

## MONICA DE CARDENAS



**Rä di Martino, Allunati #10, 2020, wood, gold leaf, archival pigment print on cotton paper, 16 1/2 x 16 1/2"**

**Rä di Martino**  
**MONICA DE CARDENAS | MILAN**  
**Via Francesco Viganò 4**  
**October 15–December 23, 2020**

During an era of flourishing conspiracy theories, Rä di Martino seems to invert an old one, suggesting not that we never walked the moon, but that we never left. In the pictures in this exhibition, human life-forms are flung against the lunar landscape like glimmering shadows, conjuring and connecting the mythologies of space travel and Hollywood movie magic alike.

"Allunati" (Moon-Landed), all works 2020, consists of fifteen black-and-white photographs, mostly obtained from NASA archives, onto which di Martino has pasted human silhouettes cut from gold leaf. Culled from imagery from the 1940s to the '70s, the shapes' activities range in intensity: one sits quietly, admiring the craters; others parachute into the frame. For this series di Martino has broken away from video, her preferred medium, but not her interest in the moving image; cinematic references abound: the Singin' in the Rain trio; a paparazzi portrait of Sophia Loren; a moonstruck Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers waltzing in Swing Time; Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell in Gentlemen Prefer Blondes; and two primates playing tennis, perhaps a nod to Planet of the Apes or 2001: A Space Odyssey. The effect is that of being transported into an oneiric world colonized by memories and fragments that have plummeted from the orbit of a collective Western twentieth-century unconscious.

*Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore*  
— *Veronica Santi*

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