



CASA DEL MANTEGNA

via Acerbi 47 - Mantua

SIMILITER IN PICTURA. Attorno a Leonardo Opere di Luca Bonfanti, Enzo Rizzo e Togo

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SIMILITER IN PICTURA. About Leonardo Works by Luca Bonfanti, Enzo Rizzo and Togo

curated by Matteo Galbiati, Alberto Moioli, Elena Pontiggia

20th October 2019 - 6th January 2020

press release, 21.10.19

During the celebrations for the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, the **Casa del Mantegna of Mantua** presents the exhibition "SIMILITER IN PICTURA. Attorno a Leonardo" (*SIMILITER IN PICTURA. About Leonardo*) from 20th October 2019 to 6th January 2020, with works by **Luca Bonfanti**, **Enzo Rizzo** and **Togo**, inspired by the artistic production and the scientific discoveries of the Tuscan genius.

The exhibition is promoted by the **Provincia di Mantova**, with the **support** of the Municipality of Mantua, following Container Lab Association's project, with the collaboration of Cristina Renso, Klaus Schnappenberger and Andrea Perfetti.

Through **eighty works** the exhibition presents the reflection, the analysis and the interpretation of Leonardo's polyhedric character from a contemporary perspective by the artists Bonfanti, Rizzo and Togo, respectively accompanied by the critics' **Matteo Galbiati**, **Alberto Moioli** and **Elena Pontiggia**.

Next to the pictorial works, **thirty reproductions of da Vinci's machines** by **Giorgio Mascheroni** are displayed, together with **video installations and touch screens** which enrich the observation with didactic contents, among which the video *Leonardo racconta "Il Cenacolo"* made by Maurizio Sangalli with Massimiliano Loizzi, Marco Ballerini, Alberto Patrucco and Alfredo Colina. An interactive **app** for smartphones allows the visitors to deepen every single work displayed, with the possibility of sharing the contents on social networks, aiming at promoting and encouraging culture going viral.

In the exhibition, each artist choose his own different shade and perspective about Leonardo.

Luca Bonfanti shares, as Galbiati underlines, his thirst for discovery, his restless desire of **experimentation and research**, «a constant curiosity to know the world's "functioning" and, in the same way as Leonardo, he observes, understands, analyses, takes notes». This leads the artist to move from solid geometries to surreal universes, in a continuous comparison with the colour which becomes the "narrative voice". The pictorial sign, with its strong abstract inclination, leads the artist towards dream-like, intimate, poetical and sometimes esoteric atmospheres, expressed through a dense and vibrant matter and a symbolic use of the colour.

Actually, Bonfanti, through the abstraction, defines «that love for surfaces, for colour layers, for the continuous remix of the tones which try to become the metaphor of our feelings»; thus, he gives birth to works that recall water, air and the invisible which lightly touches the thought and the intuition. In this sense, *L'ultima cena* (*The Last Supper*, 2015, mixed media, acrylic on



canvas, cm 165x300) is emblematic and impressive, with strong symbols, such as the cross, the sprout-spermatozoa, the divine light, the perspectival room, it reveals several sources and suggestions investigated by the artist, which goes from the Bible to the Apochrypha, from the Templar mysteries to Masonry, from the Annunakis' theory, the ancient gods come from the sky, to the paleocontact and the origin of life, until the famous Leonardo's work.

In the particular **informal expression** of **Enzo Rizzo**, as Moioli reveals, «we enter the world in its primordial nature, a reflexive journey the artist undertakes to look for the essence of the origins, a journey through the colours and the winding paths of the soul». His works bring to life a chromatic flux that sets the matter free which intimately attracts and involves the observer, in a circle of emotions and vibrations. In precarious balance between order and chaos, we can find the artist's works, conceived in the "kairòs", the sublime and perfect moment of the Greek world when the feelings become a vision, inviting the observer to a deep comparison with the world and his inner part. Some topics are thus more frequent, such as the unity of the opposites, the transformation of the matter and the development of the being, together with symbols linked with life and death, birth, creation and the metamorphic nature, like in his work *In principio era l'Uno* (*At the Beginning It Was the One*, 2015, oil and resin on panel, cm 160x100). The work, completely based on the use of the blue in a shade chosen for its strong spiritual vibration, is focused on the theme of the unity and the opposites and the One, the first origin of the manifestation, an explicit reference to the Neoplatonism which influenced Leonardo as well.

In **Togo's** paintings a homage is paid to Leonardo through the themes of **flying** and the **water**, both reinterpreted by a very personal sign. The first one is a memory, an autobiographical desire of the artist cultivated through the fantasy, that in his works is turned into a dream recalled by a bat wing or by a butterfly, like in *Il primo volo - omaggio a Leonardo* (*The First Flight - homage to Leonardo*, 2018, oil and acrylic on canvas, cm 160x200), where the idea of the realization of the flight, simulated by Leonardo's studies, emerges inside a natural landscape given through geometric shapes where the sea is suggested by its white waves. The theme of the water, the open shape *par excellence*, becomes a rhythmic element and a closed shape for the artist, like in the sluices series. In fact, in *La chiusa* (*The sluice*, 2019, oil and acrylic on canvas, cm 100x120) the artist faces a subject dear to Leonardo: the river Adda which flows among landscapes with a geometric cut and where the canal flow is the sum of two trapezoids. In these works, Togo seems to be searching for the order inside the nature's wonder, far from the original chaos, representing it with bright colours, belonging to a Mediterranean expressionism which communicates a violence of feelings, where blue competes against red to catch the light and black becomes the brightest colour.

In Togo, as Pontiggia reckons, «the Vincian ghost is nothing but a noble excuse for a high, intense and, above all, autonomous exercise of painting».

In order to deepen the theme proposed in the exhibition by Giorgio Mascheroni's reproductions, guided visits are provided by Alkémica Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, who is exceptionally presenting some scientific tools dating back to the XVIII and XIX centuries, inspired by Leonardo's machines and coming from the Cabinet of Physics of the Liceo Virgilio of Mantua. In addition, the didactic-educational workshop *Leonardo: le machine, le idee, le visioni* (*Leonardo: the machines, the ideas, the visions*) is open to students and aficionados, a journey through Vincian machines aiming at showing their influence on modern thought.

The exhibition is completed by some interesting **side events**. The first one on Friday 25th October at 6 p.m. will feature a conversation with Federica Padella about the topic *Mantegna e*



Leonardo: purismo e creatività. Antitesi geniali alla corte dei Gonzaga (Mantegna and Leonardo: Purism and Creativity. Brilliant Opposition at Gonzagas' Court) at Alkémica's headquarters; later on Saturday 9th November at 5 p.m. a charity auction to the benefit of the Association Karibuni onlus (www.karibuni.org) will take place at the Casa del Mantegna, while on Thursday 21st November at 5 p.m. the exhibition will host a reading rehearsal with Roberto Pedrazzoli entitled *Sulle tracce di Leonardo, l'immagine e il pensiero (On Leonardo's tracks, the image and the thought)*. On Saturday 30th November at 5 p.m. *Meeting with the Artists* who will guide the visitors through the interpretation of the displayed works. Finally, on Saturday 7th December at 5 p.m. the lecture *La vigna di Leonardo: cronaca di una scoperta (Leonardo's vineyard: chronicle of a discovery)* about Ludovico il Moro's choice to donate to Leonardo the famous vineyard is led by professor Attilio Scienza.

The exhibition is accompanied by a complete **catalogue** published by Scripta Maneant with critical texts by Matteo Galbiati, Alberto Moioli and Elena Pontiggia.

Biographies **Luca Bonfanti** was born in Desio (MB) in 1973. Painter, sculptor, photographer and musician, he started his career as a self-taught artist following the teaching of some of the most famous contemporary artists in Milan, then he has pushed his research to express itself with different languages. He has got prizes and awards in national and international contests and he can enumerate 50 individual exhibits and many prestigious long-time projects around Italy and abroad. In 2014, with the venture of Expo 2015, he has founded Container Lab Association.

Enzo Rizzo was born in Messina in 1958. After some trips to the East and the Middle-East, he moved to Milan in 1985 where he lived for many years before leaving it for a quiet village in the Oltrepò Pavese. He has realized many individual and collective exhibits since 1982, among which we can remember Geneva, New York, Messina, Rome, Prague, Paris and Taormina. His works are part of many important private and public collections.

Enzo Migneco, in art **Togo**, was born in 1937 in Milan where he lives and works. He has dedicated himself to painting from 1957 and at the end of the 60s he started his research in the field of engraving. He has exhibited his works with some relevant curators in many private and public locations in Italy and abroad such as Milan, Ferrara, Wroclaw (Poland), Helsinki (Finland), Taipei in the domain of the International Biennial of Engraving, Perth (Australia), Messina, Rome, Soncino, Palermo, New York, the European Parliament of Bruxelles and the 54th Biennial of Venice.

Giorgio Mascheroni (Cantù, 1941-2018) realized many machines which explain in a clear manner the object of his studies focused on the nature, the human being and his creation. At the beginning, he reproduced in scale some machineries for the wood manufacture, then he went closer to Leonardo by studying his several drawings. Every work is handcraft with recycled materials, adapted to the most ecological and environmental context.

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Exhibition details

Title SIMILITER IN PICTURA. Attorno a Leonardo/SIMILITER IN PICTURA. About Leonardo

Curated by Matteo Galbiati, Alberto Moioli, Elena Pontiggia

Organized by Container Lab Association - www.containerlab.eu

Venue Casa del Mantegna, via Acerbi 47, Mantua

Dates 20th October 2019 - 6th January 2020

Opening hours Wednesdays-Saturdays h 10-12.30 a.m. and 2-6.30 p.m. | Sundays h 10-12.30 a.m. and 2-7 p.m.

Closed: Mondays and Tuesdays, 24th and 25th December 2019, 1st January 2020

Extra Openings: 8th, 26th, 31st December 2019 and 6h January 2020

Entry € 5 adults | € 3 reduced-price (teachers, military forces and law enforcement off-duty, over 65, groups of at least 15 adults, Mantova Card owners, school groups, Mantova card junior owners) | Free (under 6, disabled, helpers and/or family members, I.C.O.M. members, tourist guides, 1 companion per adults' group, max 2 companions for school groups, journalists)

Catalogue Scripta Maneant with critical texts by Matteo Galbiati, Alberto Moioli and Elena Pontiggia

Information Casa del Mantegna

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Information for guided visits and didactic workshops about Vincian machines

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