

FESTA

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(English version, Italian below)

Festa is the eternal repetition of a primal event that took place in a time so remote to be impossible to determine. It is a time beyond the history, close to eternity and continuously echoing in the abyss of humanity. It is the myth - literally "the real word" - that narrates these primordial times, delineates its contours and summons its original sound.

It is a time that the buzz of the busy everyday life tends to cover with a veil of small talk and discontent, in the vain hope that the prime abyss from which everything originated will cease to instill terror. This is not the case: if one does not look deeply into the abyss, this will present itself more insistently and disturbingly.

One can say that culture generates from human beings' courageous decision to gaze into such abyss, at the dawn of western civilization, in the archaic, Homeric, pre-philosophical Greece.

So, from the meeting between primal chaos, personified by the God Dionisus, and the luminous - and often blinding - solar sphere of Apollo, the forms of Art are born.

Art generates from terror, from the will to give a shape to the suffering that is inherent in Man's mortal nature, in his desperate finitude.

Festa is where Art's community manifestation occurs, the moment in which the archetypes of primal horror are summoned, where the desperate cry of humankind reshapes into dance, picture, sound, word.

The series of photographs that compose Festa is a repossession of those archetypes and its forms: the organic, the vital pulse, the surfacing of the human figure and its mask, the implacability of life and death's natural cycle.

Festa is inevitably a tragic work, in so far as it takes shape as an artistic confrontation with the primal and profound dimension of humanity. In Festa, the chanting words pronounced by the officiants during the sacrifice of the Dyonisian ritual resonate. The victim is Dionisus himself, ripped apart; he is the sacrificed goat. The literal meaning of tragedy is actually "chant of the goat", *tràgos* meaning "goat" and *oidè* meaning "chant". The tragedy is the way through which the abyss is shown, "represented" in its inherent un-representativeness. This is why the tragedy is consciously doomed to fail, and its cause consists in this joyous yet desperate attempt to shape chaos.

The colors that are presented in each work of the series tap directly into Aposematism, namely the aptitude of various species of animals to take colors that could scare potential predators by chromatically transmitting their toxicity. The repellent colors are an immediate call to the fight that populates the world of living organisms, from the simpler plants to the more complex insects, up to mammals and human beings.

The contours of the images are surrounded by darkness, which finds its

break in the color red, like a burning fire illuminating the scene.

A textual work is added to the series of twelve images, in which a constellation of words, guidelines and essential references appear in order to direct the visitor through the visual works.

It is not a didactic, descriptive or unequivocal text but an expressive work that guides the viewer without forcing him/her into a pre-established experience.

Nicola Patruno