

*Roma versus Carthagónova- 2004-2006*

Rosell Meseguer

Since 2004 till 2006 I have been creating, projecting and accumulating images that would make a dialogue between the Italian and the Spanish Mediterranean coast. A mirror that leaded to comercial and social ways, a history of harbours and ships. As a tracker, I visited the Mountain Testaccio ruins, actually a fashion quartier of the Città Eterna built by bunches of tesseras, emerging from the land to the sky. They were the rests of the antique packings of oil and wine; fragments of sea salt and land.

Fragments of the personal diary, Rome 2005

Just a cinema memory, you, my intense Spring,  
in this beginning roman Summer

18 June 2005

Pepino di Capri o how to survive Napoli – *e poi, morire-*  
There, were our parents parties, so many times remembered by the 60'S music  
that was played at the *machina*, but Pepino di Capri didn't sound at Oreste's car,  
what were played, were the *uhhhhhh* from the people, the continued sounds from  
the horn with cacophonic sound that can be listened all over the Mediterranean city.

Napoli is a dunghill full of memories, of *palazzi dei Borboni*, a rest of the Spain of Carlos III; the city and its actual state, touches you, makes you be in love and cease to love. An homicide shot to the most brutal beauty that can offer two bays, a museum like Capo di Monte, a castle on an egg..., *tante cose!*<sup>1</sup>. The pizza was born here, spongy, just with *pomodoro*<sup>2</sup> and *mozzarella*, different to the roman one, crunchy and filled up with all kinds of things. Survive Napoli, is find the beauty in the dirtyness, find the other city, the one that hides in the underground, the one that talks about the Second World War and it's refugies, the one that tell us about how water was got from the subsoil and was brought to the outside floor. Survive Napoli, is find the beauty in the lost and however, recognize it.

16 January 2005

#### Villa Medicis

Sounds like Velázquez, sounds like his first pictorial impressions that so many critics called: first line of the Impressionism, it sounds like Paris, it is the French Academy in Rome (...).

It is cold, the north of Italy is completed snowed: closed roads, towns isolated, there has been snow even in La Manga del mar Menor – Cartagena-Murcia- and Mallorca.

(...) the entrance of Villa Medicis is full of candles (...); a red trousers -pants-, a fur coat, high heels, purpurine and so much confusion, it seems something important is going on. Today is the Kiefer's show opening (...), a German in an Italian-French territory. Kiefer surprises me again, immense, fascinating: earth, ink, a little airplane stuck on a canvas...

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<sup>1</sup> Italian: so many things!

<sup>2</sup> Italian: tomato

Night goes on, a face, some wines at Piazza Navona, it is getting colder, it seems the air, little by little is getting frozen (...). We shelter in Rock Castel, I amuse myself looking at the people, lineages *della notte romana*, somnambulists that tonight cannot sleep, they prefer to yell, to sing, to walk towards and forwards. Night goes on and on(...) it comes the rain as snow, we walk out. Rome is alone, white, snowed, it's very late, thousands of *puff* and *paff* sounds can be heard, snowballs (...).

We walked the last kilometre to the Academy of Spain carrying our *pupazzo di neve*<sup>3</sup>, later on, I put it with a rose in the fridge, since then, it is one of ours, our *pupazzo di neve*, our *bambino*.

26 January 2005

D'Andrea -at Andrea's place-

Every time I've had the possibility to get into a movie by Visconti, just like the main character at that film (...) it was just my imagination. Get into the Il Gattopardo, observe the beautiful scene, the object recreation, the things, the little things that touch me so much, then, it was just my imagination. Thursday the 10th, it wasn't like that, that *ragazzo* (Andrea) that appeared in our Carnaval party disguised in a military costume, offered me to have dinner at his place.

I go down, I cross Trastevere, I reach Campo di Fiori, I bell the ring, I go up four floors, I open the door; (...), at west, a piano with bulbs looking like candles, to the right, old oval family portraits -XIX Century-, not hang but hanging from the walls. Andrea, a young baritone is there with a tenor, a soprano and the pianist (...). They

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<sup>3</sup> Italian: snowman.

seemed to be illuminated, they have that halo, that each Opera singer has, because plastics artists, as Baudelaire said, lost it, or we just left it in somewhere of the soil, or the subsoil.

We get into the living room, (...) more portraits, more overhead lamps; in a place lots of old books are stocked: clasics ones, encyclopedias, more books. Just one contemporary object at the sitting room: a tv that has been hidden into a closet. In one side of the living room there is a little round table with a candelabra in the middle, in front of me, there is another guest, she must be around her 30's, astrologer, she reads Tarot. Some wines, a dinner and as a dessert: tiramisu. (...)

Later on, I could observe that the beds seemed to be part of another time and in the house there was also a military helmet collection, even a Duce photograph, (...) – no comments-. Diana took me back to reality when we got on her *motorino* that brought me to the Academy of Spain. It was two o'clock in the morning and Rome, imponent night she-wolf, seemed to me even more beautiful... We crossed Castell' San Angelo, then, the river Tíber, we kept on its side just to go up by Viale Trastevere and then I reached Spanish territory.

13 February 2005

### I Giardini di Marzo or Porta Portese

*I Giardini di Marzo* is the tittle of a Lucio Battisti's song, one of those that I listened to, during my childhood. It talks about gardens, tales, little daily events: talks about love and desires...

Every Sunday, I have the habit to go and get into Porta Portese, some kind of Rastro<sup>4</sup>. I start the week looking for anonymous photographs, postcards, little memories of unknown people, abandoned in rubbish skips; collections of the ruined.

(...) that man asked for some postcards, 8 euros –postcards of the Italian Mediterranean coast from the 70/ 80-, but for a little more, he would give me the whole postcard pile. Between the heap, I found some personal letters. They were written by the same person: She, with that old fashion handwriting that made me thought about my grandparents. They were dated during the 40's. Letters of love and coldness. I could understand almost from the beginning that he had left her for another woman, afther 8 years of relationship, 8, as the 8 euros the man asked me for. I dindn't read further and I threw them away. They caused me great pain (...).

27 February 2005

And, the end...

This time I come back *da sola*<sup>5</sup>, I go down Victorio Emmanuelle to Campo Di Fiori, I cross the Sisto bridge, there, up, the Academy... I remember now your words: *grazie per tutto quello che mi hai dato*<sup>6</sup> (...) Grow, grow between films of microfilm. Roman countrysides are to my eyes, what your eyes were to sun; it was your encounter, sea of seas, the hands our hands, slight and soft our memories, gushing out *adesso*<sup>7</sup> and piling up on the *testa*<sup>8</sup>. From love is love, that little contamination

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<sup>4</sup> Flea market in Madrid

<sup>5</sup> Italian: by my own

<sup>6</sup> Italian: "Thanks for all that you have given me"

<sup>7</sup> Italian: now

<sup>8</sup> Italian: head

has, goodbye Rome, goodbye *piccolo grande amore*, goodbye Italy, goodbye my putanesca<sup>9</sup>. Juan would say: Rome!, me myself: amore.

29 March 2005

I would love to thank the warm support of my work by El Palacio Los Serrano, Ávila- Spain. It is the result of a grant given in June 2004, by the Foreign Office of Spain to live in the Academy of Spain in Rome. I would love to remember here my colleagues at the Academy, to the shared and lived moments, as well as the people I met in Rome: walkers, musicians, artists... Special thanks to my own family and all the people that helped me to develop this project: Alfonso d'Ors, Josu Larrañaga Altuna, Oreste Azcucci, Blanca Eulogio Blázquez, José Luis Cegarra, José Manuel De la Barra Cuevas, Isabel Tejeda, Wendy Navarro, Héctor Luis Conesa Hernández, Manolo Cebrián, Jorge Berganza, Eva Olivo and Fernando Guillén.  
To the Mediterranean Sea.

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<sup>9</sup> Way of cooking pasta

The prints have been developed by the photo-laboratory FOTOSÍNTESIS-  
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