

As far as I can understand, Vanessa Safavi, with destination "Cascina I.D.E.A.", has conceived a project for a personal exhibition involving new works created during this last year, a period of confinement in her studio in Switzerland. In my opinion, the artist has undertaken a theoretical and formal investigation into the role of women in Western society, with a particular focus on the role of the woman artist. I believe that the investigation has progressively focused on the social perception of the artist-mother, the artist-mother is not a real taboo but something that we tend not to consider, almost as if we try to direct the generating energy solely to the conception of the work. Safavi analyses different aspects of the human condition through similarities with particular, often unexpressed, qualities of matter. Her operation, which in the same way manifests itself as extremely direct and simple and as hermetic and secret, consists in juxtaposing materials of opposite valence, so as to obtain, from their simple juxtaposition, the maximum tension of meaning, in a pure and simple dialectical game; in fact, she opposes traditional elements to elements with a technological flavour, heavy elements to light and airy elements, in a contrast of energies with different valence, accentuating a sort of panic lyricism. The work for this exhibition aims to bring out the vital energy in its perpetuation, the primordial force that dwells above all in female nature, that nature which in pre-Hellenic myths, in a matriarchal society, manifested itself as the generator of life. Thus, an ideal and natural reunification of the self takes place, from the essence of the existential posture of women to the work of women seen backwards, through the centuries. Breasts, fingers... These pieces refer in particular to anatomical votive offerings which, in different cultures, represent fragments of human bodies intended for healing. Never derivative, from my speculations on the subject, it appears that Safavi (in her research the body is strongly present even when it is sublimated into pure colour) is part of a perfect lineage that goes from Alina Szapocznikow to Robert Gober, passing through Antonia Campi. This exhibition explores the domestication of gender stereotypes with humour and a sense of provocation. In her work, Safavi investigates the sculptural possibilities of body representation and questions the relationship we experience with illness, sexuality and identity. In fact, the continuous more or less explicit allusions to the body are revealed in this house that contains and expresses it. Remember Freud's conviction that the oneiric images of the house and its features: certain staircases, windows and doors, represent in a very veiled form, desires, drives and dreams linked to individual parts of the body. All this is driven by a mercurial spirit, aerial, changeable and subterranean, incorporeal and metaphysical, terrestrial, humid and dense, ready to awaken in the polyformal game of discovery and of the gaze. Vanessa Safavi, from my point of view, calls into question her fragility and her precious sensitivity combined with her memories and sensations. Her sculptures are almost cores of concentration of pictorial energy that sometimes implode in vivid monochromes to then re-explode in the sumptuous splendour of thickened colours and then open again in the mind and visuality of the observer.

Marco Tagliaferro