

ZOO

On the occasion of Arte Fiera 2017, Paola Rava offers, in her atelier on the street D'Azeglio, in Bologna, the exhibition entitled "Zoo", which has as its sole subjects animals who are the protagonists. The collection will remain open until the end of February and the exposition of the "Zoo" canvases will be characterized by a rotation of the works during the entire period of opening. The different animals are mainly represented in a dreamlike context enucleated from their natural environment, but they have as common matrix, still more important than being animals (reminding us that we too belong to their own realm) their eyes, their look. Good-natured and sly, frightened and shy, aggressive and provocative. Always on target on the one who observes them. This choice that Paola does in her works is from interpret as a search for vitality, as a profusion of energy, that the painted subject wants to convey to the observer.

"Zoo", a title that ironically alludes to the captivity of those animals, because prisoners of the canvases and walls where they are exposed, but through that direct gaze, transcend and free themselves in the mind of the observer.

The deer, the elephant, the leopard, the wolf ... so many subjects they express an energy positive and creative, which characterizes this body of works. The eyes, therefore, protagonists more than the subject itself, which becomes its mere frame. A choice which highlights the search for the soul, which the author finds in things, in the animals and in the people. A research that Paola also performs in the life of every day and that for those who know it could only transfer into their own pictorial works. When I dedicated myself for the first time to the observation of the works that make up this collection, I have not immediately grasped the key to interpreting them. After talking to the author, to a certain point, the way was illuminated to grasp the communicative essence that Paola

he wanted to express, through his own creativity. I grabbed this thin thread conductor that "Zoo" offers to those who observe with depth, and not superficially, these works.

The look as a litmus test of the empathy between living beings of any species, or race, whether it be animals or human beings, without making any distinction.

The strength of these works is all there and once received, displaces the one who hastily could dismiss these paintings as yet another work done on the animal species. To look good like this is not. As if that animal well depicted disappeared at the moment of the revelation of that arcanum. And what's up more mysterious and energetic than the look? What characterizes a being more living of their own eyes? Which best medium has the animal to communicate with we human beings through their own expressiveness? We have these questions

placed at least once in life and the canvases of Paola Rava seem to want respond, through the strength of those figures, to most of these questions. I want to end with a sentence by Arthur Schopenhauer, which expresses very well and concisely the essence of this exhibition: "In the calmness of the look of animals still speaks the wisdom of nature; because in them the will is the intellect has not yet separated enough from each other to be able to, when they meet again, yes, to be amazed by each other. "

Barbara Luciano