

ENGLISH

GALLERIA CONTINUA

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GIOVANNI OZZOLA

FOR A LITTLE WHILE

GALLERIA CONTINUA | Paris - From April 14, 2023

GALLERIA CONTINUA is delighted to present in its Parisian space the first exhibition of Giovanni Ozzola, a major multidisciplinary and self-taught artist in the international scene, from 14 April to 14 June 2023. Born in 1982 in Florence, Giovanni Ozzola lives and works in the Canary Islands. The artist deploys his language through photography and video, combining them with ancient techniques such as slate engraving, sculpture by moulding, or even strappo, which was used to remove frescoes from the walls, placing them on canvas.

Ozzola's artistic practice shows a deep sensitivity to the multiple phenomena of light and their physical characteristics, translated into the conceptualisation and representation of works that question infinity and exploration, both geographical and introspective. The artist's work is punctuated by radical contrasts between light - artificial or natural - and darkness, between subject and space, between here and elsewhere, and between man and his environment. The openings, windows to heady landscapes or starry skies, are an emblematic motif in his work, representing both a boundary between the inner and outer worlds, and an invitation for viewers to go beyond their own boundaries of reference, both physical and cultural, and create correspondences between introspection and exploration.

The title of the exhibition reflects the artist's need to create, for a moment, a connection between his works and the viewer.

These instants when the visitor accesses the present moment do not last, evade all rational thought, and represent only a small suspended fraction. Ozzola generates fleeting encounters and impressions where the artist, the work, the place, and the viewer are one, in an invitation to feel his works for a stolen moment.

The exhibition brings together major works spanning seven years of production: sculptures, photographs and installations, in a reflective journey to be explored as a single installation offering a constant back and forth between interior and exterior, content and container, general and particular, and physical and psychic. Upon entering the gallery, visitors can experience a place that is both closed by walls and picture rails, and open to experiences and memories, where the artist offers them a chance to grasp a new freedom through his works, one that breaks down walls and creates windows open onto vast potentialities.

In a series of works created using the "strappo" technique, that the artist updates using materials such as silicone and metal mesh, we see negative impressions taken from the walls of various bunkers, discovered during his explorations of the island of Tenerife, where he lives and works. The artist freezes in time the fragile marks of humanity engraved on the surface of the walls, testimonies to the brief passage of man as an individuality lost in the immensity of the earth, sea or sky. Occupying an entire section of the

space along rue du Temple, a triptych created specifically for the exhibition evokes signs and memories and opens up to the light and the horizon as in an awakening.

As in the photographs, Giovanni Ozzola's sculpture is also, according to Davide Ferri, «the place of an exchange, of a passage, of a contagion». In a game of contrasts and different polishes, the artist's work *Chioccioline* are long bronze bars that rise up full of fragile snail shells, which seem to glisten in the exhibition space. With the work *Dust, fear and desire*, the artist recovers an old nautical bell, used on ships to signal one's position or presence, and engraves the words "fear" and "desire". Simple traces, which seem to underline how much the passage of time has not changed the final destination of the object.

The exhibition continues with the series of photographs *Untitled - Through a day - A Life*, the artist invites us to enter into an indistinct space, where he captures different intensities of light depending on the time of day, and especially when the sea meets the sky. Through the recording of light, the passing of a day is thus described. The magnificent perspectives reveal a diffuse horizon whose silent harmony generates a sense of vertigo, and where the viewer surrenders to a light to which they secretly aspire. Ozzola's works, devoid of any narrative, are images in conflict: their extreme balance

takes us to places where our spirit is soothed and comforted. They lead the viewer to a place of refuge, but the window on the world or on the other, present in each work, pierces an opening into the depth of field, tearing apart the two-dimensionality of the photograph to leave room for different variables of immensity. Captured at different times of the day and night, visible or almost invisible, the horizon is near or far, always out of reach, frightening and exciting.

Giovanni Ozzola has been featured in solo exhibitions such as come "For a little while" (Galleria Continua, Paris, 2023) "Traces of Wind" (Galleria Continua, Pechino, 2022); "I didn't see you" (166 Art Space, Shanghai, 2021); "Atto Unico" (Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, 2021); "Bunkeres y Estrellas" (XVI Bienal Internacional de Fotografia, Museo de Bellas Artes de Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Tenerife, 2021); "If I Had to Explain, You Wouldn't Understand" (Fosun Foundation Shanghai, 2019); "Octillion" (Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, 2019); "Sin Tiempo" (Galleria Continua, Les Moulins, Boissy le Chatel, 2019); "Algo Tuyo y Mío" (Centro Fundación UNICAJA, Malaga 2018 e Almeria 2019); "Rutas de Sangre" (Claustros del convento de San Francisco de Asis, Basilica Menor, La Habana, 2018); "Fallen Blossoms - Whispering" (Galleria Continua, 798, Pechino, 2017); "Relitti e camere con stelle", curato da Davide Ferri (Untitled Association- Lynchen, Berlino, 2017); "Adrift" (District 6 Museum, Cape Town, 2016).