

LUXEMBOURG

Luca Vitone CASINO LUXEMBOURG

White cube, black flag, carte blanche. . . . these catchphrases recur as visual metaphors throughout Luca Vitone's oeuvre, which investigates the meaning—and loss—of “place” within a globalized world. This major survey brings together works from 1988 to 2006, beginning with Vitone's *Carte atopiche* (Atopic Maps), 1988–2004, geographical or city maps (or gallery floor plans, as in the series *Il luogo dell'arte* [The Place of Art], 1991–94), from which he removed street names and other indications of place. The exhibition is set up like a journey through the interconnected phases of the artist's career, beginning and ending with *L'ultimo viaggio* (The Last Journey), 2005, an installation based on the artist's childhood memory of a trip with his parents from

Luca Vitone, *L'ultimo viaggio* (The Last Journey), 2005, Peugeot 204 Break, five color photographs on aluminum, each 19 1/4 x 30 1/8", seven objects, and one black-and-white photograph, 19 1/4 x 30 1/8".



his native city, Genoa, to the Persian Gulf. The journey was made in a red Peugeot 204 Break, which, still steaming, only now seems to have come to a stop in the museum's entrance hall, whose floor is covered with fine desert sand. A photo depicts Vitone, age thirteen, facing a series of photographs of the landscapes he once traveled through (but whose full ambiguity seems to unfold from a contemporary viewpoint).

“*Ovunque a casa propria*” (“At Home Everywhere”), the title of the show, indicates constant movement as well as the need to mark a place, however temporary, as “home.” *Wide City*, 1998, is a collection of photographs of “foreign places” (restaurants, businesses, mosques) in the artist's present hometown of Milan, while *Pittoresqui viaggi privati* (Picturesque Private Travels), 1995–98, collects postcard views of foreign places the artist has traveled through as a tourist. A series of (not exactly) monochrome paintings entitled *Io, Roma* (I, Rome), 2005, consists of white canvases left on the outside of certain buildings or places in the Italian capital. Throughout a period of months, the city itself is portrayed by means of its “environment”—smog, dust, and dirt that left their traces on the formerly white surfaces. The individual reception of place through mapping from memory is beautifully retraced in *Percorsi privati* (Private Itineraries), 1994–99, maps drawn by locals to help travelers navigate in a foreign town.

Questions of global disorientation and intercultural communication are further explored through collaborative projects like *Der Unbestimmte Ort* (The Imprecise Place), 1994, an event for which Vitone invited the local Roma community to actively participate in his opening and show at Galerie Christian Nagel in Cologne. The artist's interest in peripheral societies, nomadism, and anarchy as apolitical versions of existence outside national confinement is manifest in *Nulla da dire solo da essere* (Nothing to Say Only to Be), 2004, a new flag, a combination of the anarchist's black flag—not ascribed to any political party in particular—and a wheel, which for the Gypsies symbolizes nomadism. For a series of postcards, *Eppur si muove* (Nevertheless It Moves), 2003, Vitone has raised his flag in different foreign, “wild” landscapes. When we leave this show, with its varied reflections on the ways people inscribe themselves into a place or a landscape, the sand in our shoes reminds us that we not only leave our footsteps on earth, but also that we always carry a bit of it away with us.

—Eva Scharrer