

## *THE TRAP*

by Stefano Collicelli Cagol

First flashback – Glasgow  
International Festival (2016)

Packed in transparent bags and immersed in toxic liquids with violent colors as those found on the containers next to the kitchen's sink, the fruits and vegetables hold heavy jesmonite sheets. While they lay on the wall, their surfaces are crossed by edges in which one glimpses lenticular images of exotic countries, bought at the market of Porta Palazzo in Turin. Over the threshold of the display, a pineapple spurts water thanks to an irrigation system, the mechanism of which twists visibly within the exhibition.

Second flashback – “Cutis” Glasgow Project Room, Glasgow (2017)

Except for the ceiling, the space as a whole is enveloped by a transparent film, changed into blue, a material usually employed to protect glass during transportation. An electric cable crosses the room, touching all the architectural elements of the space and activating a light as soon as a visitor walks into the exhibition.

Present – “Pathetic Fallacy”, Il Colorificio, Milan (2017)

At Il Colorificio, Marco Giordano presents a project thought in relation to the space, as was the case with the previous exhibitions. The threshold is now a glass compass, found in what previously was the shop's window. A violet film filters the sunlight which enters inside. Some LED plantation lights illuminate the exhibition space, with a light shade which is, as well, mostly violet. These lights are employed in greenhouses to phase the plants' growth according to distributors' and consumers' aesthetic desires. Five long silicon strings make up the artwork called Duuuude, they link the floor to the ceiling, moved by a hidden force according to the rhythm of unknown sequences.

Silicone is one of the substances with the lowest organic material content that can be found today. Thanks to its elasticity, malleability and resistance it is used in several sectors: electronics, cosmetics, toys, the film industry, in different industrial sectors, and in the sex industry.

It contains silicon, a material which is ubiquitous in the everyday technology. In the space of Il Colorificio each string is put into action by an Arduino engine which recognizes only two types of movement – clockwise and counterclockwise – which can be recombined into infinite sequences. Due to its high percentage of inorganic material, silicone is not substantially affected by the variations in the space's lighting.

The LED lamps favor some frequencies emitting the ones that are useful for regulating the development of organic substances. For this reason, they used sheltered from the sunlight, in strictly controlled environments similar to laboratories.

At the same time, their limited light spectrum influences the perception of our surroundings, producing an increasing disorientation. The three-dimensionality of the room, as our senses would usually perceive it, becomes flat. Moreover, in Il Colorificio, the transparency of the thin silicone strings is bound to blend with

the white walls, which are now large violet monochromes. This operation of spatial maquillage transforms the visitors into the only organic subject tests of this artificial laboratory of aesthetic reprocessing.

*Duuuude* appears to be a Hitchcockian McGuffin, a honey trap. The movement and title of the work induce us to project a sort of anthropomorphism towards these creatures. This is what “Pathetic Fallacy”, the exhibition’s title, seems to be referring to. It is a quote by John Ruskin, the English writer of the 1800’s, who referred to the tendency of the romantic poets of his country to attribute human characteristics to nature as a way of getting more acquainted with it. Although the silicone wires could be also mistaken for live creatures such as vines or cobras.

The exhibition’s mechanism works in the opposite way. It is confusing, it doesn’t attempt to make you understand what you do not know. Those who enter are transformed into the real object of research. In a controlled environment, where the artistic intervention is kept to the minimum, Giordano inserts those elements that are deemed crucial for the transformation of an organic body according to aesthetic parameters. From the Sixties on, silicone and filtered light have contributed to the remodeling of the human body. The light absorbs the visitors, *Duuuude* and the spaces of Il Colorificio. Therefore, it is in contrast to the tendency of anthropomorphizing, that which is in motion within the exhibition, but isn’t immediately recognizable. Maybe the title “Pathetic Fallacy” refers to something different. Keeping in mind Giordano’s previous projects, one could consider that what is at play here falls into the category of the abject. Hal Foster sustains that in the 80’s and 90’s the abject was always represented explicitly by contemporary artists – from Cindy Sherman to Mike Kelley – who considered reality as a traumatic event. In recent years though, the strategy has mutated and the abject seems to be in absentia or better yet, it is no longer represented, but just evoked, absorbed or capable of absorbing anyone inside it. No longer solely connected to trauma, the reflection on reality in relation to the abject seems to refer to a more subtle psychological aspect: to the everyday pressure caused by the sensual regime, by the perpetual state of excitement of our *potentia gaudendi* – as foreseen by Paul B. Preciado – the pleasure our bodies can experience. The artist doesn’t limit himself to making visible what is invisible but uses the available technology and the exhibition as a space that institutionalizes the aesthetics of certain social and economic practices. This way, he reflects on the biological condition of the 21st century.

The rotten vegetables immersed in violent colors exhibited in Glasgow are now substituted by Giordano with the bodies of the visitors who are called to activate also this project once they have crossed the threshold.