

Cristina Casero

Psicotropie (Psychotropies)

The personality, nature, and character of the subjects portrayed by Marco Circhirillo, or perhaps it would be better to say the leading characters in his narratives, which centre ambiguously around disquieting figures, are shown in all their complexity through his photographic images. Crystalline and compositionally balanced, they are brought alive by the masterly use of light and shadow contrasts, and give another mysterious and intriguing dimension – that decidedly crosses the threshold of the phenomenality – to the tangible illusion of reality typical of photography. It is precisely the figurative representation of the subjects that reveals the depth of identity of the leading characters in Circhirillo's visual narratives. And it is they who, by means of metaphor, render the idea of the articulate complexity that lives deep inside everyone.

I also believe it can be said, and it would be no exaggeration, that Circhirillo's entire research has for a time now revolved around the theme of identity, and achieved convincing results. This is precisely in virtue of the fact that the artist expresses himself through photography, constructing dense, complex images in which the aesthetic, compositional and formal refinement is always counterpointed by an intense articulation and stratification of meaning. Indeed, his works are filled with suggestion and allusion, cultured references and, when not expressly symbolic, metaphorical elements. His are photographic images that are certainly far from the purely immediate, and far from any interest in the merely perceptible and phenomenal.

In Circhirillo's "multi-portraits", the dialectical tension between elegance and expressive intensity is particularly evident, and becomes quite the characterizing feature. As always happens in the artist's works, we are again witness to a photographic technique that, to a certain degree, appears paradoxical. However, it is one that instead is deeply rooted in a rich tradition, originating from distant times, from the very beginnings of the history of photography which, in the last thirty years, has found a new lifeblood. The use of photography to create images which are not, and do not want to be realistic means, on the one hand, definitively freeing it from by now old ties with the transcription of the real. On the other, it means fully exploiting the intrinsic value of the photographic image, or better, that product of reality that makes it so different from any other iconic image. Circhirillo brings human nature to the fore, the manifold identities contained in every being, through an echo of figures conversing one with the other, and thus amplifying the expressivity of the personality who, placed precisely in the foreground, attracts our gaze. It is a gaze, however, which must dwell and let itself be drawn into the image in order to be able to fully appreciate its depth.