

Francesco Candeloro: LIGHT LANDSCAPES

LIGHT LANDSCAPES presents a series of photographic works by Francesco Candeloro in which the "landscape" is the protagonist: visions which are pure and silent thanks to the lack of any human figure in them, and which have been captured in nocturnal hours or during liminal and indefinite temporalities of dawns or sunsets, images where the night with its luminous intensity sometimes comes close to the day.

The works are part of the vast photographic series "The Times of the Light", a selection of shots taken between 2007 and 2016 that bring together subjects in which the natural element prevails (skies, waters and horizons) and others where the focus is on the city, on the architectural details and the articulation of the urban fabric; the former are materialized by means of lambda print on photographic paper whereas the latter are displayed on screen, light images "ad litteram".

The photographic production of the artist belongs to the ample continuum of works with which the Venetian master elaborates an investigation that sees in light and color, together with the element of time, the two pivots of expression. The artist employs different techniques which are perfectly concordant and coherent within the various declinations of a single research and poetics: whether the employed medium is photography or painting, plexiglas (the "prisms", the "mirroring doubles", the "Eyes" cubes series or window installations, to name just a few), shaped neon lights or, as in the "books", stratifications and combinations / deployments of acetates and colored cards, the *modus operandi* of the artist is to use every time the characteristics of color and light specific to each medium, elevating them to the maximum power and giving them the possibility to show themselves in infinite variations. This trinity of essential axiomatic coordinates light-color-time is elaborated by Francesco Candeloro through the organising principle of space, of the project, of the articulated and open collocation of the various elements, of the movement and of the sign which articulates and orders when it is architectural and modular, or draws and "autographs" when it is expressive and intimate. The artist visually tells a universe of places and encounters which is predisposed to dialogue; it, from the mundane plane, rises "...to unveil the intrinsic metaphysical nature of the sensible world and of the chromatic spectrum, understood in its psycho-spiritual essence..."

The photographs of Francesco Candeloro, like all his works, possess a quality that enchants, as they are endowed with an intense attraction and a sudden aesthetic appeal; they continue "...to put in the foreground also through this medium, that lives of light, the reciprocity of light and time...". In a certain sense they are the works of the artist in which the light most operates in an immediate way, without going through processes of elaboration and "abstraction" which intervene in other types of series.

Yet at the same time, in this passing of takes which follow the artist's nomadic and international itinerary, it is not the typicality of the place, its recognizability, that owns the primary role: almost as if, besides the choice of a more canonical or less usual framing, of a panoramic or close point of view, of the perspective to be portrayed, one location would be equivalent to another: the most representative and the most anonymous, less identifiable one are placed on the same level, in the mixture of annotations of this visual diary, so that every place becomes a cue not for its being peculiar, but for its ability to be transfigured in an optics of visual fulfilment. Candeloro's interest lies in researching,

discovering and showing the full potential of the impact of light, the true protagonist, in a given space and moment, testing its results in terms of pictorial games, which are present in a latent state, thereby generating new color pictures in a vision taken from the real, which goes beyond and transcends it.

The internal and "prosthetic" eye of Candeloro inebriates itself with chiaroscuros and is greedy for splendid coloristic results; it is by now trained and aimed to detect in those parts of the locations where the artist places his gaze how the lights on the scene, through long exposure times, will contribute to the emergence of a scenario, in a game of discovery, of waiting, almost of will to appropriate a field of reality to make it something else; a travel note, the record of a solitary and intimately heard observation becomes just another fragment extracted from the world and added to the personal universe, on the trail of the movement of travels and shifts or of the meditation on the everyday of well-known places, which are reborn in an unprecedented and poetic aspect.

Landscapes: interior landscapes, or mirrors of the interior, saturated, chemical, dazzling, hyperreal landscapes, which satisfy the senses in a synesthetic way (it seems almost possible to taste them or to hear their sound); landscapes only in appearance, where the scale of importance is reversed and the real subjects of the representation are lights and colors, sometimes stretched out macros and minimal signs in which the mind reconstructs the perception of a scenario; landscapes like fragments of space-time which vibrate with their melodious pulsing within a chaotic world, of which they seem to recompose the harmony; landscapes which subtly persuade to overcome contingency, towards a mysterious unspeakable, almost dreamlike infinite, which is rediscovered in these panoramas as a feeling of eternity that, dormant, since always lays hidden under the level of consciousness, elusive and all-encompassing breath of existence, poignant and unquenchable desire for an archaic spell in which we move but which remains inaccessible: the sense of the absolute and the secret of being have assumed in this era a new guise, of which the acute sensibility of Francesco Candeloro becomes interpreter.

By sliding before the gaze these works, a new sense of the picturesque and at the same time of the sublime, belonging to contemporary feeling, unfold. In the immense fluid and diverse sea of today's imaginary, in this reign of the hyperreal, as described by Baudrillard, these photographic visions silently transport us towards the perception of a subtle vertigo, which enchants us, touching in a neuroesthetic way a sphere of mind where ancestral and present meet. The artist shows us a liquid and dilated universe through a saturated and bright luminosity that satisfies our senses, which are now addicted to the glistening of shiny, shimmering, vibrant and charged colors. These enchanting, reassuring and anesthetizing multicolored emanations surround us and wink at us from screens, mobile phones, monitors, tablets, signs and boards and invade the world by subtracting it from the darkness: without them it would now appear to us as lifeless, they illuminate it even at night with cold lights, which are parallel to the lunar one.

In the current great digital, technological, pervasive, mediatic and unstoppably expanding sea of information, where reality and fiction are interdependent and intermingled and the production of images and data is multiplied in incredible quantities in a continually changing mixture of deconstruction and recomposition which is constantly reproduced and staged by media, the framing which Candeloro chooses and the resulting images create stand-alone worlds, which could almost have been invented: similarly to the juxtapositions of colored surfaces and graphisms of the "book" works, they are modular and can be juxtaposed in an open way as to create different figurative stories of emotional suggestions, with countless variations; a new vision of space and time emerges, in which

the world becomes a complex globality, where distances seem to disappear, multiple visions of different locations at different scales coexist and the planet looks large and tiny at the same time.

The artist's predisposition, as previously stressed, towards "...shiny chromatisms, appearances in which matter is dissolved in the radiation of synthetic colors...", his eurhythmic sensitivity, the musicality of the chromatic notes that he vibrates with harmonious mastery in each of his works and techniques, manifest themselves, in the selection of "water" panoramas presented in the exhibition, through silken, soft, warm and enveloping gradations, in which shaded areas are composed so that they melt like on the flat surface of a painting. In others, the light is cold, clear, with attractive crystallinity: especially in urban landscapes the buildings, the trees, the objects sometimes seem to serve only as a counterpoint, as a background for the appearance of light, a flaming medium and a dazzling white that floods, invades, envelops and contains everything. This light is artificial, absolute, disruptive, and reveals itself through the "negative" presence of the elements in the frame, which with their dense materiality restrain its spreading. In the most open and perspectival poses the distances and depths reproduce an electric and atmospheric "sfumato": in the terse air, in a gradation of a thousand intensities of flares of different and subtle hues, it translates the great bundle of innumerable types and qualities of lumens of the brilliant and overloaded buzz of the contemporary world. In many works, graphic writings of shining trails engrave the scene, similar to dancing resonant traces of time: incandescent traits which, released from the reference to the factor that generated them, become signs of grace and abstract beauty; in others the soothing intimate shadow prevails in its envelopment, just modulated by slight glimmers.

Sonia Arata, Amsterdam, February 2018