, once for all, in each of its nuances.

It is no coincidence that the male artist - the writer, the painter, the sculptor - has the woman as the privileged subject of his narrative, precisely because in that analysis his intelligence, his sensitivity to penetrate is tested and appropriating the broad articulation of the female world. Hence the male feeling that is destabilized and understandable at the same time called "possession". The male artist sublimates this feeling through his expressive vocation, which is precluded to those who do not have this gift: in fact, more often than not, the "ordinary" person, the "non-artist", ends up showing his will to possession in a span of actions ranging from the most pathetic to the most violent.

In women, this situation is reversed: while she, unlike man, sublimates her desire for material possession, either through renunciation, through suffering, or through resignation - often with a shrewd and intelligent availability to accept and live what is possible to live - when she enters the world of art, she has an extraordinary ability to possess, without too many sophisticated readings, the symbolic universe belonging to her own gender.

That variability of interpretations that man (not only the artist) encounters when he has the soul of a woman in front of him, the woman artist (especially her) is relentless in the ability to lay her bare, capturing with masterful lucidity the symbolic complexity of female existence.

This is the premise that is necessary for me to talk about Cinzia Pellin's work. If a writer wants to tell what he sees, he needs a great skill in writing: to know the different nuances of apparently similar words, the grammatical intertwining, the syntactic virtuosity.

Because it is one thing to tell, another is to narrate, where invention and subjective arbitrariness are necessary and essential.

Cinzia Pellin tells, first of all: and thanks to an ability to draw with a natural skill of the highest technical level, giving extraordinary plasticity to the image. But, as the previous rigorous distinction between telling and narrating is only theoretical, because in reality the two planes, that of storytelling and narration, intertwine and only the prevalence of one over the other determines which is the specific genre literary, so Pellin expresses her narrative tension of color, which pollutes the precision of the story.

Her faces - the identity of Pellin's art - are masks.

The conventional feature of the mask is its cover of authenticity: it is the tool that allows you to imagine what is hidden behind it. The mask is removed and the truth is revealed. For this reason, the reflections on how to tear the veil that conceals reality have been a test of philosophy in an incessant, historical evaluation of what an ethical conscience devoted to the search for truth is capable of, as well as a critical knowledge in able to distinguish appearance from essence. It took Nietzsche to put this philosophical problem in order by looking for ... *disorder*, denying the possibility of distinguishing appearance from reality. I find that same *disorder* in Pellin's work.

Pellin's masks do not cover anything: they are themselves truths, there is no appearance that conceals a truth to be investigated. The female soul is caught, in essence, through that mask; the knowledge of symbolism is contained in the ability to understand the signs of that mask, which, in fact, does not hide anything.

Pellin's challenge to understand the truth of a woman is a real challenge, and it is no coincidence that her most intriguing works are the portraits - the masks - of women. And, in fact, another decisive element of Pellin's story / narration is the beauty.

Beauty is by convention a specifically feminine attribute, which Pellin not only does not intend to renounce, but wants to decline it with evidence and clarity in her work. Pellin's expressive path thus inevitably becomes risky and his challenge even more reckless.

Contemporary art in its most acclaimed manifestations has entered a dead end. After the formal revolutions of the great artistic avant-gardes of the twentieth century, which had their strength to represent the "new" until the sixties of the last century, they gradually lost their energy.

In turn, the category of beauty has been expelled from the aesthetic judgment. The end of the formal revolutions and the hostile renunciation of the concept of beauty, result in an idea of artistic aesthetics that indifferently says everything and nothing, which does not express any sense except the rhetorical complacency of the absence of meaning, exhibited with pathetic transgressions, with repetitive provocations, with disgusting blasphemies.

The way out is to try, try a continuous formal exercise that addresses the symbolic representation of being there, in which the search for beauty is not an aristocratic nostalgia for classicism, but an experience of the truth of language, being always the "beauty" project, utopia, construction, conscious rejection of dissolutive and reactive forms and manifestations of nihilism in all its rhetorical expressions. Pellin's work comes to the heart of this problem with a decisive female will not to stop in front of the symbolic complexity of the female, to be able to tell and narrate it, to expose it through her masks.