

Classical / / Exemplary

Dear Giulio, in your work, the classical, shown in the references, the plaster casts of ancient statues, is always evoked as a lost object, a nucleus of truth that is no longer attainable in all its fullness. So what meaning can this word still have for us today? In general, would you agree that one adjective that can sum up all the meanings that our culture attributes to the term "classical" would be "exemplary"?

If, in some of my works, we find the shattering of completed classical forms, it is as an allusion to the "breaking up" – but not the disappearance – of something that endures through time: those fragments, if put together again, would rediscover the original form, just as every turning point in the history of art doesn't deny what has happened before, but rearranges the same ingredients in continually different combinations...

The images that unfold along the complex pathway of the history of art follow one after the other, without negating those that came before but grasping transit of a dialogue that appears to be different, but is basically still the same.

So the images that appear through various epochs generate a sort of continuity that does not manifest itself explicitly, but constitutes the true pathway along which what we call "classicism" unfolds: it is something that passes through the course of Time without producing particular signs, but inducing confirmations and expectations in a perfect equilibrium.

The exemplary nature of what we mean by the classical is, for example, silence, the absence of particular calls or announcements.

The classical does not speak, but it makes itself heard, showing all other expressions to be transitory and relative. So the eternal nature of the classical imposes itself in silence, without having recourse to particular truths but through its "necessity", through the unspoken word, unsaid yet always "heard".



Giulio Paolini **L'ermafrodito** (The Hermaphrodite) 2016/2017
Prepared canvases, plaster casts, digital print on acrylic textile, painted wood pallet. Overall dimensions 85 x 350 x 180 cm
Photo by Luciano Romano. Courtesy Galleria Alfonso Artiaco, Naples. Collezione Alfonso Artiaco, Pozzuoli

