

## The breath of sky

*By Azzurra Immediato*

“A dialogue between eternity and lightness”. This is what the photographs of Rossella Pezzino De Geronimo portray, with an extraordinary outlook that seems suspended in a timeless dream-like limbo.

The dialogue is to be found between the two main characters of these works – the sky and the colourful rock formations of China’s Zhangye Danxia National Geopark – which the artist has sensitively reworked in post production with intimate and conceptual textures. Upon observing these photographs, intended as something more than simple landscapes, one can detect the artist’s method of taking something known and extrapolating its primordial essence pertaining to a latent cosmogony, only to leave it without expression. Rossella frees the energy of the earth, the sky, the elements, getting back to basics in a contemporary and unusual fashion. These are hypnotic images that take your breath away. It is like observing precious fragments of those great rock walls under the microscope, before suddenly becoming rapt by the vastness of the landscape. And yet, this transformation has a disturbing, enigmatic dimension. The onlooker feels he is lingering on the unexpected, experiencing a dulling of the senses that, on the contrary, become the only conscious means of relating with the photographs. Rossella offers Nature – Woman, Mother and Eternal – intricate textures, in a close and intense two-way dialogue. An intangible empathy redesigns the actors’ roles in these works: the protagonists are no longer just the photographer and the landscape, but rather, a deep, visceral understanding between their souls, which at any point may merge into one.

Eternal nature – or womanhood – meets and clashes with the human frailty of the woman photographer, who, on focusing on the elements of the Earth and Sky, consciously stumbles on the uniqueness of time, which follows inviolable rules and translates into a clearly identifiable metaphor. From all this – that is, from the need for a deep and Pan-like analysis – stems the desire to transform natural data from objective to subjective, while maintaining a degree of universality. Thus, Rossella leaves the objective data – the colour of the rock formations of the Zhangye Danxia National Geopark – up to chance, evoking the concept of primordial chaos and veering toward surreal shades. As the artist herself explains, the use of the colour blue, which reigns supreme in this series of shots, conjures up the idea of immortality and harmony that, in Tibetan philosophy, equates to a state of passion-free serenity. Eastern and Western iconography refers to a dimension that goes beyond human limitations and pushes the boundaries towards infinity, represented by the sky, the sea, and – in archetypal symbolism – by the concepts of femininity, beauty and serenity. Those who know the artist are also familiar with her sweet yet determined temperament, aspects that are

inherent in womanhood, with all its strengths and weaknesses. These photographs offer a symbolic blend of these aspects, which, from counterparts, become counterpoints of a dual quid: one visual, and the other existential. Every slope, every gorge that opens up between the rocks, seems to open up breaches in the deep folds of the soul. The onlooker reaches for catharsis – each in his own, individual manner – through the colour blue, before meandering through changing colours that, poised between nature and technology, suggest a path to be followed.