

## BACCANALE

Touch and escape for Ivo Còtani at MUVIS in Castiglione in Teverina, a three-day event full of revealed contents and artistic skills, which touch the Teverina valley, the same that extends from the Corbara basins to the unreal Civita di Bagnoregio, among gullies and vines.

Along the gallery that houses vases and relics from a bygone era, the wave of colors in Ivo's panels is well suited, all expressions of playing in a semi-painful dance, releasing energies that are not at all hidden. Between the serious and the factual, it was once said, but if happiness is not part of life, tell me how to resolve existence otherwise, if not by dancing happily.

Yes, his paintings lead me back to a dance, I would propose it to many with full sun, in the middle of a field or on a sunny threshing floor, which offers shade only under the pergola of vine leaves. It is therefore well suited to this place, which from the sandstone lands gives rise to shoots and grapes, the same grapes always held and squeezed in the hand by hosts and trimalciones of every age, first in terracotta and then gold or fragile cups crystal.

Then there is freedom! Freedom to say to be to do not to be to take away take (this last verb in the infinitive we used it at lunch in our first meeting between Ivo and me and we gave it a particular meaning). And it's not cheap. Look at its panels one by one and read carefully the read captions, sometimes, but only sometimes affixed, which imply many miseries in the festival of the opera itself. You will find that it is a game but also an assault! I was overwhelmed by these images as if they were a small earthquake of the mind. Small ... then not so much!

Because I place Ivo Còtani among the new artists we will talk about later in time. Rome is full of new ones... the Academy churns them out and loses them, the academy itself sometimes creates useless monsters; at other times, from those who distance themselves from it with intelligent sagacity and attention and with the right reactivity to the professorame, novelties arise that attract and make people think in a new way.

In his panels there is not a single black background, the exact opposite of the current neo figurativism that celebrates all too obstinately and slavishly the now popular and widespread concept of Caravaggesque contrast of silhouetting shapes and lights on dark backgrounds. Only a few hints of a diluted dramatic

Prussian blue in the PVC panel “After last supper”, always tempered by the lightness of the lines, the graphic overlapping, the softness of the colors and the overall joyfulness of the composition.

Look at them carefully, they are the relief in lightness.

They appear and disappear, they want to attract you and make yourself understood, move away and get closer, simply to dance and make you dance with references to your imagination, in a popular festival where lights, stars, festoons, goliardic physiognomic and traditional ballets pile up in a stage backdrop of continuous and contemporary apparitions. Yes, perhaps it is the theater of life, living together between a sunny bath and a bunch of grapes is the secret revealed by Còtani, for a collective portrait of the fatuities, illusions and dreams that we wish or would like to always live. Portrait and portraits, because the figures always full of irony and caricature references, to say the least represent us and finding oneself in them can be the sensation that we perceive but that we secretly keep to ourselves.

I like to acclimate to the language that I think belongs to Ivo, whom I called and searched for, precisely because of his philosophy of art jester, already visible in his personal

relationship, in the way of dressing or in the renewed histrionics applied in painting.

As you can see and read, I do not adopt, since we are used to and easily inclined to blunder as an art critic, no comparison or similarity or references to the many isms or expressive characters of other recent authors.

However, I should in some way evoke them in a critical examination of the works of Còtani (Festa, Angeli, Schifano and others), but definitely drowning in the soft and intense blues or in the clear ocher figures, getting lost in the pink clouds of the irradiated sky of Ivo, I I don't care. Those artistic lives of Piazza del Popolo are far away, between Bar Rosati and Canova, with Nicoletta Strambelli to keep them company. More closely linked to importing the American avant-gardes and translating their values and cultural significance well, they then had every right to be the counterpart of the serious and tragic Italian neo-realism. Each fruit has its season. We were in the second half of the twentieth century. Pasolini was killed in 1975, Moro in 1978, the epilogue of a terrorism that never seemed to end.

It was a vital and healthy contrast for Italian culture, this between neorealists and transavantgarde. Brilliant and constructive. We were a messed up and frightened

society and could not be interpreted and handed down except by keeping in mind Goya and Grosz, but also Warhol and Ginsberg or acting by creating images, making poetry and good journalism. He was confused then. The historic galleries of Rome sold and promoted new artists. The eyes of culture were all turned to investigate between that dynamic and convulsive confusion.

Good. In my opinion, however, everything goes back to the times of that time. Both because the wave was enormous and the tsunami caused has not yet receded, and because the winds of '68 are still blowing light and pleasant, perfecting and stabilizing the feelings of liberation, civil conquests and the season of rights, opposing to the tremors of a creeping ignorance, consequence and ooze of the current globalism that pollutes, makes old, new and very new generations sick. We still need investigation, albeit slightly ironic. And we need fresh wind and not the junk of museum deposits found and repurposed.

We again need the acrid and severe reflection of those who looked back at an Italy to be regenerated. But we also need the rediscovered flowers and color of the sea, the body lying in the solina, the overflowing buttocks, the

slender and slender characters in motion, the animals hinted at, the winking faces and the graffiti stars, just as we like the multitude of faces, transgressions, nudes, in a Bacchanal vortex comparable to the Woodstock bivouacs.

I would like to feed its power and allow everything to come back much more intensely, to allow perfected stability, thanks to the existential precariousness of Ivo Còtani and other artists I know well and find in this dimension. And that everything is game, dance, comedy in a perfect collection of eroticism, volatility of impressions, perfumes and spells appears to me as the welcome, awaited emotion that I was missing, to be enjoyed with eyes and body, with imagination and freedom. to be, in this low and often sad state of today.

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