

Yuri Ancarani (Ravenna, 1972)

Yuri Ancarani, one of the most interesting eyes at work on the moving image, acts in that liminal area between video art and documentary cinema, between exhibition and international festival, between museum and multiplex. He does not consider himself a non-fiction director, even if with a clear and impartial eye, he tries to bring to light the most authentic aspects of the reality in which he enters, revealing evident contradictions and little-known social codes. Its actors are ordinary men and women who move autonomously in their context; Ancarani is their silent guest who observes and records with meticulous precision: he does not direct because any interference could distort the truth of the image.

In his first works with video, produced at the beginning of the 2000s with a minimum budget and the use of simple technical means, the artist, who is originally from Ravenna, focuses on the limited and limiting dimension of the Romagna Riviera where he has grown up, focusing on the most nostalgic and surreal atmospheres: from the stereotypical holiday and seaside traditions to the visions of the petrochemical industry, from the dynamics of socialization within a group to a present but camouflaged multiculturalism, up to the weaving a portrait of a sentimental and local landscape, yet so typical in many provinces.

This interest in the territory does not diminish even when the productions become larger, the shootings clearer, and the rhythm of the films slower and dilated. Although, over time, Ancarani has moved towards the exploration of distant places, from the richness of Qatar to the village of Haiti, his gaze always seems to return and prefer the reality he knows best. It is the case of the trilogy *La malattia del ferro - The Disease of Iron* (*Il capo*, 2010; *Piattaforma Luna - Luna Platform*, 2011; *Da Vinci*, 2012), which focuses on the relationship with machines and technology in three different Italian working contexts and the subsequent cycle of films dedicated to the symbolic places of the Milanese life: The stadium of *San Siro*, 2014, the prison of *San Vittore*, 2018 and the bank of *San Giorgio*, 2019, outline the profile of three institutions which, in their own way, only function thanks to rules and mechanics concealed to an external eye. In its being closer to art than to cinema, the work in the collection *Lapidi* (Gravestones), 2018, differs from the narrative structure of the titles mentioned so far. In this diptych, composed of the juxtaposition of two vertical screens, are simultaneously transmitted two different sequences: on one side the images of the commemorative plaques dedicated to the victims of the mafia in Palermo scroll, on the other the shots of a Sicilian landscape as shocking in its beauty as silent and at times unknown. The work is an opportunity to investigate the transformations involving collective memory practices, buried by a tourism commemoration in which the same gravestones, emptied of meaning, become the perfect backdrop for visitors' selfies.

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