

Eva Frapiccini

Selective Memory | Selective Amnesia

Opens Friday, 17th February 2015, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
From 18th February to 30th May 2015
Tuesday to Saturday, 3:00pm-7:00pm. Mornings by appointment



The Alberto Peola Gallery is pleased to present the second solo exhibition of artist Eva Frapiccini.

Frapiccini's work explores the influence and the lasting effects of political and cultural conditioning in the processes of the creation of memory. Her works often come from knowledge of and personal experience in countries disrupted by political events, to explore the theme of identity and its invisible forms of expression.

In the exhibition *Selective Memory | Selective Amnesia*, the artist explores the process of sedimentation and removal of the memory, starting from the reflections of neurologist and philosopher Israel Rosenfield in *The Invention of Memory*. According to Rosenfield, sensory input is a necessary condition for the construction of memory. The manner in which information is stored and processed, and the meaning it is assigned, varies from person to person. Memory is a dynamic

device, inasmuch as it is subject to updates and changes that reflect the sequence of events and experiences, and makes everyday life possible. In the cognitive process, emotions play a decisive role in the recording of memory, while successive retellings deconstruct and reconstruct it endlessly.

In the same way, Frapiccini uses the method of collection and processing of documents, dipping into her photographic archive for the first time. The whole exhibition reflects on the practice of selection and rediscovery. In *Velvet* (2015), the artist selects a group of images from the past, working on blocks of indeterminate color. The document strips itself of the context of space and time to become

pure emotional memory. Thus is created a series of seven works, residue of emotions common to memories of the past.

Foils (2015) is an archive-installation that consists of a selection of photographs taken by Frapiccini in different years as she travelled through Europe, India, the Middle East and Latin America. The key to understanding this series is the suspended atmosphere of a long journey between places that are difficult to decipher, the result of continuous exploration, oriented in different directions, of the evocative and meaningful power of the image. Empty wardrobes in hotel rooms, booths that are witnesses to meetings, broken train rails, isolated Middle Eastern beaches, conspire to transport the viewer into a scene that is sometimes *noir*, sometimes surreal, where the story seems to develop in multiple directions, in an atmosphere of continuous drift.

Golden Jail. Discovering Subjection is a series of photographs on cotton paper, rolled up and stacked. The work was created by the artist following residencies in Cairo and Bahrain between 2012 and 2014.*

Frapiccini makes changes to her photos manually in a process that recalls the cancellation and transformation used by power to preserve itself, with particular reference to two countries affected by the Arab Spring: Bahrain and Egypt. The continuous "erasure" in Bahrain is omnipresent: the oldest and most arable areas are destroyed, written protests on the walls are systematically blotted out with black paint, opponents of the dictatorship disappear and the medical staff that treated the protesters injured by police in 2011 are sentenced to prison. The three works related to the small Arab kingdom are rolled up to hide part of the image, in order to emphasize the lack of freedom of expression. In the two works related to Egypt, the images overlap, alluding to transformation as a political practice: the overturning of court judgments, the change of governments, the use of Tahrir Square that stripped it of any kind of sense, all reveal the unchanged identity of social classes in power before and after the revolution.

In the work *Golden Jail* the image takes on a symbolic value; just as the narrative of a memory changes the memory to make it useful in the present, so too do transformation and cancellation become weapons of propaganda, reducing the citizen to a subject.

* In Cairo at The Townhouse Gallery, in the International Network for Artist Residencies and Educational Programs / Foundation for Modern and Contemporary Art-Crt programme. In Manama in Bahrain at Al Riwaq Project Space, on the occasion of the festival of public art foundations. Alwan338, curated by Alexandra Stock.

In gallery text by Cristina Baldacci