

Literary writings of non-literary artists

First of all, let us set the boundaries by means of exclusion: this issue of Poli-Femo does not deal with the work of the category of artists defined as literary authors: writers of poems, novels, short stories, fables, dramas, etc.; rather, it deals - in a positive sense - with the written work of all the other kinds of artists, representing not literature but the many other arts. A rudimentary classification of which might include the visual arts (painting, sculpture, etc.), the performing arts (music, dance, theatre, musical theatre, etc.), the constructive arts (architecture, design), the arts of electr(on)ical media technology (photography, cinema, video art, radio drama, etc.) and all those that have emerged more recently as hybrids or extensions or twists of the traditional arts (conceptual art, installation, performance art, land art, net art, comics, videogames, etc.).

In the most recent historical period, from modernism onwards, there has been a strong tendency to deconstruct the explicit and implicit codes of the system of literature (or, more generally, of writing). Including codes relating to genres and their classification. On the creative front, authors are increasingly inclined to transgress the order of centuries-old or millennia-old codified genres, crossing or abolishing the boundaries - on different planes - between poetry and prose, between *factio* and *dictio*, between high and low literature, between pure writing and writing mixed with other material media, etc. On the historical-theoretical-critical front, scholars increasingly recognise the lability of established categories of genre, even in their application to history: hence, those categories prove to be not entirely effective in accounting for past phenomena, let alone the present.

In such a context, if we want to deal with a textual genre other than codified ones, we should proceed with caution. **The writing of non-literary artists** does not form a single, separate, compact genre; on the contrary, it takes the most diverse forms and constitutes a heterogeneous whole. Alongside the obvious interest in this issue in production of a more specifically fictional or poetic nature, there is also interest in other categories of artists' writings, such as, typically, manifestos, or the presentation of the artist's own work, or essays (concerning the artist's own art or even other arts or non-artistic fields), epistles, interviews, or articles with a publicist slant. Much of this production has declared literary ambitions or reveals an intention, albeit not explicit, in this sense. It is precisely this **literary intention** that will be the object of investigation in this issue of the magazine.

Despite the heterogeneity of forms and objectives, the writing of non-literary artists is a sufficiently clear and distinct category to be the object of a specific, dedicated investigation. It is worth isolating and focusing on this field of investigation, which does not appear to be devoid of scientific interest. The working hypothesis is that, without presupposing the existence of a unique and autonomous (macro)genre of "writings by non-literary artists", it is nonetheless useful, at least from a heuristic perspective, to bring together in a single volume a set of analyses and theoretical studies on texts by artists from different artistic backgrounds in order to allow the emergence of characteristic traits or significant common elements inherent in the so-called "dual talent". Moreover, while there are collections of authors' writings (sometimes in specialised series), in-depth studies on the writings of individual artist-authors, reflections on the writings of authors belonging to individual artistic fields (the writings of painters, the writings of composers...), as well as precise analyses of significant examples of dual talent (cf. "Literature and Art", no. 18, 2020), it does not appear that a general study of artists' writings across the different arts (a study that will presumably have to be collective and interdisciplinary) has already been firmly established, indeed it may almost have to be invented. The basic question could be the following: can the inevitable interferences between artistic languages that characterise the production of non-literary artists be traced back to a series of characteristic traits?

The writings of non-literary artists (actually, with regard to what follows, also those of literary authors) can be divided into two macro-categories (whose boundaries are obviously not rigid, but nor are they inconsistent or entirely arbitrary):

- literary writings, belonging to greater or lesser established genres, typically - but not exclusively - fictional, e.g. a novel by a painter or a poem by a composer, etc.;
- non-literary writings, not belonging to established literary genres and typically nonfictional, including, for example, manifestos, self-presentations, essays, analyses, epistles.

The volume to which this call for papers refers will therefore be subdivided into two sections, respectively concerning the two above-mentioned macro-categories (without excluding contributions that may also profitably challenge them).

"Poli-Femo" therefore invites **researchers from various disciplines - those inherent to literature and those inherent to the other arts** - to propose articles aimed at studying the literary and non-literary writing of non-literary artists.

The monographic theme of this issue can be approached in a completely free manner, but some suggestions for lines of enquiry may be:

- within the work of the same individual author, the unity or separation - genetic and then actual - between the products of their non-literary art and those of their writing;
- even in the case of separation of the products of the two distinct activities, the possible interference of the artist's individual poetics in their (non-literary) art with their writing;
- the artist's ability to innovate with respect to canonical writing genres;
- any historical or geographical tendencies relating to the propensity of certain categories of artists to write about their own art (poetic, critical, theoretical, didactic texts etc.), about a different art or about something else entirely;
- the possible impact of the fictional production of non-literary artists on contemporary literature;
- the question of 'dual talent' (where relevant) approached from a theoretical point of view;
- exploration of language affinities/differences.

Proposals for study on the subject put forward by those intending to collaborate in the publication will be examined by the Scientific Committee, in order to widen the field of exploration undertaken in this issue of the Magazine. Contributions will be accepted in Italian, English and French.

To this end, the Editorial Board proposes the following deadlines: a preliminary and essential step is to send an abstract (min.10/max.20 lines), keywords and a brief curriculum vitae of the proposer, to redazione.polifemo@iulm.it by **28 February 2022** (absolute deadline). The Editorial Office will confirm to the authors the acceptance of the contributions by **15 March 2022**. The deadline for submission of contributions is **15 June 2022**.

All contributions will be subject to double blind peer review. The issue, edited by Prof. Laura Brignoli and Prof. Stefano Lombardi Vallauri, will be published in **December 2022**.