

Sweet epiphanies

Curated by Caterina Fondelli | January 26 - March 20, 2023

The group show "Sweet epiphanies" curated by Caterina Fondelli, features the artists Martina Bruni, Livia Carpineto, Fulvia Monguzzi, Carolina Pozzi and Xueqing Zhu, and stems from the art residency spent at the C.F. Contemporary Fire venue last September 2022. The artworks, specifically created during the residency period, present common intentions, visions, languages and atmospheres, already underlined in the curatorial selection phase and highlighted through sharing moments and exchanges.

In the same manner as the need to use the cognitive power of the mind in different ways emerges in everyday life, without having as ultimate goal the finding of a final solution, but rather the arousing of extemporaneous and original manifestations, so it happens with the "sweet epiphanies" mentioned in the title within the maze of dialogues in this exhibition. The female artists seem to implement what is known as divergent or lateral thinking, pivotal in creativity, or better the ability to take multiple points of view into account, welcoming the flow and flexibility of ideas, resisting the ordinary in order to find alternatives. Thanks to this multidirectional approach, that captures the strength even from the moments in which attention is not focused, but it actually escapes by deviating from the usual paths, apparitions emerge and gradually take shape.

Thus begins the imaginative journey of "Sweet epiphanies", with delicate touches and whispered inspirations, leading to a timeless dimension in which concrete and abstract, reality and fantasy coexist, wrapped in a fog of infinite possibilities. Among the windows of small houses, which exude a playful spirit and at the same time a sense of warmth and distant roots; trees resembling human facial features; animals that expand in space by claiming it; creatures between the spectral and the ironic, the artists invite into the Wunderkammer which is nothing other than their mental home, for a non-judgmental, but osmotic and curiosity-filled exploration.

Caterina Fondelli (1991, San Miniato) graduated in Foreign languages, literatures and European artist cultures, and she worked as a visitor assistant in some prestigious art museums and institutions in London, UK. Once back to Italy, Caterina obtained a Master degree in Contemporary Art Markets from NABA, Milan, while starting collaborations with contemporary art galleries with roles as gallery assistant and exhibitions coordinator. She writes for art magazines and has recently started to work as an independent curator, after attending a course in curatorial practices at the School for Curatorial Studies, Venice.

Martina Bruni (1989, Cosenza. Lives and works in Milan, Italy), artist, professional psychotherapist. Martina Bruni practices an art that has multiple influences: her land of origin, place of traditions and ceremonies, melancholy, a legacy of a past of myths; her studies as a psychotherapist and activities dedicated to psychodrama; memory and everyday life that coexist. Alchemical literature, in the various texts in which it has stratified throughout history up to Jung, illuminates her creative process, reworking her own experience together with that of places and objects encountered in reality, in memories or in the dream experience. Nourished by an intense study activity, intended as an intimate and compromising exercise, Martina Bruni recognizes in each work the value of the symbol as the possibility of building a meaning. Through the technique of drawing, the artist suggests a commitment to self-discovery as the only path to see and welcome the *other*. She took part in exhibitions, projects and performances as: "Chiavi in prestito", a cura di Francesco Paolo Del Re e Sabino de Nichilo, Casa Vuota, Roma (2022); "INFESTANTE", Spazio Martín, Milan (2021); "Rovina", Futuro Arcaico, Bari and Valona, Albania (2021); "Tableaux Vivants" for Luigi Presicce, Ex-Mattatoio, Rome (2021); "Noccioline", Yellow Gallery, at the studio of Davide Serpetti, Tortoreto (2020); "Simposio di pittura", Fondazione Lac O Le Mon, Lecce (2019).

Livia Giorgina Carpineto (1997, Rome, Italy. Lives and works in London, UK), graduated in Illustration from the Camberwell College of Arts UAL (2020) and in Visual Communication at The Royal College of Art (2022), London. Her work explores fleeting familiarities, assembling and deconstructing timeless, intimately symbolic images in subtly sibylline narrative compositions. It draws on a personal, but universally shareable, iconographic network, an intertwining of kitsch and prosaic aesthetics, literary allegories, secular and spiritual figurations, past and modern mythologies. The collective imagination is anything but static, made up of dialoguing, dynamic and malleable elements. Livia Carpineto's artistic practice searches for the subversive potential of visual constructions intended as devices of poetic, critical and social expression. Together with her editorial illustration work, she collaborates with galleries and cultural institutions on projects that explore historical, geographical and community contexts as: "New River Head", Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration, Londnj (2022); "Transcend", Gallery 3, Margate (2021); "UAL Xhibit 2021" (2021); "Model Village", Swiss Church, curated by Hot Desque, London (2020); "Climate Crisis: Speculative Futures", Horniman Museum and Gardens, London (2020) and "South London Story Lab", South London Gallery, London (2019), among others.

Fulvia Monguzzi (Miss Goffetown. 1985, Desio. Lives and works in Milan, Italy) graduated in Sculpture from Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Milan in 2008, spending a period of study at the Facultad de Bellas Artes de Las Palmas, Granada, Spain; she attended the Štěpán Zavrel International School of Illustration in Sarnede, Treviso (2009 - 2011). Miss Goffetown's practice focuses on the need to move from the private to the collective dimension with its simple language, a painting where color determines the emotional orientation, while remaining neutral with respect to the socio-political context, giving space for gaze and thought to achieve something more fantastic. Painting is slow and needs space and time, and suffers for people who are unable to allow themselves the luxury of observation, contemplation and reflection. The reasoning is visual, a series of snapshots taken from perception construct an apparatus of thoughts that shape its manifesto, which is both ironic and

dramatic at the same time. The gesture is impetuous and almost uncontrollable, but the rationality is in the constant and daily process, an artisan work of research, of production.

The artist is part of Spazio Martín, Milan and among her participation in shows and projects: "FANFARA", Galera San Soda, Milan (2021); UAU Festival dell'Illustrazione, Bergamo (2019); "Graphic day figure di cose", Galleria Moitre, Turi (2019); "Come Impiattare", Galleria Lampo, Milan (2019).

Carolina Pozzi (1994, Seriate. Lives and works in Lecco, Italy) graduated in Painting from the Venice Academy of Fine Arts, she also completed a period of study at the Hochschule für Bildende Kunst in Dresden, Germany, in 2018. Through painting, the artist tries to pay attention to what is happening and what she does, while not knowing exactly what it consists of, she persists in doing it. She defines the loneliness that this process entails as "one's absurd attempt to remain human".

Among her participation in exhibitions: a lo definisce come "il proprio assurdo tentativo di restare umana". Fra le sue partecipazioni a mostre: "The appearance formula", curated by Benedetta Monti, Andrea Festa Fine art (2022); "Who killed Bambi?", curated by Gianluca D'incà Levis, New Space of Casso al Vajont (Dolomiti Contemporanee), Casso (2022); "Sugar," curated by Carlotta Pansa, spazio contemporanea, Brescia (2022); "Venice Time Case", curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, Tommaso Calabro gallery, Milan (2021); "IL CREPACCIO IG SHOW", online solo show, curated by Caroline Corbetta (2021); "Senza tema", group show curated by Daniele Capra, massimo de luca gallery, Mestre (2019); "Double Trouble", curated by Christian Macketanz, Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin (2018). In 2022, she took part in Via-farini-in residence program, Milan, Italy.

Xueqing Zhu (1996, China. Lives and works in Venice, Italy) studied Painting from the Beijing University of Technology and is currently attending a Master in the same field at the Venice Academy of Fine Arts. The artist adopts Chinese painting as a starting point, and over the years let herself be inspired by the twentieth century German and French Expressionism and the contemporary artist David Hockney; all artists who aim at moving and giving strength to people, as Xueqing Zhu herself tries to do.

According to the artist, trying to find oneself in painting is not an easy task, it requires technical experience and sincerity. Each thoughtful attempt comes close to the unique self, and there are times when one moves away from that. Those are the moments in which the sincerity, which means respecting one's desires and the real world, is lacking: that is, finding one's essence in the truth of real things. These subtle dialogues and boundaries make the image stronger and more refined, so at the right moment it hits people's hearts and thoughts precisely. It is the meaning of a painting.

Among her participation in exhibitions: "yourself in my shoes", Tube Culture Hall, Milan (2023); "Degree show 3", Palazzo Monti, Brescia (2022); "Nelle selve non più belve", Vulcano Agency and RAVE East Village Artist Residency, curated by Daniele Capra, Isabella and Tiziana Pers (2022); "Palazzo Monti Degree Show III", Palazzo Monti, Brescia (2022); "Antares", final show and workshop Extraordinario with Vulcano Agency, Marghera, Venice (2020 e 2021); "Pensare in mezzo al lago", Beijing University of Technology, Beijing (2019).

