**L'ombra nella mano. Il viaggio delle forme - La sombra en la mano. El viaje de las formas/The shadow in the hand. The journey of shapes**

curated by Donald Kuspit

Gruppo Credito Valtellinese Gallery - Milan

15 September 2006 - 4 November 2006

A journey between dream and reality, between Spain and Italy, where the protagonist is the Galician artist Menchu Lamas. On 14 September 2006 'L'Ombra nella Mano. Il viaggio delle Forme - La Sombra en la Mano. El Viaje de las Formas/The shadow in the hand. The journey of shapes' opens in Milan, an exhibition produced by the Gruppo Credito Valtellinese Foundation together with the CGAC (Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea/ Galician Centre for Contemporary Art) and the Cervantes Institute of Milan. The exhibition curated by Donald Kuspit retraces the last ten years of Menchu Lamas' work, who has been active on the Spanish and international artistic scenes since the early '80s, when she obtained her first artistic success.

Menchu Lamas rediscovers an iconography linked to an ancestral world seen as a anthropological common territory worth valuing. This approach is a way to build an imagination free from media stereotypes and unambiguousness. The works on display focus on the theme of dreams, they highlight the desire to investigate a dream world in order to broaden the boundaries of one's own imagination, without escaping the everyday life. In her paintings the artist creates an extraordinary and balanced harmony between rationality and the unconscious, between imagination and reality, being able to keep intact the distinctive characteristics of both realms.

Menchu Lamas adds appearances of the human body which are expressed in dark silhouettes, images specifically used in the negative; some other times the hint at the body is overtly evoked through hands and feet such as in 'Territorio da cor' of 2002. In time the presence of the body has been felt by the artist as something too invasive, an element of distraction: for this reason labyrinths, geometrical shapes, walls, crosses and webs are placed side by side with the images, becoming abstract symbols of the human thought and presence. On display there are about twenty important works of large size: their height goes from 2 to 2.5 meters and the works impose themselves with an evocative mix of colours, which combines the reds with the yellows, the blues with the pinks, the greens with the oranges, as in the case of 'Soño tachado' and 'Espiral do soño', both pieces from 2001.

Simultaneously the works of the artist are presented at the Museum of Santiago, where a video allows the visitors to see the exhibition in Milan; similarly in the rooms of the Gruppo Credito Valtellinese Gallery a film is screened in order to admire the Spanish exhibition.

The exhibition is completed by a catalogue published by the CGAC (Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea/Galician Centre for Contemporary Art), in cooperation with the Cervantes Institute and the Gruppo Credito Valtellinese Foundation, with critical texts by Donald Kuspit and Roberto Pinto.

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