

# Orion Shima & Martin Stommel

## Side by Side

7 October > 14 November 2020

Opening event, October 7, from 6pm

Rruga Abdi Toptani at Toptani Shopping Center



### Between life and world

*The myth of nature and the nature of myth*

Apparently, in the works of Martin Stommel and Orion Shima we can find a kind of mythological sensibility regarding man's relationship with nature. To put it metaphorically, let's say that we have to do with two different streams that come together in search of the sea.

They do not choose the landscape as a simple space or background; rather, the landscape is treated with the same importance as the characters. The two authors' approach to nature evokes an idyllic, or heavenly state, or mythical, or all at once, because they are essentially "sublimations" of the human journey from here to beyond. In other words, their landscapes are not normal, or are not possible "here and now".

The paths to these "magical" places, as it seems are known only to the characters who inhabit them. They appear to us sometimes strained, sometimes sad and sometimes redeemed. They almost become one with nature, as if it is their extension or vice versa. They can also be seen as fugitives from society, the city, the market, traffic and everything else done in the name of progress, to spend some time with themselves, or to seek it through ritual, which is typical in nature; not through an action, which is typical for progress or utopia.

The facial and body expressions of the characters in a certain space of nature (both in Stommel and Shima), in many cases appear as "neutral", which means we are dealing with a state between comedy and tragedy, namely with drama. They carry that drama which can be summed up in the phrase "nature is not enough", because man is not the son or daughter of nature. If nature is enough, if it is our home, our lost or promised paradise, then why do we feel anxious, why do we feel alien?! Anxiety is inevitable, even in the heart of nature, despite the various forms with which it grips us.

Indeed the Mediterranean had a tradition (Greco-Roman) which "cured" anxiety with hedonism, just to get rid of it, to forget it. This habit continues even to this day, but of course in various forms. Nevertheless, anxiety remains, whatever we do. The question is neither to avoid it, nor to fight it, nor to deify it, but to coexist by balancing it with love.

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