

From: *Sensing Painting. Opere dalla Collezione d'arte della Fondazione CRC / Works from the Collection of Fondazione CRC*, exhibition catalog (Rivoli-Torino, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, 27 October 2023 – 28 January 2024) (Rivoli-Torino: Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, 2021), pp. 23-24.

Short-range investigations

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This collection was born from the brilliant and forward-thinking efforts of Giandomenico Genta, who decided shortly after his appointment as President of the Fondazione CRC that it would be useful and of strategic importance to provide the foundation in Cuneo with an innovative collection of contemporary art. He then took the farsighted decision to involve the Director of Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, as President of a small but experienced Acquisitions Committee. Made up of only three members, it was charged with selecting which works to purchase, a difficult task in today's highly varied and apparently chaotic contemporary art scene. These choices would give the new permanent collection its own unique identity, and would also represent an investment over time. I am happy to admit that I was proud to be invited to be part of the Committee, alongside my more famous and internationally established "colleague" and friend Carolyn. She made the excellent choice to complete the Committee with the appointment of Chus Martínez, Head of the FHNW Academy of Arts and Design in Basel. Chus, like Carolyn, has longstanding experience of the international scene, and a keen nose for young and up-and-coming artists worldwide.

On my side, I focused on identifying artists who were active within the local area, specifically the Piedmont region, with particular attention to the province of Cuneo and Turin (though not for this reason to be considered "provincial" artists). Proof of this lies in my proposal to acquire works by Elisa Sighicelli (1968), an artist born in Turin who studied in London and can boast numerous solo and group exhibitions in leading galleries around the world. Also from the local area, I suggested artists who had participated in major exhibitions abroad, such as Valerio Berruti (1977) from Alba and Nicola Bolla (1963) from Saluzzo, alongside younger artists—former students of the Albertina Academy of Fine Arts of Turin whom I had met when I was professor of art history and director of the Academy—who had already amassed impressive portfolios of solo and group exhibitions. These included Manuele Cerutti (Turin, 1976), Alice Visentin (Ciriè, Turin, 1993), Ludovica Carbotta (Turin, 1982), Guglielmo Castelli (Turin, 1987), Giuliana Rosso (1992), Erik Saglia (1989), Francesca Ferreri (Savigliano, Cuneo, 1981), Paolo Turco (Cuneo, 1981), Giuseppe Mulas (born in Alghero in 1995, lives and works in Turin), Romanian Cornelia Badelita (1982), Moldovan Victoria Stoian (1987), but also Italian artists of the latest generation such as Marta Spagnoli (Verona, 1994), and Rudi Ninov from Bulgaria (Teteven, 1992).

I almost always opted for paintings, more suited to the spaces and the "tastes" of a bank, as in the case of the large-scale landscapes of Andrea Massaioli (1960), another outstanding artist from Turin. In addition, I also revived the work of an "old" yet exceptional Turin innovator of the 1950s, Piero Simondo (1928–2020), one of the founding fathers of Situationism.

Aligned with the many and more internationally inclined choices made by Christov-Bakargiev and Chus Martínez, these almost “zero-kilometer” propositions have allowed, without exorbitant costs but with the prudence typical of Piedmont, for the gradual development of a collection of contemporary art that exudes pride and beauty. I would like to thank the current President of Fondazione CRC, Ezio Raviola, for advancing the project initiated by Giandomenico Genta, while preserving the inherited objectives and cultural foundations over time. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Marcella Beccaria, Deputy Director, Chief Curator and Curator of Collections at Castello di Rivoli Museo d’Arte Contemporanea, for transforming this collection into a fully-fledged exhibition.