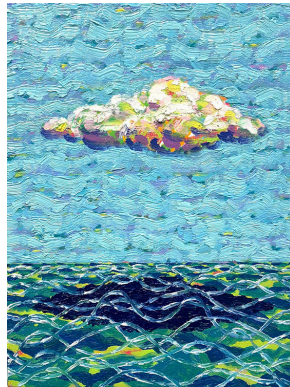


Tolve, Antonello. "La nostalgia di un paese mai visto. Una collettiva sul viaggio da Anna Marra," *Segnonline*, 6 December 2019.

**segnonline**

*Translated from the original Italian*

Designed around the chromatic elegance of Benjamin Degen, the collective curated by Marina Dacci in the spaces of the Galleria Anna Marra Arte Contemporanea in Rome focuses on a speech related to travel: and more in depth to man, to his body in movement, its curiosity, its desire for knowledge and discovery, the "nostalgia" that can be felt for "a country never seen" (Baudelaire). *Inner Landscape* is, in fact, at least to me it seems, an *invitation au voyage* that delves into the anthropospheric fabric and which allows a glimpse of a particular sensitivity towards materials used as memories or as symbolic transpositions, as reflections on *the vital world* (on the *Lebenswelt* fielded by Husserl) intended as a horizon in which the plot of the work is woven for everyone.



Benjamin Degen, *Over Time Louder*, 2018, oil on canvas, 40.5 x 30.5 cm



Paula Cortazar, # 21 (La Fuerza del Río series), 2019, carved river stone, 24x40x33 cm

Next to the work of Degen (New York, 1976), pleasantly and carefully disseminated in the two rooms of the gallery, the sculptural and plastic work of Paula Cortazar (Monterrey, 1991), of Alexandra Karakashian (Johannesburg, 1988) and Michele Mathison (Johannesburg, 1977) is also articulated on the direct taking of assumptions that deal with the theater of the world, with the umbratile history of the elements, with the time that silently settles on the material

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and that with the hours, with the days, with the months, with the years, with the centuries, he molds and re-shapes the territory.

Three works by Paula Cortazar - his is also a granite slab, *Scars (Human series)* - taken from the series *La fuerza del Río* (2019), and precisely the numbers # 19, # 20 and # 21, are for example an instant natural reference : the artist recovers large river stones and adds a trace to nature's smoothing action, digging and creating pleasant spiraling paths, labyrinthine and dense grooves.

Michele Mathison also takes up the tufaceous stone (the soft one that illuminates and makes Puglia smile), combining it with the iron, used to create cold branches on which - in the case of *Artery* (2018) - there are mounted flowers of asphalt. Then, there is Alexandra Karakashian's more socially engaged work, which also tells of the trip about the recent tragedies with *Orphans of Recent Events I / II* (2019) and *Yashmak VI* (2019).

Among Degen's works, I don't hide that his painting (more painting than drawing) particularly touches my aesthetic strings, *Over Time / Lauder* (2018) seems a poem whose words have been stolen from the voice to leave the eyes only right to hear its distant echo. It is a marine horizon (above, in the sky, there is a light cloud) placidly pulsating that recalls the nineteenth-century navigations married to silence and waiting, to "restless fantasies on the desired land" (Gauguin).