

FUURAN

What is perfection? Aristotle states that it's what is complete – what contains all the necessary parts, what is so good that nothing like this could have been better – and what has achieved its goal. Then there is the hard perfection, that of matter, and the free perfection, the abstract one. This concept may be used without it being abused, not using it in its encompassing complexity, but in its specificity.

Standing in front of the works of Enzo Forgione, one spontaneously notices a certain level of perfection. Perception suggests the one of the form putting in doubt whether it is a photograph or a painted canvas. The images are formally hyper-realistic, but different from the American artistic movement of the 70s with photorealistic character, such as of Estes and Hanson .

Forgione, in fact, not only relates to the photographic image to paint, but like a true realist, observes his living subjects in order to portray it. For the artist is not enough observing the dominant subject , the flower, to capture its essence. The depiction of the orchid must represent the life of the plant and, conscious of this, the artist assists all its vegetative cycle, from growth to flowering. This attitude reminds many solutions of Conceptual Art, from De Dominicis up to Abramovic and Bill Viola, those who learned to observe nature from the Impressionists, transforming the observation itself into a work of art calling it performance.

The absolute fidelity to reality arises from this attitude old and new at the same time. We have already observed the similarities with the conceptual, now we want to focus on those deriving from an ancient behaviour. Forgione himself declares his admiration for the Japanese practice of growing Fuuran in the Meiji era. Also known as the Orchid of the wind, the flower has the appearance of the samurai headgear, therefore cultivated only by their caste. Whilst a symbol of perfection and inner growth, the planting of the orchid also took on a symbolic meaning, and was representative of the courage and of the proper formation of the Bushi, that of the enlightened individual.

A sacred rite to achieve perfection, of which the contemporary artist captures the impact which is not only aesthetic but also anthropological, hence creating images so true to the real models to trigger in the observer a natural physical attraction to the sinuous forms that touches the unconscious erotic desires and vital instincts. This feeling is immediately transformed from pleasure into uneasiness due to the extreme realism of the subject, sensual but still.

The imitation of an ideal life, the absence of which might well slip past the viewer, is the goal of the radical Realism of Forgione. Target achieved and exceeded, since the representation acquires a life of its own, winning over the inertia with the dynamism of its colours and the sharpness of its lines. This goal seemed attainable only by technological means, from photography to video, by an artificial and external prosthesis of man, which had a functioning of its own. The results of painters like Forgione show that technological creations will not exceed the creator, as well as he, the man, will never reach the completeness of his creator, Nature.

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