

Rita Casdia | good day - bad day

by Agata Polizzi

Three years after her last personal exhibition (*Mini Baby*, 2010), Rita Casdia has created another one. It's a visceral, emotional plunge into her restlessness that digs more deeply this time around. It plunges right down to the fears and touches some unresolved knots that render Casdia profoundly melancholic.

Three years of work and preparation scattered with doubts and questions. A tiresome dialogue with the past, that, on one hand, has strengthened the role of memories, but on the other hand, has forced Rita Casdia to confront the fact that one cannot escape from the past, not even with one's fantasy. So with this certainty, one doesn't have a choice but to face reality. Knowing that one has to live with every ghost of the mind. Knowing, that one can even find comfort in them.

This assumption is not the visionary theory of an artist who is looking to astonish by racking one's brains with improbable philosophical contortions. Instead, it is the sincere experience of a woman who, at the end of her torturous search, finds herself.

The series of drawings entitled *Rainbows and Shadows* is a diary of an internal journey. It is the two faces of a medal. On one side, it still shows too many dark and dense shadows. On the other, it opens itself to the light and leaves space for colour. Colour, which most probably symbolizes healing and hope. These drawings seem to be a preliminary exercise for Casdia. They are a manuscript that later becomes the plot, a manuscript that explores her rationale through images.

Smother, a video that lasts for five minutes and thirty seconds, is the central nucleus of the project. It is the representation of a unique relational intensity: the biological and unexplainable one that exists between mother and daughter. The bond, which may be the most important and complex. The root of much existential anguish. A feeling nourished not by the lack of love, but the exact opposite: a love that suffocates because it is too big to hold.

Two personalities, two realities, and in the middle, an infinite number of variables that torment Casdia. Variables that make her insecure, and create an eternal crisis around a relationship to protect, to heal, and nourish. With time, the roles slowly change. They become inverted, and in the end, they get lost within each other. It is here that the change begins. The acceptance, the total and inevitable abandonment to nature, which, sooner or later, dictates its own rhythm.

The video, which I would define as moving, is an x-ray of memory, a representation of a loved, perhaps reassuring, place in which people's destinies, memories, and objects of a lifetime thicken and stratify. In the background is the landscape with its sounds, movements, and vitality. The ironic and slightly restless presence of miniscule and improbable hominids, traces of a mute stare, constantly pointing at things. A red thread that holds the mind vigilant, suspended between the past and present. The presence of sentries of narration, disrupted by a hypnotic lullaby, by an infantile voice that is uncontrollable and sweet. This voice seems to want to reaffirm its belonging to a dear person. A dear person that nobody else could ever substitute.

The same baby girl that calls her mother to her gives form to the greatest symbol of childhood: the baby doll house. That which is simply a memory materializes inside this installation entitled *House*. A magic box that, undoubtedly, has a didactic function because it is able to give visual substance to Rita Casdia's thoughts. It contains and narrates her imagination. Immersed so as to record faded time and to select images that gradually emerge in the mind. Those same images have given body to her visionary narration.

The visual and sensory feelings that emanate from the perception of the works as a whole bring back a different intensity in each second. Casdia's work has painful and playful traits and it never fails to involve the observer and show her point of view. It transports the observer inside her enchanted world – a world of which she is, and I believe will always be, a conscious prisoner.