

Each desert is its own starting place. Powerful and symbolic. Jesus is tempted by the devil in the desert. Right there where one is alone with oneself. Where space is frightful and unnatural, time dilated, possibly timeless, so close to a complete illusion. Light becomes intense, embracing everything with a mystic veil. Unwatchable. As is the deity (inside us). Baudrillard speaks of light in the desert as the image of disincarnation, as separation of body and soul. Solitude becomes a tangible presence. Inside the desert it is possible to relive “the pure mark of one-hundred and eighty million years and the enigma of your very existence... it is a fragment of another planet – howsoever prior to each human species – and harbinger of a different temporality, more profound...” writes Baudrillard in America. Hallucinations and mirages can be projections of possible companionships and realities so incredibly distant that go as far as to cross the horizon. However they appear so near, result of an optical effect called superior mirage. The sight gazes deeply without encountering obstacles. One might see the infinite, if it could have a body. And it does, if that infinite mirrors who we are and what we have inside. The desert is terrifying because it astonishes us with our own selves and our limits. Right there, where there are none. Symbolically it is the place closest to the experience of death and as such, to the mystic transformation and closeness to God. It is the fear of the void that becomes skin. It becomes body. It becomes soul and voice. Again Baudrillard “...the desert is a natural extension of the Body’s internal silence...”. This is why it’s frightful. Only by traversing ourselves can we traverse the desert. And vice versa. With few steps. But symbolic. Profound. Delicate. Intense. Like the 7 steps that Margherita has dedicated to just as many intents, in a performative and symbolic feat carried out in the Atacama desert (Chile), fighting, losing, questioning herself, and finding herself once more. Margherita feels the necessity to give a “body” to the sequence of photographs, witnesses of this powerful symbolic act, escaping the two-dimensionality of a simple frame. She then chooses to sew the pictures of the 7 steps, with different sequences linked by a red strand, on 7 white

linen rough canvases. And she decides to do so in Ibiza, magical and ancestral island, the adoptive land where she grew up in. There, she tinges the canvases with the Earth's soil and leaves them to dry under some trees during a night storm, hence imbuing them with the powerful and symbolic energy of the forces of nature: earth, dark, light, lightning, air, water and sun. Each canvas holds 21 photographs, 21 steps for each day and is enriched with symbols and amulets which Margherita sews into the canvas, their very essence being charged with intentions. Just like the gris-gris, voodoo amulet bags the purpose of which is to protect whomever owns them from bad luck or to cast upon him good fortune, inside each being a meticulously chosen stone: a quartz rock, a malachite, a moon rock, an amethyst, a citrine and a carnelian. Linen canvases that are not just there as physical support but, once again, symbolic. They are magical maps revealing a journey, needed to find one's own. To transform the very fabric, dyeing and sewing it, is a symbol of that change that the steps we take cause. All actions that transform the canvas the same way the performance and desert transformed Margherita. As a psycho-magical act, a death so as to be reborn as a new self. The act of sewing reconnects to the powerful concept of femininity. The importance of sewing for women is recurring in history and the world, women sew to achieve a sort of liberation, for their own country, their own identity. It is a symbol of struggles and female strength. That very strength which Margherita has found in the desert. That unique power of women that allows to birth the world. A voyage of purification and rebirth that brought her here today and us in her footsteps, which become ours.

Claudio Composti