

Galleria Eugenia Delfini

La schiuma dei giorni

Roberta Mariani

October 19, 2022 - January 15, 2023

Introduction

Galleria Eugenia Delfini is thrilled to announce Roberta Mariani's first solo exhibition in Rome. The exhibition, whose title, *La schiuma dei giorni* takes a cue from Boris Vian's novel *Froth on the Daydream*, is accompanied by Gianni Garrera's critical essay, and presents a series of pictorial and sculptural works through which the artist investigates the fold as a concept from which to generate three-dimensional spaces.

The pictorial series, made on paper with pigments, graphite powder, and spray paint, presents abstract textures, force-plays, and elastic skeins. These irregular path weavings are articulated on different planes and resemble landscapes or, as Gilles Deleuze would say, "a pond of matter in which there exist different flows and waves."¹ Surrounded by these canvases, one has the feeling of being in front of organic (and sometimes virtual) visions in which traits sprout, simultaneously expanding and contracting like breathing. The sculptures, also crafted with pigments and brushstroke layers, are folded papers whose bends and folds give shape to bodies, remains of skins, or primordial fossils.

According to art historian Heinrich Wölfflin, when Deleuze elaborates on the fold as a distinctive feature of the Baroque, one of its material traits consists in the "tendency of matter to spill over in space"², and this is precisely what Mariani's work is attempting to do: go beyond the circumscribed space of the work to generate timeless worlds and phantasmagorical visions in which everything is constantly being born and dying.

¹ Deleuze G., *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, THE ATHLONE PRESS London, 1993, pag. 5

² Wölfflin H., *Renaissance and Baroque*, 1888, in Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, THE ATHLONE PRESS London, 1993, pag. 4

Installation views



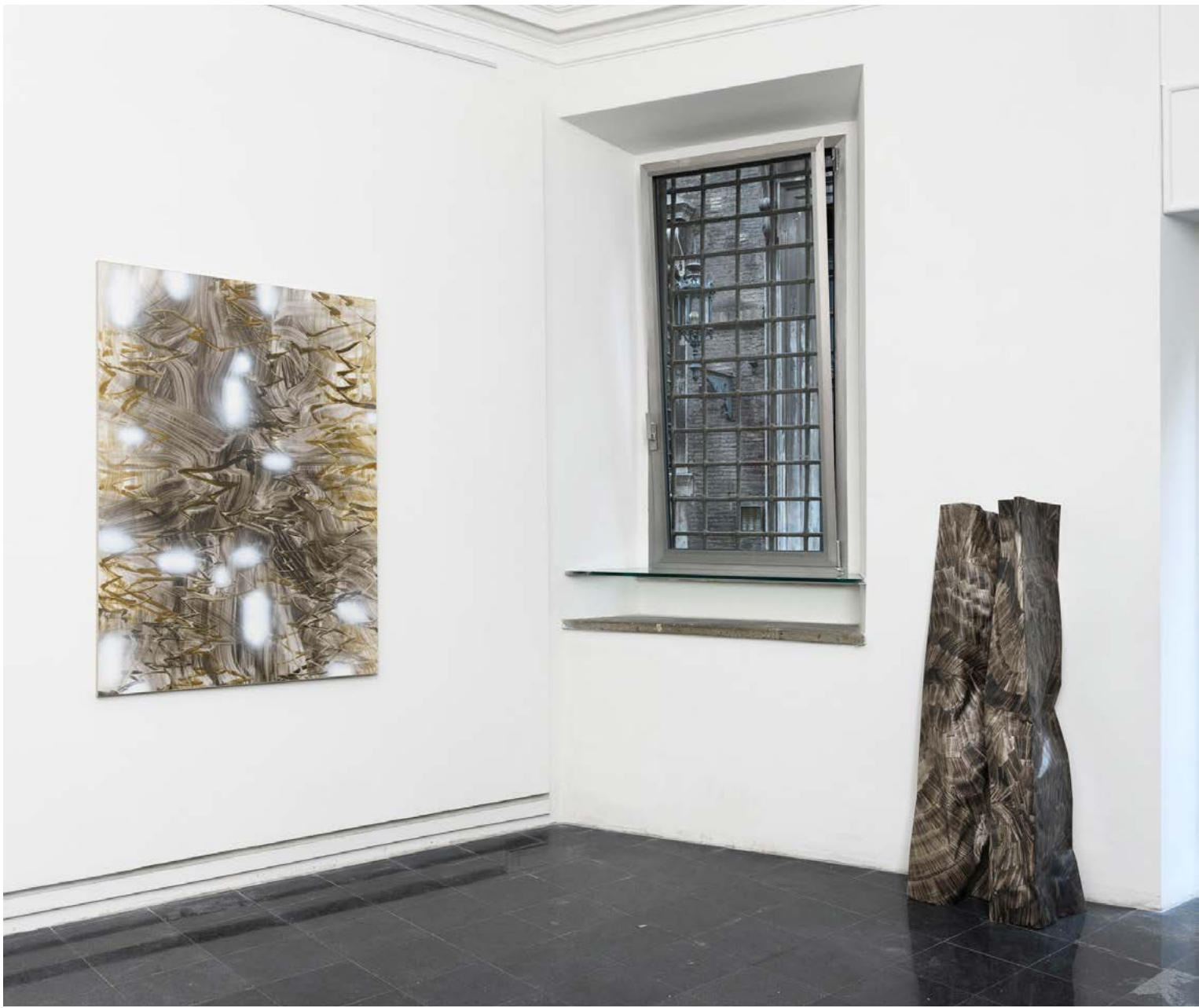
Installation view from Roberta Mariani, "La schiuma dei giorni". October 19, 2022 - January 15, 2023.
Photo by Giorgio Benni. Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini.



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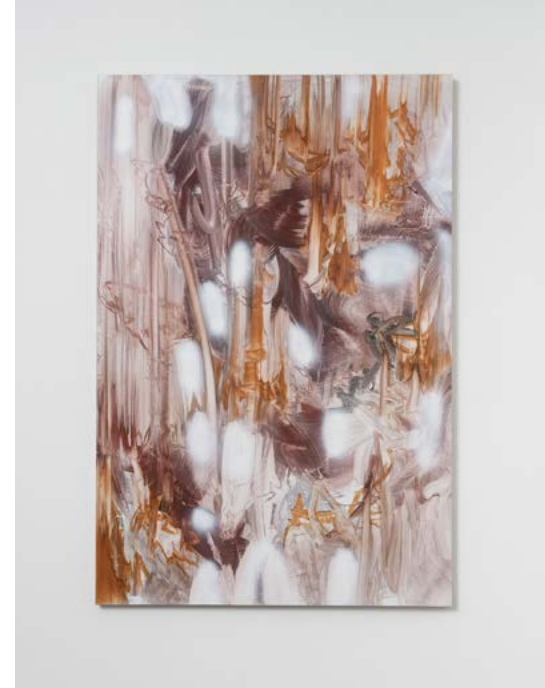
Exhibited Artworks



La schiuma dei giorni #01, 2022
Pigments and acrylic spray on framed paper
150 x 100 cm
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini



La schiuma dei giorni #02, 2022
Pigments and acrylic spray on framed paper
150 x 100 cm
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini



La schiuma dei giorni #04, 2022
Pigments and acrylic spray on framed paper
150 x 100 cm
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini



Buan (being in between), 2022
Paper, pigments, glue and wood sawdust
165 x 40 x 40 cm
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini



Untitled, 2022
Paper, pigments, glue and wood sawdust
150 x 50 x 0,8 cm (x2)
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini



La schiuma dei giorni #03, 2022
Pigments and acrylic spray on framed paper
150 x 200 cm
Photo by Giorgio Benni
Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Eugenia Delfini

Critical text by Gianni Garrera

When the world's ornamentations are mutual emulations of matter's markings, vegetation is equivalent to fabric, and the two realities share the same aesthetic parabola, both aware of how to undergo the same melismatic shifts. Roberta Mariani achieves the ambiguous equivalence between the intricacies she paints and the folds of a piece of bark and those of a brocade, between the corrugations of limestone and the wrinkles of a fabric. Mariani shows that strokes, marks, lacework, foams, and spinning traces of painting are indeed Nature, they are already in themselves vegetation, herb family, and minerality, because her painting is not meant to imitate Nature but to be Nature itself and to sow and bud on the soil of the painting. The tangle generates its own perspective, and the meanders of lines find within their own chaos their ways to show off. Folding is a genetic power of ornamentation; it has wrinkles and twists within itself, or distensions, as an expression of relaxed areas. It is not true, as Galilei wrote, that Nature does not delight itself in poetic appendages. Matter continually aspires to itself or to a supplement of itself, it can be pleased with itself, inside the ripples, and from the virtuositities, it can undertake and exhibit.

Everything in painting is made of the same aesthetic matter, owing to the primacy of semblance. The painted thing partakes solely in the color with which it is painted, therefore it takes on a chromatic guise, that is, a non-material but pictorial matter, just as in dreams there is a non-fleshy but dreamlike flesh. In painting everything is pictorial. Representation is configured according to its objective physical mode to which respect painting can elaborate different realizations that, by being concrete, can be a physical alternative to the world in its authentic and natural physical constitution and thus become lyrical alienations of Nature. Roberta Mariani reverses the relationship between appearance and reality. The painted image genealogically precedes the actual natural thing to which it resembles, because if thin-

gs are made in the image and likeness, the image comes prior to the likeness and the resemblance to the elements of the world is secondary. Mariani's painting is not illusionistic art that confronts things to give them an illusion. Therefore, this kind of aesthetic mirroring does not pursue formal imitation of the sensible appearance of the corporeal, for it is not interested in mimetic fiction since painting always precedes nature. On the contrary, as equivocal as it can get for mimetic work, painting annihilates, for excess of synthesis (as if it were lyophilized), the relationship with the rest of the world, since it is self-sufficient and does not need to translate materially into a watery wave or a silky drape or herbaceous hedge in order to realize itself. Artistic form pre-exists the thing before it is configured into a material thing; it prescind from the identification of the material that will make it, so at its origin, there is only painting. Figuration is superior and alien to concrete matter. Every painting refers to natural things prior to participation in the sensible world. It is not art that imitates Nature, but vice versa, and if Nature were to mirror itself in Roberta Mariani's graphic gurgles it would learn new modes of gushing. In this sense, Nature is subordinate to Painting.

Mariani's work consists of lines, reiterated to the bitter end, filaments and discriminating bands, interlocks, accidental (or glaring, as in the case of these works) intervals, lace-like grids, combinations, capillary entropies, slices or meshes, anthills, graphic organisms. The complexity, inequality, and multiplicity of connections manage never to be ensnared in laws nor fixed in a mechanism, so that a kind of dynamism is achieved exclusively by the constancy of trembling segments, or their thickening, capable of generating the impression of an organic, constant, and feverish translation. The artist manages to overcome the problem of systematically applying a pattern, which is essentially a problem of modulation and combination. In this way, aesthetic operations are never totally identifiable with predictable operations and, therefore, are not locked into formulas. The concentration of the warp is guaranteed by the binding properties of the enforced weft. The aesthetic ideal that invests this research concerns free methods that can offer spurious doodles, so there is an autonomy of the line and the filler, and this autonomy of the sign's self-determination is its fecundity.

Each of the tangles aspires to its own exaltation. The qualitative form of what has been fulfilled is the external result of the unfolding of those moments that are formalized in an internal sense, through strokes, whiskers, and friezes. All parts of the unfolding are associated in a movement chord that is dynamic coherence of all segments. It involves drawing nuclei of lines that must reproduce a tremor which is always attributable to the tremor rooted in development. Evolution has an intimate oscillatory movement that flows out in repetition, for movement is tremor that balances on itself, without really developing in any way. This trembling is the foundation of the painting, so the all-encompassing reason for everything is the restlessness of a tiny, permanent oscillation, and all the praxis adopted by Mariani

has always been related to this trembling. Nature trembles in the depths of itself, and every painting of Nature trembles because of the restless motion of the modular, because when a line moves, it trembles in the depths of itself, and what was fixed in it falters and shudders.

Thus each pictorial page of Mariani has no beginning and no end but participates each time in the fullness of a latent total order that unfolds before our eyes.

Certainly, this undulating and rippling painting falls within the serpentine graphies. The nature of the serpentine line (only at times sinuous) is a paradoxical generating principle compared to the rationality of the straight line. The serpentine line is lyrical. The sinuosity of the processes configures a lyrical space. Serpentine and fluctuations can also rely on the intensity of repetitions. In this context, the labyrinths enacted at every point on the sheet are limbs of a single mantle.



Galleria Eugenia Delfini

Via Giulia 96, 00186 Rome, Italy
06 976 039 46
info@galleriaeugeniadelfini.it
www.galleriaeugeniadelfini.it

IG @galleriaeugeniadelfini
FB /galleriaeugeniadelfini

Roberta Mariani

Via degli Ausoni 1, Rome, Italy
+39 333 28 47 695
info@robertamariani.it
www.robertamariani.it