

Leonardo Blanco

Leonardo Blanco is a surprising draughtsman who has made the courageous and, in many ways, unpopular choice of turning to abstraction. Indeed, after the twenty-year intoxication with the informal, which hit the art world with the force of a river in full flow, a sense of saturation has long been felt by the public, critics and the artists themselves. Blanco, however, is too young to be overwhelmed by the prejudices that have marked the post-informal season and powerfully claims his individualism and the freedom to move in a perspective which even today enjoys little consensus.

The artist could have fallen back on the easy expression of his talent for drawing, seeking satisfaction in the wonder of his public. But instead of the seduction of symbols and the deafening noise of the crowd of semantic meanings, he has chosen the deep and silent space of meditation, where painting constitutes the climax of a process of construction and invention of form.

It is only in appearance that his work is similar to the emotional language of the informal, because it is intimately sustained by a conceptual implication which becomes concrete first in the reflection, then in the patient process of restructuring the raw material and finally in the attention paid to colour, form and spatial relations. Undoubtedly his research is permeated by an analytic tension which is distant from the excesses of the unconscious and the synthetic impetuosity of the gesture. He possesses the poetry of rationality aimed above all at supplying greater autonomy of representation, vitality in the creative process and control of the pictorial action.

Moreover, there is a distinctive quality which strongly emerges in Leonardo Blanco - the awareness of the frontal and militant role of the artist which induces him to make 'difficult' choices and with these, shun the obviousness and recognisability of forms in order to take a critical stance in the face of reality and its interpretation. But above all, he shows awareness that the ethical moment of a work of art is enclosed in the rigour and authenticity of the creative experience, refined down to the minutest detail to institute ranges, surfaces, luminosity, tonal effects and vibrant transparency, all accurately controlled by a manuality in which the echoes of an ancient knowledge can be detected.

Nobody can remain impervious to the sincerity of his works and, believe me, in a world which is in so many ways unacceptable, that is a value to be respected.

Francesca Michelotti
Director of the Modern Art Gallery