

## **Rossella Pezzino de Geronimo and an art that does not imitate life but is itself life.**

*by Daniele Radini Tedeschi*

Visual artist and photographer Rossella Pezzino de Geronimo has identified technology as the right tool for exposing the emotions of the soul. After graduating with a diploma from the European Photography Institute, she began working with photography studios in Brera when still very young, working with successful photographer Lionel Pasquon and becoming his personal assistant. Her earliest works take the apparent form of photographic reports on her travels in Japan, Ethiopia, India and Burma. The power of Rossella Pezzino's portraits lies in the truthfulness and purity of the subjects she chooses, because they are immersed in the existing flow of life. This is an aspect she shares with two great masters of portraiture and tireless travellers, American Phil Borges and British Jimmy Nelson, who have been passionately documenting the lives of tribal peoples all over the world for many years, using "environmental portrait" as a means for raising issues involving indigenous populations and promoting awareness of them. But what could be limited to documentation aspires to grasp the great inner strength of the personalities immortalised, and the photographer herself. If photography is a projection of the photographer's personality, this is certainly true of these images in particular, representing the starting point for a long dialectic process inspired by an urgent need to overcome pain and anguish. To get past them, the photographer approaches a naturalistic idiom purged of all recognisable references, placing her images in a timeless dimension. This work intent on "removing" all recognisable physical presences places the focus on Nature, which, captured in various isolated details taken out of context, appears boundless and mystical. In her recent photo collections, "Le mie quattro radici" ("My four roots") and "Colore Calore e Movimento" ("Colour, warmth and motion"), we observe vast desert lands and lagoons, places where earth and water battle to conquer space. Clarity of line and limpid, glossy hues, are all we apparently see. The panorama is the new dimension in which the artist's creativity finds its *raison d'être*, aiming to achieve a true "Poetic Geography". After all, looking over the artist's biography, what stands out is this combination of two aspects: art and business. Rossella Pezzino de Geronimo is in fact the sole director of Dusty, a prominent Italian environmental services company. A life-long project, experienced with an all-consuming passion which, according to the artist herself, fuels her desire to fight for a cultural revolution focused on the achievement of a new form of Beauty, both aesthetic and ethical. Looking back over the history of art, it is clear that landscape art has achieved a poetic coincidence with a number of great masters of informal photography. They include Edward Weston and Mario Giacomelli, who are capable of addressing the ecosystem with a true philosophical vision, focusing on naturalistic reality, which occasionally spills over into abstraction. Just as our artist's work might be compared to the mysterious black and white shots of British photographer Michael

Kenna, taken after lengthy exposure to light, by day or at night, so that they register details the human eye is incapable of perceiving. All Rossella's aesthetic research also displays echoes of a "De Chirico-like romanticism" alluding to a Metaphysical conception of art in general as concerned not with appearances but with grasping the mystery of the "noumen" of phenomenic reality. The motion of the images, reproduced using the technique of holography, expands into the space surrounding the viewer, in a true breath of life. As the artist herself rightly says: A living, alchemic art, continually in search of connections and interactions, penetrating and acute, alienating and reassuring, abounding in oxymorons... welcoming contradictions, an art that does not imitate life but is itself life, pure and simple.