

GALLERIA ANTONIO BATTAGLIA

Press Release
With kind request for publication

GIUSEPPE DE FAZIO

Memories from underground

On Wednesday 29 November 2023 from 6.30pm to 9pm the Antonio Battaglia Gallery inaugurates the personal exhibition of the artist **Giuseppe De Fazio** (Catanzaro, 1955), organized in collaboration with the architect and designer Fabio Rotella and accompanied by a catalog with a critical introduction by Ivan Quaroni.

The title of the exhibition, *Memories from Underground*, refers to the geological world from which De Fazio's artistic research takes inspiration on the suggestion of the material and color purity of mineral stones that the artist has investigated from the seventies until today, constituting a vast archive of shapes, lights and colors that make his pictorial and sculptural production a sort of summary of geometries and volumes of an unknown underground world. His works, created in painting with the classic techniques of encaustic and oil on canvas, and in sculpture using blocks of rock salt and alabaster, are, according to the artist's definition, "extractions from mother earth", core samples that capture the energy flow of a subsoil in continuous movement and transformation.

"De Fazio's interest in the inorganic forms of minerals and the structures (organic and inorganic) of crystals and rocks was further clarified starting from the 1990s, through the transition to a painting that eliminated any iconographic inspiration to veer with towards an abstract, or rather, apparently aniconic grammar. Thus, precisely in those years, the characterizing elements of a language that revolved around the relationship between colour, light and geometry began to emerge. In short, in his painting there was a pleasure in the patterns and recursive textures produced by the geophysical forces on the earth and, in particular, on the objects studied in the disciplines of petrology, mineralogy and gemology.

Over thirty years later, we find that same pleasure in the artist's recent production, combined with an inexhaustible experimental yearning that is expressed above all in sculpture, where industrial compounds such as siporex - a concrete made of cement and silica sand -, the polystyrene or cement resin, are associated with more noble materials such as leaf metal or even mother-of-pearl. In painting, however, Giuseppe De Fazio prefers to combine traditional techniques such as encaustic and oil, which allow him to emphasize the luministic component of his compositions, images that investigate inorganic matter with extraordinary fidelity."

from the catalog text by Ivan Quaroni

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Observing the artist's works - as Marcello Sèstito noted in the monograph Giuseppe De Fazio, Grumi Conrati di Senso, published in 2017 by Rubbettino Editore - "we will seem to witness these materials in movement, small stones that collide, slabs that overlap, incoherent piles, organic elements in diastole and systole, as if the Promethean fire that generated some paintings burned constantly from below until it re-emerged on the surface, like incandescent lava ready to flow out into the light."

The exhibition continues until January 13th 2024

from Tuesday to Friday 4pm - 7.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 11am - 1.30pm / 4pm - 7.30pm and by appointment

Biographical notes

Giuseppe De Fazio was born in 1955 in Catanzaro where he attended the Art High School and the Academy of Fine Arts, in 1978 he obtained a degree in painting and the following year he was assistant to the prof. Gianni Pisani for the chair of painting. In 1977, during a brief acquaintance with the philosopher Giovanni Marzano, he learned about mineral painting and began to develop his significant contribution to it.

In 1978 he met the mineral painter Guccione Giuseppe Masci in Rome with whom he established a long-lasting collaborative relationship, in 1982 their common interest led them to jointly create a large work-manifesto, exhibited in Rome in the same year.

After a short period between Milan and Novara, in 1985 he moved to Brescia where he taught pictorial disciplines until 2003, dedicating himself with commitment and continuity to mineral painting.

Here he abandons the initial figurative approach and orients his stylistic research on light and colour, founding elements of a mineral abstractionism that will come to life in large-scale canvases.

Starting from 1994, another strong attraction towards the plastic form will lead him to simultaneously follow a new path of exploration, attending the Vantini school in Botticino for three years which will allow him to transfer the mineral style into sculptural works.

In 2003 he settled permanently in his hometown where he divides his time between teaching pictorial disciplines and an active and incisive artistic research activity.

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