

Ecobestiario
by Daniele Capodiferro

"We are such stuff of dreams are made on and our little life is rounded with a sleep"

William Shakespeare

That's sure: the meeting place of fantastic animals is the dream. In Alessandra Marinoni's *bestiary* the absolute oneiric vision becomes the vehicle of artistic expression, infinite well from which she draws so fantastic but so urgently contemporary images.

The concept of her works takes roots in the classic tradition of the medieval graphic representations, revisited in a personal modern vision that recognizes the pressing ecological issues.

In several classical elements, among which the choice to represent fantastic animals, the use of veillings, the always white base on which the animals rise out, we find the permeation of several aspects of an actual issue: the daily disposal of urban waste. So, we find twelve irreplaceable beasts-post modern faces-, each of which works to pick-up exhaust oils, picnic plastics, exhausted light bulbs, chewing gums, cigarette filers, batteries ... all materials not biodegradable at all and highly pollutant.

The artist's declaration has no censorious or rhetoric attitude at all and is permeated with nimbleness and color nearing itself to the sensibility of the child that resides in us all. Alessandra Marinoni shapes her "eco-bestiary" in a perfect balance between reality and fantasy, between concrete and imaginary aspects. One of the explicit scopes of her artistic sign is to bring near the art both to adults and children in a light and playful manner. Childhood is like a golden mine under our problems' and anguishes' load, ready to offer us the brightness of its resources.

The medieval bestiaries represent highly stylized animals, with decorative effects and expressions with a strong formal impact. We find domestic or wild animals, fantastic or hybrid animals that live in an imaginary and far place, like the Middle East. In the Middle Age animals are symbolic references for the representation of a vicious and godless or a positive and honest society, with a clearly Christian pedagogic function subjected to the authority. The wolf, cruel and ravenous, symbol of money avidity and avarice. The eagle flying into the sky toward the sun burning its wings and splashing into the water, symbol of spiritual regeneration. And the lion, the hyena, the unicorn ...

In Marinoni's bestiary we don't find at all that symbolic superstructure. The animals are dressed with a positive and "pagan" aura. Her images are not drawn from a reality (true or assumed) and then transfigured, but they are permeated with the artist's psychological attitude that watches elements of the animal that live in her imaginary mixed right away with naturalism elements.

We find the frog-dauphin, symbolizing the constant regeneration of life that eats a chewing-gum. The hob and the multi-tailed cat that pick up urban excreta and cigarette stubs, affirming the inalienable right to walk freely and without obstacles. The housewife-geese attentive to pick up all the clothes pegs. The Fish-Elephant purifying earth and see from the batteries' pollution. The loved horse (probably the closer to the emotional sphere of Alessandra) with a noble intelligence that picks up with elegance cans and exhausted oils. And other to discover, symbolizing the thousands of faces that our (even little) engagement could bring.

Each portrait has a bright force giving a real consistence to these dreamed animals making us message's accomplice and not only public of the work. This sensibility to the animal world at one side denounces their "objectivation", their role as good to supply enormous alimentary markets (how not to think to hormonal treatments, to forced nutrition, to genetic manipulation?) and at the other side the schizophrenia of the opulent society that exalts some of them to the role of sole partners.

Let's return in *medias res*! During the past century, following Freud's discoveries, the dream acquired so an importance to become Promethean of an artistic wave: the surrealism. But the originality of the artist resides in the desire to realizing *her dream* (artist's dream and possible dream of an ecological community and no more a research scope in the unconscious, unique experience of the individual. For the artist, dream and imagination don't substitute themselves to reality, as in surrealism, but dialogue with it to give an importance to the awareness of the ecological commitment and show – in *transparency* – a demand of revolution.

In this series we see the influence of metaphysical picture, adopted by the Marinoni in previous works of her decennary production. Forms are apparently simple but full of classic and modern elements; beyond the time but indisputable sign of the time. The images are clear but without shadows, isolated but connected to each other; motionless and quiet, but they talk directly to us.

If on the canvas' surface the fantastic world of Alessandra Marinoni talks to our ecological conscience, behind it knocks on our unconscious, on this immense shadow's universe that moves our existence's wires. The dream appears like a powerful key to our deeper self, that self that doesn't split us (in wars, bands, egoism...) but puts us together in the deep as a human community and, maybe, with something larger. A close contact with our self, a healing contact. Dreams, said Carl Gustav Jung are a bridge with our unconscious to expose them to the disinfecting power of the daylight, rediscovering elements we think lost...

Let's go in the new eco-real-fantastic world of Alessandra Marinoni