

Grazia Toderi

(Padua, 1963)

Grazia Toderi's images pertain to this world but convey a view of it that is difficult to achieve while remaining firmly anchored to it. Avoiding narrative, her videos initially focused on the domestic microcosm, before rising up to an aerial and sometimes even cosmic perspective. In Toderi's videos, even time, which in this world cannot be experienced except as an irretrievably linear sequence, follows different laws and is presented in a cyclical manner that abolishes the concepts of before and after, beginning and end.

Interested in the relationship between personal and collective memory, Toderi identifies in the pervasiveness of television an element capable of freeing memories from their specificity, only to then be reinserted into a shared consciousness. 'Stealing' fragments taken from TV programmes, Toderi uses them as material that she reworks by computer. Sublimated by the artist, the original recordings thus become works where past events seem to become part of original messages launched toward an extra-terrestrial dimension, aiming at the future. In one video series, the artist identifies stadiums as places of concentration of energy, where the games that take place can assume metaphorical value. In *Subway Series* (2001), an installation composed of a pair of video projections, Toderi uses TV shots of Shea Stadium and Yankee Stadium in New York. Showing a long-distance view, the artist eliminates the newsworthy nature of the sporting event that characterised the original sequences and instead presents almost abstract images that expose the interweaving of the precise geometries that govern the game and the shape of its designated sites.

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An excellent interpretational key to access the world found in her videos, the titles that Grazia Toderi attributes to her works are often taken from literary texts. This is the case of *Autoritratto con problemi, problemi* (1995) which draws inspiration from a tale by Ingeborg Bachmann originally published in the early 1970s. The protagonist of the story is Beatrix, a twenty-year-old woman who has fallen into a state of ennui: all she can do is sleep and wallow in her own thoughts. When she finally finds the strength to break out of it, during a day of driving rain, she decides to go to the hairdresser's, only to leave even more disturbed and dissatisfied with the result. The latest of Toderi's works to join the collection, *Autoritratto* actually belongs to the initial phase of her career. The works from this period, shot using mainly a fixed camera, do away with the dynamism of the medium so as to focus on minimal objects and everyday, almost meaningless situations, which end up transmitting to the audience a sense of fatigue and unrest, intensified most of all by the length of the shots. In *Autoritratto*, for example, the artist may be seen under a bonnet hairdryer while the words of Bachmann's story flash past. For eighty minutes, the length of the video, the viewer is required to sit in front of the screen waiting for an action that will never be completed entirely.

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