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Alice Ronchi
With a rose in your teeth
Opening May 25, 2022
Until July 30, 2022

Just like all of us, Alice Ronchi has obsessions. Recently, Leonard Cohen's 'Famous Blue Raincoat' has accompanied her days, to the extent that for her third solo exhibition at the gallery, *With a rose in your teeth*, she chose to borrow lyrics to this cult song. Perhaps not because of the unquestionable quality of the singer and composer, but rather for the emotions that this song has generated in her.

While the title of the exhibition might seem slightly naïve – evoking a visual imagery of a seductive woman with a rose in her teeth – Ronchi actually wants to highlight a state of ambiguity, in-between vulnerability and audacity. With this image in mind, the artist expresses her desire to evoke a female figure who proposes herself to the other, eager to please and to be loved; fearless yet fragile at the same time. The rose as a beautiful yet spiky, potentially dangerous object, reveals the boldness of whoever is holding it. Likewise, the rose has an inherent intimate significance for the artist as women in her family have passed on for generations the love of growing old roses.

With this title, Ronchi evokes the courage of a female figure whose incessant need to be accepted forces to go beyond her own limits. The call for care and tenderness arises, paradoxically from silent, suffocated and intimate afflictions that often take hold in relationships and grow into something else.

The exhibition brings together recent and new productions around some of the recurring themes of her practice, such as the need to rediscover an idealized, joyful youth and an absolute and intimate need for care.

If the human need for affection knows no time or limit, its form and modalities depend on the events that surround us, both on a private and a collective scale.

The current global landscape we have witnessed it in the last few years, has accelerated and amplified the processes of exclusion and loneliness. Never before has the human being felt the crave to touch, to physical relations, and above all to get back to meaningful emotional exchange with others and with oneself. And in this, although it all stems from a purely intimate and personal path of the artist, where there are elements that can be shared with everyone and that are universal.

True Care – Room 1

The visitor faces the seminal work of the exhibition, *True Care*, upon entering the gallery space. This new body of works is composed of a series of eight paintings depicting organically round and tenderly chubby shapes painted on transparent foils superimposed and framed in a plexiglass shell.

The forms seem to gently brush against each other, caressing one another with respect and gentleness, winding up in a feeling of cosiness. A sort of dreamlike landscape aiming to inspire tenderness and the lightness; a poetic narration of something abstract that aims to dialogue with another dimension, the blurry one that deals with memories, dreams, feelings and an intimate desire of care.” The large format paintings face the

visitor who enters the room, inviting them into an intimate exchange with the warm shapes. They emphasize a state of mutual vulnerability. As stated by the artist, this found intimacy “is (what) I desire most of all, to gently touch the spectator, to gently caress him and share something that for me is pure and innocent.”

No narration, no representation; only the intention to lead the viewer into an immersive light and intangible atmosphere.

Talismano – Room 2

Further on, in the second room of the gallery, *Talismano* marks a return to Ronchi’s origins as a sculptor. One enters in a small space encouraging a direct dialogue with the work. At the centre, a precious and timid element, highly symbolic. A solar arch is supported by two columns that elevate it, like a sacred altar. This esoteric, human scaled sculpture made of pink Portuguese marble and brass transmits a sense of protection. The artists plays with space and the sensations it produces. As stated by Ronchi, “intimacy brings everything together: fears, secrets, needs, hidden desires and extreme beauty. Intimacy and the intimate need to care is what the exhibition represents, it is the key to everything, the starting point and the point of arrival and expression.”

Voglia di tenerezza – Room 3

Timidly installed in the office space of the gallery, Ronchi has silently positioned *Voglia di tenerezza*. A slender arc of iron delineates her own handwriting which appears in / as a childlike script, alluding to a more private and intimate research for harmony and openness. The decision to place it in a working environment once again emphasizes the artist's desire to play on the bi-polarity of different emotions; the light-heartedness and carefree nature of childhood in an unexpected dialogue with the world of labour and consequently the adult realm.

Although the exhibition plays on the artist's emotional dichotomy, the cardinal works do not reveal this often painful passionate side, they do not reveal distance but the fundamental moment of encounter.

Joel Valabrega