



LIDIA BAGNOLI
(Castelnovo ne' Monti, 1952)

Lidia Bagnoli studied at the Liceo Artistico and the Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna. She began exhibiting her works in 1974 and from then continued her artistic activity extending it to stage design, to advertising, to design, and to multimedia. She taught for more than twenty years at the Accademia of Fine Arts at Brera of Milan: actually professor of Scenery design for Melodrama of the Accademia of Fine Arts of Bologna. She worked with many Italian and International galleries among which were the Galleria Forni in Bologna and Milan, the Cramer Gallery in Bonn, and the Tatistcheff Gallery in New York. In September 2016 she presented a video associated with D.W. Griffith's film Broken Blossoms at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, which followed other performances and conferences associated with the rapport between music and images at the University of Illinois, Parma (2001), New York University (2001), National Gallery, Washington, DC (2003). In May 2017 she will present at the annual New York University conference, Music and the Moving Image. At the same time she created various stage designs for operas, in particular a collaboration with the Conservatory of Music of Milan for the realization of the scenery design for Ponchielli's I Promessi Sposi (2015). In the countryside to the north of Bologna she restored an old chapel and transformed it into her studio, where she lives in the company of her four-pawed friends and other welcome occasional guests.

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LIDIA BAGNOLI

DOCKS

APRIL 8th - MAY 7th 2017

OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, April 8th 18-22

OPENING HOURS

WED, SAT, SUN 16-19
April 25th, May 1st 16-19



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DOCKS

APRIL 8th / MAY 7th 2017



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DOCKS

Painting falls in love with abandoned places, it caresses industrial landscapes, it searches subjects within the industrial world that don't show any particular beauty, at least not until they are discovered by artists. The beauty is something to be revealed inside the folds of a more and more complex world, in something appearing from the unexpected that contains the surprise of the not-seen.

Lidia Bagnoli has painted a series of docks, maritime ports, in a town in the United States whose name one could even ignore. All ports look the same; their names could be interchanged without any problem. The landscape around Rotterdam or Genova could be merely a different variety but docks, together with their gigantic hardware, with their cranes, with their tentacular devices, are a common element that emphasizes the fascination of these non-places. Everything passes through; merchandise moves continuously and nowadays even men do the same. Maybe everything has become merchandise so that economic exchange is the only vital energy left. But these apparatuses of production, when caught on their break, become part of a strange scenario, a little surreal, as if they were a great power put on hold. They are industrial landscapes suspended between the natural and the artificial, between the organic and the inorganic. They are monstersonstand-by, they appear "unnatural" in their stillness, immobile. Lidia Bagnoli has put together a series of strong works.

Her painting gestures, fast but at the same time meditated, her quasi-scratched sign, the non-color of these canvases, give a sense of melancholic meditation about life and about time passing. Having chosen a non-place, like the docks of any port, she exalts this sense of estrangement because nothing gets between the feelings and the subject of the work. Once again, art is an "expression of emotions"; the artist's choice of subject by itself is not relevant nor absolute. Lidia Bagnoli restitutes something that has deeply struck her; she transmits the aesthetic emotion of a moment in her life. The sense of melancholy comes from her fascination with the unexpected. A port is a place where one spends only a few hours, human beings and merchandises are in transit, they don't live there. Ports are populated by eternal feelings of escaping, of traveling, of desire for "something else", of a desire to leave or of somebody who should be leaving with you staying instead.

A port is a border that can give you happiness or pain. A sense of emptiness and of solitude is amplified in these works, too. Deserted ports, without their daily traffic, present their gigantic dimensions in a colossal proportion, through the hardness of steel and with the machinery that is moved by prodigiously superhuman energies. The painting designs universes of emotional reflection, turning it into something else; Bagnoli overwhelms any descriptive intention, tracing a sentimental geography.

The deserted docks are the preamble to the world of the painter, who is able to transform them into soul places. They are the equivalent of the Gothic ruins in Caspar David Friedrich's paintings - they catalyze the relationship between men and the grandiosity of things and of the world. Maybe the passage of time exists only in men's imagination; today, reflecting about the significance of life has more sense if one is standing among industrial buildings rather than being with more and more distant and incomprehensible wildlife.

Moreover, ports were always places inhabited by poets and painters. The first painting that gave a name to the impressionists (its title was "Impression, Soleil Levant" by Monet) portrayed the port of Le Havre. In the eighteen hundreds, railroad stations and ports were symbols of an anthropological change and the sensitivity of artists caught a new beauty in them. Similarly, the docks of Lidia Bagnoli remind you of the architectural vision of Jonathan Guaitamacchi and of Giacomo Costa but, in hers, the more intimate and personal dimension prevails. The industrial world is not seen as a metaphor of a future; Bagnoli stops in front of her own emotions, in an afternoon walk, in her catching the heart beat of the industrial world, suspended in pause during its incessant "functioning". The painting talks, uses its language, the artist's technique amplifies that existential sense of participation and distance at the same time, in front of the subject of the work. Shadows, details, lines, tonal matching, form clear and rigorous compositions, but with that sense of indeterminacy that allows us to catch all of what appears beyond the visible, behind the mirror of the world.

Valerio Dehò

