

## **DISEASE (this is) - Franco TORRIANI**

Work and support: the *Disease* video by Dario Neira is based on a Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR). The subject is a male human being. The NMR examination is relatively invasive. The subject experiences it through the discomfort of physical and noise constraint, of a relationship with the sickness, and of further environmental discomfort (*disease*).

The author's comment seems to me to be a scientifically intimate. It concerns a man who simultaneously lives through a physical and internal experience, with an acoustic content which, however it is processed, repeats the soft dull sound heard inside the appliance. The sound of the machine's door closing, at the start of the NMR, adds a roughly authentic element to a process, which in Dario Neira's view, begins with a man 'under observation', immersed in a kind of claustrophobic soliloquy, lasting some long moments, and arrives at some recurring concepts of his research: the body, thus in essence human beings, the body's mapping and fragmentation in the quest for a common uniting value, for a relationship with creativity and symbolic expressions.

In this, his first video work (*Disease*), portrait and landscape, in the view of Neira - who has a professional scientific education - interweave in a voyage which is partly inside and outside the body of the exhibited subject. The approach is interdisciplinary, and, as is customary, human sensitiveness is accentuated to the limits of suffering - and sometimes beyond them - in the presence of any condition that accelerates and increases the hostility of our habitat. In the first part of the video, the continuous flow of internal organs, their unceasing visual fragmentation, de-sublimates the body, turning it into a symbol. In the second part of the video, the one aimed at the outside of the body of the subject undergoing NMR, Dario Neira, in common with other artists, aware of the relationship between arts and sciences, focuses on the relationship between human beings and technique, between common, biological identity and personal historic identity (1).

Skin, the key concept of Neira's artistic path, is seen as 'part of a whole', as already occurs in many of his works and installations. Here it is configured both as a screen and as an organic landscape, and, lastly, as a text that reveals a personal story, through hairs, nevi ('beauty spots') and other characteristics of a surface with a language, one that 'speaks'...

The skin also perceived as an interface, a place of transit and subtle transformations (2). The skin-body dual-concept remains one of the essential points of Neira's artistic path. Skin seen as that part of the whole which, in addition to being a test revealing mankind - and I should add, perhaps revealing several living species - by appropriate de-positioning intervention, can lead us to a repositioning of the world's human beings (NMR as a metaphor of creative, artistic and interpretative intervention and of its behaviour?).

Furthermore, skin, connected to pain and discomfort, is a recurring theme in human culture - it was Nietzsche who held the view that human beings are a sickness of the Earth's skin.

*Disease*, Neira's video work, also refers to - although this is not its main purpose - another very interesting metaphoric expression: the one linked to the contagion, discomforts and stress of information.

It is not a paradox to say that, today, reference is made from several directions to the relationship between discomfort (in the medical sense) and culture, although it has been comprehensively shown that an axiology of discomfort is a very complex matter (3).

1) Luc dell'Armellina, *Idée,peau,interface*, in "Anomalie- Interfaces" (digital\_arts n.3), by Emanuele Quinz, Madelaine AkTyPI, Paris, March 2003. Luc dell'Armellina, in his essay, quotes the ethologist Boris Cyrulnik, in whose view "*all information is written in the*

*biological sphere*". ( <http://www.anomos.org>),

(2) *ibid.* Luc dell'Armellina.

(3) On the subject of information discomfort, see the leading article by Andrew Goffey, *Contagion and the diseases of information*, in *Fibreculture*, issue 4, 23.05.2005, <http://journal.fibreculture.org/issue4/index.html> (essays, among others, by Eugene Thacker, Roberta Buiani, Jussi Parikka, and Stamatia Portanova).