



Artist: Natalie Silva
Exhibition title: *'Nature, Interrupted'*
25-30 September 2014
Hong Kong Arts Centre

A liquid world

Natalie Silva has never placed limits on her painting. The figures that she paints stand on colored and vibrant backgrounds as they wield guns or walk in the streets of the city. These figures are born not only from an aesthetic choice, but of careful thought of the relationship between humans and their habitat, the interaction between people, the essence of all things, and the world around us. In her paintings each item is placed on the same footing, without priorities and without judgment. Her real target is not to interpret reality, but to observe it without filters, without distortion or pre-established models that may affect the expression. In this context Natalie Silva is different from artists who were born and lived in Italy. Her American origin allows her incredible openness to the history of art - especially Italian art - from which she takes her references without negative influences. She combines them to the traditions of the United States; rediscovered in particular through her seminars with David Hockney at UCLA, plus Schifano and Alex Katz, that helped her acquire a very wide palette of colors.

The work of Natalie Silva is often made by binomials, and then the backgrounds of intense colors, contrast with areas of empty canvas, not painted: these are silent spaces, where anyone can put a part of himself, and at the same time these are physical locations that create a direct relationship between the work and the viewer, inviting people to fill these empty spaces with their own thoughts.

Faced with the necessity to compare herself in the year of water "declared so by UNESCO," 2013, for the exhibition In-Natural staged in Bordighera, at the Terruzzi Foundation: Museum Villa Regina Margherita - the painter has started the production of an extensive series of paintings - which, significantly titled In-natural with its double meaning of "in the natural" and "unnatural" - where she investigates both the human body and the natural primary fluid and colorless water, which makes possible - before everything else - the survival of the species, of all species.

The fluidity of water, has allowed Natalie to choose a total freedom of expression that emerges with strength and lightness at the same time, the images of dips and swimmers are surrounded by clear waters and dazzling surreal colors, in a game of cross-references between reality and dream, between the faithful representation of the anatomy and the emptiness that is created by placing the dancing bodies in water from acid green, purple or

orange. They seem to dance, but they are swimmers: the practice is evidenced by the costumes Olympic athletics and swimming becomes a daily ritual, arduous and continuously tense in order to improve ourselves day after day with a workout that brings the body and its movements in order to reach a harmonic symbiosis and natural.

The search for Natalie Silva has touched over the years different scenarios, but the last time the sea is the central theme of her work. Between the water and the waves of the Mediterranean situation she finds her memories of childhood, beaches and cliffs are points that are rooted in her personality more intimate and so the marine places are filled with meaning and leave their traces in his DNA.

These images of powerful visual and emotional impact, inevitably make us think of water as a primordial place, we think of the amniotic fluid that accompanies us throughout life and that takes on different shades depending on the time, circumstances and situations, and reflecting absorbing different shades and being mediators of the flow of feelings and mutations. In a process that is birth and rebirth, water is the central and essential element, always powerful symbol in the West as much as in the East. For Natalie Silva is not sufficient to propose a simple regeneration of similar forms; plunged into the green water, the human body can be transformed, become even fish: a Koi carp, for example, a symbol of love and friendship, which in turn is bound to become a dragon.

The poetics of Natalie is constituted by absolute respect for nature, a sustainable approach that characterizes the life and work as an artist, from the choice of subjects and the materials used, always selected with particular attention to the environment in which live. Often her works are made of different materials combined to canvas, cardboard, as well as stone fragments, and are up to date on all the latest technological innovations in the past few months, the artist is working on the realization by the 3D programming, a large sculpture a plunger made from polyester, finished with water based resin; work performed in collaboration with Daniel Rhomberg at the prestigious University of Architecture of Vienna.

What Natalie seems to communicate through her paintings is the ... relationship between nature and humans, both placed in the center of this simple and essential rediscovery of the figure, finally released from any psychological interpretation and conducted into a more spontaneous and instinctive representation of human bodies and the cosmos.

Marta Santacatterina