

**Franziska Nori, *When the street looks to the sky*, text written for the group show *As soon as possibile*, CCC Strozina | Centro di Cultura Contemporanea a Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze, 2010**

In her works, Marzia Migliora makes use of a wide variety of means of expression-photography, drawing, videos and audio recordings-in order to explore themes such as nostalgia and memory, loss and obsession. Textual citation is one of the defining stylistic traits of her work. While *Test Optometrico (Optometric Test)* focused on literary quotes, *Quando la strada guarda il cielo (When the Street Looks to the Sky)* engages with a sentence uttered by a famous sports champion which can be interpreted as a metaphor for our accelerated society: "The reason I go uphill so fast is to shorten my agony." The champion in question is cyclist Marco Pantani, who may be seen as a modern tragic hero. His career was marked by a striking series of successes, but also by bitter defeats. Thanks to his drive and considerable endurance, he won historic victories in the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia in 1998. In 1999, the doping scandal came to light and this caused great damage to his public image as a champion much loved by the public. Pantani was abandoned by most of his supporters and the media, who up to that moment had regarded him as one of the greatest cyclists of all times, but now profoundly discredited him. In 2004, Pantani was found dead in a hotel room in Rimini, struck down by a heart attack caused by his extensive use of drugs at a time when he had already been physically weakened by years of depression. With the same suddenness with which he had become one of the legends of modern cycling, Pantani was forgotten by most people or simply referred to as a symbol of the crisis of this sport.

This work, created for *As Soon As Possible*, consists of a carpet symbolizing a stretch of road on which Pantani's sentence is inscribed in white letters. The allusion here is to one of the features of cycle races: the words of encouragement fans write in chalk or paint on asphalt roads to urge their idols on in the most difficult laps of the course. Pantani's sentence-an expression of his attitude towards the universal requests for super-performances on his part-can be interpreted as the fragment of an inner monologue in which performance, pushed to the maximum level, is described as a reaction to the difficulties of life. The wooden carpet muffles all sounds and swallows the steps of those treading upon it. By walking upon this carpet people are offered the chance to rethink and perhaps reappraise Pantani's sporting and existential journey, as well as to silently focus on themselves and on the meaning of Pantani's words for their own lives. The cyclist's journey almost becomes a symbol for the condition humaine in the accelerated society we all live in.