

From: *Luciano Fabro*, curated by J. Gachnang, R. Fuchs, C. Mundici, exhibition catalog (Rivoli-Torino, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, 28 June - 17 September 1989), Fabbri, Milano 1989, pp. 176-177.

Model, anecdote

Rudi Fuchs

Next, and in opposition, to the narration of descriptive anecdote as a method to define and comprehend the vast variety of the world, there is the succinct and marvellous presentation of structure, the philosophical abstraction of visual realities into a model. That model is comprehensive, referring to the general state of things; often it has long historical and philosophical life. Such a model is, for instance, central perspective - a generalized method of comprehending visual space. Central perspective has a grand solidness but it comes to life by way of the pictorial anecdotes in which it is used. The anecdote is drifting in the wind like falling leaves but it is not without direction; the anecdote is spectacular and beautiful, moving and impressive, humorous and intimate. Unlike the model it makes us remember things and fabricate stories in which we recognize the makings of the world and the ways of people. The anecdote makes the timeless model into a specific instance of particular time. The anecdote is the temporary form of the model, just as the model is the comprehensive form of all anecdotes.

An artwork can go either way: it can move towards the model, like Mondrian, or slip into the anecdote, like Boccioni. This choice in formulation (and therefore in reasoning) is probably particular for the twentieth century. The proof of that is the incredible invention of abstract art in which they tried to separate the model from the anecdote. In some contemporary art the attempt is made (methodically, successfully) to retain the model in the form of an anecdote. That seems to be description of the art of Luciano Fabro. Entering the surprising landscape of that art one finds the most curious fragments, anecdotes of form and shape and material and interpretation. Fragments of the body, fragments of landscape and nature, fragments of architecture, fragments of observation, fragments of the sky - but also structures and contraptions that measure space or the subtle reflection of light. The construction of these fragments is practical, not methodical. There is something extremely light and swift in them, like the movement of dancers. They are surprising and intelligent - but like the drifting leaf in the most delightful anecdote, they are not without direction. The direction, however, is not straightforward like logic but capricious. The artist is practical. He savours the surprises in certain encounters. The encounter may be planned but the surprise is not. The surprise is the anecdote that, ultimately, also reveals the possible presence of a model. However capricious the anecdotes are, they seem to be encircled by a large, schematic model. The model, in the back, gives them a certain sense.

Of course Fabro is not trying to exactly formulate the model. There is a certain, practical point of departure, a set of artistic «problems» to which he addresses himself: the behaviour of bodies of a certain material in light and space. Without the anecdotes, the model is boring. By way of the anecdotes his inventions, Fabro formulates his art away from the model. The anecdotes fly like butterflies, away from the solid ground just as the great singer soars above the unbearably

sentimental text of the song.