

# LORELLA PAGNUCCO SALVEMINI

Unconventional, asymmetrical shots. Views play upon enlarging anatomical details. Not faces, but details of faces, glimpsed upon as if they were landscapes. Embodiments, which in their oil painting form, maintain the simplicity of black and white photography and are exasperated by a dimension very near to a blow-up. The only notes of colour: hints of teal and marine blue, almost transparent, defining the eyes, and the fiery red lips and sometimes nails. An absolute, provocative and cheeky red, which stuns and exalts, like the beauty, so perfect as to seem abstract, of these women.

Who are the mysterious creatures who scrutinize, eye and invites us from Cinzia Pellin's canvases? We recognise some of them. We seem to have already seen her in the glossy pages of a fashion magazine, a fashion show, perhaps in Milan, or perhaps at Palazzo Pitti in Florence. There is Anita Eckberg, captured in the explosiveness of her gushing sensuality, as if just out of the set of "Dolce Vita" after the Fontana di Trevi scene.

Then there is here: the voluptuous, blinding Marilyn Monroe, the woman par excellence, the myth. The most desirable lover in the world, friend of the powerful who sustained that her being liked by truckers would have sufficed, and who ended up giving sleepless nights and firing the imagination of generations of men. The actress often appears in these canvases, in a sort of magnificent obsession, which with here soft, slow gestures alludes to a surrender, but are instead, of conquest. With her mouth slightly parted and a look of desire fixed upon the lens, as if she were making love with the camera. There is also a friend, recently offering herself to model and meekly buckle to the artist's direction, who suggests hairstyles, herself applying the makeup. She says: Put yourself like this, look at, turn, let down your hair, smile, and occasionally, cry.

At this point, a coup de théâtre takes place. From the artificiality of a pose, something that transcends fixed expressions and gestures unexpectedly passes through. Something which makes us see the faces like backdrops against which life develops. Pellin's background in set design give rise to paintings having a set design effect which, is nothing other than seduction and wonder. In the six-hundreds, she would have been a splendid baroque painter, probably persecuted by the tribunal for inquisition the triumphant lust which transpires from here paintings. Last century, hardcore critics would have turn their noses up at her, as for them, strangely, social commitment equates to aesthetic ugliness when not equated with misogyny. She would also have made the most orthodox of feminists frown upon her, obsessively trying to uncover objectified women everywhere, especially if charming.



Fortunately for Pellin, she arrives after these periods of excesses. She is a young self-aware and intelligent artist. For her, the eternal game of seduction does not run the risk of becoming constraint. Hers are rather subject woman. They retake possession of their femininity and sexuality and learn once again how to enchant. They have dismissed the confessor and the psychoanalyst. Simply, they desire and love to be desired.

They go back and to listening to their grandmothers tricks. They make their selves beautiful. Often maniacally so. If at time one has the doubt that they exceed with plastic surgery, even for the slightest of defects, we understand that for them, the end justifies the means. They also borrow some of the great-grandmother's behavior. They alternate between haughtiness and weakness, melancholy and joy, acquiescence and elusiveness, tears and laughter. They expose their long, white necks, they near a finger to those predictably expert ruby, full lips. They allude, sigh. The distant air of one who, conscious of their power, pretends to not care. Or on the contrary, they look with unconcealed shyness, languidly, furtively, up and down, promising

carnal happiness which one intuitively guesses will be keep. And there they are, immediately after, sure of their attractiveness, brave, dominant, haughty, suddenly dismissing false decency and reticence, aiming straight towards ones senses with an intensity which doesn't admit refusal. This is the woman of the third millennium, with feelings, contradictions, secrets which are those of today and of always

So whilst this painter seems to paint portraits, we must acknowledge just how much she is able to undress the soul.

