

**BOLOGNA**

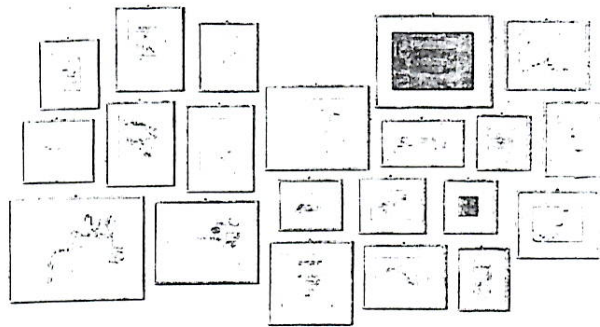
**LUCA VITONE**

NEON

Luca Vitone's exhibition "*Itinerari Intimi*" (Intimate journeys) presented a selection of works keyed to significant moments in the artist's life. This autobiographical journey began with a black-and-white photograph of Vitone as a child, standing in front of a map of Italy. As suggested by the title, *Previsioni del tempo* (Previsions of time), the photo might be read as a prophetic image, given Vitone's later explorations of topography as a subject for his art. Nearby, a pile of letters and postcards, visibly water-damaged, lay on the floor of the gallery. This piece, *Corrispondenza* (Correspondence), 1998, represented all the mail the artist had ever received, from childhood up until the day his studio was flooded in 1998, a catastrophe that explains the papers' condition. This was one of the most interesting pieces, not only because of its emotional and poetic import, but because of the way it engaged with a series of 144 photographs, taken by the artist while he was on vacation, hanging on the wall behind it. The artificial, banal exoticism of the postcards was thus juxtaposed with the true exoticism of distant locales visited directly, offering the viewer two different (but not really so different) modalities for experiencing landscape.

In another room, a colored diagram charted the time slots during which various people worked at Link, an alternative space in Bologna famous for its cultural activities and enlivened to a great degree by Vitone himself (143, *Link*, 1999). Here the artist turned a mundane schedule into a kind of abstract language. In contrast, *Clessidra*, 1996, comprised two wooden sculptures that are the product of Vitone's recent interest in furniture (here, a bookshelf and a stool), perhaps a response to the demand for functionality that his sociocultural investigations of territory evidently make.

In the basement of the gallery, the artist again evoked the flood, ironically juxtaposing the double doors of his studio with a photograph of a large wave sweeping over the deck of a ship. Next to this, he presented an enlarged photo of his arm, tattooed with the latitude and longitude of his birthplace, along with other evidence of his existence, such as a bill from an expensive Italian restaurant and packing materials from a show he recently had at the Christian Nagel gallery in Cologne.



Luca Vitone, *Percorsi Privati* (Private routes), 1994–99, twenty-one drawings on paper, dimensions variable.

The larger implications of work that emerges from Vitone's own experiences were especially evident in *Percorsi Privati* (Private routes), 1994–99, a group of twenty-one framed drawings, each of which stemmed from a fortuitous encounter between the artist and a passerby whom he asked to draw a small map to help him find some destination. Whether detailed, sparsely delineated, or doodlelike, the drawings, as cartographic representations, stood as a metaphor for orientation and research, for finding or losing one's way. Vitone added a note of irony to his own "intimate journey" with *Rock Suite in Y*, 1998, a CD on which the artist, sampling from a number of rock songs (the lyric sheets were cut out and exhibited in a display case), recorded a series of auspicious "Yeahs."

—Giorgio Verzotti

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.