

# 大自然中斷

## NATURE, INTERRUPTED

Natalie Silva





# I D E N T I T Y

PRESENT

# 大自然中斷 NATURE, INTERRUPTED

Hong Kong Arts Centre, Pao Galleries, 5th floor  
2 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

25-30 SEPTEMBER 2014

## A LIQUID WORLD

Natalie Silva has never placed limits on her painting. The figures that she paints stand on colored and vibrant backgrounds as they wield guns or walk in the streets of the city. These figures are born not only from an aesthetic choice, but of careful thought of the relationship between humans and their habitat, the interaction between people, the essence of all things, and the world around us. In her paintings each item is placed on the same footing, without priorities and without judgment. Her real target is not to interpret reality, but to observe it without filters, without distortion or pre-established models that may affect the expression. In this context Natalie Silva is different from artists who were born and lived in Italy. Her American origin allows her incredible openness to the history of art - especially Italian art - from which she takes her references without negative influences. She combines them to the traditions of the United States; rediscovered in particular through her seminars with David Hockney at UCLA, plus Schifano and Alex Katz, that helped her acquire a very wide palette of colors.

The work of Natalie Silva is often made by binomials, and then the backgrounds of intense colors, contrast with areas of empty canvas, not painted: these are silent spaces, where anyone can put a part of himself, and at the same time these are physical locations that create a direct relationship between the work and the viewer, inviting people to fill these empty spaces with their own thoughts.

Faced with the necessity to compare herself in the year of water "declared so by UNESCO," 2013, for the exhibition In-Natural staged in Bordighera, at the -Terruzzi Foundation: Museum Villa Regina Margherita- the painter has started the production of an extensive series of paintings - which, significantly titled In-natural with its double meaning of "in the natural" and "unnatural" - where she investigates both the human body and the natural primary fluid and colorless water, which makes possible - before everything else - the survival of the species, of all species.

The fluidity of water, has allowed Natalie to choose a total freedom of expression that emerges with strength and lightness at the same time, the images of dips and swimmers are surrounded by clear waters and dazzling surreal colors, in a game of cross-references between reality and dream, between the faithful representation of the anatomy and the emptiness that is created by placing the dancing bodies in water from acid green, purple or orange. They seem to dance, but they are swimmers: the practice is evidenced by the costumes Olympic athletics and swimming becomes a daily ritual, arduous and continuously tense in order to improve ourselves day after day with a workout that brings the body and its movements in order to reach a harmonic symbiosis and natural.

The search for Natalie Silva has touched over the years different scenarios, but the last time the sea is the central theme of her work. Between the water and the waves of the Mediterranean situation she finds her memories of childhood, beaches and cliffs are points that are rooted in her personality more intimate and so the marine places are filled with meaning and leave their traces in his DNA.

These images of powerful visual and emotional impact, inevitably make us think of water as a primordial place, we think of the amniotic fluid that accompanies us throughout life and that takes on different shades depending on the time, circumstances and situations, and reflecting absorbing different shades and being mediators of the flow of feelings and mutations. In a process that is birth and rebirth, water is the central and essential element, always powerful symbol in the West as much as in the East. For Natalie Silva is not sufficient to propose a simple regeneration of similar forms; plunged into the green water, the human body can be transformed, become even fish: a Koi carp, for example, a symbol of love and friendship, which in turn is bound to become a dragon.

The poetics of Natalie is constituted by absolute respect for nature, a sustainable approach that characterizes the life and work as an artist, from the choice of subjects and the materials used, always selected with particular attention to the environment in which live. Often her works are made of different materials combined to canvas, cardboard, as well as stone fragments, and are up to date on all the latest technological innovations in the past few months, the artist is working on the realization by the 3D programming, a large sculpture a plunger made from polyester, finished with water based resin; work performed in collaboration with Daniel Rhomberg at the prestigious University of Architecture of Vienna.

What Natalie seems to communicate through her paintings is the... relationship between nature and humans, both placed in the center of this simple and essential rediscovery of the figure, finally released from any psychological interpretation and conducted into a more spontaneous and instinctive representation of human bodies and the cosmos

**Marta Santacatterina**



## INTERVIEW WITH THE ARTIST

"I consider myself a painter, not an artist", Natalie often says about her work.

"My research really narrows down to the painting: color, light, and 'il gesto'. Painting is what I focus on. I don't want my characters to become. They express themselves through color, brushstrokes and movement".

One of the features that along the years has struck us about Natalie and her work is conciseness, the gift and the doom of always being present, to experience things as they happen; a feature that can give you alternatively great pleasures and great sufferings, depending on your sense of humor and on chance. Exactly, as the paintings we are looking at. Humans, whose energy and paths cross or merge or do not at any given level: magical, personal, symbolic or social.

What's the feeling she would like to gain from her paintings? "I think it's about time we drop the concept of having to understand. My paintings are to be looked at".

Everything synchronizes: the light, the color, the movement or the imagined movement. She left Milan in order to focus on her specific research in painting. "I needed light, there was a compelling urgency to confront myself with nature and its infinite colors.

To move away from the city was exactly the right measure".

Her colors are so vivid and "in your face" and that's the relationship with the characters. Natalie Silva goes quite often to Los Angeles, after a while she misses the action, the feeling of continuous movement in a massive way and at the same time the reliable sun makes everything appear like it's still. "Los Angeles really throws color in your face" as she said during a recent interview.

Natalie Silva avoids perspective in her paintings. Flatness belongs to her research on color, on painting as action. Not only the American movement... more like the ancient Venetian Renaissance: Tiziano, Tintoretto, or Veronese, where shadows are a different color, not necessarily just a darker shade. The painter does not need a perspective. The color and the way it is used will determine the atmosphere.

(Extract from an interview between Natalie Silva and curator Massimo Torrigiani in occasion of her exhibition "Back Street Boys" held at The Royal Academy of Arts in London).

## NATALIE SILVA

German-born Natalie Silva (b. 1962), attended University of Maryland and Luigi Bocconi University.

She held her first solo exhibition at the Mudima Gallery in Milan in 2001. Since then, she has held solo exhibitions and has been featured in group exhibitions in Switzerland, Slovenia, London, Paris and Los Angeles.

Solo exhibitions include The Narcissism of the Artist, Mudima 2 Gallery, Milan (2001); Grey Panthers, Archaeological Museum G. Rossi and Library Museum Bicknell, Ventimiglia (2005); Backstreetboys, Dotfiftyone Gallery, Miami (2007); Backstreetboys, by Arrangement of the Royal Academy of Arts, London (2007); Corporate Culture, Gallery Canvas, Dallas (2008); GWG girls with guns, Dotfiftyone Gallery, Miami (2009); Ordinary People, Galleria Studio, Milan (2009); Latest Works, Galleria Studio, Milan (2009); and Dreamers, Museum Villa Boselli, Arma di Taggia (2012).

Silva participated in Art Basel Miami in 2004, 2010 and 2012.



# IN-NATURAL

The artistic research of Natalie Silva refers to the type of relationship that has progressively configured itself in the artistic practice, between nature and its representation: "in-natural" because it is referred to nature, investigating its processes, its mechanisms. Reproducing them in painting, transforming them into something other than the natural element.

This is how another reality is created, the reality of painting, the reality of art in general; a re-created reality "in-natural". To talk about something closer to today's art, we could refer to the environment created by the Danish artist Olafur Eliasson. In 2003 at the Tate Modern in London, Eliasson showed The Weather Project, an enormous artificial sun that illuminated Turbine Hall with the same unpredictability as the weather.

It is principally with this "in-natural" characteristic that articulates in a dialog with the natural element, in this case-water, by the artist: in her works water is not a metaphoric, allegoric, or symbolic element. It is a concrete presence, translated in artistic terms, it is artificial and arti-factual, these are the elements compose the physicality in Natalie Silva's paintings.

Natalie Silva has a particular interest in the human figure, not without a detached playful irony.

In her work a confrontation with water had to translate into water-human being,

caught in the daily activity of swimming, as certain titles suggest: Push spin forward, Spin swirl spin.

The last one represents a typical turn of a professional swimmer goggles and all, seen from above as in a sporting event. Even when the title has a different significance the position of the body is that of physical exercise. Not recalling any symbolic echo, such as: Swan, Landing on the Moon, Not yet a Butterfly.

Even in White Dolphins the protagonists assume the position of a backstroke. In this case it is the relationship with painting that wins over the representation of reality. It's not by chance that Natalie Silva defines herself more of a painter than an artist. Painting doesn't mean – and even the less initiated public know that by know – imitating reality, faking a third dimension opening up from a two dimensional canvas, but means confronting oneself with pictorial material, if not extracting from reality interpreting and transforming it into forms and color, in an innovative perception that doesn't try to trick the eye and mind illuding them that they are seeing reality. Instead it opens the mind into new and diverse sensations and visual dimensions.

That's why Natalie's colors can be "in-naturally" yellow, purple, green or orange, that's how these bodies assume in-natural colors (blue and purple, blue and green, blue and yellow, green and orange, creating what is called in optical

physics simultaneous contrasts (since impressionism) exalting in the viewer the intrinsic luminosity of the painting.

Spiele mit Schiele (Play with Schiele), is a pure pictorial game, the face of the girl in the painting recalls in fact, the phisionominy of the female figures of the famous Austrian painter; Egon Schiele (1890-1918) to whom also the play on words in the title refers to, while the colors assume a clashy chromatic contrast typical of German expressionist paintings.

In Natalie Silva canvases the water sprinkles are musical pieces of pure painting material, her water in fact is made of wide surfaces of colour from which blotches of magmatic paint falls and drips resembling action painting from the American Abstract Expressionism movement, one of Natalie Silva's major references, as Pop Art (but more in relation to the attitudes towards everyday material than to the type of painting).

A connection to Natalie Silva's work could be suggested through David Hockney's famous painting A Bigger Splash (1987).

All these references have been duly noted by those who have worked along with the Italo-American painter. Here it's seems interesting to notice other aspects, certainly interesting and more about her work. The independence from photos, contrary to todays painting, but most relevant would be to underline Natalie Silva's demonstration that figurative painting doesn't necessarily mean a

return to the past, but an ability to open up to conceptional structures, just as much as any other artistic practice. The installation aspect, that the work of the painter reinforces in this project, creating spatial and chromatic perceptions that are "in-natural" but certainly intense and strongly visionary.

(Taken from curatorial text of Leo Lecci)

From the observation of the natural universe emerges the strong binding empathy that ties these paintings to the liquid element, iridescent in its colors, shapeable in its forms, inescapable in its intrinsic vital essence.

Natalie Silva explores the visible world, in a specific research that tends to focus on inserting the human element into an indistinct -willingly so- space; in order to read from one time to the another, volumes and forms that become projections of our memories.

One may read in this research, the perception of poetics in all that surround us, without academicism without literary romanticism, but with a sensitive instinct for color and the eclectic strength of its interactions. What comes out are figures that fluctuate in a liquid aquatic space, dynamic and reflexive at the same time.

(Taken from curatorial text of Annalisa Scarpa)





To the Wonder  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x120 cm





Furthermore.....  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm





**Hula Hoop**  
2014 • Mixed media on cotton  
100x120 cm



Like a Rolling Stone  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm





Tumble Dry  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm







**Allegro andante**  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x200 cm



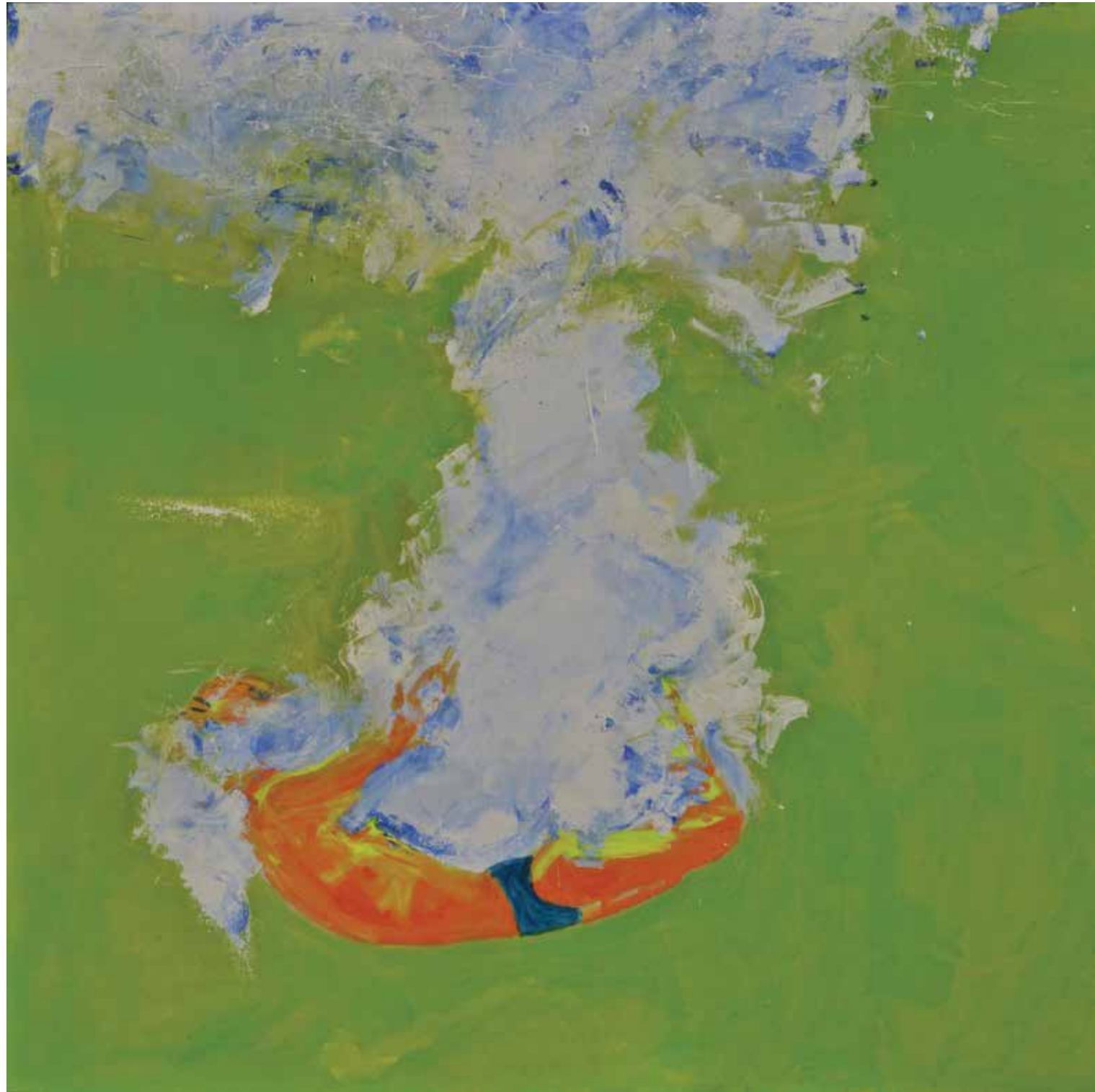


Angel  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150cm

Can't get you out of my head  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150 cm







Landing on the moon  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150 cm





Fusing Into One  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm





White Dolphins  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x200 cm



**Not yet a butterfly**  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
120x120 cm





Push spin forward  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150 cm





**Spiele mit Schiele**  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
120x120 cm



Spin swirl spin  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150 cm





**Spreading Wings**  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm





Dolphin allegro

2014 • Mixed media on linen

60x110 cm





**Swan**  
2013 • Mixed media on linen  
150x150 cm



One Cloud, Two Clouds Away  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
100x100 cm





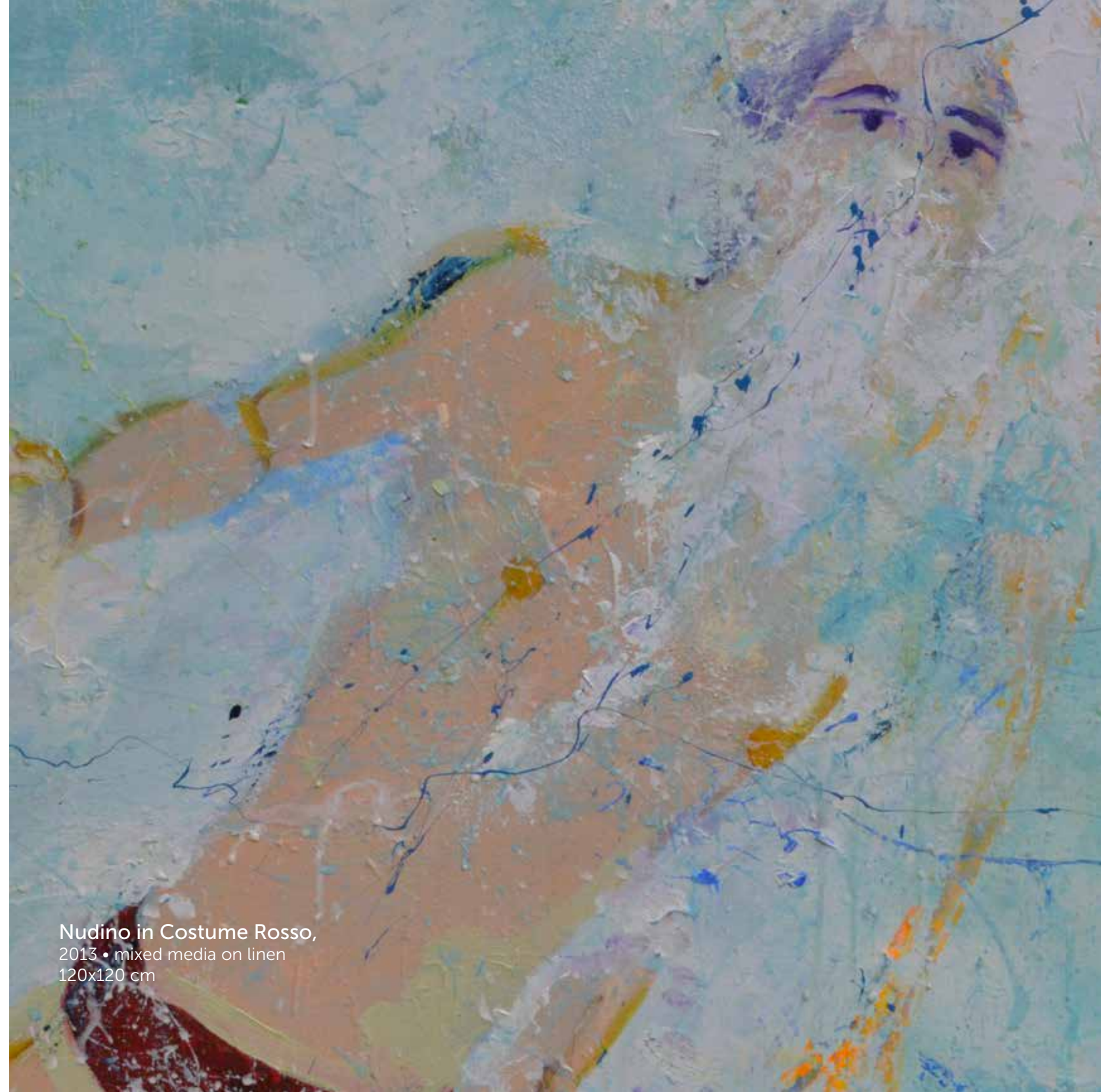
**Ganesh**  
2014 • Mixed media on printed canvas  
100x80 cm





Dolphin flip  
2014 • Mixed media on linen  
60x110 cm





Nudino in Costume Rosso,  
2013 • mixed media on linen  
120x120 cm





**Twist and Turn**  
2014 • Mixed media on canvas  
100x100 cm

# NATALIE SILVA EXHIBITS

## SOLO SHOWS

- 2014
- Milano | “Sott’Acqua”, @Ermanno Tedeschi Gallery  
curator Ilaria Dupre’
- 2012
- Arma di Taggia | “Dreamers” @Museo Villa Boselli, curator Fulvio Cervini
- 2011
- Milano | St Art Galleria Studio’ curator M. Simonetta
- 2010
- Vallebona | “Bon”Art”, curator Simona Alborno and Academy d’Art of Bordighera
- 2009
- Milano | “Ordinary People” @Galleria Studio’, curator M. Tamburrini
- Miami | “GWG girls with guns” @Dotfiftyone Gallery, curator Vanessa Garcia
- 2007
- Dallas | “Corporate Culture” @Galleria Canvas, curator Lauren Christensen
- London | “Backstreetboys” by Arrangement of the Royal Academy of Arts  
curator Julian Loneragan
- Miami | “Backstreetboys” @Dotfiftyone Gallery, curators Alfredo Guzman and Isaac Perelman
- 2005
- Ventimiglia | “Pantere Grigie” @Museo Archeologico G. Rossi and Biblioteca Museo Bicknel  
curator Edoardo Testori
- 2002
- Locarno | “Merci” @NU Gallery, curator Marco Tagliafierro
- 2001
- Milano | “Il Narcisismo dell’Artista”@Davide di May Gallery, curator Marco Tagliafierro

## GROUP SHOWS

- 2014
- Vallebona | “Bon”Art”, curator Simona Alborno
- 2013
- Bordighera | “IN-Natural” @Fondazione Terruzzi Museo Villa Regina Margherita, curator Leo Lecci
- 2012
- Vallebona | “Bon”Art”, curator Simona Alborno
- Monaco | Open des Artistes @ Galleries L’Entrepot, prize for painting for Monaco Telecom and Private Banking Monaco
- 2011
- Miami | “Wynwood Art Walk” @Dotfiftyone Gallery, curator Isaac Perelman
- 2010
- Vallebona | “Bon”Art”, curator Simona Alborno and Academy d’Art of Bordighera
- Apricale | “Arte x Arte” @Castello della Lucertola, organized by FAI, Liguria Committee  
curator Roberta Croce
- Roma | “Sguardo sulla Realtà e Oltre” @Complesso di Sant’Andrea del Quirinale Teatro dei Dioscuri, curator Elisa Govi
- 2009
- Miami | “Art Does Design” @DCOTA Design Center of America, Dotfiftyone Gallery, curator Isaac Perelman
- 2007
- Roma | “15 finalists” for Premio Celeste Pittura @ISA, curator Gianluca Marziani
- Miami | “EU ART” @Palace of the Italian and French Consulate, curator Anna Piva
- “Arte e Omosessualità da Von Gloeden a Pierres e Gilles” Firenze @Palazzina Reale & Milano @Palazzo della Ragione curators Vittorio Sgarbi and Eugenio Viola

- 2006
- Miami | “It Happened One Summer” @Dotfityone Gallery  
curator Isaac Perelman
- 2004
- Miami Art Basel | “I D international” @Dotfityone Gallery  
curator Tzili Charney
- Venezia | “No Vitrites, No Museums, No Artists, Just a Lot of People” @Domus Academy Workshop with Rikrit Tiravanija, P. Huygee and A.Perrone
- Brescia | “Premio Loverini” @GAMEc Galleria d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea  
curator Giacinto di Pietroantonio
- Milano | “Latest Paintings” @Lia Rumma Gallery, curator Davide Gallo
- 2003
- Napoli | “merci”, Film by Nina di Majo, Seventh Edition of International Films about Artists  
curator Laura Trisorio
- 2002
- Napoli | “100 artisti per un museo”, Casoria Contemporary Art Museum, curator Antonio Manfredi
- 2001
- Ravenna | “Party del Corpo” @Palazzo della Ragione, curator Marco Tagliafierro
- Novara | “Nidi d’Artista” for Laviano Papi  
curator Marco Tagliafierro

## CHARITY AUCTIONS

- 2014
- Milano | “La Tua Opera per un Bambino”, auction for the Fondazione d’Intino-Mondadori Sotheby’s Auctions, curator Antonio Lettieri
- 2010
- Milano | “La Tua Opera per un Bambino”, auction for the Fondazione d’Intino-Mondadori Porro Casa d’Aste, Palazzo Durini, curator Antonio Lettieri

- 2009
- Imperia | “arte per arte” for la fontana delle 99 cannelle ad Aquila, FAI delegation of Imperia, curator Roberta Croce
- 2008
- Milano | “La Tua Opera per un Bambino”, auction for the Fondazione d’Intino-Mondadori Porro Casa d’Aste, Palazzo Durini, curator Antonio Lettieri
- NewYork | “Contro la Violenza domestica”, Rona Solomon Curcio Projects

## ART FAIRS

- 2014 - 2012
- Genova | Art Exhibition Genova, @M’arte Gallery
- 2014 - 2005
- Miami | Art Fair @Dotfiftyone Gallery
- 2014 - 2004
- Miami | Art Basel @Dotfiftyone Gallery
- 2011
- Padova | Art Exhibition @l’Affiche Gallery
- Antibes | Art Fair and Antiques @Studio’ Gallery
- Bolzano | KunStart artfair @Studio’ Gallery
- 2010
- Strasbourg | St’ART Artfair @Studio’ Gallery
- Padova | ArteFiera @Studio’ and l’Affiche Gallery
- Paris | CHIC ArtFair @School Gallery
- Milano Marittima | Artefiera @Studio’ Gallery
- Bolzano | Kunstart @Studio’ Gallery
- Bergamo | BAF Bergamo ArteFiera
- 2009
- Padova | ArteFiera @Studio’ Gallery
- 2008
- NewYork | Pool ArtFair curator Curcio Projects



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