

Ludovico Orombelli / selected projects 2022 - 2026

Ludovico Orombelli (1996) lives and works between Milan and Lausanne. His research draws from the fields of iconology and technique to investigate the principles that shaped Western imaginaries. By retracing and re-examining creative processes of the past, he interrogates the foundational frameworks through which certain realities are produced and understood.

Since 2023, he has been using the technique of *spolvero* (*pouncing*) to retrace the preparatory phase of Renaissance fresco painting in dialogue with architectural spaces. The resulting images emerge as memories of the artwork's inner structure, suspended between appearance and disappearance.



Sinopia, 2026, radar, Milan, Italy. Photo: Tiziano Ercoli



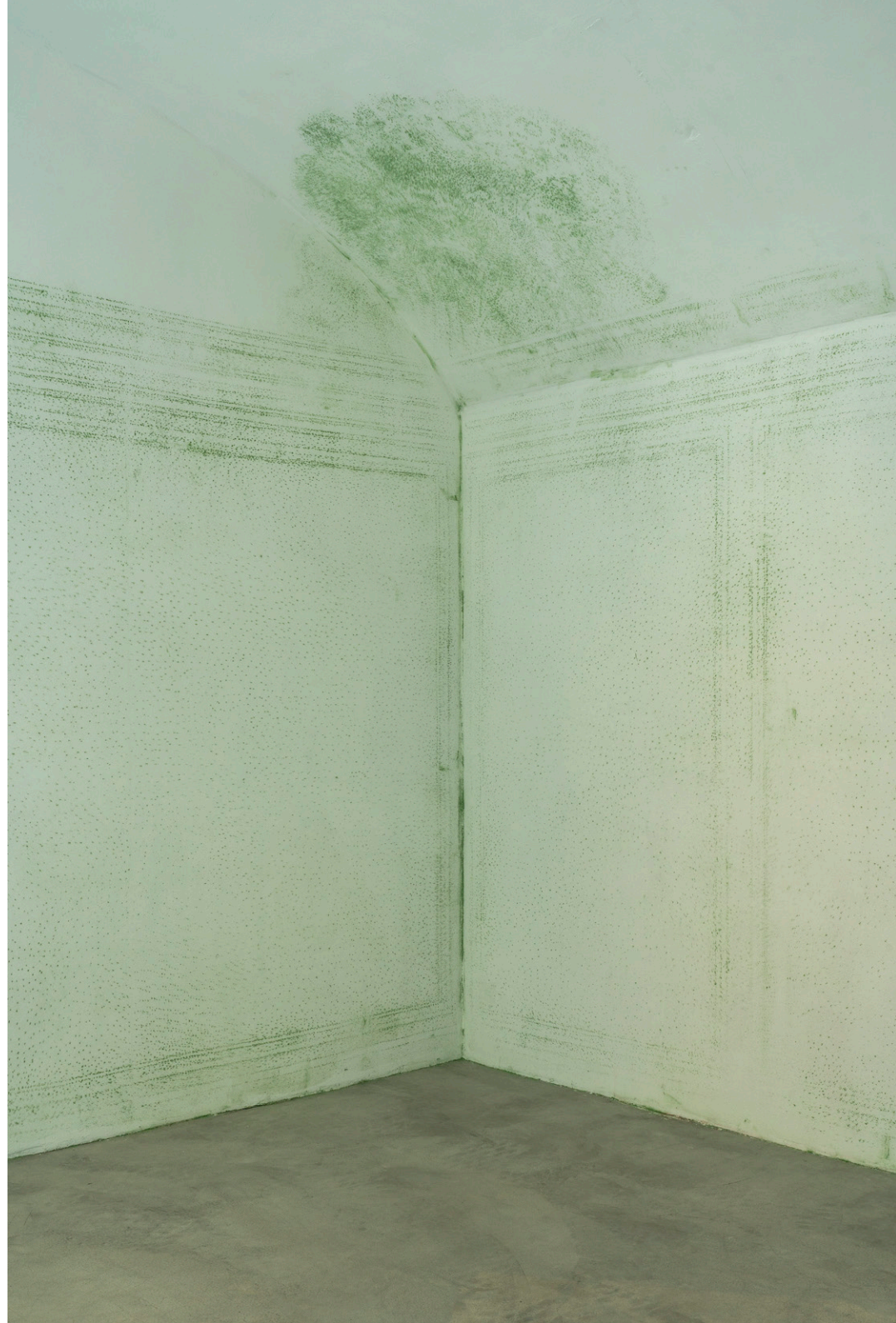
Sinopia explores the relationship between an image and the exhibition space, aiming to merge them into a single environment in which every compositional choice helps guide the viewer into a perceptual dimension. The iconographic composition, divided between an architectural and a natural component, provides the viewer with spatial coordinates. The drawing of an architectural structure spans the lower portion of the space and defines the perimeter of a scene that extends across the entire gallery; groups of cypress and apple trees, whose fronds rise toward the vaulted ceiling, mark the eight cardinal points that orient the viewer. The iconographic elements, distributed through the interplay of order and nature, recompose an hortus conclusus, a motif of ancient origin that recurs throughout the history of Western visual culture as the setting for mythical and religious narratives.

The image is structured by its technique, which acts as the framework governing both the conceptual and symbolic premises of the space, and thus the form of the imaginary and the possibilities of what can be imagined. In this case, the work takes shape through perspective, whose vanishing point coincides with the center of the vaulted ceiling, and through spolvero, the preparatory technique used in mural painting since the Renaissance. Perspective reflects a modern belief that geometry and abstract thinking could create a world based on human proportions. Spolvero, on the other hand, represents the initial stage of a fresco painting - a project awaiting completion. Within the space, the perspective drawing never fully takes shape, remaining suspended in the soft, volatile materiality of the green pigment that composes it.

The image is conceived in relation to the time and space of its context, so that - in this case - its existence depends on the exhibition's duration and conditions. The exhibition title *Previsioni* suggests a moment prior to vision, alluding to the intention of returning the image to a hypothetical and preliminary state in order to question its fundamental technical and symbolic structures. By aligning everything toward a vanishing point, the work opens up the possibility of revisiting a past that cannot be seen, yet continues to act.









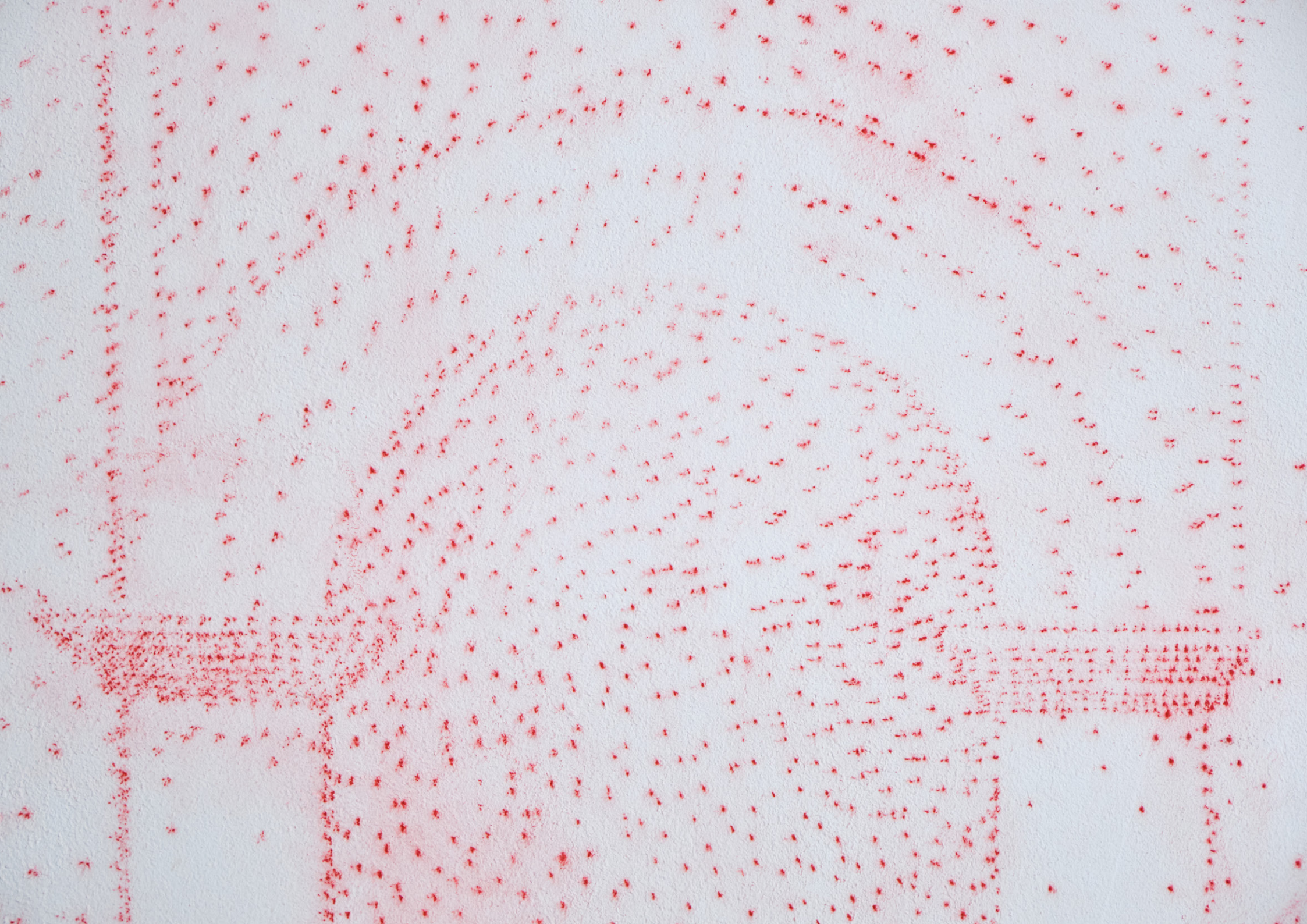
Sinopia, 2026, Plattform26, KBCB, Biel/Bienne. Photo: Finn Curry



Sinopia, 2025, Elac, École cantonale d'art de Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland. Photo: Eva Rivas Bao









Sinopia, 2024, École cantonale d'art de Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland.



Sinopia, 2024, Dots, Leipzig, Germany. Photo: Gustav Franz



Sinopia, 2024, Dots, Leipzig, Germany. Photo: Anna Fritsche



Sinopia, 2024, Dots, Leipzig, Germany. Photo: Gustav Franz





Esposizione Sud Est
Open by Appointment

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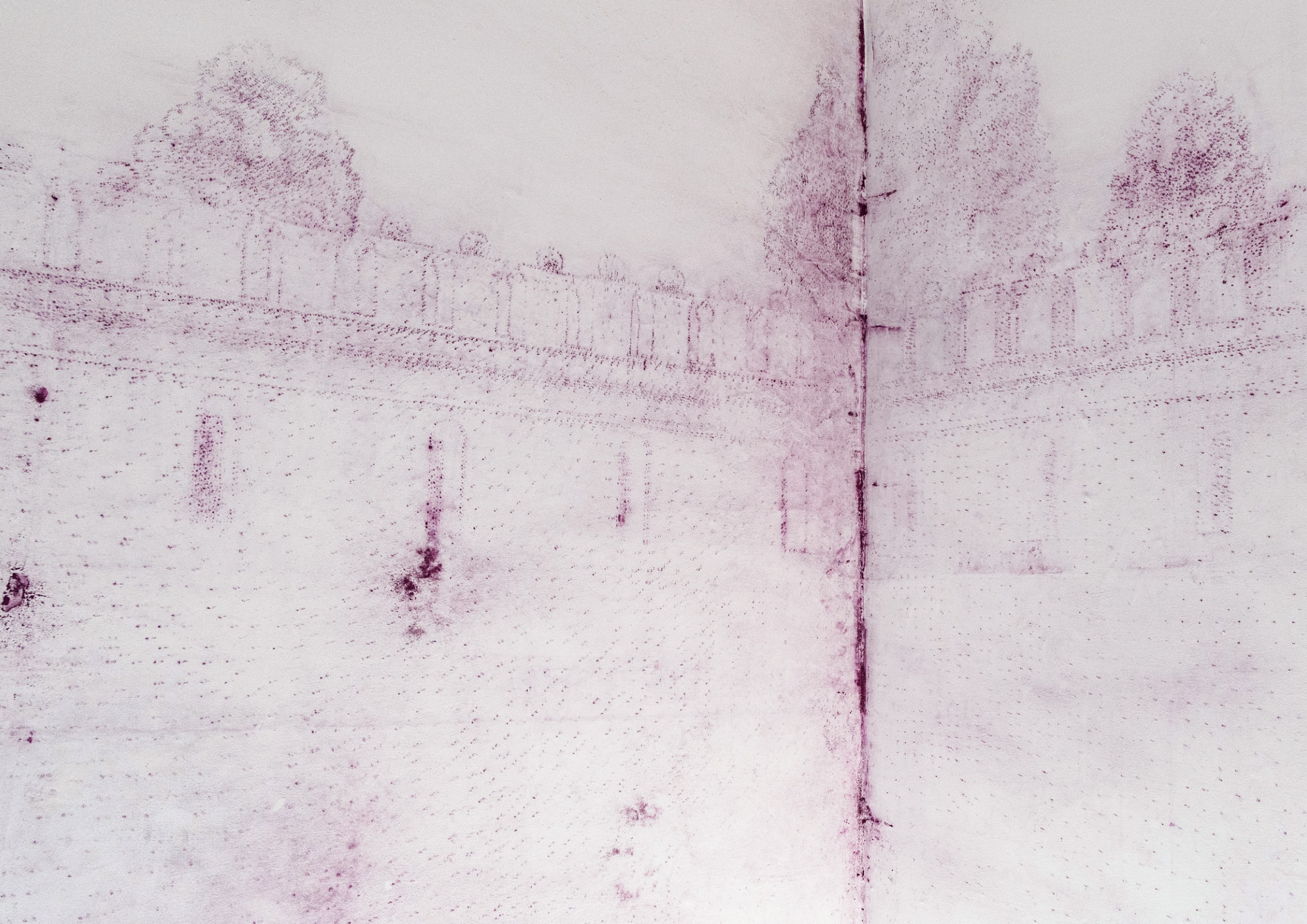
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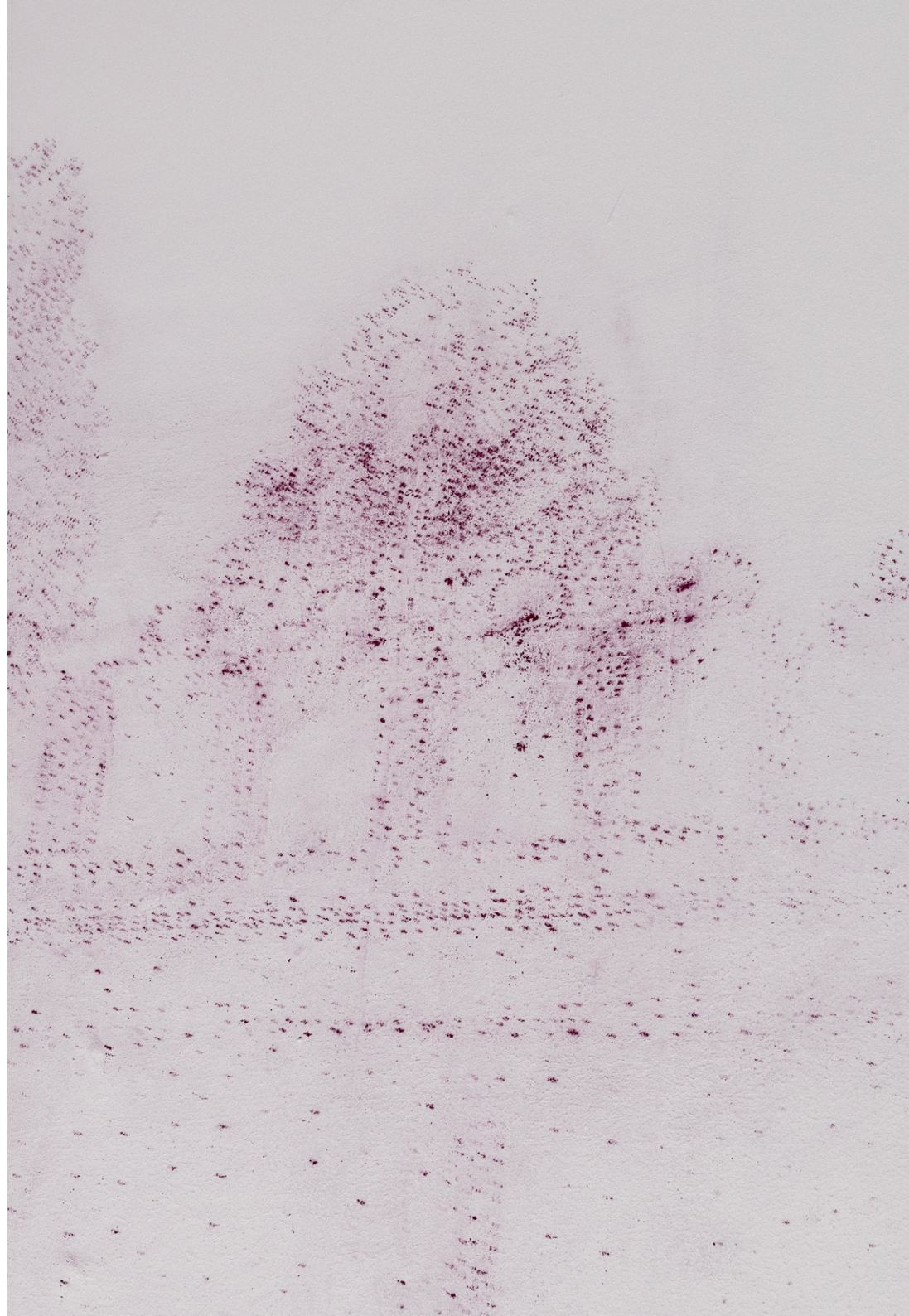
ORNELLO
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CAMPES













Sinopia Centro'Alto Cavallotti, Milan, Italy. Photo: Michael James Daniels

Ludovico Orombelli has converted a long corridor-like room into a sacred space, where the colour that usually illuminates churches - blue or gold – has been instead replaced with an orangey red. The ceiling, redolent of a starry vault of an ancient church, retains the theological and ontological role of acting as a matrix: everything that exists in the room draws its source from there, as if there was a passage of matter that, from the indefinite, translates on the walls in defined or sometimes shadowy forms. This parallel with the ancient way of conceiving pictorial spatiality, of an environmental nature, has the aim of creating an altered state of perception. The contradiction with the ancient lies here, in the fact that Orombelli places us in an environment that is in its own way exciting and not calming, perhaps even hallucinatory and not simply meditative.

The materials and technique take their inspiration from traditional painting, done with pure pigments using the pouncing technique and the idea of sinopia as a preparatory drawing. In fact, pigment appears to fall from the intense red of the ceiling, with the silhouettes of the trees taking shape on the walls, as if sinopias of the real ones visible through the windows. But if the real trees have a visual, three-dimensional, chromatically composite fullness, those obtained by Orombelli on the white parts of the walls are ghosts that arise from the canons of pouncing - a cardboard sheet is pierced through and then the holes are filled with pigment - so that what we see are traces, suggestions of shapes comparable to memories, or even synthetic grids with a geometric flavour that remind us of pixel codes. In this manner, alongside the open windows, real nature is confronted with a form of nature that we could interpret as digital, that is made up of rhythmic presences and absences of colour.

At the far end of the room we find a squaring of the figurative space, reminiscent of Giulio Paolini's early works and the 1961's *Disegno Geometrico* in particular, but even before those, the squaring recalls foremost the preparations of the pictorial surface in Renaissance and medieval practices, that is, the preparation of the field on which the figuration would take place. Thus, in the same room, we find at the top the magma and lava from which everything metaphorically originates. On the side walls, we find a homage to nature, the eternal subject of painting, which confronts the outdoor view as if in a dialogue with a garden or a Milanese interior courtyard, perfectly situated in a historical here and now and, therefore, also not very Arcadian and subtly engaged with the present challenges of the planet as well as the structure of cities. We are inside a fully urban context, man-made and catered to over millennia, between tradition and technological innovation.

The recent artistic movements to which this operation could be linked are many: from Paolini's proto-conceptual art to a reflection on European urban Public Art, from the Earth Works of the American 1970s to a relational attitude born in the 1990s, when the importance of the spectator and his specific way of crossing, reading, experiencing and impregnating an environment became evident: the room conceived by Orombelli must be walked through and cannot be grasped at a mere glance, as if it was a painting that does not require bodily involvement. All this, however, cannot distract us from the artist's desire to talk to us about painting itself, or at least its Western tradition: techniques such as encaustic painting and sinopia evoke the practice of fresco painting and remind us that environmental art and public art, although only recently theorised, have centuries-old roots that cannot be evaded. They were born to create works that were meant to last, just as the fresco, which does not appear here, and one wonders why. The answer might be that the sense of permanence, of endurance, of trust in duration is a part of our way of feeling, but it is vanishing in these times of speed, uncertainty, innovation, with all the existential disorientation that comes with it. We cannot escape the past, we cannot deny the present, and we must live in the here and now. The emotional tube that Orombelli proposes to us, from its mental and philosophical side to its more figurative and enjoyable side, suggests that we should not shy away from any doubts. On the contrary, we should face many of them with a curious, spiritual, historically informed mind and, above all, open to the evolution of language; without forgetting the need to oscillate between our thoughts and impulses, to remind ourselves that the logic intrinsic to the form of a tree does not change, and neither does our need to represent it and to represent, remember, reflect in a continuous back-and-forth between the truth beyond the windows and other truths, sedimented on ceilings, walls and gaps between floor tiles, in which an ancient yet tangible pigment is randomly wedged.

Angela Vettese

Ludovico Orombelli ha trasformato un lungo parallelepipedo di metri cubi in uno spazio sacrale, dove il colore che illuminava le chiese – il blu o l'oro – si è convertito in un rosso aranciato. Il soffitto, memoria della volta stellata di un'antica chiesa, conserva il ruolo teologico e ontologico del porsi come matrice: tutto quello che esiste nella stanza trae la sua fonte da là, come se ci fosse un trapasso della materia che, dall'indefinito, si traduce sulle pareti in forme definite o talvolta umbratili. Questo parallelo con il modo antico di concepire la spazialità pittorica, di natura ambientale, è rivolta a suscitare uno stato percettivo alterato. La contraddizione con l'antico sta qui nel fatto che Orombelli ci mette in un ambiente a suo modo eccitante e non tranquillizzante, forse addirittura allucinato e non semplicemente meditativo.

I materiali e la tecnica prendono spunto dalla pittura tradizionale, fatta con i pigmenti puri con la tecnica dello spolvero e con l'idea di sinopia come disegno preparatorio. Dal rosso intenso del soffitto, infatti, pare cadere il materiale per le sagome degli alberi disegnati sulle pareti, quasi sinopie di quelli reali che si intravedono dalle finestre. Ma se gli alberi reali godono di una pienezza visiva, tridimensionale, cromaticamente composita, quelli ottenuti da Orombelli sulle parti bianche delle pareti sono fantasmi che nascono dal codice dello spolvero – un cartone viene bucato e poi si riempiono i buchi di pigmento – tale per cui ciò che vediamo sono tracce, suggerimenti di forme paragonabili a ricordi, addirittura griglie sintetiche di sapore geometrico che ci ricordano i codici di pixel. Con le finestre aperte, dunque la natura reale si confronta con una forma di natura che potremmo interpretare come digitale, cioè fatta di presenze e assenze ritmiche del colore.

Al fondo della stanza compare una squadratura dello spazio figurativo che ricorda le prime opere di Giulio Paolini, il Disegno geometrico del 1961 in particolare, ma ancora prima di quelle, la squadratura ricorda le preparazioni della superficie pittorica di stampo rinascimentale e medievale, cioè la preparazione del campo su cui avrebbe avuto luogo la figurazione. Così, in uno stesso ambiente, troviamo in alto il magma e la lava da cui origina metaforicamente il tutto. Sulle pareti laterali troviamo un omaggio alla natura, soggetto eterno della pittura, che si confronta con l'esterno come in un dialogo con una land art da giardino, da interno milanese, perfettamente situato in un qui e ora storico e quindi anche poco arcadico e sottilmente impegnato con i presenti destini del pianeta nonché della struttura delle città. Siamo dentro a un contesto pienamente urbano, antropizzato e pettinato da millenni, tra tradizione e innovazione tecnologica.

I movimenti artistici recenti a cui si potrebbe legare quest'operazione sono del resto molteplici: dal protoconcettuale di Paolini a una riflessione sulla Public Art urbana europea, dagli Earth Works degli anni settanta americani a un'attitudine relazionale nata negli anni Novanta, quando è divenuta palese l'importanza dello spettatore e del suo specifico modo di attraversare, leggere, vivere e impregnare un ambiente: la stanza concepita da Orombelli deve venire percorsa e non può essere colta a colpo d'occhio, come se fosse un quadro che non chiede un coinvolgimento corporeo. Tutto questo però non può distoglierci dal desiderio dell'artista di parlarci della pittura in sé, o almeno della sua tradizione occidentale: parole come encausto e sinopia evocano la pratica dell'affresco e ci ricordano che l'arte ambientale e la public art, per quanto siano state teorizzate solo in tempi recenti, hanno radici secolari che non possono essere eluse. Sono nate con i mezzi tipici di una pittura nata per perdurare nel tempo, come appunto l'affresco che qui non compare, e c'è da chiedersi per quale motivo. La risposta potrebbe essere che il senso della permanenza, della perduranza, della fiducia nella durata è una parte del nostro modo di sentire, che però sta svanendo in tempi di velocità, incertezza, innovazione, con tutto il disorientamento esistenziale che ne deriva. Non possiamo sfuggire al passato, non possiamo negare il presente e dobbiamo vivere il qui e ora. Il tubo emozionale che ci propone Orombelli, dal suo lato mentale e filosofico a quello più figurativo e godibile, ci suggerisce di non sottrarci a nessun dubbio, anzi, di affrontarne moltissimi con mente curiosa, spirituale, storicamente informata e soprattutto aperta all'evoluzione del linguaggio; senza dimenticare il nostro bisogno di oscillare tra pensieri e pulsioni, di sapere che la logica intrinseca nella forma di un albero non cambia, e non cambia il nostro bisogno di rappresentarla e di rappresentare, ricordare, riflettere in un andirivieni continuo tra il vero oltre le finestre e in altra verità, quella sedimentata su soffitto, pareti, fughe tra le piastrelle del pavimento, in cui a caso si incunea un pigmento antico eppure tangibile.

Angela Vettese





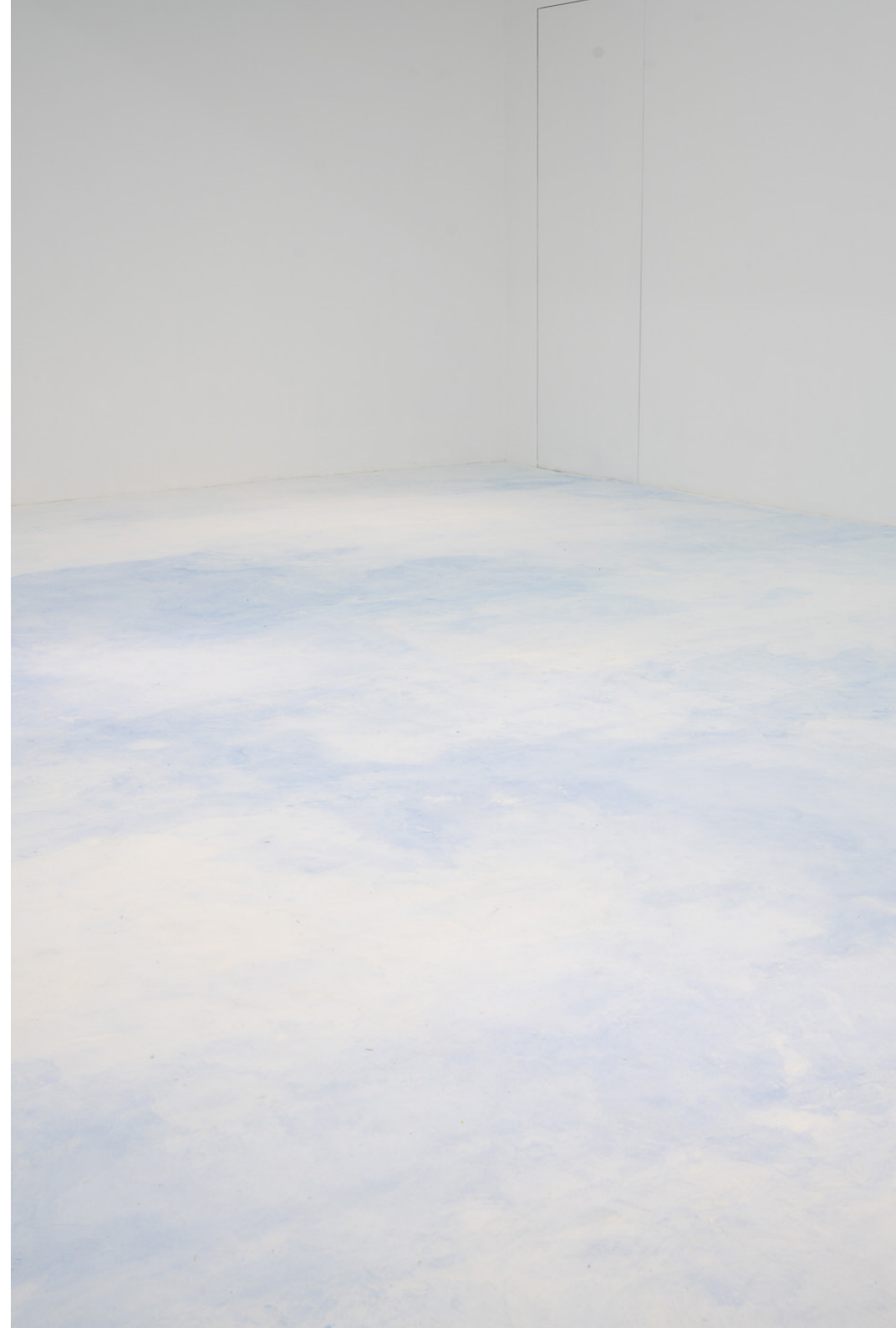






Ribaltamento, 2022, Tagli, Milan, Italy. Photo: Emanuele Soso Galante

Ribaltamento is a fresco painting covering part of the exhibition floor. Aiming to unsettle the understanding of the technique, the work overturns its conventional placement - shifting from wall or ceiling to the horizontal plane. An image constructed through aerial perspective hinders the viewer's path.





Parete, 2022, inkrubbing on paper, Como Contemporanea, Como, Italy.





Education

- 2023 - 2025 MA Visual Arts, The École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL)
2016 - 2019 BA (Hons) Fine Art, Arts University Bournemouth, Dorset, UK

Solo Shows

- 2025 *Previsioni, radar*, Milan, Italy.
2024 *In a place I still don't know*, Dots, Leipzig, Germany
Una stanza deve avere più di quattro angoli, Esposizione sud-est, Conversano, Italy
2023 *Al di qua*, Provinciale 11, Centro Artistico Alik Cavaliere, Milan, Italy

Group Shows

- 2026 *Plattform26*, Kunsthhaus Pasquart, Biel/Bienne, Switzerland
2025 *Switzerland Diploma Show*, Galerie l'elac, ECAL, Lausanne, Switzerland
2024 *Farewell to the stage*, Artopia, Milan, Italy
Home! Sweet home, Spazio Tenda, Milan, Italy
2022 *Spaces, an open intimacy*, Tagli, Milan, Italy
Saluti da Coco, Como Contemporanea, Como, Italy
Break-in. Temporal Displacement, The Address Gallery, Brescia, Italy
2021 *Macina*, TreTre, Viafarini.work, Milan, Italy
Ardere ardere ardere ardere, Sa.turn Platform, Verona, Italy
Entre-Acte, Renata Fabbri Contemporary Art, Milan, Italy
2020 *Saremo in pochi*, VIR Viafarini-in-residence, Milan, Italy
2019 *Studio Visit*, The Blank Contemporary Art, Bergamo, Italy

Residencies / Prizes

- 2024 *Raccolti II*, Provinciale11, Casa Vettese-Donati, Lunigiana, Italy
2022 *Raccolti*, Provinciale11, Casa Vettese-Donati, Lunigiana, Italy
Post Ex, Rome, Italy
Dolomiti Contemporanee, Borca di Cadore, Italy
2021 *Tagli*, Stromboli, Italy
2020 *VIR Viafarini in residence*, Milano Italy
2019 *IN PRATICA*, Viaindustriae, Foligno with The Blank Contemporary Art, Bergamo, Italy

Selected Press/Talks

- 2026 *Fuoco incrociato: storie di pratiche artistiche a Milano*, Triennale di Milano, Milan, Italy.
2024 *Ludovico Orombelli "In another place I still don't know"*, DOTS / Lipsia, Flash Art
2022 *Ludovico Orombelli, Studio Visit*, Quadriennale di Roma.