

**VACANT SCENERY** - Solo Show at GALLERIA KAJASTE - Oulu, FINLAND.

**"Introductory speech to the opening of the exhibition - February 4th, 2014"**

Although my work is often considered under the heading "photography", I do not consider myself as a photographer in the traditional sense. Rather, I use photography as a tool to get what I desire. I mainly consider myself as a collector of images, especially images of travels. Through such a practice I put into action my deep conviction that the first quality an artist must have is "knowing how to look."

The real work begins in front of the computer. There, I begin to use the images that I have collected. To me, the computer is an extension of the mental processes that lead me to a kind of rarefaction and synthesis of travel memories.

Shortly before leaving for the show in Finland, an Italian journalist asked me where I find inspiration for my work. I told her that my inspiration comes from the Swiss painter Karl Bodmer, from Bernal Diaz del Castillo, from Marco Polo when he writes "*The Million*" and the American photographer Edward Curtis. Karl Bodmer, at the age of 23, joined the scientific expedition wanted by the Hapsburg empire to study and scour the course of the Missouri River and the Yellowstone, which, at that time, were unknown. There, Bodmer painted the Indians he met and even glimpses of the fields of the Mandan and Hidatsta tribes. Twenty years later these populations were no more there, wiped out by smallpox and flu. Bernal Diaz del Castillo was the envoy of the Spanish crown during the conquest of Mexico. Throughout that experience he wrote his memories called "*Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva Espana*" (The true story of the conquest of New Spain). Edward Curtis photographed the last free Indians of the American Great Plains. Each of these people nourished and interpreted, in their own ways, a typical inclination of the human being: the search for the "elsewhere". The elsewhere as a ground where to experience the mystery of "becoming". A place where to approach the oblivion of nothingness, the "unknown" which contains in itself what is monstrous and, at the same time, what is celestial.

In our times, the "sense of elsewhere" has been dissolved. Today, everything is documented in real time, everything is filed, everything is simultaneous and contemporary to the present. My series "**Frozen Frames**", the first of my visual work, started from this point, from this reflection around the concept of elsewhere.

I also tried to become a special envoy, a reporter of the elsewhere, documenting and recreating a "new world", an alternative world, a world already dead or at his birth. A landscape with its views and its infinitude, using the imagination and "visionary-ness" as the main tools.

The same journalist that I mentioned before, asked what drove me to create an exhibition in Finland. My answer was that here the content of my pictures finds an extension in the

spaces and lights outside my work, outside the gallery. Somehow, here is the seed of that "elsewhere" which gave birth to my personal "elsewhere". Some time ago I was on the lake INARI (Finnish Lapland). One morning, going out from home, I found three balls of ice sat down on the fence in front of the house, enclosing pine needles, stones and other bits of wood. I do not know if they were formed naturally or if someone had specially made them and for which reason. For me they were perfect and absolute objects, such as mirages of metaphysics in a material world. Acting without thinking anymore I just captured them with my camera. Today, some of those balls are contained in the works SFERA LIMPIDA. Becoming "ouvres", their absolute metaphysics was fully revealed. Mirages imprisoned in a two-dimensional theater. Metaphysical scenarios made of absolute forms, suspended in an abstract and purely mental landscape.

This exhibition has been conceived as a path crossing two distinguished areas but, at the same time, each of the rooms has its own path. In the first room, the path leads us toward mental and rarefied spaces, bright and clean. There, the sense of beauty is turning to an absolute and sublime imaginary. In that path, is the absolute equilibrium of geometry which guides us, an equilibrium represented by the circle or sphere present in all works. Sometimes it comes from astral bodies, other times it is represented by pure forms, even in the circular hole of the work "Hole". In the second room you enter into the underworld of "Frozen Frames". In this exhibition the route begins in the brightness and ends in the darkness or in the desolation of carcasses and debris abandoned in a desolate land.

In crossing these two paths I would like this show could be able to tell you the dual dynamics which is for me working with images. A process continuously swinging between the sublime beauty and brightness of the forms of thought and the darkness of a frozen chaos generated by emotions.