

Viola Di Massimo was born in Rome on September 25, 1970. She attended the artistic high school and then the school of fine arts of Rome. She is fairly young with respect to the extension of her artistic career and to the insight and depth of her production, but since the early school years her philosophy took shape in embryonal way by the writhing of the classical standards of female nudes. A painting made of colours and images, a story from the book of "One Thousand and One Nights": so, in brief, the work of this artist is said; it is unquestionably distinguished by these constant factors.

Today, considering her artistic course, and as her insight grew up together with her technical and aesthetic experiences, it's possible a more analytical appreciation. At the present we can say her painting is a painting of the beautiful and of a pleasure at the visual impact; this is true in the dramatic characters too, where the colour is intriguing and the brushwork is warm and soft.

At the beginning of her artistic course, when in the year 1988 she attended a collective painting exhibition, the paintress already highlighted this marked aesthetic aspect despite the proposed subject was far removed from the subjects peculiar to her; in her artistic debut a romantic and unrealistic expressionism prevailed where the tragicalness of human drama is dissolved in naivety by a bizarre mockery turned into vital passionate colours with strong contrasts.

A second phase takes place in which Boterian dimensions are added to the Balthusian figurative consistency, always in accordance with outward expressions anchored to a light amusement between joke and vision. In progress we see the beginning of a very personal synthesis in a metabolized seizing of the most meaningful contemporary influences from the XIX till the XX century (Magritte's bowler hats turn into huge top hats).

Starting from the personal exhibition of 1997 we see an original work distinguished by a modern classicality and by an unmistakable style where we feel metaphysical reverberations, as in the repetitions of bent and waving chessboard floors, in the slimline mannequins, in the moons, in the solid and huge top hats; and in all this, always, "the woman", first with an enigmatic expression, then with a shaped or cross-shaped face, without any expressive element as in Dalí's mannequins.

In spite of hieratic standstill of everyday objects and conditions, we feel colours, movement, life that pulses in an effort turned into a motorial hint of figures, of women that seem as if in posing in an immanent sensuality on the fringe of eroticism with strong emphasis on colour; the same stress that is not bent to the symbolic staticness of the myth and of the eternal feminine. It does not pertain tragic or dramatic themes: it's a dream that flows – elegant and tender – delicate in its drama that the paintress avoids underlying. The oneiric vision rises to the surface by hints of a naive fable and by the colours which are rarely

gloomy. In absence of female figures the mannequins are prominent, kind in their simple and daily actions: these are possibly the more innovative subjects of the whole work of the artist.

In the production fulfilled at the beginning of the “new millennium” prevails a metaphysical mark with a quasi foresight on what ineluctably will happen; as the archetypes that are always in the “eternal returns” of symbols as towers, suspenses, letters and timeless dimensions without a definite space (smooth walls, curtains, doors closed or open on endless spaces, silent insides interacting with thunderous outsides); the theatre, in the stage as in the backstage, becomes the space of a would-be act, of the eternal representation, of the meaningful interludes with a passionate and warm emphasis on colour; the woman turns into a “personaggio in cerca d'autore” inside the beautiful and tragic amusement of life; as in the oneiric dimension in which we are shocked by the life of the unconscious unsteadiness (bent and waving chessboard floors) of the equilibrium of a rational logic: it is here that dreams and metaphysics meet and coexist raising upon the human will.

The last production unwinds and evolves on the same style of stylistic features and symbols marked by the personal freshness of the artist; her paintings evolve enriching themselves by researches about expressions and emphasis on colour, by elements and backgrounds so twilight and gloomy as if “the beautiful fable that today deludes yourself” should teeter in front of the reality; so the mannequin of the paintings becomes “some other – no more an “alter ego” – with whom to talk in accordance to existential categories, following the tradition of “Max Ernst and his follows” advocates of the artistic expression as complete and polymorphic.

Everything is anyway dominated by a sweet and heart-warming mockery; even if the fate is oddly unforeseeable as the heart and spade cards spread on many paintings. All the work does not act in the logic of a watchful consciousness but flows and reveals myth and dream fastened on universal dimensions but narrated by a tale made up of colours and movement.

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