

Kairos

The work of Sofia Podestà investigates man's relationship with the landscape: often she focuses on sweeping vistas where nature reigns in all its majesty, as in for example the series *Enrosadira* and *Emotional Landscapes*. With *Kairos*, however, the photographer has changed direction: these images belong to a more delicate, almost intimate dimension, even if they derive from previous collections, from which they have been extrapolated. It was precisely in the work of re-examining her archives during the recent lockdowns that this new exhibition was born, with the selection of 12 images, taken between 2016 and 2021, ranging in location from Marmolada and Cortina to Iceland, Terminillo and Monte Livata.

The opportunity is provided by the pandemic in progress and by the confinement measures put in place to stem the spread of the virus: in the impossibility of physically going to her favorite places, the photographer revisits what she has produced up until that moment, but with a new filter: and this is how shots initially set aside acquire a new flavor and a new meaning - a different perspective.

Bare trees, as if frozen by the ice; dark and intricate woods, covered with a mantle of fallen leaves and snow; blankets of mist that caress the rocks and hide the tops of the fir trees, in a game of hide-and-seek where we are left to wonder if the fog is rising or falling, and trying to answer the question of where the wind goes when it's not blowing. Podestà shows us a geography of small things, where the simplicity of a fallen branch, poised on a body of water, is accompanied by a hint of melancholy. Here and there you can see traces of a human presence, which nature slowly covers and conceals: it is only a matter of time, it is the order of the cosmos, which continues regardless of human affairs.

In this incessant flow, the photograph inserts itself as if trying to subtract moments from chronological time, in the name of a necessity: that of recording a more or less decisive moment. Podestà's work points to the contrast between the eternity of nature and the need to try to capture a part, albeit minimal, of its essence: they are fragments of the landscape, but also parts of the self. In light of this and the genesis of this selection of photographs, it is evident how the nostalgia that hovers in these shots takes on an even more charged tone: in full lockdown, these landscapes are familiar places that are missed and which Podestà can't wait to get back to, as if they were a dear friend.

The images therefore take on a meditative connotation: on the human condition, but also on the very nature of an archive and its use in the photographic field. It is not a sterile organism that simply gathers together what has been seen, shot, sequenced, shown and discarded, but rather a living collection which requires the continuous work of re-interpretation and revision. Using the calm imposed by the pandemic, Podestà retraces her steps, as in a forest enveloped in a thick mantle of fog, to find new paths focused on soft contrasts, born from the juxtaposition of images originally conceived for different purposes, from which she selects small slithers of silent landscapes.

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