

Le Grand Tour

Among the British gentry from the eighteenth century on it was customary to complete their individual educational and cultural training by setting off on a long journey on mainland Europe, taking in the most important and representative cities in history and the topics that had been the object of their studies.

It was an empirical experience and immersion in the knowledge learned from books, but also a substantial and massive stimulation of emotions, precisely through the viewing of places, natural and architectural sights, works of art, encounters and sometimes pleasant unexpected events. A journey also made up of new knowledge and experience that would leave enduring memories in the minds of the young gentlemen.

This is how I see Monica **Gorini's** "pilgrimage" during her travels in France to visit the places made known by the great Monet: a sentimental journey to the empirical rediscovery of all the knowledge learned in years of study and philosophical reflection, in the hours spent intellectually ruminating on a knowledge of abstracts and extracts.

A journey through the reflections and emotions of the French Impressionist, through those same lights and colours that are still much the same, despite the passing of time. In particular, Gorini focuses on Monet's extenuating studies of water lilies, *une recherche* that has become a method and dynamic of life and that defined an artistic and intellectual path.

To Gorini travel means going in search of traces of the other and his history, and in this meeting and knowing him; but travelling is also seeking and discovering oneself and one's individuality, what distinguishes us in knowing and in the particular way of "feeling" with respect to the other. I think this is what the journey recounted in Monica Gorini's diary *Synthèse visuelle* (Vanillaedizioni) stands for.

In the same way, Monica Gorini's solo exhibition, which inaugurates her entrance to Gilda Contemporary Art, in a sense seeks to guide the visitor on a journey through colours and light. The two rooms of the gallery are different in tone, intensity of lighting and aesthetic synthesis. In the first room, in shades of blues, yellow and greens, the visitor is welcomed by a large installation entitled *Jardin d'eau au petit matin*, consisting of a radial pattern of slender curved rods to express one of the most interesting physical properties of water, its surface tension. At the centre, as if floating on a suspended space, is a wooden sculpture. On the sides of the structure, we can read the chromatic unfolding exhibited by the waterlily *Sulphurea grandiflora*, while the opalescent and pale-blue glass placed at the base recalls the glow of early morning, *le petit matin*. On the azure surface rests a triangular base prism with mirrored and reflective sides that extend the vision and merge the horizon with new perspectives.

On the walls of the room, there are two medium-sized and irregularly shaped works on wood, the result of research into the colours of *Sulphurea grandiflora* water lilies, especially during the day. In her research, Gorini reconstructed a chromatic archive of 3000 colour palettes painted *en plein air* in France, which correspond to moments in the life and day of water lilies. Resting against the walls are the sculptural elements *Rayon lumineux*, beams of light.

In the first room, with aesthetic rigour and synthesis, the artist invites the visitor to rediscover the shimmering atmosphere of the morning light, the break of day, the beams of light on the patina of the pond, and to explore the modes of her personal perceptual model.

For the visitor the first room of the exhibition becomes a deep yet delicate immersion in perceptions and emotions, the result of visual and sensory provocations stimulated by colours, lights, lines and geometric forms. The circle itself of the central installation leads the visitor to take a walk, to “stroll around” and in this movement to find new spatial and temporal coordinates. I found some notes by Monica Gorini on this theme pertinent: “When you encounter a circular form, the most instinctive action is to walk around it. The exploration begins through a physical involvement that in turn will influence the way of perceiving and understanding the work.” Thought, as Merleau-Ponty insightfully intuited, whose reflections serve as a frame of references for both philosophers of experience and scientists of perception, “is not an abstract entity but a set of processes that are physically constituted in the body”.

In the second room of the exhibition, it is the images, and moving images of the video *Le rêve infini*, together with music that guide the visitor. We are in the blue hour, the particular moment of twilight, the hour of evanescence.

The video installation, the sensuous and poetic photographic works on the walls devoted to water lilies, slow down the public, inviting them to be seated, to “listen to the story”.

Also in the second room, the visitor’s path is completed by the work entitled *Deconstruction en rose*, an emblem of the process of breakdown of existence into the moment, the mutability of being in a time that is not configured as linear and a succession of points, but as a layering of states of feeling and their continuous mutability, as a concentric vortex.

The exhibition, shared with the artist at every stage of its design and construction, seeks to be an invitation to the public to deepen their personal perceptual and emotional world and not just a knowledge of the artist and her specific research, just as I strongly believe art should do, when it stimulates our distinctive and unique reflections, becoming a contributory cause of individual growth.

The layout is structured to involve sight, mind and body, provoking a type of vision, or rather of synaesthetic interpretation of reality, in which the senses are confused and merge.

I love to quote a character in Fellini’s film *E la nave va*, of 1983. This is the blind seer Princess Lherimia, played by the great and unique Pina Bausch, the German choreographer and dancer, known for the expressive form widespread in the 70s known as *Tanztheater*. It is no coincidence that Fellini summoned Bausch to interpret the character. The noblewoman is convinced that she can find the colour of every musical note, in a disorientation of the senses and emotions that is then the true matrix of our most profound knowledge. The sensibility of attributing a sound to each colour is a manifestation of a high level of spiritual and intellectual understanding, which also passes through the perceptions of the body. This same perceptual and cognitive modality enables us to identify a scent, a specific perfume, with a form and a shape, a light of specific brightness becomes a synthesis of a place and an instant of our existence.

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