

Vincenzo Trione, "Sheinkman, poetic obsession," *Il Mattino*, July 26, 1997

There is something of the ancient, or if you prefer, a difficult simplicity, in the work of Mark Sheinkman, in contamination between media, in technical experimentation, and in linguistic slippages.

His "sculptures" and his drawings- now showing in Naples, for the first time in Italy, at Studio Trisorio (at Riviera di Chiaia, 215) are absolutely and radically elementary. To realize them, the New York artist in his thirties- already particularly followed by international collectors- has need of very little; only a sheet of paper, a pencil and an eraser.

His is a practice more similar to sculpture than to painting. Executing with graphite, some lines, some linear "travels", Sheinkman with poetic obsession, uses the eraser to cancel, to take away, to reduce, to dissolve the heaviness of the lines previously traced. Thus are born, views, figures ineffably abstract, which remind one on closer viewing over time of waterfalls, icicles...

"The resulting drawings- has written David Ebony- are spectacular. Large floor to ceiling works with calligraphic markings evoke ancient scrolls". The dynamic geometry defined by the pencil remains vibrant and ungraspable thanks to the masterful use of the eraser, capable of creating infinite shading. Moved by the will to achieve a considerable esthetic understatement, to "reduce to the minimum", to return to elementary and geometric forms, constructed with "poor" materials, Sheinkman arrives at an original form of "minimalism". Exploring sophisticated effects with pleasure and formal complication, unshown by the American artists of the preceding generation, the essential work here has none of the "coldness" of "conceptualism". The lightness and simplicity, for him, is the result of a long and slow labor.

Without ever indulging in excessive mannerisms, he himself stays true to a classic procedure, not renouncing completely manual construction or manipulation. At the center of his research there is a reflection on the tasks and on the functions of drawing, which is one of the original languages.

But here drawing is not considered simply as a support, as something which is preliminary and accessory, but as a media which has its own autonomous strength. Existing independently, it succeeds in having a dialogue- without an inferiority complex- with media like painting, sculpture, and photography. Think, for example, of huge sheets of paper, covered with dark markings, which rolled and hung vertically on the wall, assume a strong plastic and associative power. On the other hand, in another small format work, appear many markings very similar to pencils on a dark background, which seem to have been photographed. Exactly in this consists the bet of this artist, dedicated to demonstrate that abstract drawing is not a language destined to remain nonreferential and nonobjective. "I am trying to redefine- he has affirmed- possibilities for abstraction, which incorporate contradictions and create abstract images with associative references.