

GIOVANNI OZZOLA *Routes and Stars*

Opening: Saturday 27 October 2012, Via Arco dei Becci 1, 6pm–12 midnight

Until 26 January 2013, Tuesday–Saturday, 2–7pm

Closed on holidays and: 8, 25, 26 December 2012, 1 and 6 January 2013

Galleria Continua is pleased to host a new solo show by Giovanni Ozzola in its Arco dei Becci gallery space in San Gimignano.

Ozzola's work ranges across photography, installation and video installation, including the hybrid forms that can arise from the intermingling of these different media. His work is distinguished on the one hand by a constant attempt to grasp harmony, understood as a substantive element of life, and on the other to reveal the many different emotional traces that traverse our perceptions, and which contribute to defining our everyday experience of the world and of our unconscious that translates a vision of it. Due to a whole series of cultural parameters, the human eye constantly reconfigures, in terms of light and colour, what we look at. The temporal contraction in Ozzola's work does not allow the brain this process of reconfiguration: through the creative act and its subsequent use and enjoyment, the artist achieves an uncut, clean and pure vision of nature.

Navigating, exploring and travelling are actions through which human beings have always tried to face up to their ancestral fears. *"Each of us,"* the artist observes, *"is called upon to face their fears ... stone after stone, we build our foundations, and in this way we also form the basis for a collective consciousness. All explorers that have ventured into the unknown have overcome their fears, and become the vehicle of an experience that has led to a growth in the consciousness of each individual."* *Routes* charts the routes taken by the great voyagers, routes that are not just a matter of identifying a point of departure and one of arrival, but instead focus on that unsaid which is missing while things happen. The indefinite, the imprecise and the unknown give voice to a visual poetics that is presented as an inhabitable space, as a collection of unknown corners that become individual memory.

The material used for this new cycle of works is slate. The artist chose it *"for its blackish-leaden colour, which recalls darkness, the period of the day in which it is most easy to get lost and at the same time is the most frightening; it amplifies the sound of our thoughts, heightens our anxieties as modern men, because the points of reference represented by what is visible are lacking. What's more, resulting as it does from the gradual sedimentation of an extremely fine silt deriving from the fragmentation of ancient hills, it takes shape by way of sedimentation, just like our memory."* Ozzola cuts into the slate using a prehistoric technique, stone etching, used for the first time about 46,000 years ago by the Cro-Magnons, but which then spread throughout the world, for no other reason than that it represented the ancestral desire of human beings to communicate who and where they were. On the slate Ozzola has etched signs, or rather, scars. These scars indicate a route: it is possible to make out the departure, arrival and stopping points, but the geography appears to be totally absent. The landmasses, points where it is possible to plant our feet solidly, are not visible, and we can only perceive them when we yield to our senses. Adding together all the routes, the

continents appear as if “by subtraction”. We rediscover points of reference, and the initial sensation of anxiety and disorientation disappears.

While *Routes* was an invitation to all of us to create our own path in the world, the new project the artist is featuring for this solo exhibition, *Stars*, offers the opportunity to get lost in a night without geographical references where only the stars can tell us the way.

The works on view represent rising stars that materialize over the natural surface of the slate.

Giovanni Ozzola was born in Florence in 1982. He lives in Tuscany. Despite his youth, the artist has already shown his work in many prestigious contexts, ranging from Amsterdam to Tokyo, London to Beijing. Recent solo shows include: *Geografie della mente*, Società Geografica Italiana, Villa Celimontana, Rome; *Naufragio*, curated by Ludovico Pratesi, Centro Arti Visive Pescheria, Pesaro; *Settecento*, Galleria Continua, San Gimignano; *On the Edge*, curated by Elena Forin, Elgiz Museum, Istanbul, Turkey; *Rencontres lors d’une promenade nocturne*, curated by Florian Matzner and Alberto Salvadori, Villa Bardini, Florence; *Omnia Munda Mundis*, permanent installation, Castello di Ama, Gaiole, Siena. Ozzola has also contributed to important international exhibitions, including: *Disappearance*, curated by Gaia Serena Simionati, Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; *Sphère*, Galleria Continua/Le Moulin, Boissy-le-Châtel, France; *Linguaggi e sperimentazioni*, MART Rovereto, Rovereto; *China Purple, No Soul For Sale*, ViaFarini – Tate Modern – Turbine Hall Bridge, London, U.K.; *The Difference*, curated by Vincente Verlé, Centre d'Art Bastille, Grenoble, France; *Il Cielo in una stanza*, curated by Andrea Bruciati, GC.AC, Monfalcone; *P.T 01*, Chelsea Art Museum, New York City, USA; *Rites de Passage*, curated by Pier Luigi Tazzi, Schunck-Glaspaleis, Herleen, Holland; *Guardami, Percezione del video*, curated by Lorenzo Fusi, Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena; *invisibile in-corporeo*, curated by Pier Luigi Tazzi, MAN Museo d'Arte, Nuoro; *Museo Pecci Progetto Collezione*, curated by Daniel Soutif and Samuel-Fuyumi Namioka, Project Room, Museo Pecci, Prato; *Happiness. A Survival Guide for Art and Life*, curated by David Elliott and Pier Luigi Tazzi, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.

For further information about the show and for photographs:

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