

An artist with multiple experiences, Vittoria Chierici is now exhibiting her work in a gallery showing paintings by young, multitalented artists. I have known her for more than twenty years; she has never neglected research in art criticism, painting and film. In her work, she has always explored the links between topical events and their crossover with culture. Born in Bologna, Vittoria Chierici was close to the “Enfatisti” group and participated in the adventure of the 1980’s. She also attended the School of Visual Arts in New York where she exhibited her work in the Battaglie (Battles) show at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura. When asked to name an artist for an international show in Tokyo, I chose her and titled her section “I tics di Vittoria Chierici” (Vittoria Chierici’s tics). On that occasion she showed a number of paintings, the same in size and color, each one disseminated with signs similar to stenographers’ marks, all having Andy Warhol Coca Cola bottles as its subject. Her neuroses are functional to her explorations. Among the many works by Chierici, it’s important to recall “Palle da tennis” (Tennis balls) whose fluorescent yellow tracks look like balls bouncing randomly on the canvass, or, just the opposite, set in a radial arrangement as the ceiling in Galla Placidia’s mausoleum. It is an attempt at representing complexity. In her life Vittoria cultivates a relationship with mindfulness. She has never failed to fulfill a promise or an obligation. For those who are close to her, her lucidity as an art critic is both nurturing and scary. She has always paid a lot of attention to new means of communication and reproduction. In one of her latest efforts, the “Battaglie di Anghiari” (The Anghiari Battles) Vittoria Chierici joined together computer technology and her manual skill as painter. To make sure her presence was noticed. These “battles” originate from an unfinished and vanished painting by Leonardo, commissioned for Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. All that is left of this work are about 10 small drawings of various episodes from the battle, but not an overall picture. Vittoria discovered that these drawings hint at a circular perspective, almost as if viewed from above, in which the different episodes could be inserted *ad libitum* and in succession of time. Almost like a work in progress. In her numerous reconstructions Vittoria also takes into account descriptions of the unfolding battle made by contemporary chroniclers. A battle is not an image but rather an event whose episodes unfold over time. Vittoria thinks that the difficulties Leonardo faced in giving a complete image to those who commissioned the painting and were interested in a celebratory product stem precisely from this logical quandary, this snag at the very origin of representation. Vittoria had the ingenious intuition that this quandary marks the start of the problems of modernity. Even in her “Tennis balls” paintings the canvasses are a mirror: having received her mark, the canvasses reflect back to us a never ending event. I hope that these notes will be helpful in stimulating some thinking about Vittoria Chierici’s work, which is extremely valuable, both for its artistic merit and as an expression of the contemporary.

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