

Lives of the Mothers-Saints: Alessandra Ariatti's Ties

Abstract of the catalogue text

[...] The three canvases on which Ariatti has steadily worked from April 2010 to June 2014, and are her only *overground* production—that is, works not done on commission—from these years, interconnected as a *Legami* [Ties] project, constitute a decisive evolution of her portrait making. From being pure if enhanced icons of the lived life, her images have become an hyperfigural presentation that, while not an illustration of psycho-social values, is nevertheless ideologically structured. “Ever since I began painting these three canvases,” the artist has written, “my analysis of the face has become extreme, I have dug beneath the surface; this allows the viewer to enter a dimension that is not that of the surface image.” In the three *Legami* paintings, indeed, intangible values and extra-pictorial contents have invoked and guided an explicit intensification of the technique, which has entailed a descent beneath the skin of the representation—an imaginal reconstruction of the anatomy of the portrayed body that gives it a physical solidity, an intensified subjectivity, transcending the limits of the photographic template on which the works are founded, transforming it into a pictorial experience of existence. [...]

Mario Diacono