

Daria Ghirardini, *Weaving colour*
in *Rolando Tessadri, Casa Gallo, 2013*

At first glance, it is impossible to fully understand Rolando Tessadri's complex art; time and attention are required if we are to even partly grasp the meaning of the numerous chromatic and structural vibrations within it. His works, which are based around orthogonal meshes on canvas, call to mind geometric abstract art and the works of great contemporary artists such as Nigro and Dorazio and he uses colour to convey a strong lyrical component. The works presented in this exhibition represent different stages in a coherent, continuous artistic direction, part of a search for new semantics and with a very exact, very minimal language.

The title *Tessiture* (i.e. Weaves) stems from the fact that each work involves an orthogonal grid, which reminds the observer of yarns in weaving. Tessadri creates these works by applying coloured pigment to the surface of a canvas, under which threads have been previously placed parallel to each other both horizontally and vertically. Colour is then removed using soft spatulas like those used in silk screen printing and a process that creates a delicate balance by both adding and removing shades of colour. Using this technique, which is similar to frottage, Tessadri applies a matrix of regular grids to his works. Reiterative and ever-changing at the same time, these present colour in a variety of shades that are brought to life and regenerated when they come into contact with the light. How compact or fine the structure of this mesh of colour is depends on how far apart the artist places the yarns and these acquire varying glows and colour tones that continue to change and interchange, and direct the eye as it undertakes an unlimited perceptual exercise. In this way, Tessadri is able to convey the urgency of an expressivity that can no longer rely on a closed volumetric space but, made up of lines and extensions that interact with one another in a suspended dimension, tries to fathom the most vital, the most dynamic aspects of what has been experienced.

Tessiture does not just focus on presenting a minimal geometric pattern; indeed it almost strives to go beyond the restrictions that geometry imposes, going against any established norm yet without breaking any rules. Tessadri identifies the space (and does not cordon this off) with the alternation of full and empty backgrounds in a constant game of contiguity and distance that forms a multiple fusion of intersecting horizontal and vertical lines, which by their very nature are structured and geometrically ordered. The lines marked out by the artist's activity reveal a different way of seeing and understanding, and add a temporal element (or at least a fragment of this) that inescapably appears to slip away from us as it itself becomes evolving time. Although in conceptual terms the element organises the constituent and essential component of the work, what lasts on the canvas and beneath the colour (the grid – a rigorous sequence of inseparable lines) does not exhaust the communicative tension but instead becomes the first fundamental and founding step in determining heterogeneous spatial and temporal reflections.

The precise, controlled organisation of the woven yarns, which Tessadri dedicates scrupulous attention to, produces chromatic flows and lulls from which a perception of time emerges that is inevitably characterised by introspection; time during which the eye follows the flow of colour, grasps constantly new and different changes in this and proceeds along pathways created by the light in mutual movements from top to bottom and from left to right and back again. Using a consistent and gradual

perceptive pathway created by colour, the artist manages to make the border of the closed and well-defined canvas space therefore seem to appear fainter each time the viewer looks.

The tones Tessadri chooses to use do not strike the observer in an attempt to capture their attention from the first glance. They are not loud and violent but controlled and moderate and invite the viewer not just to see or look but to open up to the start of an experience. Colours differ based on a common basis made up of varying shades of grey with yellow and red hues, whilst more recent works feature coats of white in different intensities. Although the variations in tone are well defined, they seem to be almost impossible to detect and are presented in a soft, subtle way that invites us to enter another temporal dimension in which time organised by the present is perceived as cocooned and diminished: a time in which the observer can pick up on the glowing, tonal vibrations and let feelings, memories and sensations rise to the surface.

Tessadri constantly uses the model (a conceived geometric element that is repeated until a composition standard is established) but it is also unrelentingly contradicted in order to restore the possibility of a hypothetical and heterogeneous direction. Within this, space is presented as a silent, far-off place that hangs suspended in the ephemeral energy of the light and tones down the orthogonal weave so that it almost seems to disappear into the colour, which in turn gradually reveals itself.

In this peculiar artistic path, characterised by a complex agreement between design and essential conciseness and never detached from a rhythmic dialogue with the surrounding environment, the artist chooses to magnify perception, combining various works (either overlapping or side by side) in order to create square or rectangular structures. His compositions follow vertical and horizontal directions within which each individual composition element is conceived as the integral and interacting part of a whole; the specific element maintains all the power of its original identity but also acquires a value that is different compared with an overall creation.

The diversifications and variations that are clear and present in the individual works are now increased in these composite nuclei and gain new life. Tessadri organises his work in such a way that within the compositions one same colour tone takes on grey or white hues by means of a delicate, regular graduation, generating a greater perceptive intensity of the whole when these meet with the light. He lets light give new vitality and dynamism to the soft tones with their minimal contrasts, and reveals a large-scale version of the elementary geometric structure in all its splendor, creating a dialogue and an interchange of references that activates the communicative connections and the links between adjoining elements and various groups of works.

The connections and the links between the essential nature of the action, the study of the light, the desire to open up to a new space and probe the dimension of time are the constant expressions of an art that does not dissolve in the repetitiveness of absolute, closed dogmas but becomes the representative hypothesis of a constantly evolving generative process. With Tessadri, the gaze interrogates the surface unrelentingly but is unable to exhaust its barely perceptible impulses and colour stimuli that seem to be set in the original colour yet also seem to constantly vary in tone. The rhythm of the orthogonal composition and the variation of colour in the individual works (as in the sequences) both encourage an immanent temporality, which is detached from the rapidity of the everyday present in order to comprehend the fragments of an art that finds it hard to reveal everything.

Tessadri tries to guide the observer through a suspended time in which moments are organised by the vibrations of colour, which has been left to slide over and beyond the weave of his works.