

September 22nd, 2022

I thought it was appropriate, almost necessary, to write this text on Sunday. I didn't consider the procrastination that Sunday (at least mine) always brings, so I wrote it on Thursday.

I have always had a very complicated relationship with Sunday. I often find myself looking forward to it, only to be punctually disappointed. I associate this feeling with a particular Sunday in my childhood, the Sunday when I learned the expression "*andare a monte*" (an Italian expression used when a plan goes awry). There had been a series of unforeseen events that afternoon, including the cancellation of the birthday of one of my elementary school classmates, an event in which I had placed many expectations during the week. That same evening my mother said over the phone to my father, "Pick up the pizzas, so many things *sono andate a monte* for Alberta today, she deserves a nice dinner.". Absurd how such an insignificant event could probably have affected my perception of Sunday. Today I came to the conclusion that the most beautiful part of Sunday has always been its idealization.

I had a long talk with Davide about Sunday. His more idyllic and peaceful vision of this day almost moved me. He told me about his love for the calmness and slowness that this day represents for him; about the almost absent traffic in Acqualagna during Sundays, the bells ringing, and how the last day of the week resembles the life we would perhaps like to live every day.

Although our Sunday ideas do not coincide perfectly, I believe that Davide's new works encapsulate both calmness and idealization; they can therefore be considered "Sunday-like" from more than one point of view. At least from ours.

In the ten paintings of the new series of paintings (Snake, 2022), a snake gradually fills the space of the canvas, though it hardly ever seems interested in its prey but rather in the majesty it gradually acquires as it becomes longer and stronger. On the other hand, the mouse, also present in every canvas, always appears unconcerned about danger, regardless of its position within the painting. A gold leaf illuminates the eyes of both of them, but while the former's accentuates the snake's haughtiness, the latter's emphasizes

its profound tranquillity. Gradually, the paintings become increasingly full, almost suffocating, recalling not only visually the anxiety that could seize the average Nokia 3310 owner. Despite this, anxiety does not seem to assail the little mouse who remains there, leaving his best life, aware that the longer the snake stretches the more he risks tripping over himself. Perhaps that little mouse has discovered how to make every day a Sunday, or it is just waiting for this Sunday to fold in on itself and for the week to begin again. Expectation and calm blend together to generate a strange sense of peace, superior to any kind of adversity, even the most edgy.

Like underground creatures, terracotta money boxes sprout up from the floor to populate the exhibition space. Oversized and almost ridiculous in their uncertain forms, they are designed to fulfil their natural function: to be bought, filled with money and, once full, broken.

Although in more recent times the money box has taken on zoomorphic forms, one above all that of the pig - a symbol of abundance, conservation and good fortune - from which the name "piggy box" itself comes. One of the oldest money box found in Asia Minor was in the shape of a Greek temple, in which there was always a section (the opisthodomos) dedicated to the collection of offerings consecrated to the gods.

Davide Mancini Zanchi's "piggy banks" take on the appearance of fantastic temples, basing their propitiatory forms on cultures now lost in time, but united by the need to believe in luck and to build a ritual, a habit to rely on for peace of mind. And what is Sunday if not a constant promise of tranquillity?

What do piggy banks have to do with the snake and the mouse? Perhaps even Davide does not know that. Davide Mancini Zanchi takes nothing seriously, taking everything seriously. Only people with a marked intelligence have this ability, which, moreover, cannot be considered innate, but rather the result of a long observation of reality, including the ugliest, lowest and subcultural aspects (which are not ugly, low and subcultural by the way) and the more glossy, uplifting and "intellectual" ones. It returns a seriously-ridiculous view of what is observed and for that reason necessarily inconsistent.

Text by Alberta Romano