Everything begins with an act of disruption, a controlled assault. From the very start of his practice, Marco Rèa identified the glossy pages of fashion magazines as his ideal terrain of conflict: no blank canvas as a space for addition, but the immaculate façade of advertising as a surface for subtraction. It is not the addition of a mark that gives birth to the work, but the inverse gesture of a man who sits before a standardized aesthetic and decides to set it free. Rèa does not paint. He excavates. He takes that polished beauty, engineered to say nothing, and begins stripping away its excess. What emerges is a search that becomes obsession: erasure as the only possible route towards the truth.

Silence is opens like a breach within this tension, an immersion that hurls us into the darker origins of his research. Here, spray paint, that breath of pigment Rèa inherited from his urban roots before transfiguring it into something entirely his own, no longer serves to color, but to conceal. It spreads like a dense veil swallowing the synthetic smiles of advertising imagery, leaving exposed only an eye, a cheekbone, an emotion never sanctioned by the photographer. A gesture that transforms commercial appeal into a vibrating unease, a kind of autopsy of glamour.

Then the atmosphere shifts. The world comes to a halt. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, isolation reshapes not only daily life but the rhythm of artistic gesture itself, which becomes quieter, more restrained, almost clinical. White enters the work — not the luminous white of clouds, but the sterile white of disinfectants, and solvents. During this suspended time, Rèa begins attacking the paper directly, corroding its skin. Ink-stained hands give way to a restless pen tracing obsessive marks across the surface: signs that resemble language while refusing to become readable words. These mute inscriptions form an asemic vocabulary that asks for no translation, because anyone confronting them can project their own inner narrative onto the page. They carry the static hum of solitude reaching outward, filling the emptiness left behind by dissolution.

But silence, in Marco Rèa's work, is never an endpoint. It is tension gathering force. Beyond the white comes the return of color, sudden, visceral, almost explosive. This is the moment of synthesis, where painting regains flesh. Yet even within these violent chromatic eruptions, traces of the past persist: beneath the layers of paint, the rapid gestures of spray from his earlier works continue to pulse like veins beneath skin. The image begins reclaiming a body, demanding presence beyond the limits of the flat surface.

This urge toward physical presence reaches a crucial turning point in the serie *Frattura scomposta*. Here, Rèa reminds us that fracture is to be understood not simply as physical breakage, but as emotional rupture. Figures already eroded and stripped of certainty now splinter into geometric fragments where saturated blocks of color collide against the fragility of the acrylic gesture. It is a process of reclaiming substance. The fracture itself is displayed as the seal of a new identity that is unafraid to show its wounds - a way of redrawing boundaries through exposure.

The abandonment of the two-dimensional plane ultimately reaches a tangible fulfillment, which greets the viewer at the very entrance of the exhibition. Sculpture becomes the natural outcome of

an investigation that has passed through darkness and emptiness. Matter, exhausted by the limits of surface, finally occupies space directly. It asserts itself physically, becoming the inevitable extension of an artistic practice that has always resisted fixed categories.

Rèa has always inhabited a threshold condition, moving between two worlds: the public gesture left on the street and the private and almost surgical dimension of the studio. If sculpture now claims its place so decisively within the physical world, it is because it mirrors the very nature of an artist who inhabits two realms simultaneously: that of the street, where the mark is both gift and collective confrontation, and that of solitary analysis, where paper is dissected with merciless precision.

This hybrid nature enters into a natural dialogue with the identity of Street Levels Gallery, the Florence-based gallery that operates as a research platform dedicated to the evolution of visual languages emerging from urban culture. Street Levels has consistently focused on artists who, like Rèa, have transformed a street-born attitude into a sophisticated contemporary vocabulary, dissolving the traditional divide between what belongs outside and what belongs within institutional space.

Within these walls, which have witnessed both the urban energy and the purest form of experimentation, Marco Rèa's work finds its ideal reflection. The gallery protects and supports precisely this form of artistic practice: an art that draws from the urban landscape without becoming trapped by its codes, that turns spray paint into lyricism and silence into a form of rupture.

Silent is tells the path of this journey. It invites us to peel back the surface of things and discover that, more often than not, what remains after everything unnecessary has been stripped away is the most truthful part of ourselves.

Federica Schneck