

Capitain Petzel

ISABELLA DUCROT

Big Aura

November 23, 2019 – January 4, 2020

Opening: Saturday, November 23, 3-6pm

Through her extensive travels in Asia, Isabella Ducrot has assembled a sublime collection of antique textiles, originating primarily from India, China, Tibet and Afghanistan. Fascinated by the presence of rhythm and rhyme in these materials – two notions crucial to the craft of the weaver – Ducrot has made it her artistic mission to transform them into objects which represent the rhythm of life.

For her first solo show at Capitain Petzel Isabella Ducrot presents different series, all of which share an element of repetition. It is in repetition precisely that Ducrot finds these rhythmical, musical motifs; in repetition that these textiles of the East become to her *pleasant lullabies* (una gradevole nenia) or *effective prayers* (una preghiera efficace). Ducrot believes this kind of repetition has suffered in maintaining its aesthetic justification in the West, having been subordinated merely to decoration, particularly prior to any turns towards abstraction. She has as a result become interested in reducing the prejudice against decoration in the applied arts, by giving both voice and scale to patterns of all kinds, as beautifully exemplified in *Big Aura II* which presides over the exhibition space.

Throughout the space, Ducrot presents her *Bende Sacre* (Sacred Bandages). These scarves originate from Tibetan monasteries where they were used as votive offerings to be placed around the shoulders of sacred sculptures and other objects of worship. Ducrot imagines the prayers emerging from the rhythm of the weaver's loom; the very fabric of the scarf growing with them in unison. She unveils with these works a tenacious alliance between mind and matter as the threads intertwine in allusion to divine messages.

The artist's chosen subjects are otherwise landscapes, vases and teapots. Nora losia elaborates on the still lives on paper : 'These vases, teapots, and a handful of natural elements, in the rhythm of exercise, of repetition, take on a character that grows further and further away from the meaning of presence: the initial intention to stay within the confines of their formal essence founders nonetheless in a meditation that draws reality back to the essential in a single gesture, almost an ideogram of the present. The objects chosen by Isabella Ducrot (...) belong to a scenic design of interiors; raised to the rank of protagonists, they pass from being present to a new presence, and reveal their beauty, because they have been stolen from memory.' In the series *La bella terra*, for instance, rivers, sky, stars, moon and trees are used again and again in order to compose laudative songs for the earth's fundamental virtues and the urge to protect them.

Isabella Ducrot (born Naples, 1931, lives and works Rome) has exhibited this year at Galerie Gisela Capitain in Cologne, and in 2018 at the Spazio Parlato in Palermo. In 2014 she had a major exhibition at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Rome, Italy. In 1993 she showed her work at the Venice Biennale. Ducrot is due to have a solo exhibition at Galerie Mezzanin, Geneva, Switzerland in the winter of 2020.