

Reality, Curated

Valentina Loffredo

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Valentina Loffredo's *Reality, Curated*, with photographs from her exhibition series As For Me, I'm Very Little, is dominated by bold colors and patterns. Its entries invite closer examination and interpretations of their subtle texture and color changes, shifting perspectives about their many possible levels of meaning.

Most of these photographs employ a bright color palette, with stylish human figures as their focal points, cast against backgrounds of stripes, geometric shapes, and dramatic, patterned architectural and natural landscapes. Others are more restrained in their uses of color and have more subdued moods and senses of stillness: "Charon" depicts a steam-puffing fishing boat wreathed in a white seascape of fog or clouds, with only a faint mountain rim in the distance to gauge size and orientation.

Denis Curti's introduction characterizes Loffredo's work as portraying a "surreal dimension," best interpreted using imagery from one's dreams and imagination. Surrealist art iconography pops up with her portraits of elegant, suited men sprouting watermelons and balloon clusters instead of heads. The absurdist humor of her playful titles and collage-like arrangements of flat bands of color contrasting with deep, shadowed, and textured forms is also reminiscent of Surrealism.

Nods to other artists arise: "Homage to Hockney" depicts a deep azure pool and diving platform, as often appears in many of his paintings, but is it really a pool? Loffredo has strewn all that blue with bananas, whose shadows belie that they are resting atop a liquid surface. "Kusama's World" similarly reinterprets Andrew Wyeth's iconic painting of "Christina's World" with a sea of sunflowers instead of meadow.

A beautiful showcase for a talented artist, *Reality, Curated* is a clever and composed photographic exploration of visual allusions and shifting perceptions. While it lacks commentary from Loffredo herself, this only adds to the enigmatic qualities of its images.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (November / December 2020)

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