

Enrico Pierotti  
*Looking at Trees*  
curated by Alex Urso

Using painting as a way to explore landscapes; observing them and codifying them on canvas, picking up on the most poetic and silent aspects. This is the premise behind the work of Enrico Pierotti, a young artist from Fano's inland region. He is being featured in a solo show (the first in his journey), which brings together a body of recently created works.

The theme is nature, as represented with a series of panels and canvases (almost all of which are mid-sized or large), starting from observing reality to then travel in a more dreamlike, evocative direction: the main elements of the works – hills, forests, and ploughed fields – seemingly “melt” into each composition, making landscapes the subject of a narration that gives way to the imaginary. *“In my work, I try to place a greater focus on weaving together the symbolism, contact, lines, balance, and harmony among forms and colors in order to create a poetic vision of nature. The subjects in the paintings are embodied by the juxtaposition of these elements, and they vanish on the surface of the canvas blending together, to allow for nothing but the colored surface to emerge. Color and composition interact on the canvas in a scattered manner, and the gaze is meant to get lost,”* says the artist. Many of these works lead to a sense of bewilderment, with the appearance of small poetic compositions: gentle, silent narratives; tributes to the freedom of man, who sees taking on nature as a tool for inner elevation.

#### LANDSCAPES AS A WINDOW UNTO ELSEWHERE

Moreover, the spiritual theme is certainly no coincidence. If we think back to the charmed history of landscape painting, it is rare that this genre has merely focused on simple, straightforward reproductions of the places observed. More often, and especially since the Nineteenth Century, *en plain air* paintings have been seen as an attempt by artists to establish a dialogue with their subconscious and emotions, translating onto canvas the inner impulses of those who see a spiritual dimension in nature – a mirror unto themselves – in an attempt to elevate themselves toward infinite, divine purity. *“My eye wanders across the valley to the pine woods which fringe the opposite side, and in their aspect, my eye finds something which addresses itself to my nature. Methinks that in my mood I was asking nature to give me a sign”*, wrote Henry David Thoreau in one of his diaries. He spent his life trying to establish a profound relationship with nature, wandering through American forests seeking escape and trying to make peace with the world. The title of Pierotti's exhibition, *Looking at Trees*, is a reference to one of the writer's most famous poems, creating a link between the artist's visual production and the writer's philosophical, naturalistic vision.

#### AGAINST THE RHETORIC OF LANDSCAPES

Beyond any "romantic" digressions, there is an aspect of Enrico Pierotti's work that makes his paintings urgent in ways, offering new insights to reflect upon when it comes to the themes seen on his canvases.

What do we mean when we talk about landscapes? This is the ultimate question that the exhibition aims to leave with the viewer; and it is all the more important in the area surrounding Ripatransone and Ascoli Piceno, which, since the beginning of time, has lived and breathed landscapes and, in no lesser a sense, the rhetoric of landscapes. What we often proudly boast about and have a great fondness for is a concept of landscapes that is often idealized, evoking warm feelings for these hills, but, nevertheless, holding us back from addressing concerns about the future of this beloved land. When seen up close rather than from a higher viewpoint, our countryside shows ever more signs of human neglect, pollution, illegal building practices, and “throwaway” regeneration initiatives implemented without a real vision for tomorrow. Educating people to embrace landscapes, even with all of the difficulties, understanding them and feeling part of them, would help us care for them and defend them. Sometimes even from ourselves.