

LEARNING FROM 2501 by Fabiola Naldi

These words I write originate from a “systemic revelation”: the renewed fascination for the concept of work in progress and for the aptitude to the process that animates and moves many of the authors who deal with public space and ‘open’ performance.

The title of the well-known Harald Szeeman curated show held at Kunsthalle Bern in 1969, *When attitude become form*, has been recently “rephrased” for an exposition whose aim is to gather together the best interpreters of urban practices.

Among the participants is **2501**, and many other cultural professionals with whom I had the pleasure to work with over the years; rereading Harald Szeeman’s words and the statement of the project as curated at the time, they are still very different from the often extemporaneous aptitudes of these more recent examples.

The idea of process within **2501**’s visual language doesn’t directly question the gesture, the chosen space, or the surfaces involved. Instead, it is the representation of that very same time and space, developed and occupied.

The juxtaposition, the comparison, and, in part, the definition itself of the time the act of painting requires are essential to the artist. It is not a coincidence that *Nomadic Experiment* is characterised by a documentary component and by an authorial one, an intangible archive for all intent and purposes, a virtual location to identify video testaments functional to the reconstruction of the project realisation in its entirety. Piecing all the fragments back together, what is instantly evident is that they function as a synecdoche, that is a part representing the whole, a single “appearance” of sort capable of restoring the absolute sense of the artist’s will.

In a way even the choice of the pseudonym **2501** amplifies this necessity of temporal expansion: on one hand, it identifies his date of birth, on the other, it commemorates the establishment of São Paulo, Brazil, where the artist in his youth lived for four years.

The numeric identity alone represents him in an utterly depersonalised way, removing the contemporary audience’s desire to know everything about the artist, favouring, instead, the attention replaced solely on the evolutionary aspects of the act of painting, drawing (and now also filming and photographing). The creative gesture flow as such is particularly evident in his typical sequences of fluid lines, undulating, almost never interrupted; the transient frequency these presences grab the surrounding space with becomes the medium and the message concurrently, establishing new ‘atmospheric’ relationships with the places involved.

In works like *Dynamic Influences*, as reiterated by the artist himself in different interviews, the approach to the execution originates from the observation of the solar cycle on the surface, namely the effect of light (and shadows) in relation to the diurnal subtle changes. The result is the recording of the act in itself at the moment of action on the wall: no stylistic preparation, no prepackaging of the piece. The direct hold of the support joined with the precipitate of this long vision are combined with the graphic line in the instant it adheres to the architectural “skins” of urban neighbourhoods or abandoned sites.

This aspect is the most incisive element when referring to the practices close to the generally called Street Art: the naturalness of a gesture and of a reflection that is so much sign as much as linguistic passes through a long and attentive observation of aspects both material and conceptual. What remains to the beholder is the immediacy, the inevitable authentication of the ephemeral, of the instantaneous and, at times, even of the fortuitous.

A further demonstration of such operating modes can be found in the great variety of mediums used: spray paint, water-based paint, alcohol-based colours, ceramic, metal, leaves, other natural elements and, above all, Indian ink. At the same time, the simple addition of technological media like videography, photography, sound undoubtedly become a non-accessory component of an expanded planning ability in constant transformation. There is a language though that is capable of combining all these materials and the consequential approaches to their use: the physical act often directed at the enactment of a corporeal performance that completes the works and prolongs them toward a dimension as intangible as imaginative.

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The performing practice doesn't appear only at the time of creation of a specific piece: **2501** moves and so does the point of view (his and ours), he extrapolates details and then mentally repositions them through a displacement concept, an act ready to remodulate both the location and the perspective from which it is observed.

The crucial centre of the creative process becomes the dynamic relation the artist develops in the way he acts, he presents himself, and turns to others. The 'form' of the performance will go beyond its appearance, its objective materiality, placing itself under the mark of the extemporaneous and the flow, of the fugacity, of the immateriality, available only in a given moment and not always organised. This interaction becomes artistic form during performances and in its diverse manifestations.

The work is produced in those space-time locations that Karl Marx defined as interstices, that is no man's land, extraneous to the common rules of relationship, implying previously unknown possibilities of exchange. In this case, the artist and artwork's role is that of creating environments exiled from the norms of everyday life and the mechanism of art economy. This is why many of 2501's pieces appear and disappear, with no interest in their maintenance or safeguard, in the name of a site-specificity that is clearly intentional. It is as if the movement dynamic in itself, the relationship with the necessity of documenting and the constant experimentation with always different places, times, and materials acquires an advantage standing within **2501**'s artistic practice.

For the short documentaries titled Glimpse of America, for instance, the reference is made to a fundamental project of the second half of the Twentieth Century: *Learning from Las Vegas*, shot by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour in March, 1968.

The group studied various aspects of the city, including the commercial language, the lighting, the styles and architectural symbolism. Venturi and Scott Brown, in particular, were inspired by the emphasis of signals and symbols of the famous Vegas Strip, consequentially creating a taxonomy of shapes, signals and indications.

Here the reference to such a long gone piece placed in a distant historical period becomes paraphrase of a precise attitude of research toward the surfaces, the walls, the architecture, the city planning that resonates through the journey of 2501 as essential background to the creation of renewed lines, grids, structures and graphic strokes.

Despite the variable and always in progress context referred to, I believe it is possible to recall the attention to the continuity between the Sixties/Seventies and today's processual and performative drive, in which **2501** proves to be perfectly integrated.

*Born Jacopo Ceccarelli (Milan, 1981), artist **2501** attends Milan Civic School of Cinema and obtains a Visual Communication M.A. at the New Bahaus University of Weimar, Germany.*

He is fascinated by maps, urban/architectural space and its social contradictions in post-capitalist society; for years, he investigates, with the aid of a "machine", the flow of time, its cycle, and its recurrences with their manifold variations; his work develops into an extremely eclectic formal acceptance through movement suspended between post-structuralism and post-situationism.

Years of non-academic education between Milan and São Paulo, Brazil converge into an artistic reflection in constant dialogue with urban topography: his murals are visible around the world, from Milan to London, NYC, Miami, Los Angeles, São Paulo, Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, Ulan Bator, Kiev.

In the past twenty years, he has exhibited in galleries and museums across Europe, United States and South America.

