

Zurich Development Center



Exhibition SARA ROSSI
August – December 2005
The series PULCINELLA: The Quest for Moon Water



Acqua di Luna from the series "Pulcinella", C-print on aluminium, Ed. 1/5

The artistic work of the young Italian artist Sara Rossi is fluctuating between imagination and reality, real life and poetics. She tells stories mixing iconography and

media reality, and produces poetic atmospheres which are in total contrast to the aggressive character of media images, Her works are characterized by a fluidity of time, by ephemerality, history and durability. They evoke fairy tales as much as memories to historic and epoch-making events of our common past. The timeless character “Pulcinella” is the space traveler between the times.

“Pulcinella”, one of the most widely known characters from the Commedia dell’Arte, is a working-class Neopolitan character whose witt and “ugliness” makes children laugh in his homeland and around the world. The exiled character is known as Pulcinella in Naples, Polichinelle in Paris, Mr Punch in London, Petrushka in Moscow, etc.

Pulcinella is a merchant of butterfly wings, a hunter of moon water, an explorer and alchemist.

In Sara Rossi’s „Pulcinella“ series, the main character allows - as a traveler and explorer -, Melancholy to rule the universe while the alchemist is landing on the moon in order to collect a health-giving elixir – moon water – that will benefit mankind. Landscapes and characters are appearing and disappearing in the images, leaving us behind in a limbo, not knowing any more what belongs to reality, to fantasy, to theater... Everything seems possible in that specific moment of perception. As spectators we are put into a contemplative act of looking – letting time go by as if it did not exist.

The “Pulcinella: the quest for moon water” series is inspired by an ensemble of three 19th century lithographs by an anonymous artist that depict the main stages of his journey: his departure from earth, his arrival on the moon, his return home.