

Turin, Italy, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Back in 1969 I was an eighteen-year old student, and I had my first exhibition with my teacher, Riccardo Chicco, at the Cassiopea Art Gallery in Turin. During that exhibition, despite the satisfying remarks made by Angelo Dragone during a presentation and some discreet success that resulted in the selling of some of my works, I realized, at first quite vaguely and then increasingly clearly, that it was *necessary* for me to make a radical choice.

This choice was between two options. *EITHER* I could choose to put on the artist's clothes, to see my colleagues often, to become visible at well-known Art spaces, to attend all cultural or pseudo-cultural happenings, to be kept waiting at the anterooms of gallery owners, merchants and critics, to keep an eye on those who would have climbed the career ladder within different organizations, to follow the origin and development of all trends so as to belong to different circles, to try to stand out with some original idea, and to use clichés to disapprove of the establishment while, at the same time, make use of the visibility the same establishment offers,

*OR* I could choose to be completely out of this frame, to be a painter without adhering to the logics and the conventional obsequiousness so characteristic of the market, the institutions and the "reputable rooms." In a word, this was a choice that implied defending my art by doing something different.

Thirty years have passed: I pursued my career as an architect and as an Art History teacher in order to defend and rescue the painter within.

If in 1969 I felt uneasiness and anxiety without any logical explanation and with a deep feeling of distrust towards the militant and theoretical world of Art of those years, today my complete awareness of this reality compels me to make a definite and logical choice.

*What is the point of* me setting up exhibitions in public or private spaces or in galleries which have been the window, the altar, the consecration of everything which in large measure I reject?

*What is the point of associating my own art with what I (correctly or mistakenly) do not consider Art?*

*What is the point of waiting neurotically for the blessing of a critical apparatus which has endorsed the most terrifying things –including itself–, and which in the last decades has oftentimes betrayed the dignity of its real function by taking up roles that it should not be expected to perform?*

*What is the point of tolerating that the lobbies of merchants, gallery owners, museum directors, and officials responsible for funding decide on my destiny; and what is the point of becoming a market share with a fluctuating value within a market whose exponents, ever since World War II, have in most cases been, consciously –or even worse, unconsciously– good-for-nothings?*

*What is the point of being considered someone just in merit of the number of exhibitions, appearances, and reviews –as if the life of an artist could be equated with a bureaucratic career?*

*What is the point of being an accomplice of a perverse apparatus that induces human beings to loose their own freedom of choice and autonomous judgment, that constrains us to keep up with the trends, brands and labels, and that makes us feel alienated if we do not adhere, or pretend to adhere, to the ideas “deprived of any substance” that emanate from the world of intellectuals–this is another real and secret guilty which has allowed the proliferation of those ideas, and in so doing it has become a partner in crime of a cowardly silence just to get a slice of the cake in return?*

*What is the point of flirting with the news, making up findings apparently original and which the more vulgar and sometimes repugnant they are, the more attention they catch? To do so is to ally with the audience of the most hideous television just to erect a deceitful and decrepit castle for oneself.*

*For all these reasons I shall not accept to exhibit or participate in public events and spaces, museums, foundations, national or international institutions that have taken part or have been*

accomplice (oftentimes using public funds) of the great fraud perpetrated against the “users.” Indeed, the public has the right and the duty to put their heads high up and actively reject this smuggling of fake money, to recover their ability to see without recourse to dirty ideological filters, far from the obliged devotion to social myths and the usual unmotivated and self-imposed inferiority complex.

*For all these reasons*, I shall give birth to spaces for exhibition where I will try to show my work and, at the same time, I shall make these spaces available to other initiatives that should strictly observe a code of law and conduct that will regulate these spaces and initiatives.

*For all these reasons*, in these spaces, the collaboration and interaction with the art critics and market will have to be faithful to ethical and artistic standards. With these standards, let us make it clear, we do not pretend to hold an absolute truth, but to respect the values of freedom, dignity and independence.

I do not accept to get on a bus that in the last decades has been packed, in my opinion, with pitiful figures consecrated and celebrated as geniuses and great artists, and which has often been driven by public and private officials, shopkeepers, and sponsors avid for publicity and pestered by the market’s logics, by self-styled intellectuals, by many critics, by museum directors and by representatives of pontifical institutions, all of whom, out of nowhere, became indisputable demiurges, and who with arrogant narcissism or appalling unawareness have deceived the ultimate (or primordial) users of any work of Art, narcotizing, gradually but inexorably, the *inner need* that is present in every human being and that allows the human being to sail across every sea without following anybody’s route, but following the light of the stars in the sky.