

Gabriele Salvaterra, *Contextual note*  
in *Rolando Tessadri, Casa Gallo*, 2013

All works of art are in some way contextual, if for nothing else but the moods that enrich, disturb, and vary our perception in the moment we approach the object. The day, the hour, the light, the air, the smells, and other objects all modify the quality of the work and indeed the quality of any expression of man or nature which our senses stumble upon. That said, there are certain artists for whom context is a fundamental value, the very heart of their work, and certain works are accomplished through what surrounds them or what they contain <sup>5</sup>.

Rolando Tessadri's exhibition pays homage to one of the most important artists of the 20th century, an artist who made contextuality and the art of creating environments, of showing and receiving, one of his trademark features. Carlo Scarpa designed *Casa Gallo* between 1962 and 1965, at the start of what critics called the "winning years": the perfect conclusion to his professional and private life in which his artistic language undergoes a process of formal simplification <sup>6</sup>, creating spaces and making them into ideal organisms for receiving objects and people. *Casa Gallo* illustrates two important ambitions of Scarpa's architecture: creating spaces for men and for art <sup>7</sup>. This building is a home and an exhibition space and, even though it is something we can admire and enjoy (due the organisation of the rooms, the light and the monochrome surfaces that bring it to life), when we go through it we can sense that the real achievement here lies more in its capacity to provide people and art works with the very best context to exist in. This is architecture that stands out as being a means and not an end <sup>8</sup>.

Rolando Tessadri's *Tessiture* are arranged on these walls like a discreet guest would appear in the home of a distinguished host and, like Scarpa's surfaces, they play a subordinate yet key role, with work screening its central nature and pointing instead to the surroundings, to the space, to the light and to the atmosphere that it helps to create. With regards this relationship with space, Tessadri's works also feature a key ingredient and they find constructive elements in the use of light and geometry: a point of contact with Scarpa's architecture.

In preparation for the exhibition, Tessadri's white weaves in his studio in Trentino created a snowy-white, nebulous setting, pure and vibrant. In Scarpa's space they stand up against an artist that made indirect and natural "diaphanous light" <sup>9</sup> his signature style (consider Possagno Plaster Cast Gallery and *Fondazione Querini Stampalia* in Venice). These approaches do not yield to the reasons behind the art and the central nature of the language yet in this very *step backwards* they find one of the main reasons behind the specific artistic process. In the meeting between these two *contextual* personalities, the real protagonists are therefore the effects created by the environment, the light and the atmosphere.

<sup>5</sup> Carlo Scarpa states, "I have not done many works from scratch. I have worked on museums and set up exhibitions, but always in a context. When you have a context, perhaps the work comes more easily" in DALAI EMILIANI MARISA, *Il progetto di allestimento tra effimero e durato: una traccia per le fonti visive di Carlo Scarpa*, p. 43, BELTRAMI GUIDO, FORSTER KURT W., MARINI PAOLA (a cura di), *Carlo Scarpa. Mostre e musei 1944-1976. Case e paesaggi 1972-1978*, catalogo della mostra, Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona - Palazzo Barbaran da Porto, Vicenza, 10 settembre - 10 dicembre 2000; Electa, Milano, pp. 41-52.

<sup>6</sup> BELTRAMI GUIDO, *Carlo Scarpa: gli anni vicentini (1972-78)*, p. 278, in BELTRAMI, FORSTER, MARINI (2000), pp. 276-279.

7 DI MEO ANNA, *Casa Gallo (palazzo Brusarosco), Vicenza 1962-65*, in BELTRAMI, FORSTER, MARINI (2000), p. 280.

8 LOS SERGIO (1995), *Carlo Scarpa. Guida all'architettura*, Venezia - Verona, Arsenale Editrice, p. 10.  
DAL CO FRANCESCO, *Genie ist Fleiss. L'architettura di Carlo Scarpa*, p. 32, in DAL CO FRANCESCO e MAZZARIOL GIUSEPPE (a cura di) (1984), *Carlo Scarpa. Opera completa*, Milano, Electa, pp. 24-71.

9 DI MEO (2000), p. 280; LOS (1995), p. 8, DAL CO (1984), p. 53.