

## VITAMIN D2 - MARCELO MOSCHETA

Jacopo Crivelli Visconti . 2013 . Vitamin D2, Phaidon

# Vitamin D2 - Marcelo Moscheta

**Jacopo Crivelli Visconti** . *Curator*

On 27 April 1971, Stanley Broun noted on a small sheet of paper the exact number of steps he had taken that year when crossing Holland, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Broun's work emblemizes the proximity and intrinsic relation of apparently distant actions such as walking, measuring and cataloguing. Beginning with the Situationists, walking has become a way of disengaging from the passive attitude imposed by the society of spectacle, whereas counting, measuring and archiving (steps, found stones, units of distance travelled), and perhaps collecting something along the way, are gestures that save the action from oblivion and immortalize it, inevitably transforming it into something else.

Some of Marcelo Moscheta's works are part of this lineage: his Stones Series (2009), for example, comprises a number of stones collected while walking over several days, and each is identified with the exact coordinates of the site where it was found. There are analogies between this work and some of Long's actions or, more recently, Helen Mirra's, but what makes the Stones Series unique is the 'portrait' that comes with every stone, executed with extraordinary virtuosity by the artist in graphite on PVC board. In the drawing, he uses a highly original technique: starting from a photograph, he creates a 'mask' by scoring a sheet of tracing paper with the exact outline of the stone. Then he cuts it out and covers it with graphite powder, and finally rubs it off with an eraser to bring out the shape. This method might be viewed as closer to sculpture than drawing, at least from the angle of Michaelangelo's celebrated definition of sculpture as what is done 'per forza di levare' (by taking away).

This is significant, considering that most of Moscheta's recent works, even those in which drawing is central, are eminently sculptural and installation-like. In 33 Mountains (2010), for example, drawings are mounted on long iron 'legs', while in Atlas (2011) images of each planet in the solar system are held against the wall by a steel cable. In both works it should be noted, drawing is still used as a measurement system. In the first case, the number of mountains alludes to the age of the artist himself when the work was done, while in the second, the size of each planet is correctly proportioned in relation to the Earth. Alluding respectively to the implications of a symbolically charged age, and to the titan in Greek mythology who carried the world on his back, these works also point to the spiritual, almost mystical dimension of Moscheta's landscapes.

It is in the clash between the desire for accurate measurement and the fascination with the unfathomable immensity of the world that the core of his work resides. In this sense, the work is part of the great Romantic tradition of confronting humanity with the vastness of nature. Fascinated by heroic scientific expeditions of the past, the artist set up residencies in remote places such as the Arctic Circle or the Atacama Desert in Chile, where he produced works in which the relationship between Man and Nature becomes central, although elliptically so. In other words, and surprisingly considering the frequent absence of the human figure from these images, the authentic protagonist of these

works is the man – a small figure in contrast to the vastness of the horizon – who walks, measures, observes and notes.