



LA 24 ORE: COURT OF MEMORY

Installation by Kikki Ghezzi

1 May to 31 May 2015

The Italian “24 Ore” (literally, “24 hours”) is a leather briefcase designed to hold only a day’s essentials. Kikki Ghezzi has created three *24 Ore* containing photogravure images of her childhood home, images taken when the home had stood silent for five years after the death of her father, and shortly before it was to be emptied completely. Three distinct cases represent stages in a journey of remembrance: preservation of memory, grief, and ultimately, personal transformation. The *24 Ore* embody the process of memory itself, its limitations and demands for selection and compression: a house must become a small, portable case; years passed within its walls must become only moments of inward reflection. The subjects of the photogravures are themselves mere traces -- shadows on the wallpaper left by objects that had hung for decades in the family kitchen, brighter squares where the *millefiori* wallpaper of the artist’s childhood bedroom had been obscured by bookcases now long gone -- and their further abstraction into photographic images, so that now they are traces of traces, represents the relentless fading and winnowing by time of our memories themselves.

At the same time, the *24 Ore* embody those aspects of memory that must be creative, life-giving, eternal. Each case is carefully and richly constructed, the first two enveloping the images stored within them in soft velvet layers much warmer than the walls of the dying structure from which they came. The images within are multiplied, and varied, each iteration a different hue and shade from the last -- evoking the way that a memory repeatedly recalled is still a new creation every time, uniquely colored by the circumstances and emotions of the moment of its recollection. This aspect of the inescapable present, as well as the inescapable self within whom these memories are ultimately made, is echoed in each briefcase by the circular mirror to be found in the lid when it is opened, confronting the viewer with an image of him- or herself, overlaid with a surrealist sky and with the yet more ephemeral reflected images of the memories within. The final *24 Ore*, containing a sealed letter to the artist’s parents, represents a further distillation of experience and emotion, but in a form now accessible to no one -- not even its author. The silvery details of this last briefcase and its smooth texture depart from the more earthy, organic exteriors of the other cases, evoking a future more than a past, a reliquary, a precious container of the sacred.

Photogravures on Somerset white paper 15.5 x 10.75 and 13 x 10.5 inches
Le 24 Ore: Leather, silk, cotton, paper & metal snaps, 4 x 11 x 17 inches

All works courtesy of the Artist
Photogravures printed by Jennifer Melby

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