

GIULIO FRIGO

Impenetrable

Curated by Laura Lamonea and produced by Video Sound Art Festival

Opening 9 December 2020

until January 2021

Impenetrable, Giulio Frigo's third solo show with Francesca Minini, forms the epilogue to a larger exhibition project, begun on 16 October at the Piscina Cozzi in Milan.

In his paintings Frigo calls upon real figures – philosophers, acquaintance, historical figures – in an attempt to probe the dynamic and non-linear connections that unite them. Thus, the physiognomic distortion and use of fiber optics in the work *In Superficie (Spinoza Topologico)* I invite the observer to go beyond the level of the image, to enter a complex map of neural connections and information flows. To borrow a concept from biology, the works on display restore to us a connectome, a network of cognits* that extends out beyond the individual mind and which, at a trans-individual level, is capable of defining reality and its socio-communicative structures.

In the large composition of panels, entitled *Presentatori di Presenza*, multiple levels of interpretation overlap: in the foreground there are the famous RAI TV hosts, as in the picture from 1967. Dancing during a performance of the singer Mina – we get a glimpse of her behind Tortora – they are *television*, the open-air unconscious of the society of those years, a non-stop flow of entertainment. Giulio Frigo probes the multiple layers of language, fashioning a thick web of allusions behind the hosts: Byzantine attitudes, Renaissance gazes, Hollywood-style profiles, references to the mysterious figures that move through the corridors of the RAI.

Frigo's undertaking seems like one of another age, an operation heroic in its materiality: 32,000 brush strokes of phosphorescent tempera and 1800 pixels, hidden by a mantle of color on which the artist has painted "the figures of the eternal present". They are figures that emerge through the technique of *sgraffito*, dispersed into a luminous vortex.

The four hosts-messengers, in a pose recalling the god Mercury in his best-known effigies, are accompanied by the four holograms of *Pulviscoli Eraclitei*, forms based on mathematical models that describe phenomena of perpetual change.

"The pixels of the hologram represent a series of figures of flux, which I have called *Pulviscoli Eraclitei* in order to contrast them with the Platonic Solids... I am interested in blurring the borders between things, and, consequently, between the concepts we use to divide up the world and ideas." - G.F.

Presentatori di Presenza moves beyond the pictorial to enter the impalpable dimension of the hologram. The work extends beyond the device of every painted representation, pushing itself into the sphere of *information*.

The same attitude has resulted in *Impenetrable*, the installation that gives the show its title: a dust of pixels painted on thin strips of PVC, which receive viewers in the heart of the exhibition and conducts them through the unfathomable depths of the digital world.

Behind every message, film and digital image hide billions of pixels, a flow of miniscule particles of color. The pixels silently give form to a world that scrolls before our eyes, through increasingly sophisticated interfaces, whose mathematical beauty is often difficult to contemplate. In the work *Pixel*, Giulio Frigo depicts these particles by emphasizing their rigid and modular nature. The artist composes a picture that could continue infinitely, expanding in every direction through the combination of discrete brush strokes. Despite being two-dimensional elements, the pixels seem animated by a mechanical glare resembling that of a screen. Indeed, the fluorescent colors used for the canvas

have the peculiarity of moving slightly beyond of the spectrum of the visible, recalling that part of the digital world made up of the cloud, wi-fi and radio waves, which permeate urban spaces with their immaterial presence.

The experience of the digital remains impenetrable; you can touch a screen with your finger, but it is impossible to grasp. Its non-stop flow of data and mathematical calculation is increasingly distant from a human being's capacity for reasoning, who is called on to reconsider our unnatural primacy and pretensions of omniscience.

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*Cognits, as described by Joaquim M. Fuster in *Cortex and Mind* (2005), refer to the basic unit of the network of the cortex and memory, patterns of dispersed neurons, overlapping and interactive, which take form based our life experiences.