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Pomona artificiale

Prologue

Un vettore è sempre rettilineo. Tuttavia è possibile che sia legato ad un punto fisso attraverso un braccio. In questo caso, il punto a cui il vettore resta vincolato imprime al suo movimento una rotazione. Questa è definita momento.

Sembra significativo l'uso della parola "momento", un termine che già conosciamo come parte della nostra quotidianità, che usiamo quando ricordiamo, ad esempio, il particolare momento in cui il nostro procedere nella vita si è legato a certe situazioni, circostanze o persone, e quel legame ha costituito una rotazione, una deviazione del nostro percorso rettilineo. Una svolta più o meno significativa.

Spesso pensiamo al movimento - alla possibilità di modificare il proprio momento - come a qualcosa che appartiene a ciò che è vivo e respira. Tuttavia accade, talvolta, che entità inanimate subiscano profonde deviazioni nel loro indeperibile incedere nel tempo.

First part: Physiological Maturation

In the mid-19th century, Italy was going through a period of intense agitation: it was a crucial political season, with the project of national unity taking shape, and the entire country moving towards industrialization, following the example of the neighboring European states.

It was the 5th of March, 1858. It was night. Francesco Garnier Valletti was sleeping in his home-laboratory in Via Dora Grossa. In a dream, he was revealed a new material and a method for manufacturing his wax models, based on a mixture of virgin beeswax, Dammar resin, and alabaster powder.

The deep value of this preparation doesn't lay in the composition of its blend as much as in its usage: if casted into molds, it results in a material that can be softened with heat, like wax, and might therefore be worked, smoothed, shaped, and welded using ceroplastic techniques. Once cooled, it acquires the consistency and strength of plaster without its fragility or weight.

The botanical models produced with this technique embodied the ideals of the positivist historical context and the flourishing imperialist taste for collecting, documenting, and classifying the natural world. These objects sublimated a broader tendency, emblematic of the 19th century, to catalog as vast a portion of reality as possible.

At that time, alongside the first experiments with industrial fruit cultivation, the nursery industry emerged, because most fruit-bearing plants propagate vegetatively — by cutting — rather than by seed. New plantations were established in late autumn or winter, just after the end of the apple tree's fruiting season. This agronomic limitation emanated the urge to showcase a representation of the fruit that the plants would eventually bear to the industrialists buying them.

Meanwhile, agricultural institutions grew interested in pomological reproductions as research tools. In this new academic setting, they acquired a fundamentally pedagogical value, linked to the idea of a naturalistic archive that would support the development of studies in fruit science.

The contemporary standardization of crops, rooted in the agricultural industrialization of the late-19th-century, induced a second major shift in the meaning of Garnier Valletti's collections. Until the first decade of the 21st century, no more than five apple varieties were cultivated industrially worldwide. Today, these collections of pomological models commissioned as tools for capitalistic acceleration, represent hundreds of apple varieties, providing witness to an agricultural biodiversity that has now been lost.

Second part: Senescence & Over-ripening

The chlorophyll in the apple's leaves produces sucrose through photosynthesis. The sucrose is converted into starch, which accumulates in the fruit's plastids.

Ethylene induces the activation of α-amylase and β-amylase, α-glucosidase, and sucrose synthase. The starch is broken down into smaller molecules — maltose and dextrose. Maltose transforms into glucose. Glucose is once again converted into sucrose and fructose.

This process allows the fruit to breathe and to live — until it exhausts its starch reserves. Then, its decay begins.

Now it experiences this expanded life
within a controlled atmosphere.
Can you hear it? The breath, slowing down.
Ever so slowly, it moves toward the truth.
What is its boundary?

As people are confined within an urban reality, devoid of contact with the natural world, the natural world gets immediately idealized. Today it has emerged a certain tendency to rediscover, to value, the diversity that once defined our food system. The protection and restoration of biodiversity, now presented as a priority for the agricultural supply chain, is nothing more than the reflection of a productive drive responding to market demand.

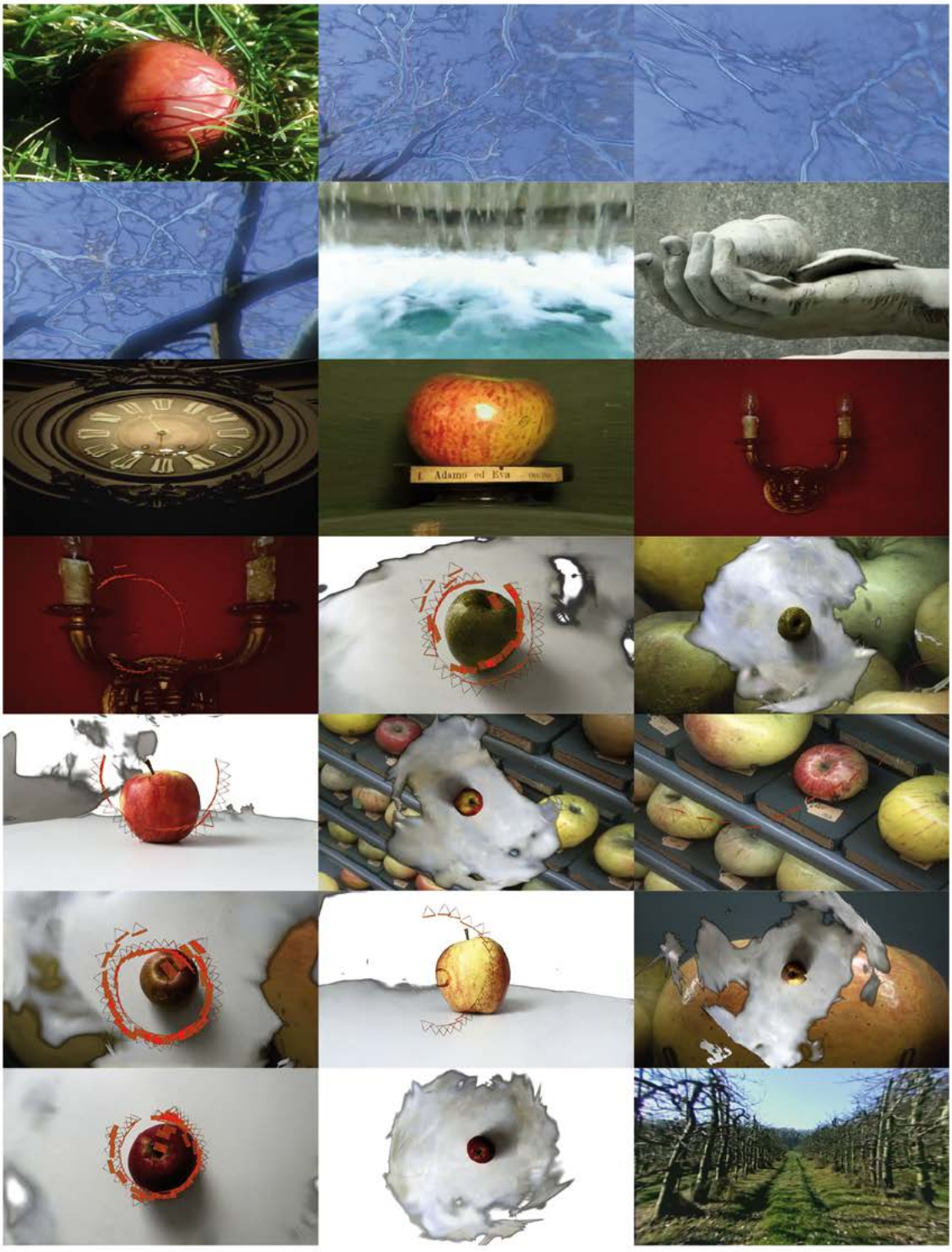
The resurgence of lost varieties is instrumental in satisfying the desires of a society fascinated by the exotic and the new — a system at collapse, attempting to survive the ecological crisis it has created. Restoring lost biodiversity is valued as an asset in the realm of genetic engineering, recovering desirable features, such as a source of resistance genes against specific bacteria or fungi, extreme dry or rainy climates, and increasingly controlled storage conditions that extend the fruit's lifespan as much as possible.

Third part: Rotting & Decomposition

Questa è la tua verità, il mio confine.
Ora vivi la tua marcescenza,
il momento, forse, della tua vita,
il tuo decadere.
Io, d'altro canto,
ho colto la mela della tua onnipresenza
dall'albero del bene e del male,
e il mio debole corpo
si è illuso d'infinito.

Ora ti sei confusa
nelle spirali delle radici,
dei giorni,
dei pensieri.

Io sono la mia verità, il tuo confine,
e in te
vivo il rifiuto
della mia decadenza,
il mio debole corpo.


Adamo ed Eva