

Michelangelo Pistoletto
Cittadellarte and its “Uffizi”

2002

Cittadellarte arose out of my art work on and with the mirror from 1961 onwards. The most significant reference in support of the commitment to *responsible social transformation* can be found in the works entitled *Divisione – Moltiplicazione dello Specchio (Division and Multiplication of the Mirror)*, which I realized in the 1970s.

In these works the mirror was conceived as a symbol of totality due to its capacity to identically reproduce the image of any existing thing.

Dividing a mirror – taken as an emblematic example of a universal container – produces two individual mirrors which, reflecting in each other, generate an infinite series of mirror images. In the same way, the division of zero in mathematics produces one and one, which make two.

The two mirrors give rise to a proliferation of numbers in that they generate, in the reciprocal mirroring within them, the image of a third mirror, a fourth mirror and so on to infinity.

Moving from the conceptual to the concrete, we can say by analogy that the primordial container of all things, concentrated in the zero, that is nothing, divides to create matter, space and time within itself.

Further confirmation of this can be found in organic systems: in nature, a cell divides to form two cells, which in turn divide, gradually producing a body.

The division of the mirror proves that at the origin of things there is not multiplication but division.

Multiplication was conceived following an inverse interpretation of reality, in that the (progressively growing) internal subdivision of the universal nucleus has been called multiplication.

Cittadellarte devotes itself to the process of *responsible social transformation*, which is the guiding philosophy of all its activities. The commitment to generating new meanings and values for the formation of a global civilization is thus based on awareness of and adherence to the principle of *division* as the germinal characteristic of creation.

Indeed, stemming from this principle is the concept of *sharing*, which we take as the basis of a conception of human relations that is radically different to the logic of multiplication underlying the system of accumulation, unification and possessive occupation.

The symbolic act of dividing the mirror not only leads us directly to take sharing as the main guiding principle in all areas of social practice, but it also shapes and guides the structural organization of Cittadellarte itself. In other words, the rules that reflect the intelligence of nature define the overall structure of the organization that contains the activities of this centre.

Cittadellarte is the zero space, emptied, that is, of all the facts and phenomena that concern the human and social context. However, this space is filled magnetically because, like the mirror, it reflects all those facts and phenomena.

As mirror or mathematical zero, Cittadellarte is a primary nucleus. This nucleus divides into different nuclei, which share the commitment to *responsible social transformation*. The nuclei that have been separated in the original container take the name of various different components of society.

The set of nuclei, known as ‘*Uffizi*’, give organic form to all the activities of Cittadellarte. Each office nucleus is independent but interrelated with all the others.

The currently active offices are devoted specifically to art, politics, economy, education, production, communication, work and religion. Others, relating to science, philosophy, ecology, nourishment, rights and sport, are in the process of being formed.

The *Art Office* deals above all with exhibitions and events; the *Politics Office* mainly concerns itself with the project called *Love Difference – Artistic Movement for an InterMediterranean Politic*; the *Economics Office* is researching what has been termed ‘economic organicity’; the *Education Office* is represented by UNIDEE – University of Ideas; the *Production Office* deals with projects in conjunction with industry, business and public institutions; the *Communication Office* is active in different spheres of interaction and information, ranging from the internet to forums and press office activities; *Work Office* is engaged in projects on sharing of aims between entrepreneurs and workers; *Religion Office* open the space of art to the delicate spiritual and religious themes in the attempt to create a new thought.

Each name referring to an office – potential or operative – has its own emblematic motto:

Art – at the centre of responsible social transformation.

Communication – I am the other.

Rights – of survival and international comparison.

Ecology – worldwide renewal.

Economy – translation of values, from the monetary to the human.

Education – technical knowledge and imaginative practice.

Philosophy – thinking based on the meeting of opposites.

Work – motivation.

Nourishment – physical and mental.

Politics – love difference.

Production – every product assumes social responsibility.

Religion – eliminate divisions while maintaining differences.

Science – knowledge.

Sport – peaceful war.