

Life has its own temperature: it is in the measurement of heat that it finds a way to grow, to continue to be, and to remain in a state conducive to its biological development. There is a warm flow within the body that moves and feeds the unknown world that is the physical form which we inhabit, and in which we identify. Additionally, our body is a system that operates best at about 36 degrees Celsius. We all still recall how crucial this figure has been in recent years, how temperature had turned into the symptom, the dividing line, the signal to gauge the level of danger our body was facing. Of course, as we sense the heat increasing, we become instinctively alarmed: fever is an evil per se, as well as a possible symptom of another, deeper evil; it is the clearest message that our organic system can formulate to ask us to pay heed. Francesca Ferreri (Savigliano, 1981) uses matter to give shape to the symptom: the gallery is now an inflamed body. For a long time, but especially since 2022 (the year in which the temperature rose in the artist's body, making her confront the malaise that Covid then embodied), Ferreri has been investigating the meaning of inflammation, this signal that the body uses to talk to us. In her drawings, Ferreri finds the sequence, the latent gesture of heat when it grows beneath the skin; the *Fever Drawings* (2022), hitherto unpublished, are the initial manifestation of trauma, of the insane algorithm which governs us in the uncontrolled peak of inflammation. We now find ourselves in the role of pest bodies, not sure whether still benign or already spoilers: we are the bacteria that, as we walk, risk contaminating what we touch, trampling to the ground the backbone of the endangered anatomy of space, the organs we find ourselves walking on. The inflamed body sends forth various cries: we will see them progressively.

Dolor (pain) is the colourless sting that, leaning towards us, tells us of the slight twinge that precedes the onset of any damage. The artist knows that the manifestation never has a definitive or single meaning: every symptom is a signal born from the desire to save, not to hurt us. This is what the body wants for us: to get us off the cliff and bring us to safety. In this case, the concept of restoration is an extension of an inquiry that pertains to Ferreri's research in both thought and material: the repair of damage arises from the desire to preserve or return to the previous unscathed state of a certain physical reality. When unheeded, the preparatory signals for repair soon turn into evil, a further gash on the ruined matter; the body must start its mending work all over again - the eternal cycle of repair.

With pain, in the inflammatory process, comes the *rubor* (redness): the body becomes the votive altar dedicated to the colour of one's own symptom; the open arms of the work beckon us to look at the icon of the spirit, preserved on the erythema of an upside-down, horizontal sternum.

We look up: reddish and metallic angels are stationed on the ceiling, looking at us from there. The *calor* (heat) moves over the height, towering above us: in the mysterious flow that makes the temperature rise, and therefore disrupts the chemical regularity on which our concept of health rests – now we see the large linen canvas painted with acrylic and oil - the heat is a flutter of

wings that makes the air heavier, our breath shorter, the skin already sweaty.

Francesca Ferreri makes inanimate matter speak of our fever, of its latent meaning, while bacteria, with their circular shape, almost primitive wheels, can move freely on the ground and walls, with hollow cores and never, let's repeat it, necessarily malign. *Tumor* (swelling) is our fourth cry: we see the skin of the wall lifting, its tissues swelling; perhaps, if we touched it, we would hurt it.

What Ferreri is doing is not to be understood as merely recording the workings of our biology. The artist is not putting the organism under a slide, like Giuseppe Penone (*Unfolding one's own skin*, 1970), nor is the referent of art the true and sanguine body as in the performative tradition: these are symptoms that speak to each body; it is the thermal explosion of the volcanic soil that our body sometimes turns into. As if we were so many Earths ready to be born after the heat eruption of a *big bang*. We see our bodies become inflamed: our temperature is rising to a point where it can change our vital functions, and without really knowing how to control or understand it. Ferreri incorporates into the fibres of her works the colour and vision of what we can only see beneath the skin and, even then, cannot even fully comprehend cognitively. What is this heat that slowly, silently, spills over? What could we call this phenomenon, which ultimately undermines human health and causes various issues? When Ferreri poses these queries to herself and to us, she is referencing the *Hyperobjects* theorized in the book of the same name by Timothy Morton (2013): noting that the human body is increasingly forced to change its thermal balance (and the disorders that it entails) is something elusive, a problem too vast and too vague to be assigned a place that is intellectually adequate and comprehensive.

It is all about reflux and listening; in the necessary dialogue between the reality of the body and that of the spirit (Ferreri prefers this latter to the mind, which is used to narrowly identify the rational faculty alone), a spirit that is made of the blood that irrigates us, that speaks the same vital language as the cell, or the nerve. We look at the large sculpture positioned to absorb the vital flows of the place, like a leech painted with the colour of the spirit.

As if to say that nothing is ever really disunited; that it is precisely in recirculation, absorption, and uninterrupted exchange that the whole we form can be accomplished, healed, and its full function fulfilled.

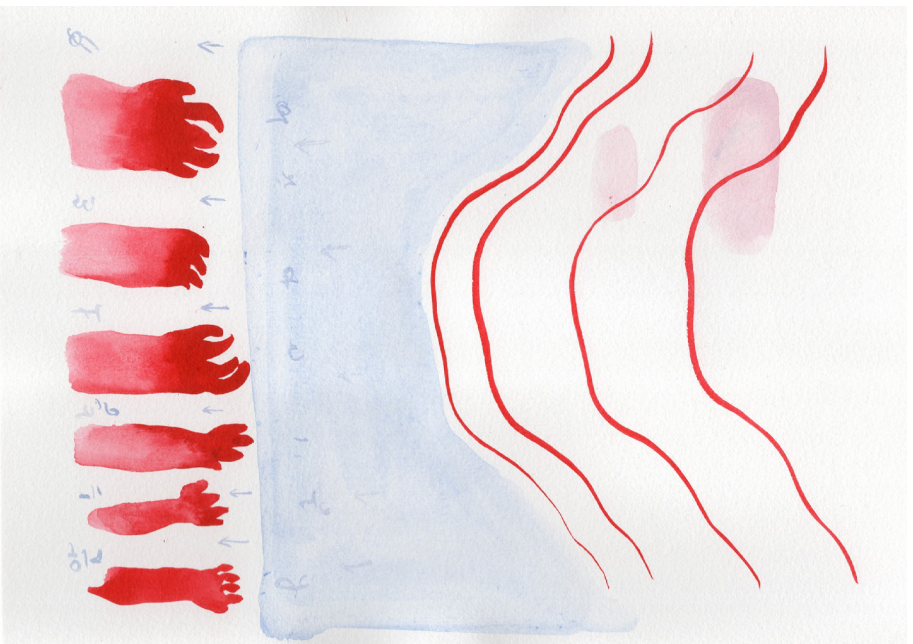
Carola Allemandi

Simóndi

OPENING
13 March 2025
6 — 9 p.m.

EXHIBITION
March 14 — April 26

OPENING HOURS
tue — sat
3 — 7 p.m.
(morning by appointment)



Francesca Ferri, *Fever Drawings*, 2022
watercolors on paper, 29,7x21cm

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FRANCESCA FERRERI

Endless Repairs

text by Carola Allemandi

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