

# Ciàula scopre la Luna

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29 June—8 October 2022

A pale blue dot. A pearl in the black sea. An eye watching over us all. A graphite egg laying hold upon this text. *[Big, peaceful, like a fresh and luminous ocean of silence]*, the heavy load of the moon on your hands. Is it possible?

Behold where we stand. At a massive distance from the dot, surrounded by its silvery light. In this territory made out of limited surfaces and ruling powers. Immersed in the timeless, futile effort to conquer the moon. Only to realize that we are lingering within the depths of our grounds, the echoes of extraction politics and powers.

The show “Ciàula scopre la luna” is a confrontation with the technoscientific representation of the moon and the commodification of this faraway land into a romanticised symbol, collectively owned. The works bring an assemblage of observations on the political exploitation of the moon and the forced perception of outer space as a physical and social narrative. The space becomes a sculpture to be explored—revealed under the surfaces of meanings and events. Three dimensionality and surfaces dissolve into binaries, a meeting between apparently opposing materialities. Surfaces are the threshold points between paintings, drawings, prints, and installations; the space in between is left to be defined. A rock is a pigment is a keystone is a zone. The graphite is diffused on the works, coating, and re-signifying the intercurrent materials, such as paper, metal, clay, or walls.

Materiality comprises the epidermic surface of the show, the ground for us to step in. Like in a trip to the Moon and back, SRV targets the tactics of extractivism and anthropocentric views, and creates an overview of possibilities for us to explore, question, subvert and resist to the logics of colonial seduction; and discover anew the beauty of the moon.

*[...] That night the pickmen wanted to go home without extracting all the brimstone that was needed for that day [...]*

The need to conquer the space begotten by imperial ambitions and attempts of mankind unification, under the conditions of globalization, framed within seductive narratives of ‘goodwill.’ As in the case of Nixon and his moon rock gifts to 50 US states and 135 countries, brought to earth by the Apollo 11 and 17 missions. Nixon’s gesture is indicative of the colonial processes undertaken by governments. The “Goodwill moon rock” is a counter-cartographic project that maps the dispersion of the Moon on the Earth. Through a process of research and creation, SRV collects, examines, and interprets archival material relevant to the rocks and to the dispersion of the Moon fragments to imagine alternative histories and futures.

*[...] What a weird thing: in the muddy darkness of the deep pits, where around every corner there was death waiting for him[...]He was scared, instead, of the darkness of the night [...]*

When fear of the unknown we crave more certainty, unconditionally. The surface of the moon, charming unexploited geology is a temptation for our voracious greed for resources. “Luna” color drawing replicates the detailed geological map created by NASA, with emphasis on the urgency to question the extractive economy implemented in the cosmos. The leap of human commercial activity into space requires us to rethink the way we perceive the forces of our economic system, against the vastness that space offers.

*[...] That night walking through the tunnels the usual sound of the crow didn’t came out of his mouth as usual, but rather a tortured long wail. Now up the ladder, even this wail stopped, stopped by the dismay in the black silence he was about to find once again in the impalpable void out there. [...]*

Our most recent depictions of our possibilities in the terrains of the Moon are digital renders of future space colonies. Big rockets are landing on its surface with intentions of extraction and we, future occupants of the place, are the yet to be the selected heroes. The “Skylink” addresses urgencies related to outer space decolonization. This series converses the profound interconnection of all existence, encompassing not only relationships between human beings and all other forms of life, but also the entire cosmos.

*[...] But the light hue kept growing, as a new rising sun. Was it possible? [...]*

Push and pull, attraction and repulsion- ebb and flow; water keeps moving, in a natural course of change. Cosmic gravity or cosmic sympathy introduces the interdependency between the Earth and the Moon. This indicates a tied relationship between things, as intra-related as a whole. Thus, scale becomes insignificant, as the force of attraction can cut through every barrier. A barrier that separates but that also allows our vision to pass through. This movement is represented through the work “Tide” silently leaning on the exhibition walls, marked with graphite, it shows different variations of sea tides in relation to moon phases. The Moon, neither of conjoined nor of separate parts, exhibits its closeness to Earth through the movement it creates far or near it can be.

*[...] the moon, with her wide veil of light, oblivious of the mountains, of the plains, of the valleys she was spreading light on, oblivious of him, who no longer felt fear for her, whose tiredness had faded away, in that night now full of amazement.[...]*

We are sunk in oblivion and moved by amazement. But behold where we stand. The many stories of outer space appropriation are the particles for the counter narrative to the unknown. Every gesture of representation is a political statement on control and excessive vanity. Every reference is making the Moon part of the Earth’s ecosystem and the human dynamics and networks. Despite the unreachable aspect of it, we are on a mission; to obtain the impossible. It is a contemporary reality, blurry and illusionary. For what we know, is the light of the moon.

*[...] There she was the moon![...]*

\*The above is a conversation between the short story “Ciàula discovers the moon” by Luigi Pirandello (1912) and some of the projects by Santiago Reyes Villavecques presented in the show.

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Luigi Pirandello (1912)  
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