

ANTINOMIES

WRITINGS AND IMAGES

Luca Pancrazzi: the book as a landscape

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02/16/2022



Small and minute
it wanders in time by
scrolling without reference to anything
from right to left and vice versa
from west to east and vice versa.
Between here and there, the minimum and the minute spend
time looking at who
could make sense
of this movement. [1]

From a methodological point of view, "making archives" is a constant practice for Luca Pancrazzi, founding with respect to a vision of research that does not take place according to an evolutionary principle but is characterized by continuous reversals and convolutions, the renewal of attention on cycles of works, the testing of sub-traces of work that have manifested themselves cyclically, sometimes unpredictably and in different forms. A method, Pancrazzi affirms, of the necessity of which he has acquired full awareness since 2014, starting from the exhibition *I disperse and continue, leaving me behind one step after another* [2]. The archiving of images, at the basis of the method that informs the research of the artist, of the works and finally of the writings, often goes hand in hand.

Three books released between 2020 and 2021 account for Pancrazzi's relationship with the word in different ways. The book, for Pancrazzi, is an authorial object, conceived by the artist, a sort of section of the exhibition. And it is to three exhibitions that these books are dedicated: *Cyclic landscape varied* by Michela Eremita, for the Landscape Museum and for the Clock Tower in Castelnuovo Berardenga in the province of Siena (3 October 2020-1 January 2022) [3]; *Shadows, projections, reversals, sudden voids and inversions* that took place at Villa Pacchiani in Santa Croce sull'Arno (October 2020-February 2021) and curated by me; *Minute Landscape*, Archaeological Museum of Acqui Terme (2 October-21 November 2021) curated by the artist himself. The first and the third have in common, right from the title, a reference to one of the central themes in Pancrazzi's research, the landscape, the second which intended to focus attention and methods by presenting germinal works from which lines of research have been generated or insights that led elsewhere. Specifically, then, in *Landscape Minute*, Pancrazzi concentrated on small ceramic sculptures and drawings that have inhabited the museum windows together with the archaeological finds - usually exhibited here - to imagine landscapes, overturning the relationship between objects and short-circuiting the figure-ground relationship.



Minute Landscape , 2019, ceramic glazes on terracotta, 9x9x3 cm, ph. Enrico Minasso
The volume that refers to the Castelnuovo Berardenga exhibition collects a series of texts on the landscape written over time by Pancrazzi and introduced by a text by Michela Eremita [4] ; in the book dedicated to the Santa Croce sull'Arno exhibition a text of mine and one by Elio Grazioli accompany the photographic sequences, retrace the construction of the exhibition and focus on some important passages of the artist's research [5] . In *Landscape Minute* it is the only voice of Pancrazzi that accompanies the images: a register more in poetry than in prose, not didactic or commentary but evocative.

the relationship with the characteristics of the medium and the constant challenge to the eye. Finally, the reflexivity of the work-spectator relationship, which is a perspective framework, a fatal relationship that modifies object and subject in the perception and then in the practice of mutual observation and always varied in time and place.



Interno Negativo , 1994, oil on canvas, 70 × 100 cm, installation for *Shadows, projections, overturns, sudden voids and inversions* , Villa Pacchiani, Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI) ph. Ela Bialkowska, OKNOstudio

The texts - unpublished or published at different times in catalogs, books, magazines, exhibited during conferences - document intellectual, emotional, professional exchanges and reflections, sometimes in epistolary form (with Elio Grazioli, with Marc Augè) or exchanged during a trip (with Gianni Romano), in connection with other artists, with curators and gallery owners. A landscape too, a mobile and fluctuating galaxy of archived and revisited thoughts, a firm yet variable point of view characterized by different registers and which presupposes, from time to time, different recipients: from friends to curators, to the public of the exhibitions, to the readers of the books and, finally, to himself.

On general issues, the texts progressively focus on Pancrazzi's relationship with the images that often emerge from a vast photographic archive. In the re-use that often sees them migrate from one medium to another, they move away from reality to gain conceptual experience. The images are thus eroded, de-normalized and normalized in an atypical way, testing their hold in front of our eye, and to the eye they return variations: we look at an image that looks at us and this dialogue takes place over a period of time. which is also a factor of change and transformation.

The selection of the best images, for the prefixed result, takes up a lot of the time I leave myself before I'm tired of the idea of the painting I'm looking for. I take photographic images as precisely, I divide them by typology, and the most suitable ones, those that resemble the image I have in mind, come out of arrogance from the alignment of the cataloging. Snap and reject. Thousands of images, black and white and color, blurry, blurred or perfect for exposure, similar to what I remember, images born of chance, from practical carelessness or from the casual use of the room.

I look a little inside the viewfinder of the car, and when I do it I find it interesting, but I get bored immediately, looking at the world from the lens of a car gives me the impression of being hidden from the world and rediscovering it through a hole that gives it back fantastic only because we are deprived of it. I don't aim, but I expect the machine to record what I see, and as I see it, then the error, I reject it, surprises me to find the image I had seen.

(...) An image when it becomes the subject of a painting finds its own volume, a discarded three-dimensionality of reality is an evocative and permeable extrusion. The painting then takes on autonomy and I, like an intruder, move quickly and stealthily with the brush until discovered I have to move away, the painting is finished. In addition to the subject chosen at the table, a painting is in mind much earlier than it is able to have an intermediate confirmation of the possibility of being able to paint it. Other times, the images I have taken are perfect, untouchable in their unstable balance, with their unmissable defects, of these rare images I follow their destiny giving them complete autonomy that leaves their raw strength intact. [6]

And later, in 2014:

My photographic sequences seem like bursts without aim, they are fired without looking inside the viewfinder, without framing, like someone who shoots the chased car looking out the window of his own chasing someone. I shoot the tires of the landscape I'm chasing. Thousands of images in black and white negative film, in super 8 and double 8 film, then in color slides and then in black and white, in self-positive polaroid, and finally in digital. Printed, photocopied, traced, projected, redrawn, contact printed on lit film, enlarged, scanned and then reprinted, re-copied, drawn, watercolored, filtered and saved ... I participate in chases and battles in the streets, where photographers reporters document the news, I was not afraid of the film and the shots have always been proportionate to the exercise of aim.

I learned more from mistakes than from successes, and I continued to photograph taking advantage of this awareness. I made a lot of mistakes and then I cultivated all the mistakes.

The images began to collect in filing cabinets, boxes, books, folders, folders, and I understood the prevalences, passions, applications, and missions that most require presence and dedication. I realized it was a question of aiming exercise. I have collected thousands of photos of the landscapes that I have encountered, I have taken them from cars, trains, planes, bicycles, ships, most of them taken from the front dashboard of my car. [7]



The ideal city, 2019, various materials, wood, electric motor, led bulb, environmental dimensions, ph. Ela Bialkowska, OKNOstudio

Fundamental is the concept of variable and varied perspective of which the "out of register", the negative, the relationship between full and empty and the shadows are tools of implementation. " The 'out of register' refers to printing processes when the screens (...) do not coincide and the image varies, changes, becomes and reveals something else." ^[8] Elio Grazioli warns us that shadows and projections must not be seen "in the usual sense, that is, as producers of symmetries and oppositions, but as operators of

sudden reversals, overturns and voids. Since his first solo show, Pancrazzi has set up this invitation, calling it 'varied variable symmetry' ” [9] .

Already in a letter dated 23 December 1994 Elio Grazioli wrote to Pancrazzi:

Dear Luca, when, one of the last times I came to the studio to visit you - you had prepared an installation for I don't know which German gallery owner - I saw the resin objects, some transparent, others colored, all small and scattered on the ground in the center of the room, and the new paintings on the walls, I have hand-touched not only the importance of space and time, of emptiness and fullness, of the various oppositions taking place in your work, but of the center, of its pulsation. It had been like this at Care Of too, and even before in Arezzo, and even in that catalog of ours, with the construction of the "varied variable symmetry" ... Maybe this last time the objects, on the ground, even sent me back the image of a galaxy, in short, a gigantic dimension “inside” the images of rooms.

And on January 12 Pancrazzi replies:

(...) Then that letter of yours came back to my mind where you too prepared an encirclement using pieces of mutual knowledge as free fragments that navigate in the present. Just like those objects on the ground, which you have seen and described and which arise from this opposition between reality and memory, between micro and macro, are casts of shapes that live around us, in our atmosphere, a sphere of the tangible made up of things that are close at hand, but whose negative cast escapes us a little, it is near and far away at the same time . [10]

The places to which Pancrazzi refers are very close, near and far (Pieve a Presciano, Florence, Germany, America, the micro and the macro), never crossed on foot, very little by bicycle, more easily by car and possibly by speed or register thanks to movements. Starting from the landscape theme, we measure ourselves with thought and method, with the daily practice of observation, with movement in space and time.

(...) Through one country after another entering via Roma, or exiting Corso Italia to re-enter again in another via Roma. Between one city and another I live the same moment over and over again. I do not continue in a straight line but practice a loop that brings me back to the same point every time. When I stop, time also stops, as if the breaks were to be excluded from the final timing. I go through everything and in the end I always return home. [11] I know myself, I-d-know me.

The bicycle allows me to have an intermediate speed between pedestrians and cars and not to relate to any of these scales of movement. From time to time I move further and

further away from my neighborhood to look for new newsstands, hardware stores, workshops or shops that I will visit only once. Through the same neighborhoods and the same streets and every time the area never seems the same, the power of the bicycle and the art of getting by in traffic, even time seems to become mechanical. I think of the unfolding of things around them as animated by gears with tolerances of a few (missing) teeth . [12]



I disperse and continue leaving behind one step after another , 1996, ink on paper, 6 x 3400 cm

Pancrazzi tackled the concept of "non-place" by engaging in dialogue with Marc Augé since the exhibition *In the shadow of time* (Galleria Mazzoli, Modena 1996): metaphysical landscapes invented, painted and drawn, sculpted and modeled, tunnels and *interiors* , phantasmagoric industrial buildings find common points of view in the theories and in the definition of the anthropologist.

(...) *See or be seen*

Whoever observes a landscape is observed by reflection from the landscape, what we see penetrates inside us and from the outside we observe the landscape that is inside us. We are the landscape that observes. This flow between us observers and us observers is an archetype of non-place. Now non-places mark space / time no more and no less as once

the tolling of the nearest bell tower marked time / space. If each individual is a place, am I the anthropologist of my solitude, and will an anthropology of space become an anthropology of time? [13]

Regarding his landscapes seen in the reflection in a rear-view mirror or the fields and reverse fields drawn by entrances and exits from road tunnels, I choose to report the following:

Many years ago with my father we often crossed a tunnel that divided, in the few kilometers of highway between the town where I lived and the neighboring city, two valleys (...) The landscape beyond was the same, but different, the view from the highway it made it familiar and similar to the one on this side, but unlike the other, it seemed flat, without depth, like a theatrical backdrop built to make motorists enjoyable without distracting them too much from driving. That passage between the two valleys was also a meteorological surprise, while on one side it could rain, on the other already glimpses of the sun could have opened the sky for some time and vice versa, you could never know what we could find on the other side. When I pass that tunnel again, few things have changed. While I drive the car I look straight ahead and behind, through the mirror, to verify my intermediate position between the two horizons and I get ready to re-tune the FM on the radio that from one valley to another do not yet coincide.

Painting never coincides perfectly between one glaze and another, it bears my approximation. The images vibrate, the painting like the light that exists between things reveals the unpainted fullness of forms. When I paint am I outside the painting or am I the painting? [14]



Ailati , 1994, oil on canvas, 150 × 200 cm
And again in an unpublished text of March 1996:

(...) We can say that today the landscape is parallel and perfectly divided in two by the road line in a landscape on the left and a landscape on the right that coincide in the two vanishing points on the horizon of the road itself: the one in front and the one behind. The landscape then becomes the landscapes . [15]

Among the writings I point out the still varied point of view: Pancrazzi usually drives and takes pictures together, with a mobile phone now if not with a camera. For him, being able to be a passenger is an unprecedented pleasure: this is what he says he experienced during a trip to Lebanon, a journey of which, as a passenger in the front seat, he documented the outward and return journeys, opposite to the one outbound, from same window.

“What begins now is the projection of a photographic sequence made up of images taken of the landscape I crossed. It could be a Landscape of Passage, but it is still part of the possible landscape that one encounters while traveling and crossing any place. As Pessoa said, the journey is the traveler, and here I would say that the landscape is the one who observes it” . [16]

On the cover: Luca Pancrazzi, Occidente , 1994, acrylic on canvas, 130 x 180 cm

[1] Luca Pancrazzi, *Small Landscape* , Gli Ori, Pistoia, 2021, exhibition catalog, Archaeological Museum of Acqui Terme, 2 October-21 November 2021.

[2] Assab One, Milan, 9 May-June 2014 curated by Pietro Gaglianò.

[3] The exhibition is part of the “Chi è non del Chianti” project, promoted by the Municipality of Castelnuovo Berardenga with the financial support of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena Foundation and the scientific direction of Valentina Lusini.

[4] *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclical landscape. I disperse and continue, leaving one step behind another* , Fondazione Musei Senesi Editore, Siena, 2020.

[5] Luca Pancrazzi. *Shadows, projections, reversals, sudden voids and inversions* , edited by Ilaria Mariotti, Gli Ori, Pistoia, 2021, catalog of the exhibition *Luca Pancrazzi - Shadows, projections, sudden voids, and inversions* by Ilaria Mariotti, Villa Pacchiani Centro Espositivo Santa Croce sull'Arno, Pisa 17 October 2020 - 14 February 2021

[6] unpublished text of 2001, *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 132

[7] *Restitution of landscape to landscape* 2007/14 (80 slides on a carousel and projector); *Mira* , 2014 (4.5 caliber rifle on different canvases) Published on the occasion of the exhibition *Mi dispersdo e continue leaving me behind one step after another* , Assab One, 2014, Milan. *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclical landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 226

[8] *Shadows, projections, sudden voids, and inversions* , 2021, p. 82

[9] *Shadows, projections, sudden voids, and inversions* , 2021, p. 81

[10] Taken from *Italy* , “Riga” n. 8, edited by Marco Belpoliti and Elio Grazioli, Marcos y Marcos, Milan 1995 already in *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 56.

[11] *A place is any place but no place is like that place* , Pieve a Presciano, December 1993 Taken from *Nonsites* , Studio Legale Gallery, Caserta, 2005 already in *Luca*

Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other , 2020, p. 44

[12] Milan, December 16, 1998 Taken from *Italia due* , “Riga” no. 17, edited by Marco Belpoliti and Elio Grazioli, Marcos y Marcos, Milan, 2000, formerly in *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 125

[13] Milan, June 1996 Taken from *In the shadow of time* , Emilio Mazzoli Editori, Modena, 1996, formerly in *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 79

[14] *Extruded Intruder* , taken from the catalog of the *Extruded Intruder* exhibition , Galleria Mazzoli, Modena, 2001, formerly in *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 136

[15] *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclical landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 82

[16] *Landscape of passage* , taken from the text for *Piano With Landscape* , edited by Pietro Gaglianò, Teatro Stabile Krypton, Scandicci, 2012 already in *Luca Pancrazzi - Varied cyclic landscape. I disperse and go on leaving one step behind the other* , 2020, p. 208.



ILARIA MARIOTTI LATEST ARTICLES

she is an art historian and curator. You teach Contemporary Art History at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. From 2000 to 2012 you worked for the Teseco Foundation for Art. Since 2010 you have been directing the Expressive Activities Center of Villa Pacchiani in Santa Croce sull'Arno (PI) where you have curated several exhibitions and their respective catalogs. Among the most recent of her are the personal exhibitions of Alfredo Bosco, Francesco Carone, Luca Pancrazzi. Since 2013 you have been continuously designing itineraries involving international artists and companies in the Santa Croce sull'Arno area (for the editions made up to now with the artists Moataz Nasr, Loris Cecchini, Giovanni Ozzola, Ornaghi & Prestinari, José Yaque, Nari Ward , Zhanna Kadyrova).