

Gaia Di Lorenzo

WE CONTAIN EACH OTHER (Breve storia di una spugna)

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Folds

Just think of wonder as a gazing device. A tool for observation.

In order to build empathy with the world's manifold contradictions, it becomes imperative to disrupt the pursuit of a singular, stable meaning, instead seeking to weave multiple paths for histories to come.

Wonder then, forms a space where control is relinquished, and the usual assumptions make space for new associations.

The way of navigating Gaia Di Lorenzo's exhibition suggests a meandering journey, if you will, that crosses known symbols and remote narratives. The elements placed throughout the space play out personal trajectories: they are formed in daily relationships and casual encounters, bodily negotiations, sanctioned collaborations. Like a palimpsest, these many narratives disclose simultaneous time frames but also different instants: layers of moments sitting on top of each other. A sense of order features in the work, only to be immediately dispelled. Welcoming a logic of never-ending mutation, forms give up their unity and liquefy: so the artist attempts to complicate rigid dualisms by blurring the edges of singularity. Di Lorenzo's journey invites to see how the multiple, instead, echoes in the occupancy of space other-than-self, to find—there—warm relief.

We contain each other.

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If space is demarcated by cultural codes, what if a different flow disrupts it?

Upon entering, the room turns into an unstable space, of floating expectations: a dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times where past, present and future collide in alchemical compounds that leave you groundless. A room is a container: a pathway of emotions, unravelling, in and out through a door. Enclosing and disclosing, dividing partitions; channeling sensorial, spatial experience; unveiling private parts, body parts. A room is a threshold, a passage: here, growing intimacy and flows of desire gush, in and out.

A door as a half-enclosure. Do you possess the right to cross it?

There is no opening and closing here. Normally a virtual breach, the glass portal blocks instead part of the space: rendering leftover room a passageway of its own. This barrier gathers the room in its thickness; it hosts the ghouls of interiors, as dreamy states projected onto a surface. Amorphous

figures entrapped into iron frames collide; opposites cobble in compositions that complicate fixed sense. They are gatekeepers: antagonistic, yet together. “Doors are called the access points (*ianuae*) at the thresholds of profane buildings”. In the past, portals were considered to be no-man’s land, a zone that belongs neither to the inside nor the outside.

Is this a dangerous place?

Entering the brilliant vessel, you might find something rotten that is also a source of life. This luminous essence, shining like a pearl, hides a dark face. With its perfectly smooth surface, it’s a cavity: in and out, as the flow of breathing goes. What is this shell hiding inside? Show me, take me in; let me touch the raw order of things, and dwell with it for a moment.

And here you are: venturing down the stairs, away from brightness to embrace darkness. The cold stone will be disorienting but, slowly, your eyes adapt to a new light; a sense of acceptance enfolds you. Ramified matter is there to guide, and a map is drawn: you know it’s trying to tell you something, give you some kind of direction. Whispering of spaces that were crossed, lived, and retained in the memory.

The deeper places are never comfortable: you are being courageous.

Text by Carolina Ongaro

Gaia Di Lorenzo (Rome, IT, 1991), lives and works in Rome. She earned the BA in Fine Arts at Goldsmiths University, London in 2016 and the BA in Literature and Philosophy at Università Tor Vergata, Rome in 2013. Recent shows include: 2019 - ADA, Rome; Palazzo Collacchioni - Rocca Aldobrandesca, Capalbio. 2018 - Jupiter Woods, London; The Orange Garden, Rome. 2017 – Galleria Tiziana Di Caro, Naples, curated by Maria Adele Del Vecchio.

As Gaia Di Lorenzo’s individual practice is fundamentally influenced by others’ and her surroundings she has, in the past few years, founded two collective projects: the series of three exhibitions named SHIFT in London from 2014 to 2015 and CASTRO in Rome in 2018.