GIAMPAOLO BABETTO

L'ITALIANITÀ DEI GIOIELLI

Florian Hufnagl (Ed.)



L'ITALIANITÀ DEI GIOIELLI

Die Neue Sammlung – The International Design Museum Munich ${\tt ARNOLDSCHE}$

CONTENTS // INHALT // INDICE

GIAMPAOLO BABETTO
JEWELLERY, VESSELS, DESIGN // SCHMUCK, GEFÄSS,
DESIGN // GIOIELLI, VASI, DESIGN
Ellen Maurer Zilioli
VI

JEWELLERY // SCHMUCKOBJEKTE // GIOIELLI XV

OBJECT DESCRIPTIONS // OBJEKTBESCHREIBUNGEN //
DESCRIZIONE DEGLI OGGETTI
XXXIII

CONSTRUCTS BY A SENSUALIST // KONSTRUKTIONEN EINES SENSUALISTEN // COSTRUZIONI SENSUALI Dorothea Baumer XXXVII

VITA GIAMPAOLO BABETTO XLVI

PRIZES, AWARDS // PREISE, AUSZEICHNUNGEN // PREMI, ONORIFICENZE XLIX

SOLO EXHIBITIONS // EINZELAUSSTELLUNGEN // MOSTRE PERSONALI XLIX

GROUP EXHIBITIONS ${\mathscr M}$ AUSSTELLUNGSBETEILIGUNGEN ${\mathscr M}$ MOSTRE COLLETTIVE LI

WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS ${\mathscr M}$ ARBEITEN IN ÖFFENTLICHEN SAMMLUNGEN ${\mathscr M}$ COLLEZIONI PUBBLICHE LIV

SELECTED REFERENCES ${\mathscr M}$ AUSWAHLBIBLIOGRAFIE ${\mathscr M}$ SELEZIONE BIBLIOGRAFICA LV

GIAMPAOLO BABETTO

比为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertong

CONTENTS // INHALT // INDICE

GIAMPAOLO BABETTO
JEWELLERY, VESSELS, DESIGN // SCHMUCK, GEFÄSS,
DESIGN // GIOIELLI, VASI, DESIGN
Ellen Maurer Zilioli
VI

JEWELLERY // SCHMUCKOBJEKTE // GIOIELLI XV

OBJECT DESCRIPTIONS // OBJEKTBESCHREIBUNGEN //
DESCRIZIONE DEGLI OGGETTI
XXXIII

CONSTRUCTS BY A SENSUALIST // KONSTRUKTIONEN EINES SENSUALISTEN // COSTRUZIONI SENSUALI Dorothea Baumer XXXVII

VITA GIAMPAOLO BABETTO XLVI

PRIZES, AWARDS // PREISE, AUSZEICHNUNGEN // PREMI, ONORIFICENZE XLIX

SOLO EXHIBITIONS // EINZELAUSSTELLUNGEN // MOSTRE PERSONALI XLIX

GROUP EXHIBITIONS ${\mathscr M}$ AUSSTELLUNGSBETEILIGUNGEN ${\mathscr M}$ MOSTRE COLLETTIVE LI

WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS ${\mathscr M}$ ARBEITEN IN ÖFFENTLICHEN SAMMLUNGEN ${\mathscr M}$ COLLEZIONI PUBBLICHE LIV

SELECTED REFERENCES ${\mathscr M}$ AUSWAHLBIBLIOGRAFIE ${\mathscr M}$ SELEZIONE BIBLIOGRAFICA LV

GIAMPAOLO BABETTO – JEWELLERY, VESSELS, DESIGN

"Descriptive geometry is the indispensable basis for understanding the forms, the relationships and the harmony in a composition." MARIO PINTON

We are indebted to the Albrecht Dürer engraving *Melencolia I* (1514) for one of the most distinguished references to the importance of "applied" geometry to the fine arts. It is a composition notable for its complex symbolic content, featuring the polyhedron and the cube as well as the cone in significant arrangement, elementary geometric forms, therefore, of great metaphorical potency as symbols of time and creation, the expression of a collective world-view, as sacral messages, as synonymous with the artistic research assignment and aesthetic agenda. Thinking in, and with, forms of mathematical origin has belonged since antiquity to the spectrum of sculptural abstraction and design whenever certain information of a symbolic nature have been concerned. A continuously ongoing dialogue has taken place through all periods of art. Moreover, this subject matter has provided a guideline in transferring proportion and weighting, a knowledge of

scale and volume, for experiencing atmospheric qualities, spatial perception and harmony to that Italian legacy of the ideal, which first manifested itself as a multi-faceted agenda, as an autonomous aesthetic in the Trecento, Quattrocento and Cinquecento. At that time, a belief in the unity of the arts prevailed, in the fusion of craftsmanly skill and intellectual invention. In 1540, for instance, Vannoccio Biringucci, a Sienese founder, wrote in his treatise entitled De la pirotechnia, goldsmithing was "an art of intellect and genius", which exacted universal mastery of several disciplines.2 A statement that prefigures the productive co-existence of head and hand represented and taught by Hermann Jünger, for one, as applied to 20th-century auteur jewellery. It is safe to assume that the above mentioned components have entered the consciousness of the Italian Moderns as referring to a "repertory of themes and schemata as standard artistic praxis" drawing on a common and universally accessible historical canon, which continuously provokes a "recurrence" of classical and ancient motifs, certainly also in encrypted contexts.3 There are numerous witnesses to this. In contemporary art jewellery, one might cite Bruno Martinazzi and Giampaolo Babetto. They might be termed kindred spirits yet polar opposites, with more than twenty years' difference in age separating them. Both draw on an ancient "repertory of ideas and lexis", which, in its immediate environs can be read and studied as a "public memory",4 as it were, for drawing different, albeit not entirely opposing, conclusions from it. Scale, ratio, proportion, composition and respect for the tried and tested aesthetic of antiquity are

at the centre of this, forming an unshakeable foundation. On this basis, Martinazzi turned to myth, Giampaolo Babetto, on the other hand, to the experiments and provocations of his generation, which he has absorbed from various sources, regularly monitored and rethought, filtered and re-interpreted in his work. From this, one of the most important and complex œuvres in the genre has emerged over the past forty years. Born in Padua in 1947, Babetto, a multi-talented gold- and silversmith with leanings towards architecture, photography, instinctive observation and alert perception of mundane situations as well as his historical forebears' mastery of their craft, have not by coincidence, as Salvatore Settis has shown in his writings on the vital resilience of ancient topoi, taken to heart Biringucci's pronouncement and is effortlessly brilliant in several disciplines. The nucleus of Babetto's œuvre is jewellery, with furniture design, metal-working. intervention in architectural contexts thrown in – such as the Veneto villa in the Palladian style and the Mitsubishi Headquarters in Tokyo are all part of the mix. What he was initially taught as "craftsmanship" first came from the school of Mario Pinton, the legendary reformer of Paduan concept of jewellery. The core of Pinton's methodology consists in studying matter and "idea", sculptural and spatial valencies. Further, the fundamentally geometricising tendency of the Paduan scene can be traced back to Pinton, its "hallmark" worldwide, with the aim to bring to the surface essence and inherent rules of substance, of the real subject material goldsmiths work with, between concrete existence and the artistic urge and to embed these final aspects in the

construction of a piece of jewellery – all this already a combination of a distinguished past and a modern sequel with other means, as Pinton in Monza bei Marino Marini, Giò Ponti, Giorgio Wenter Marini Babetto has been, like some and others have experienced it. contemporaries of his, contaminated by trends that in the 1960s and 1970s were among Italian innovations, specifically the illusionistic effects of Arte Programmata, Arte Concreta, Arte Cinetica and Op Art, etc, which resulted in a great many comparable statements in jewellery. That was probably merely an episode, which at the same time corresponds to the leanings to abstraction in what is known as the "Paduan School" and, therefore, has left permanent traces, even in Babetto and his work: not only in his early pieces with movable elements but also, for instance, in his recurrent urge to change things, his drive for movement, the effects of light and shade, dynamic, inherent energies and nervy gestures in all his formal inventions, so reminiscent of Informel. All this is articulated, tamed and brought under control in taut constructions and figurations, link chains, in the contours of the Pontormo series, in sophisticated colour compositions, in the contrast between niello, pigment and white gold, in the pulsing Babetto's aesthetic lexis was later surfaces of his silver vessels. affirmed and enriched by encounters with De Stijl and Constructivism as well as the clarifying process of American Minimalism and its spatial works of sculpture, which helped the simplest solids, such as the cube, the square and the cylinder and variations on them, to rise to new heights, to absolute and universal statements in concrete,

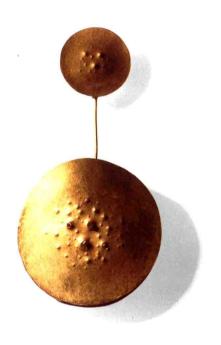
compact phenomena, while at the same time eschewing all reference to European roots or interests in composition. Further, the stringency of Babetto's elementary configurations has been challenged, perhaps even called into question, by forays into Deconstructivism, quotations from figurative art or a turn to chaos and disorder seemingly realised as dissolution or loosening of his otherwise stringent concept. ever, the truth of the matter is that Babetto's work runs in cycles and regularly returns to its core, its starting-point, which is geometry, or never really loses sight of it. The word "comporre" - "to compose" - is pointedly applicable to Babetto's approach to his art. His individual design has developed over quite a long time span and has, so to speak, been able to form itself. That, incidentally, would also be a piece of advice Babetto would impart to his students: to take time and let things mature. Thus, the "Maestro" is able to move confidently on the ground of his manual and mental experience, letting ideas and "brainstorms" rest until they thrust up to the surface of consciousness of their own accord. Sketches and drawing, photographic documentation, living in the Euganean Hills in a natural setting, the view from there into the valley and the unique Mediterranean light play a constitutive role. The Veneto villas, especially Palladio's, Giotto's frescoes in Padua, Renaissance and Mannerist masterpieces in his immediate environment and further away invite reflection on the rhythm and inherent "music" of an artistic intention, on the colour canon, composition and the articulation of space. All these factors create a basis for Babetto's work in jewellery, with the upshot an unambiguous stance: "to frame

a certain quantity of space; give shape to the land it includes so as to turn it into an inhabited area."5 When we have grasped Babetto's grammar of jewellery more precisely, we inevitably encounter particular motifs that signalise the backbone, the soul, the unique quality of his work. One of these is "prospettiva schiacciata", a perspective distorted into spatiality and compressed on a geometric ground-plan or pseudo-architectural structures aligned to a central perspective that are occasionally hidden on the back of pieces of jewellery in unabashed "understatement". Other constants are elements such as a cube that outgrows or replicates itself or rectangles of coloured Perspex that are layered or tied into narrow white gold fillets, which in more recent works stand out rebelliously from the complex configuration in which they are arranged, pushing jewellery to the boundaries of wearability. On the cube especially, Babetto lavishes enormous creative energies, which seems to keep him enthralled as if a chain reaction had been triggered off, bringing forth infinite variations: interlocking cubes, staggered and built structures, arrays and interlocking, diagonal and intersecting configurations. Extremes stimulate inspiration while harmonious proportions and a sensitive deployment of scale and proportion - a timeless guarantee of beauty - mark stabilising influences. Body, image, architecture, sculptural expression and graphic qualities are united in Babetto's work to form a fabric, not only in detail but also in the oeuvre as a whole, as a "body" and as a product of his creative spirit teeming with ideas - a balance between elegance, sensitivity, intelligence, singularity and tradition, historical

references to antiquity and actualisation of them, provocation and goldsmithing craftsmanship, a balancing act between absolute Minimalism (think of his 1980s bar pins) and breaking down geometric stringency by incorporating wild exuberance and deceptive disharmony. In this Babetto shows himself to be classic and avant-garde The category of "functional arts" provides orientation for alike. Babetto's œuvre. He undoubtedly feels an indebtedness to it. At the same time, however, he has completely abandoned its conventions and limitations. Although we might find the Italian term "Gioiello di Ricerca" problematic since it is not really possible to translate it, it is nonetheless more than appropriate when applied to Babetto's work because it really does entail circling around, exploring and penetrating design issues, defining space, sculptural composition in jewellery qua genre, the hitherto valid parameters of which are experiencing an unprecedented enlargement and deepening, a transformation of content that is spiritual, as it were - in the representation of space and perspective, the organisation of matter, in overcoming it and, concomitantly, the application of the "fundamental components of Italian fine art",6 as such, a symbolic language of forms par excellence.7 Babetto, too, is concerned with referring to an overarching reality, a different beauty, by means of his repertory, with extrapolating fragments or quotations from it and adapting them to his jewellery cosmos while always bearing in mind the "infinito", the infinite or universality as aesthetic qualities, invariably clinging to the powers inherent in artistic work and invoking them via his choice of components, by opting for a concisely developed syntax

in his art jewellery. For this he has at his disposal inner, personal archives that provides him with the "stuff" he needs, on which he draws more by sure instinct than scientific accuracy, making use of - Platonic -"universals or forms".8 Finally, to invoke a statement made by Germano Celant on Babetto's work, "la materia si fa animata, si libera del peso e pulsa di immaterialità" 9 ("animate matter, thus liberated from weight and pulsing with immateriality"), we can conclude from this that materiality and spirituality are uniquely united in Babetto's work, that the "discourse" ongoing in this body of work shows up in the concretisation of the substance of this jewellery and its dematerialisation. And this provides an additional reading of this encounter that is so rich in contrasts between mathematically defined organs that are complete in themselves and the wild wraiths that are some of his works from a more recent period or of the translucent, coloured segments of acrylic glass and the stringently regulated compositions in which they figure. To be precise, an artistic agenda that reveals outstanding mastery and introduces this consummate skill into a discipline "jewellery" that, more than any other, is per natura bound up with the material of which it is made, a subtle process that also exacts knowledgeability from the respondent.

- Quoted in Mirella Cisotto Nalon: Padova e la Scuola dell'Oro. In: Exh. Cat. Gioielli d'Autore. Padova e la Scuola dell'Oro. Eds. Mirella Cisotto Nalon and Anna Maria Spiazza. Turin 2008. pp. 20–25; here p. 20.
- Quoted in Alessandro Conti: Die Entwicklung des Künstlers. In: Italienische Kunst. Eine neue Sicht auf ihre Geschichte. Eds. Carlo Ginzburg, Salvatore Settis, Federico Zeri et al, Berlin 1987, pp. 93–230; here p. 145.
- 3 Salvatore Settis: Die Kunst des "Klassischen". Eine Idee im Wandel der Zeiten. Berlin 2004, p. 52.
- 4 Salvatore Settis: Ikonographie der italienischen Kunst 1100-1500. Eine Linie. In: Italienische Kunst. Eine neue Sicht auf ihre Geschichte. Eds. L. Bellosi, E. Castelnuovo et al. Berlin 1987, pp. 9-105; here p. 19.
- 5 Babetto, Gioielli e ... altro, Brussels 2006, p. 51. (exhibition catalogue)
- 6 Salvatore Settis: Ikonographie der italienischen Kunst 1100 -1500, loc. cit.; here p. 199.
- 7 Cf Erwin Panofsky: Perspektive als symbolische Form (1927). In: Aufstäze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft (2nd enlarged ed.), Berlin 1974.
- 8 Cf Ernesto Grassi: Die Theorie des Schönen in der Antiken. Cologne 1980, p. 120 f.
- 9 Gioielli d'Autore. Padova e la Scuola dell'Oro. Eds. Mirella Cisotto Nalon and Anna Maria Spiazza. Turin 2008, p. 124.



此为试读,需要完整PDF请访问: www.ertong