

SILVIA CAMPORESI
DOWN BY THE WATER

opening Tuesday, May 11, 2010 7 pm
on exhibition until June 5

MiCamera - photography and lens-based arts

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open Wednesday to Saturday 10am-1pm and 4-7pm or by appointment



Il castello interiore, 2010



studi per 'Ofelia' (inediti)

Where does artistic inspiration come from and how is it transformed? How is a project born and what images are left behind? Together with Silvia Camporesi we have gone through her works produced up to today, attempting to describe a line that restores the intensity of the creative process. The choice of water as the element that links all the works presented here is profoundly symbolic - water as a source of creativity - and it is ever-present in the artist's work where it is the filter that transforms objects and people.

At the same time, water has no intrinsic characteristics - it is odorless, colorless and tasteless - and can therefore take on any shape or form and have whatever is submerged in it do the same.

The first thing that springs to mind is *Deep*, the most recent work and the starting point of this exhibition project. In *Deep* the subject is the artist herself, submerged in water.

This work represents Silvia Camporesi's passage from a real state to 'another' dimension.

Deep, which like nearly all the works on show was printed specially for this exhibition, encompasses some of the fundamental themes in the artist's work: literary quotation, auto-biographical notes, a feminine presence, aesthetics suspended outside the world we live in.

The largest of the castle photographs present was taken from an earlier work and is displayed here next to new, previously unseen photos. The project takes its inspiration from *Il castello interiore* (the castle within) by mystic Teresa D'Avila. In this series, the image regains the dimensions of an autonomous project, fully revealing its characteristics. Once again we can see literary inspiration and the female figure, a time

different from the present (since Teresa D'Avila lived in the sixteenth century, but also because the mystic herself transcends time, a force that is not exhausted by time and that consumes and, in turn, is consumed), as well as the presence of water as a filter. Also strong is the dream element - as in the words of Teresa D'Avila herself ... *Life has become for me a kind of dream, and all that I see seems as a dream ...*

But this is where fiction is unveiled. The setting of the real subject in the picture takes us back to the design phase, in harmony with the intentions of this exhibition, which attempts to uncover the more mysterious and secret side of the creative process.

In Silvia Camporesi's work the artistic idea often springs from a reading. When translating the idea into a work, the artist prepares actual storyboards, notes down her thoughts, seeks images and references, designs the perfect setting for the picture, thinks of all the objects that will appear in the scene and chooses the people. This is perhaps the most complex moment, since it is at this stage that the work is born. Therefore the artist's notebooks had to be included in the exhibition, divided between those containing words and those with images, as testimony to the research process.

The final photograph is therefore a kind of synthesis, as if it were a single image in which the whole story was concentrated. If one picture is charged with a huge symbolic energy, taking on a powerful force that is unique, the fact that it is a single image also sets a few irremediable limits to the narration. The need to place a 'before' and an 'after' side-by-side led to two consequences, the first being that previously taken pictures have become an integral part of the series, preparatory studies for the final work (the same process once used by painters). This is the case of *Ofelia*, represented here by five previously unseen pictures and by the work *Ofelia (new)* itself, the second picture inspired by Shakespeare and by the paintings of Millais.

The second consequence is the need to 'lengthen' the images somehow in order to make the story visible. This is also the basis for the shift to the moving image, which appears for the first time in 2007 with the video *Dance Dance Dance*, on show here alongside the still frames. The video was born out of a real experience. While swimming, the artist noticed a cross on the edge of a pool, and it is more generally a meditation on the theme of religious faith. In the context of the water, the sign marking the edge when swimming becomes a revelation.

A woman wearing red dives into the pool and swims incessantly. The movement is repetitive, without any apparent evolution, until the revelation of a significant symbol. This symbol is the cross, which in the setting of the picture is placed at the center.

As in the novel by Murakami Haruki that lends its title to the video, there is a path also for those who have lost their sense of direction - they need only continue dancing.

The literary inspiration is also present in the first - chronologically speaking - of the projects on show: *Un diverso stato* (A different state - 2003), a series inspired by the book *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales* by Oliver Sacks.

The different nature of their neurological condition makes patients into travelers heading towards unimaginable lands, which would otherwise remain unknown.

One of the chapters of the book is the inspiration for *Les idiots savants*, although this line of thought also extends to other figures, among which Emily Dickinson, the poetess who chose to live a reclusive life and only wear white as a sign of her purity. *Earth is short* is the title of a poem that declares the futility of any attempt to make sense of this life and is also the title of the 2003 work by Silvia Camporesi. Once again, we see a feminine figure and the water, which here filters the essential objects, the book of poems and the white dress, all present in these previously unpublished studies.

The exhibition ends with the two works *Ofelia (new)* and the video *Dance Dance Dance*, which complete the circle of the genesis of a work of art. Also the exhibition, like the final picture, has gone through a creative process which has changed over time, unveiling new perspectives and hitherto unknown works.

*...I lost my heart under the bridge to that little girl so much to me and now I moan and now I holler she'll never know just what I found...
(PJ Harvey, Down by the water)*

Silvia Camporesi

Born in Forlì 1973, lives and works in Forlì

Main personal exhibitions

2010 "Eravamo persone come alberi", cur. L. Panaro, Galleria Betta Frigieri, Modena **2009** "Le ragioni del peso", cur. W. Guadagnini, Galleria dell'Arco, Palermo **2008** "Gradozero", cur. L. Panaro, Galleria Marconi, , Cupra Marittima (Ap) **2007** "Dance dance dance" Critica in Arte, cur. C. Casali, MAR, Ravenna **2006** "Terrestrial clues", cur. M. Weber, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Pechino (RPC) **2005** "Il secondo viaggio", Rebecca Container Gallery, Genova **2004** "Friends become enemies", Rebecca Container Gallery, Genova

Main group exhibitions

2009 "Rileggere l'immagine. La fotografia come deposito di senso", cur. L. Panaro, Fiera di Bergamo **2008** "Talent prize", mostra del Premio, Museo del Corso, Roma - "Videoart Yearbook 2008", cur. F. Naldi, Galleria Civica, Trento - "V.a.i. rassegna di videoarte italiana", cur. E. Tomaselli, CAM, Napoli - 2007 "Cow Parade", progetto della Regione Lombardia, Bicocca Village, Milano - "Confini", cur. R. Paiano, Oratorio di San Sebastiano, Forlì - "Il demone meridiano", cur. V. Siviero, Galleria Passoblu, Torino **2006** "49° premio Campigna", cur. C. Casali, Galleria d'Arte "Vero Stoppioni, Santa Sofia (Fc) - "If you feel something say something", progetto DARS, CVB Space, New York (USA) **2005** "Sound check", cur. M. Casati, Collegio Cairoli, Pavia - "Italian camera", cur. R. Gavarro, Isola di San Servolo, Venezia - "Lo sguardo italiano", cur. by F. Bonami e M. L. Frisa, Rotonda della Besana, Milano **2004** "Premio internazionale Robinson", cur. M. Coccia, Flash Art Museum, Trevi (Pg) - "Premio Carmen Silvestroni", cur. R. Paiano e R. Daolio, Palazzo Albertini, Forlì - "Tell me why", cur. F. Maggia, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Guarene d'Alba (Cn)

Curated by Giulia Zorzi and Flavio Franzoni for the Cultural Association MiCamera