

GIOVANNI OZZOLA

RUTAS DE SANGRE (BLOOD'S ROUTES)

Giovanni Ozzola was born in 1982 in Florence, Italy, but he has been living and working for several years in Tenerife, Spain. At the age of seventeen he had his first exhibition and in 2003 he participated in the show at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, Japan curated by David Elliott and Pier Luigi Tazzi. His work has been exhibited in China, India, Korea, South Africa, the Netherlands, Australia, among other countries.

*In Havana, **Rutas de Sangre (Blood's Routes)** is the artist's first solo exhibition in the bigger of the Antilles islands.*

In the works that employ the slate stone, Ozzola unravels an individual route that intersects with that of great adventurers, to trace historical and imagined routes. Thus, through the sharp vision of the sailor, these large slates are incised to indicate the journeys that changed the course of history. They are presented to us as waving paths: they are both testimonies of man's voracity to navigate towards the unknown and examples of individuality and self-realization.

*However, his journey can turn out to be endless, because one of the routes that nourishes Ozzola, as well as displacements, men's researches and reconstructed memory, is inserted in the blood groups' investigation that trace Humanity's history. In **Blood's Routes**, slate become the ideal support for DNA studies, imperishable proof of the past movements of man and perhaps even of its future.*

*The latest work by Ozzola, produced in Havana, is **Roots**, a piece that reflects the migratory tendencies both towards and from Cuba. First, the ones registered since 1886 (when slavery was abolished) until 1930, a period in which numerous migrants arrived here from Africa, Spain and Haiti. Then, during the 1990s, the period in which the exodus of Cubans towards the rest of the world initiated. Thus, the artist holds dialogues with paths that intersect between themselves and with wanderings that aim at undertaking, from History itself, a new route.*

*Ozzola's **Timeless** is a video that achieves to reflect an Island's loneliness and hope, the distant and desolate horizon and the sight of the sea, where communication between landscape and man through whistling becomes an intimate dialogue. This is no more than an autochthonous idiom of Tenerife based on the whistle. But the interesting thing is that it is studied in local schools and that it is, since 2009, an intangible heritage of humanity (as declared by UNESCO).*

*With the presence of **Bunker**, a series that paced its first steps in 2012, the artist not only re-semanticizes the polarity between light and dark, but also the space from which the horizon is observed. Photography, graffiti and murals make up a whole that prompts us to gaze at the space from a different perspective.*

*One of the Italian artist's works that adorns the spaces of the Sacred Art Museum are the enigmatic engraved-bells from the **Dust Printemps France** series that contain significant phrases for Ozzola and constantly speak of their link with historical memory.*

***Constellations, desires and fear**, a work that was first presented in Cuba in 2016 (in Arte Continua, an art space in the capital's Chinatown), and that now returns here with new vigor, has been completely re-assessed. Through a series of propellers placed in a circle, the work, which still shows the words engraved on it for its past presentation (in 2016, the artist organized a survey in order to have Cuban passersby deposit with him one wish and one fear), takes the form of a wheel ready to move, perhaps, towards a new direction.*

*The work **Mountain in the nebula** constitutes a rare sight that invites us to explore and admire the grandeur of the cosmic, historically one of the greatest desires of humanity. In this sense, Ozzola proposes that we interrogate ourselves on our position in the vast universe and what our future trajectory in the solar system will be.*

With this exhibition, a strong tribute is paid to all those routes that changed the thread of history. To all those adventurers that wanted to change their destinations or had no choice.

LAURA SALAS REDONDO

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