

Les aventures de la dialectique (II), 1992

Lithograph

29.7 x 21 cm

Edition of 100 in Arabic numerals plus 30 in Roman numerals

Edizioni Essegi, Ravenna

Against the backdrop of a tree-lined avenue, a white frame contains a double plant graft. Rising up from a tree in the middle of the street is another tree, from which two other trees, a cypress and an oak tree, are growing one inside the other. Strewn about in the foreground are the photographic fragments of another landscape, as if it were the torn image revealing to the gaze the view beneath. Even the title implies the intersection between two different references: on the one hand, the citation of the eponymous book by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (*Les aventures de la dialectique*, 1955), and on the other the evocation of the famous painting by René Magritte (*Éloge de la dialectique*, 1937).

As the numbering in the title indicates, the edition corresponds to the second variant of a theme that was begun in 1975. The artist recalls the first version in these terms: “The work on paper arose from a photograph taken by my wife, Anna Piva, in Tuscany. As I was walking I was taken aback by a cypress that had grown inside an oak tree. By joining to this picture several fragments representing other landscapes I created a co-penetration of images, a montage of sky on sky and water on earth, echoing the arboreal co-penetration. The ‘adventures’ of dialectics are the supposed contradictions towards which dialectics can lead us”.¹ In the print, Paolini juxtaposes this original image with a new arboreal graft photographed on the street. It is a sort of *mise en abîme*, where the eccentricity of the natural world is the protagonist.



¹ G. Paolini in conversation with I. Bernardi, 26 March 2013.

Bibliographical references

Impressions graphiques. L'opera grafica 1967-1992 di Giulio Paolini (Turin: Marco Noire Editore, 1992), 1992-95 supplement, cat. no. 87.

Entry by Bettina Della Casa