



SERGIO RAGALZI ATOMIC SHADOWS (1985-1986)
LUCIA NAZZARO THE LOOK IN THE VIEWFINDER. At the margins of the rule

Opening Saturday 21 May 2022, from 3 to 8 p.m.

22 May - 10 July 2022 • Saturday - Sunday from 2 to 7 p.m.

For its **Spring 2022 program**, Fondazione 107 showcases two strong personalities of the Piedmontese artistic community, Lucia Nazzaro and Sergio Ragalzi, and presents two solo shows that, although exhibited in separate spaces, interact in an overbearing way already from the choice of the «palette» of colors: black and white, colors favored by both artists but in particular by the common desire to develop a research with the epicenter of man.

Sergio Ragalzi presents twelve large paintings, created in 1985 as a result of a book about the atomic bomb dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki received as a gift. There are no human images in the book; faint marks of man remained on the walls and walls, particularly sooty footprints. With the atomic bomb man disappeared and with him ended a generation including everything that surrounded him and was part of his world, in an instant everything was reset to zero, even objects melted.

It is the same phenomenon as the photographic process, in which the impression on the paper is made through light, the same light of the atomic that neutralized the physicality of man and of which only the imprint remains. This is how «Atomic Shadows» large-scale paintings, each 4 x 3 meters, never exhibited until now because of their large size, are born. If we ask the artist why such a large size Ragalzi answers: because it was the size of the room in my studio where I used to paint, and larger I could not make them.

But what is the shadow? Something intangible, semi-visible that constantly follows us, surrounds us, becomes presence and absence in the variations of light and in fact never leaves us. Something impregnable, that changes in size while preserving the characteristics of the reflected form, sometimes protecting us from the heat, constantly following us until it becomes one with us, with our physicality, an extension of our body, the elastic extension that envelops us, chases us, an indiscreet presence like a bodyguard or a guardian angel.

Sergio Ragalzi's shadows are not evanescent, they are dense with matter, bitumen and anti-rombo paint, their sexes are very obvious and explicit to highlight their gender, they are strong presences that have not lost their corporality. The shadow exists as long as there is life, which is why Ragalzi's paintings are not dystopian but wish to stand as a warning to man to become aware of his own limitations, to stop while there is still time before reaching the point of no return.

The 12 sculptures in the exhibition are the «Atomic Heads» created in 1986, a year after the «Atomic Shadows.» They are torpedo-shaped sculptures, a metamorphosis in which head and torpedo merge. They draw inspiration from the «scream» painted by Edvard Munch, gaping mouths that cry out to man not to give up and to take responsibility for his mistakes with conscience by avoiding continuing to repeat them, because history has not saved us, has not sheltered us.

Lucia Nazzaro presents a cycle of works made in 2021/2022, 150 x 150 cm plates in which the artist for the first time also proposes her research on the human figure. Better, on the face of the human figure, inserted in the margins of each panel.

Lucia Nazzaro resumes making art starting from the same point where many years earlier she had interrupted the journey and starts again from what she calls an impossible dream to be realized as she had idealized it: «the man with jade eyes.» Facing the creative act, she realizes that it is impossible for her to create this contemplative work of pure beauty, absolute beauty, because of the limitation, identified in the impossibility of finding a match in reality and thus the consequent bitter conclusion. Man throughout life is confronted with the limit but in fact has no spiritual, mathematical or ideological limit, he can approach the limit or move away from it, he can be or not be ... simply, nothing. Exactly. Doing all or nothing is pure habit or attitude of mimesis. What makes Nothingness visible, for Lucia Nazzaro, is perception or desire, is the same as the all-possible.

In presenting the limit, Lucia Nazzaro starts with the numbers 0 and 1 to create geometries of thought. She constructs the square, idealized as an event of reason and there, inscribes the circle, the mystery of spirituality. By inscribing the circle in the square «n» times man confronts another limitation because he realizes that he cannot, with that rule, go beyond repetition. It is not the coveted answer. He must shift, deny every point of view. As man's gaze, in fact, focuses by fixing the starting point of this vortex generated by the endless repetition of circle and square, he realizes that the possibility of elsewhere confronts him with something insurmountable that we cannot touch either physically or with reason. The lack of certainty induces man to surrender, declining his gaze toward the cosmic universe, understood as a «form» of extreme beauty. The artist goes through this process by means of his work, which manifests itself in the cosmic representation, an infinitesimal particle of which he feels an integral part, like a messenger, a kind of conduit with the arduous task of amplifying the vision of his fellow human beings. In this latest «enactment,» the artist places an observer, relegated to the corner of every rational hypothesis, on the margins of the scene, smiling mockingly, in his last appearance.

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