

*I Had To Be In The Woods* is the title of a painting by Gianni Pisani, painted in 1964, in which we can find the traces of his uninterrupted journey through the world of forms - a fabulous, mythical, symbolic, and surreal world that seems to represent continually a new and unlimited existence. This painting is "held together" by necessity, by expectation, and a strong attraction to the EARTH. It places itself in the realm of art which realizes itself by means of a series of objects, of fragments, of opacities and transparencies which exhibit a rigorous, chromatic, enchanting, and evocative equilibrium. In this painting, composed a long time ago, there are, however, the traces of a path YET TO COME IN THE FUTURE which seems to prefigure a kind of phenomenological diary. This diary moves according to the rhythmic variations of the Ego, in the modes of a subjectivity which penetrates things and tries to fathom the most secret recesses of the earth. Here, in the EARTH of Gianni Pisani, we find ancient memories, symbolic figures, and the fable of the origin of the uncontaminated and the pure. On this fractured, recomposed, and journeyed-over EARTH, the stars loom in both a threatening and serene manner. They seem to fall down on us, grand and infinite as they are, yet stable and far away beyond the horizon of the world. In these stars many memories have gathered, and along with them, the COLLECTIVE MEMORY of something that might happen, that MUST happen - a threshold, a limit which orients us and permits us to go beyond an unsettling POIESIS written in colour. Certainly, we can find analogies (and they are obvious) between the art of Pisani and the fabulism of Chagall, between the geometries of the Neapolitan artist and the world of Klee. But here, beyond certain opportune references (one could also legitimately speak of a "modern use" of the idea of perspective and space worked out by Giotto ...) we find ourselves confronted with the UNIQUE birth of a new artistic territory. We have a picture that has its being in all things, in the story that it hides, and in the plot, it creates. And at the same time, taken all together, the picture is outside of everything. It lives in peripheral and marginal zones that are continually reconnected and given NEW SIGNIFICANCE with the infinite transformations of the Ego. Rilke once wrote in a letter: "One way or another I too must do something not material, but rather written - a reality produced by my art. In one way or another I too must discover the infinitesimal element, the nucleus of MY art, the concrete immaterial means of representation ...". The IMMATERIAL CONCRETE, so it seems to me, characterizes the forms and figures of Pisani. It tells us of his vicissitudes, of the situations in which he found himself, his utopias, his gestures, his sayings, and his transparent illusions. The tomb of the dog Giorgio, the death of the father, the boats, the sails, the great fisherman, the fish; and then ... absent, lost eyes staring heavenwards, mouths, jacket collars, objects, things, spurious materials: all these are the living forms of an intricate, contradictory world over which "hang" the distant stars. These stars are both incommensurately distant and yet so very present in our existence, as signs of our destiny. FORMS, which are also present in absence, in silence, the enigma of the living: on which there is the stamp of an archaic religion, of a naturalistic cosmology, torn between its roots in the earth and the flight to the atypical spaces of the imaginary. Here then, from the gaiety of colours emerges the light of the world; and then a mythical navigation in regions beyond time; and figures, coffins, arranged in a surreal procession. Double perspectives, variations, anxieties: the knife for a murder and salvation; the path in the woods and death, then, a raft which protects us from the world. This is the POIETICO world of Gianni Pisani, made from luminous images, from twilights, mysterious correspondences, and arabesques; and from particulars that appear insignificant at first glance, but, in the end, ARE RESOLVED in a perennial reaching toward heaven. From a survey of all these images, the most significant part of a painting is that it turns things upside-down in a fundamental way-it deconstructs the order of things and reconstructs everything on a plane of a spiritual invention that obeys, in any case, simple and essential laws. It is a FABLE inhabited by ancestral beliefs, by monsters, by hypotheses, by metaphysics, by problems, by images without objects, by myths. Pisani knows that myths are the soul of our actions and our loves, and above all, he knows that "we can act only according to the spiritual; we can love only that which we ourselves create".