

Linea di Confine per la Fotografia Contemporanea

Guido Guidi: *Lunario*

Curated by Andrea Simi

Lunario is a thirty-year photographic journey (from 1968 to 1999) on the theme of the Moon, along with all its entourage of philosophical, literary and mythological meanings. Guidi steps into the shoes of the scientist in a manner reminiscent of the procedures described in the *Sidereus Nuncius* by Galileo Galilei.¹ He thus records this series of lunar apparitions, measuring up to the technological aspects of the photographic medium, with its mechanical nature and its vocation for the investigation of optical, physical and natural phenomena. His is a search for a direct relationship with the early days of photography, coupled with his aptitude towards verification, also in self-reflexive, meta-photographic terms – a constant feature in his work.

Guidi has the same attitude towards marvel and amazement that drove Galileo in his observations through the telescope; the same angst for the unexpected and also the same willingness to modify his statements, refusing a categorical approach. Like Galileo, he operates by entrusting himself not to the processes of the imagination, but only to ‘sensed experience’. Even the limits of the tools are considered with a methodical spirit: by trying out his telescope “a hundred thousand times on a hundred thousand stars and other such objects,” Galileo was able to “understand those tricks.” Through reiteration and association in metaphorical terms, Guidi thus creates a system in which even the fantastical and the metaphysical take on a concrete aspect, yet one in which there is no room for transparent and unrelated truths.

Among the analogies, there is also the common perception of the ‘ancestral shiver’, of the ‘nocturnal horror’ – a reflection of the ultimate mystery of the human condition. In *Lunario* this emerges with a constant note of tragedy, likening the series to the epic dimension, suggesting – among other possibilities – its reading as a photographic poem. A thick interplay of vicissitudes in which the protagonist finds himself faced with heroines, (his friend Mariangela, his wife Marta and his daughter Anna), frightening figures (the Giants, at whose feet the Earth looks tiny), benevolent paladins (maestro Italo Zannier, who led him to undertake his first experiments) and following in the footsteps of Ariosto’s Astolfo, he embarks on a journey to the Moon in search of the wisdom of the photographer. An like in the episode narrated by Ariosto, his search bears its fruits.

1 Galileo Galilei, *Sidereus Nuncius*, Andrea Battistini (ed.), Marsilio, Venice 1993.