

Fabrizio Prevedello

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text by
Davide Daninos



Fabrizio Prevedello

Il tuo e il mio tempo, o L'imperfezione è la cima

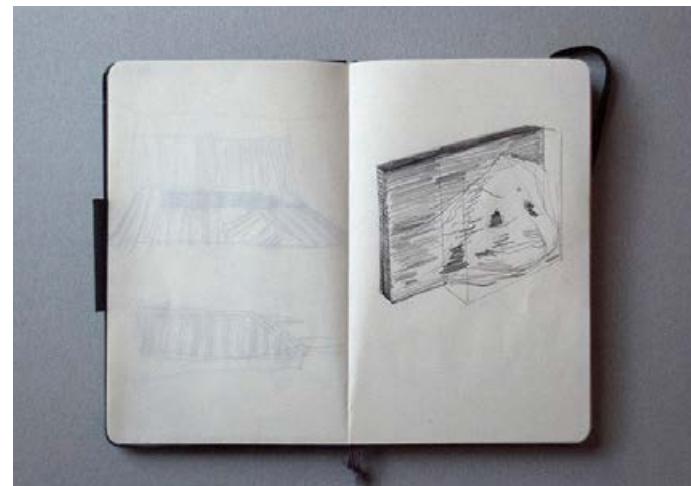
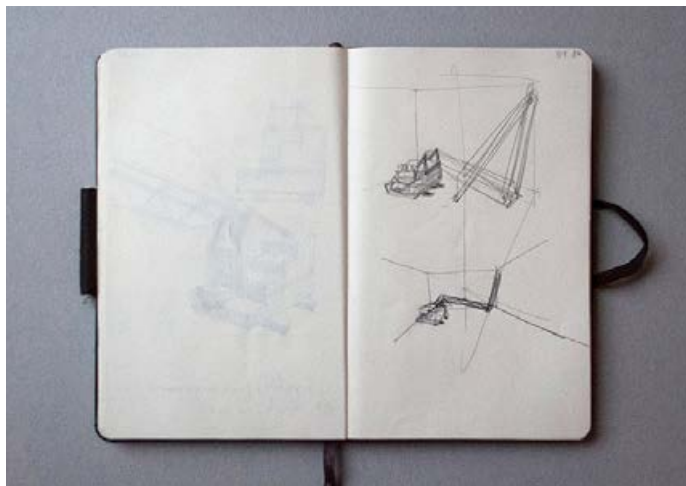
2016

Two elements:

Statuary marble and Bardiglio marble, cm 15,5x11,5x5

Concrete, iron, wood, Bardiglio marble

cm 963x90x105 (variable dimension)



Two works will be displayed inside the stand: one that is large and highly very visible, another that is small and barely perceptible.

The first.

Towards the area's far end, laid on the ground and up against a wall, an iron ladder composed of three jointed elements lies together with its base.

The trellis structure recalls equipment usually seen at construction sites. Its first part is anchored on two heavy concrete blocks placed one on top of the other, which rests on two wooden beams.

The two concrete blocks have three steps whose treading surface has been obtained from slabs of marble scrap.

The second.

A small bas-relief carved into two fragments of marble slab scrap glued together and recessed in the wall depicts the silhouette of Mount Tambura (in the Apuan Alps, Carrara).

The meticulous workmanship reveals a marble quarry inside.

The large sculpture is modifiable, mobile, and parked, as if awaiting some utilization in our busy process of progress.

The bas-relief, therefore the mountain, is immovable, stable. The mountain contains the marble of which it itself is made.

The use of marble in the work laid on the ground is merely marginal and functional, whereas the marble embedded in the wall regains its role as material for sculpture.





Imperfection is the summit

Davide Daninos

There was this:

You had to destroy, destroy, destroy.

There was this:

Salvation is only found at such a price.

You had to

Ruin the naked face that rises in the marble,

Hammer at every beauty every form,

Love perfection because it is the threshold

But deny it once known, once dead forget it,

Imperfection is the summit.

Yves Bonnefoy (1958)

The sky is blue when we begin the ascent to the summit. The air is pure and the sun warms our skin this October Sunday. The crest of the mountain beckons through the golden leaves of the trees that enclose this trail in Lunigiana. A sweet and luxuriant nature welcomes us, inviting us upwards, but as we walk, the forest greenery begins to abandon us rapidly, and is soon replaced by the stony colors of the mountain.

The surroundings gradually dry up and every organic element disappears. The trail beneath our feet starts turning white: we realize we're walking on crumbled wet white Statuary marble debris, and entering the quarryman's world. As if attracted by the ashen faces of the mountain's walls, gray clouds appear, enshroud our view, and begin stinging us with invisible drops of rain. We're following a path in an evaporating landscape, lit only by the blush of the occasional sunbeam filtering through the clouds that tinge the misty blanket enwrapping us.

Above the clouds, the surroundings change again, growing harsher. This section of the mountain is defined by an alien presence. Massive concrete blocks suddenly appear hold tall, slender pylons and dish antennas, modern totem poles left behind in witness of the passage of contemporary giants: inhuman tools built not to human scale but rather to the bulk of the Moloch of progress that wanders on these trails in the Higher Apuan Alps. As the idle guardians of the mountain walls sliced perfectly smooth, steel cables and ladders, cranes, pumps, and pools of standing water herald our arrival at the marble quarry's entrance concealed in the mountain's flank. They appear as verisimilar cathedrals cut into stone, chthonian caverns where the Leviathan of marble industry takes its rest. The noon's dim light reveals rock walls 20 meters straight up before us, and square corridors with no exit. The walls and support columns filter the rain through their cracks and protuberances, filling the silence of this unknown monument whose pained beauty was born in the encounter of the noisy power of Man and the more silent power of Nature with the lumbering echo of countless drops of rain.

Weak monuments

A marble bas-relief embedded within the wall stands hidden from the negligent gaze of hurried visitors. Its camouflage is accentuated by its reduced size that recalls an old photograph, and by the shades of white concealed in the tints chosen for the walls available.

A closer look reveals how the raised white folds that make up the main subject, a portrait of mountain with quarry, rest on a second darker layer of gray marble. In addition to augmenting the depth of image, this Bardiglio marble recreates the temperature of a sky heavy with emotion and renders the chromatic variety of the places it depicts. The mastery with which the white

marble was worked to the thickness of a sliver is no mere expression of technique as an end in itself. The transparency obtained serves to transform, as skillful veiling does in an oil painting, the original whiteness

into a vibrating chiaroscuro thronging with detail.

The subject is no whimsical fantasy, but a real landscape, Mount Altissimo and its Tacca Bianca quarry in the Apuan Alps. These are the surroundings where Fabrizio Prevedello lives, works and continues exploring. This is his subject, his container, and his raw material. The artist continues observing its complexity through the eyes of his primary medium, sculpture, rendering this portrait directly into the material he is portraying live.

The decision to render this landscape in such a non-easily malleable material also allowed the artist to prolong the physical nearness necessary to capture his subject: a tactile and visual proximity that brought him to sculpt the mountain directly on its summit. This direct contact is reflected in the attention lavished on details and in the respect for the view that emerges from such close observation. If we take the time to look at it closely, we are invited to ascend – at least with our gazes – up the hilly paths and along the crests, and reach the entrance to the quarries that by now characterize this area. For both the artist and we that observe it, this sculpture is an instrument of mediation, a preparatory to our participation in this complex site where geological eras, art history, and world wars are laid down alongside the quarryman's daily labors in the layers of a tortuous material and epistemic magma.

The practice of embedding images into buildings is probably as old as marble quarrying itself. This desire to present a bas-relief, however, was born after the encounter with a commemorative plaque to the memory of the passage of a division of the US Army during the Italian campaign along the Gothic Line that ran right through these valleys and mountains¹. The size and the method of presentation of this bas-relief is a tribute, and as such this sculpture assumes the value of a commemorative image: it also recalls a passage, a weak, portable monument dedicated to its own execution. It's a cast, a trace left behind of the activity of Man on these mountains. The depiction of this ancient and classic landscape has, in fact, been interrupted by a recent gash in the side of the peak that penetrates it through and through, and it will be the same again. The marble has succeeded in registering, with its last forces, the memory of its place



Anonymous artist, plaque commemorating the 92nd Infantry Division of the 5th US Army, Giustagnana, *post* 1944
(Copy made by *frottage*, graphite on paper, 2005)
cm 15,5 x 11,5



Fabrizio Prevedello

**Il tuo e il mio tempo, o L'imperfezione
è la cima, 2016 (*detail*)**

Statuario and Bardiglio marble, cm 15,5x11,5x5

of origin. This landscape, inevitably destined to change, is in this way preserved in the material memory of this modern effigy.

Bachelor machines

Two blocks of concrete with rounded edges, bearing the marks of the wood of their own formworks, stand on two wooden beams inserted beneath them to assist a possible relocation.

A long iron arm divided into three parts protrudes from the block on the left. The arm's triangular structure recalls the boom of a crane, but the presence of horizontal rungs suggests its use also as a ladder. The boom rests firmly against the wall before extending lifelessly onto the ground, awaiting new destinations.

This second sculpture is a *bachelor machine*, the masculine counterpart of the feminine portrait of the mountain. It's a synecdoche, a gathering of images, instruments and experiences originated once again by the passage of Man through the Apuan Alps. It's the daughter of the steel cranes and the ladders we happen to find at the quarries, but it's bachelor, to the extent that it is not associated with any function of machine in our material world.

Not only does its boom rest listlessly without destination on the ground, its reduced scale precludes all possibility of profitable mechanical use. On the contrary, like any bachelor machine released from every linear destination², its value as a metaphoric instrument allows us to continue our mental journey through this emotional landscape. "A machine is an apparatus designed to produce, to communicate or to transform movement. Whether or not the machines in question happen to be materially feasible makes no difference to their essential nature. They are first and foremost *mental machines* the imaginary working of which suffices to produce a real movement of the mind" (Michel Carrouges, "How to place the bachelor machines", in *Le machine celibi/ The bachelor machines*, 1975, pp. 43-44).

If we come closer and observe the structure in its detail, we can see how the concrete front, with its modular, construction site aspect, conceals

one side that is more sheltered from the hurried glances of passers-by. Inside, the sculpture opens and reveals a rise composed of three steps cut into the concrete with the insertion of splinters of marble of a size sufficient (no bigger, no smaller) to contain the artist's work boots.

This ascent invites us to a new movement, a new mental and empathetic exploration through the potential ascent this structure offers. The use of slabs of marble found lying around the artist's studio recalls the practice commonly adopted by quarrymen of inserting work scrap in the concrete and marble steps they built into the mountain's walls to make their daily climb to the workplace easier. This idea of achieving the maximum result with whatever is available is one Prevedello holds dear. The artist rarely seeks the skills of others in the creation of his works, which are often composed of scrap material themselves recovered from disused quarries, mills, or hardware abandoned throughout the area. At the same time, we are invited to experience both the quarryman's poetry and precariousness: the sculpture re-traces the long hike he makes daily, in the rain under a gray sky, up Mount Altissimo's sharp slope.

The fragments of marble, horizontal here against the vertical plane of the bas-relief, evoke more pressing and humble needs than sculpture's higher, classic purpose of portraiture. This juxtaposition has no intention of denigrating or lowering the value of these steps. It demonstrates instead the respect the artist has for this material, which is capable of both representing the mountain to imperishable memory and transporting us physically and mentally upwards. The desire to do justice to this material is, in fact, the force behind the turning of the cogs of this symbolic machine. Such mental landscape develops before our eyes as we walk and continue ascending the steeper and steeper rungs of this interrupted ladder in which our sculpture is concluded.

For this reason, the silent presence of the sculpted mountain is important. She is fixed, immobile, far from all the fuss we make with our transitory constructions. Together, the two sculptures compose a single apparatus capable of transporting the viewer's experience towards potential emotional and physical scenarios, filtering it through the rarified gears of this



bachelor machine that includes all the elements present: marble, Man's work tools, and the sky that shelters both.

The continuing activities of destruction, transformation, and human activity in the territory is suggested and represented by the encounter between different natural and industrial materials. The emotion aroused by exploring these places – romantic by tradition but critical in application – tightens the chest, awakens the mind with oxygen, and moistens the eyes that observe all this beauty. Such is the raw material with which Fabrizio Prevedello models his sculptures: they are aesthetic objects capable of generating consciousness by means of the not accidental encounters between different kinds of materials and stories. These sculptures are matter, but also figures of rhetorical expression. Silent poems reified in concrete, marble, and iron, dedicated to both the beauty and the brutality that defines the climate of this Italian landscape.



¹ The 92nd Infantry Division of the 5th US Army that served in Italy in 1944-1945 known as the “Buffalo soldiers”, a nickname given to the Afro-American cavalry soldiers by Native Americans in the 1800s. This plaque – originally embedded on the walls of a home near the artist’s studio – is no longer available because it was forcibly removed and stolen soon after the artist saw it. A copy survives on paper thankfully through the artist’s *frottage*.

² On this topic, *The bachelor machines*, edited by Harald Szeemann (1975), for example: “Unlike real machines and even the majority of imaginary machines [...], to begin with, the bachelor machine appears first of all as an impossible, useless, incomprehensible, delirious machines. [...] This is of little importance. The bachelor machine has no reason of existing in itself, as a machine governed by the physical laws of mechanics or by the social laws of utility. It is a semblance of machinery, of the kind seen in dreams, at the theatre, at the cinema [...]. Governed primarily by the mental laws of subjectivity, the bachelor machine merely adopts certain mechanical forms in order to simulate certain mechanical effects. Only when the signs of this subjective determination are gradually revealed does the fog of absurdity lift and the dawn of an implacable logic begin to rise” (Michel Carrouges, “Directions for use”, in *Le machine celibi/The bachelor machines*, 1975, p. 21).

References

Yves Bonnefoy, “The Imperfection is the Summit”, in *New and Selected Poems*, edited by John Naughton and Anthony Rudolf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 38-39. First edition: *Hier Régnant Désert* (Paris: Mercure de France 1958).

Le machine celibi/The bachelor machines, edited by Harald Szeemann (New York: Rizzoli International, 1975). First edition: *Le machine celibi* (Venice: Alfieri Edizioni, 1975).

English translation by Craig Allen.













Fabrizio Prevedello

Altissimo (89), 2013/16
Statuario and Bardiglio marble
cm 15,5x11,8x5



Instudio. Fabrizio Prevedello, 2015

HD video, colour, sound, 8'
courtesy: in-studio.net

Instudio is an online archive entirely devoted to the analytic inquiry of the Italian artists' workplace, be it material or immaterial, theoretical or practical. *Instudio* will try to gather in one single archive multiple experiences and evidences of the meaning and the life within a studio in our contemporary panorama. Instudio is realised thanks to the openness and the collaboration of the artists involved.

www.in-studio.net





Fabrizio Prevedello

S.T. (62), 2011
green marble, iron, plaster
cm 50x40,5x33,5



Fabrizio Prevedello

S.T. (63), 2011
marble, plaster cast, iron
cm 98x67x17

Fabrizio Prevedello (Padova, 1972)

1995 - 2002 lived and worked in Berlin, Germany

Since 2002 lives and works in Versilia (LU), Italy

Esposizioni

- 2016 “Hidden View”, Amt für Kultur- und Sportmanagement, curated by N. Ismail and B. Naumann, Offenbach am Main (DE)
“Il mare come Caselli non lo fa nessuno”, Cardelli e Fontana Opificio Vaccari, S. Stefano Magra (SP)
“Di bosco e di riviera”, Minazzana (LU), curated by Chiara Camoni
“Intervallo di confidenza”, Galleria Comunale d’Arte Contemporanea di Monfalcone, curated by Daniele Capra, (GO)
“Piccolo compendio d’istruzioni di Pittura vol. II”, Galleria Bianconi, Milano Artissima, personale allo stand Cardelli & Fontana, Torino
ArteFiera, personale allo stand Cardelli & Fontana, Bologna
- 2015 “In your dreams I am a landscape / Nei tuoi sogni sono un paesaggio”, curated by L. Rigotti and D. Pezzi, Ateliersi, Bologna
“Bisogno di ispirazione/Need for Inspiration”, personal show curated by Mun ange, Crissolo (CN)
“Passi Erratici/Erratic footsteps”, Museo Nazionale della Montagna, curated by Stefano Riba, Torino
“2° visionado de portafolios” OTR. espacio de arte, Madrid (E)
“Erste Episode: Dachboden Scheidswaldstrasse 5”, personal show, moz_a, Mobiles Zentrum für ästhetische Avantgarde, Frankfurt, (DE)
“Bestie,arbusti e artifici / Animals, shrubs and artifices”, curated by Veronica Mazzucco, Spazio Arka, Vicenza
- 2014 “Luce/Light”, CAMEC - Centro Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, personal show curated by Francesca Cattoi, La Spezia
“BG3 Biennale Giovani”, Accademia di Belle Arti, curated by Renato Barilli, Guido Bartorelli, Guido Molinari, Bologna
“Il collasso dell’entropia/The Collapse of Entropy”, Museo d’Arte Contemporanea, curated by A. Zanchetta, Lissone (MB)
“Blueshift”, Localedue, curated by Gabriele Tosi, Bologna
“I baffi del bambino”, Lucie Fontaine, curated by Luca Bertolo, Milano
“Prière de toucher 3”, MARS, curated by Giulia Brivio and Ermanno Cristini, Milano
- 2013 “Apologia/Apology”, Civil Marble Museum, curated by Federica Forti, Carrara (MS)
“Costellazione #2”, Cardelli e Fontana Gallery, Sarzana (SP)
“Alessandra Andriani, Luca Bertolo, Chiara Camoni, Fabrizio Prevedello”, Casabianca, Zola Predosa (BO)
- 2012 “Sistema fisico/Physical system”, MDT Studio, curated by Serena Trinchero, Prato
“Verde”, personal show curated by Iliaria Mariotti, Cardelli e Fontana Gallery, Sarzana (SP)
“Storytellers”, Superfluo Project, curated by Caterina Benvegnù, Padova
“Costellazione”, Cardelli e Fontana Gallery, Sarzana (SP)
“13 Premio Cairo”, nominated by Ludovico Pratesi, Museo della Permanente, Milano
“Artisti in residenza“, under the auspices of the “Laboratorio” project hosted by Luigi Presicce, MACRO, Roma

- 2011 “Sei gradi di separazione/Six degrees of Separation”, curated by Ilaria Mariotti, S. Croce sull’Arno (PI)
 “Meriggio a Carignano”, curated by Ludovico Pratesi, Carignano (LU)
 “Grisaille”, Margini Gallery, Massa
 “Azimut”, curated by Alice Ginaldi, Sospirolo (BL)
 “Per arrivare qui, il sentiero davanti alla scuola/To get here, take the trail that starts behind the school”, Novella Guerra Gallery, Imola (BO)
 “Fa un po’ freddo ma non preoccuparti/It’s a little cold, but don’t worry”, personal show curated by Luigi Presicce, Brown space project, Milano
- 2010 “Mentre ti aspetto/While I wait for you”, branch of BNL bank in Via Brera, personal show curated by C. G. Artese, Milano
 “Letargo/Lethargy”, with Adriano Nasuti Wood, MAGra Museum, Granara (PR)
 “Rendere parole alle parole/Rendering words with words”, personal show curated by Luigi Cerutti, Cardelli e Fontana Gallery, Sarzana (SP)
 “Less concreteness”, with Sara Enrico, MARS, Milano
- 2009 “S.t.” Nicola Ricci Gallery, Carrara (MS)
 “L’inverno esiste, prove ed esempi/Winter exists: proof and examples” with Luca Bertolo, MARS, Milano Artist Run Space, Milano
- 2007 “Look@me!”, Kunstquartier 2007, Berlin, Germany
 “<1”, MAGra Museum, Granara (PR)
 “La Scienza e la memoria/Science and Memory”, curated by Chiara Camoni, State Archives of Naples, Napoli

Workshops, residences, special projects

- 2016 “Hidden View”, residence curated by N. Ismail and B. Naumann, Offenbach am Main (DE)
- 2015 “Cervino, Passi erratic/Matterhorn, erratic footsteps”, residence curated by Stefano Riba, Breuil-Cervinia (CN)
- 2013 “Tempo Zulu/Zulu Time”, curated by Francesco Carone, Gregorio Galli, Bernardo Giorgi, Christian Posani, Siena
 “A Guilmi non piove mai/It never rains in Guilmi”, residence, Guilmi Art Project, curated by Lucia Giardino and Federico Bacci, Guilmi (CH)
 “Database-Carrara”, residence, curated by Federica Forti, Carrara (MS)
- 2012 “Made in Filandia”, residence, Filanda di Pieve in Presciano (AR)
 “Laboratorio” with Luigi Presicce, residence, MACRO, Roma
- 2011 “Dolomiti contemporanee/Contemporary Dolomites”, residence, curated by Gianluca D’inca Levis and Alice Ginaldi, Sospirolo (BL)
- 2010 “Solid Void”, with Giovanni Morbin and Gian Antonio Gilli, curated by Diogene, Torino



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