

Simonetta Moro – Artist Statement

My work deals with architecture, memory and place, explored primarily through drawing and painting. In my work, I seek to create a poetic experience through a representation of the phenomenological world and its manifestations. Places are the subject and object of my work: as sites of memory, points of departure for imaginary journeys, vectors of time and space, and sites of exploration and intervention. My approach oscillates between the affective and the activist and includes the fictitious as well as the factual. Figuration and abstraction coexist in my work. The map-form is a synthesis of these two modes, a metaphor that allows me to expand on the politics and poetics of places.

My drawings and paintings emerge through a cumulative, layered process that takes advantage of the translucency and texture of the materials, such as mylar or rice paper. These materials contribute to creating an allusive, dream-like quality, and give depth to the resulting image. Contrasting images are seen all at once, implying the simultaneity of perception and the suspension of time. Photographic processes also play an important role in composing the initial image on canvas or paper. Used more or less literally, reproductions are re-contextualized and transformed to respond to the particular situation I construct.

In my recent works, I explore the genres of the panorama and the cityscape, specifically in relation to drawing on site. Drawing thus becomes a performative action, taking place in the immediacy of the moment, and utilizing basic materials (but historically meaningful) such as ink on paper. The focus of this area of research is how the perception of a place gives form to its representation and its re-invention, through the continuous, protracted act of drawing.

In my most recent project, *Venice/Gowanus: Mapping Watery Landscapes*, I engage with the issue of climate change and its effect on urban environments, taking as a starting point two specific sites where I conducted fieldwork. How art can contribute to public discourse is the underlying question, and one that is increasingly central to my practice. I tried to answer the question by relying entirely on the drawing medium, through the visual and conceptual exploration of places and their history. My confidence in the possibilities of drawing to provide direct access to complex issues was confirmed by the public response received during the exhibition *U-n-f-o-l-d: A Cultural Response to Climate Change*, in which the work was included. It became clear to me that drawing has literally the power to draw-in, to make people enter another world that is also a facet of their world, and to *draw* their attention to issues that affect our everyday life. In so doing, I aim at creating a moment of realization for the viewer, and to establish a dialogue that may lead to a transformative experience.