

Francesca Ferreri

(Savigliano, Cuneo, 1981)

Francesca Ferreri's work is linked to the practice of restoration, which the artist turns to for its creative and imaginative potential without any interest in its philological application. The reference to conservational activity is justified by her experience as a restorer of frescos, which she began to develop while still at the academy, and which influenced her ensuing approach to sculpture and drawing.

Restoration is investigated most of all for its likeness to the process of the reactivation of memories, which because of their temporal distance are always partial, never regained entirely if not with additions, removals and alterations. At the same time, the two fundamental principles that dictate the rules of the modern intervention on the work of art, i.e. recognisability and reversibility, set out from the presupposition that it will never be possible to restore the original conditions of the object. The interruptions of the surface or the form, defined as gaps in technical jargon, are elements of disturbance that the restoration process can only attempt to reduce as much as possible. It is at this point that Ferreri's reflection shifts away from such conventions. Instead of limiting their presence, the gap is unusually placed at the centre of the discourse through an intervention that emphasises the reconstruction process.

The fragments that the artist takes hold of come from a past which is exclusively mental; they are pieced together through the coupling of various recycled objects, which are grafted around a formless and malleable material such as plaster, enriched with pigments and consolidating resins. Without too much care for the original object, Ferreri lets herself be led in the choice by an empathetic attraction, neither symbolic nor functional: what she is interested in is the formal, chromatic or material aspects and the creative possibilities hidden behind these residual elements of society. Sometimes her attention settles on domestic items, such as shampoo bottles or spice jars; other times what emerges are ceramic fragments, either self-produced or taken from second-hand plates or tiles. The objects thus become activators of a sculptural gesture, the aim of which is not so much to re-establish the original form but to create new ones and imagine them on the basis of something that already exists. This reflection lies at the basis of the two works in the collection: *Tolma* and *La discesa, la forma*, part of a sculptural diptych from 2016 inspired by the neo-platonic relationship between the single and the multiple. The former is a great iron structure in the form of an L, with an element that hangs obliquely, challenging the surrounding space. The latter, placed on top of a parallelepiped, shows four grafts with an unusual and coloured form produced using this procedure. Borrowing a term from biology which also provides the title for a series of 2013 sculptures, Ferreri defines them as 'heterochronies': products that visualise a non-homogeneous temporal development between a fragmented before and an after that restores the presumed integrity of the form.