

L'Europa durante la pioggia. Pietro Geranzani

/

Europe during the rain. Pietro Geranzani

7 March - 28 April 2018

press release, 6.03.2018

Visually and emotionally strong, historical and **brand new paintings** of **Pietro Geranzani** are exhibited in "L'Europa durante la pioggia/Europe during the rain" at the **Area35** gallery in Milan. The new personal effort of the artist, expressed with figurative matrix laden with symbols, puts the stress mark on the historical awareness of the Present and of the Past, with particular attention given to a restless and uncertain Contemporary.

The paintings, especially created for the exhibition in Milan, are inspired by "Europe after the rain II" (1942) by Max Ernst. A painting which expresses a situation of annihilation and fear imagined in the hypothetical enduring of the second world-war conflict through a desolate wasteland covered with ruins in a science-fiction landscape where metamorphic figures blend with naturalistic elements.

In "L'Europa durante la pioggia" Geranzani does not refer to the scenario of Ernst but evokes the place, Europe, and the rain element, its inexorable falling on humanity as well as on the **conflicts of the international contemporary contexts**. Representative, in this regard, is the work *L'Europa durante la pioggia IV. Io Faccio la Pioggia*, which portrays a man with a black hood with a single eye-hole about to trigger the explosion of his explosive vest. The rain falls on his body, surrounded in an unexpected Nature that recalls the landscapes of Giorgione: a painting strongly linked to the Tradition but in stark contrasts as with the actuality of the depicted event.

The artist expresses himself clearly, with raw images, emblems of a widespread fear, and through the symbols of terrorism, characterised by irrational and fierce violence, as observed in the subjects painted on the canvases: men about to explode or showing the devices that they wear under their clothes. The threat, the danger and the nightmare experienced, in Europe and at worldwide level, are revealed without exorcising the profound evil that spreads among people. So with an almost serene gesture, in *L'Europa durante la pioggia III*, a woman with her hands on her head and a hood on her face shows the mortal equipment under her clothes and in *L'Europa durante la Pioggia II. Farfalla* the torso of a man opens his shirt, like butterfly wings, revealing a body loaded with explosives. The image, full of pathos and anguish, symbolically refers to a cultural humus of European memory, which links the insect to the meaning of transformation and rebirth. The butterfly, in addition to this value taken from the Greek myth of Psyche, is also the symbol of the soul, of eternal well-being and, in medieval times, of angelic figures. The artist also depicts it in other works such as *Atta-Ilah Martire e Rivoluzionario*, inspired by the figure of Mohammed Atta, Muslim counted among the terrorists responsible for the massacres of 11th of September 2001. In this painting, made in 2002, several butterflies twirl from the hands on the head of the subject who is portrayed in a deflagration. Also in the nucleus of works titled *Ciò che è in basso* that represents the transience of the world, from fragments of lower human limbs grow flowers to symbolize a possible rebirth and new fertility of the soul.

A symbolism that is found in *L'esplosione dell'uovo cosmico* whose title refers to the image of perfection and creation of life that is the egg of traditional iconography, rendered in the work through a pink bloom that expands on the dark background of the great canvas (300x200 cm).

These allegorical elements of change and evolution allow us to glimpse an optimistic vein as the artist states: "I seek, through dense matter, that vibrant vitality that is opposed to the desolation of the scorched earth, to find a yearning for humanity even in the soldier who immolates himself with an heroic gesture of devotion to a superior cause. I witness the conflict between his humanity and the brutality of his unholy deed".

The art of Geranzani, a rich contrast of light versus gloomy and dark tones, does not hide references to the great masters of the past, such as Bosch, Rembrandt, Géricault, Goya, Munch, Bacon and to Romanticism, Symbolism, German Expressionism and Surrealism to which the artist consciously renders homage. The work *Met* - in Hebrew death, which hints to the legendary golem, is full of mentions to artists, literary texts, films and myths.

Referring to the iconography of St. Christopher, it depicts a giant man that fails to ferry a child on his shoulders - the incarnation of Christ - as it is the personification of the weight of the world and therefore impossible to sustain; Geranzani sees in this character incapable of fulfilling his role, the figure of the artist.

Along with the large works, a **core of medium and small-sized oils** are exhibited, as well as **sketches** and **preparatory drawings** in ink, water-colour and charcoal.

Pietro Geranzani's monograph is published by Area35 can be viewed on demand.

Project Room - Camille Pozzo di Borgo

From the 7th of March to the 28th of April, Area35 presents in the Project Room the exhibition "L'île du Docteur Moreau", a selection of works by the emerging young artist Camille Pozzo di Borgo (Ajaccio, 1992). Passionate about nature and anatomy, she proposes incisions made with a dry tip on plexiglass and printed on paper with different passages and colours.

The subjects represented are animals or their details, depicted while in combat or while moving; by overlapping the different plates on the final print the artist creates fantastic effects, chimerical creatures inserted into a dreamlike dimension.

Established in 2009 **Area35 Art Gallery** directed by Giacomo Marco Valerio is a cultural pole of the contemporary Italian art to the international level. Its activity and mission are centred upon the creation of cultural bridges and exchanges between Italian and International artist on a multidisciplinary level.

Since 2018 the gallery, together with the great exhibition space, offers a Project Room that is aimed at the promotion of young emerging talents and a greater involvement of the audience.

Among the main exhibitions are: in 2010 Andy Warhol, since 2011 a five year presence in Hangzhou, China, with the artist and emeritus professor Luo Qi with, in 2014 Jacques Toussaint in collaboration with the Institut Francais, Milan. In 2017 Area35 promoted and participated in the project "Inclusioni" with the Diocese of Massa, the Municipality and the Regione Toscana with two site specific exhibitions of artists Paolo Topy and Federico Garibaldi.

Area35 dedicated many solo exhibitions to emerging and established artists like Nino Alfieri, Giovanni Cerri, Barbara Colombo, Nicola Evangelisti, Gian Piero Gasparini, Pietro Geranzani, Marco Mendeni, Ernesto Morales.

Aware of the ever-changing and sparkling scene of the international art setting Area35 creates and promotes various exhibitions in Italy and abroad with partnerships and collaborations with galleries from Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Spain and with Argentinian, Danish and French embassies and consulates.

Exhibition details

Title L'Europa durante la pioggia. Pietro Geranzani/ Europe during the rain. Pietro Geranzani

Venue Area35 Art Gallery, via Vigevano 35 - Milan

Dates 7 March - 28 April 2018

Opening Hours Tuesday - Friday, 3.30pm - 7.30pm | Morning and Saturday by appointment

Info to the public info@area35artgallery.com - www.area35artgallery.com

Press Office

IBC Irma Bianchi Communication

Ph. +39 02 8940 4694 - mob. +39 328 5910857 - info@irmabianchi.it

text and image downloads from www.irmabianchi.it