

THE UNIVERSE
IS A BLUE TREE

pino DEODATO



Colori acrilici Fine
Fine Acrylic Colors
Couleurs acryliques
Feine Acrylfarben
Colores acrilici

140 ml

Distribuito in Italia
per il mercato
Maggio 1988
Maggio 1988





LIKELY, ABSOLUTELY LIKELY, EVEN CERTAIN

Ivan Quaroni

“Wonder belongs to the philosopher’s nature, and philosophy originates from wonder only”
(Plato, Teeteto)

Among Ennio Flaiano’s brilliant jokes and very sharp paradoxes, the one that gives the title to this exhibition seems to throw an adamantine light on the perpetual fluctuations, that swing back and forth from doubt to certainty; fluctuations that characterise the “contemporary” man (holding that this category really exists). I don’t know whether this is meant to be humorous or rather an accurate picture of a certain type of cynicism, simultaneously steady and gentle, sharp and poetic, insinuating the doubt within a vision of the world that, all in all, is open to the epiphanies of the wonderful and fantastic a vision that in my opinion perfectly fits to Pino Deodato. The artist has passed through seasons of burning political passions and nevertheless succeeded in maturing a point of view, at least in linguistic and aesthetic terms, capable of combining scepticism and emotionality, critical spirit and lyrical adhesion. Pino Deodato is a humanist, a picture alchemist, always tirelessly in transit between painting and sculpture, in-between drawing and installation, but also in-between concept and emotion. A son of different ages – the militant age of the seventies, the individualist of the eighties, the definitely post-ideological of the nineties and the mobile and liquid of the first five years of the new millennium – Pino Deodato is an eccentric presence in the contemporary art scene. This anomaly has spent the last decades building up his own, original lyrical cosmology, made of soft moonscapes and evening apparitions, rarefied presences and surprising communions with panic. In his works the world looks like a territory of disclosures, an epiphanic place that man watches not just optically, with a surprised look, but also cerebrally, due to those literary and poetic

peregrinations that, unavoidably, are the mythological skeleton of his visions, often suspended between a sublime romanticism and a mysterious, crepuscular Mediterranean nature.

The man who thinks and watches, reads and writes, and constantly wonders about the innate essence of phenomena, about the ultimate substance of creation is the protagonist of Deodato's imagined journeys. He is a man folded in on himself, as if engaged in chasing the thread of a thought or unravelling the tangle of a dream; sometimes taking part in human affairs, constantly in search of utopian pacification through natural forms. This kind of man, who has lived within the artist's work for some time, is a secular variation of St. Thomas the apostle, who embodies the skeptical spirit that anticipates any change, the doubt that precedes any dismay. A dyad composed of feelings of incredulity and wonderment seems to govern Deodato's recent works, oscillating from pole to pole, with pendular accuracy, but posed as if they are complementary extremes, ontologically related. St. Thomas is actually a two-faced figure, who embodies the effigy of suspicion, one who just believes facts based on evidence, as well as the image of the missionary inflamed by faith, evangelizer of Syria, Mesopotamia and South Western India. Yet Deodato's St. Thomas is something more, the epitome of art and poetry becoming one. Doubtful tension is alluded to in works such as "Preciso disegno secondo canoni della sezione aurea" ("An accurate drawing according to the standards of the golden section") and "Le pieghe dei vestiti raccontano la storia" ("Clothes' folds tell the history"), both of them dominated by the alchemical "*nigredo*", the initial step in the descent into the underworld of reason. In the first installation, Thomas is actually the man who measures the world according to logic, who traces the perfect geometry of a circle. He, who observes a landscape of black haze, reproduces it mimetically, but then sits down on a sheet of crumpled paper, dejected. In the second installation, Thomas is represented with fingers sceptically outstretched



towards a hypertrophic wound, at once an apotheosis and a tribute to Caravaggio's notorious *vulnus* *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, 1601-1602. Here, with skillful synthesis, Deodato describes the events of an existential defeat, which defines and denounces the limitations of Cartesian thought. Yet this is just one stage of his own pilgrimage. Elsewhere, a rational approach seems to coexist with lyrical and intuitive ones, such as in the case of the diptych entitled "*Seduto beve la notizia*" ("*Sitting up man drinks the news*"), where reading and dreaming represent two ways of looking for the truth, one focused on the analysis of facts and their interpretations, the other focused on the images of the unconscious. Travel, be it physical or astral, is a recurrent subject in Deodato's works, which are often scattered with auroral, iridescent appearances that mark, like delicate filigrees, the cobalt of a nightly sky.

In his latest works, the vaults give way to a more tapered space, mostly monochromatic, in which the milky kaolin prevails and characters float among the minute reliefs of the trees, magmatic whirlpools and aerial nimbi. Deodato seems to focus on the action, like a close up in a film, neglecting the details of place, and the *Blaue Reiter*-style settings in much of his other work. "*Ho amato un albero*" ("I used to love a tree") and "*Grande amore*" ("Big love") actually show a chromatic sensitivity through subtle surface variations and soft chiaroscuro accents, that lighten the story, deprived of the calligraphic details that still abound in the home interiors of "*Tra una carezza e un sorriso, l'universo*" ("*Between a caress and a smile, the universe*"). In short, Deodato uses a drier, basic language, while never losing a sense of levity, in work permeated with astonishment and wonder in the everyday, such as in the case of "*Portata del vento (da tradurre)*" and "*Meraviglioso*", which are installations playing on a highly calculated sense of suspension, where man and nature seem to merge into a new level of intimacy, yet, full of references to a cultured or refined "*naïveté*". In these works, the first hour skeptic, St Thomas,

tormented by doubt, gives way to an astonished witness, to a champion of faith capable of embracing the existential maelstrom and rising above human worries, soaring amongst the clouds. Yet, the artist is not referring to a St. Thomas of Evangelic, Apostolic or even Gnostic faith. Pretentious figure, a sort of cultural lemma, used by the artist to introduce a non-denominational feeling of faith that is more similar to the elementary magic of popular folklore. Indeed, Deodato delineates a path in his work of discoveries and disclosures, of theophanies – perhaps collective but almost inevitably individual – that filter the human experience through coded artistic language.

Thomas' doubts are those of the artist, who is metaphorically suspended one step away from the brink, maybe waiting for a sign, a revelation. Wonder and astonishment become the viaticum for a definitive choice, because in order to launch into space one must first accept the mission, be it even in the prosaic sense of art.

There is a painting dating back to 1984, "Il suicidio del pittore" ("The suicide of the painter") that can be considered the forefather of many to many of the artist's later pieces. It shows a landscape at dusk, half occupied by a very high cliff, shrouded in shadows, from which we see a small fiery figure diving down. It does not seem to be a suicide at all, but a sort of soaring after a long period of indecision. Just before this moment, we can imagine the painter as the protagonist of "Sospeso nel nulla. Trova un precario equilibrio" ("Suspended in nothingness. He finds a precarious balance"), with his toes on the last bit of rock or maybe on the edge of a cliff, aware that in the blink of an eye, that coveted jump will become likely, absolutely likely, even certain.

PINO DEODATO. HOW TO SEARCH AND, SOMETIMES, TO FIND OUT

Small, very small, calm, quiet and lonely. These are Pino Deodato's clay men, on view at Progettoarte-elm gallery in Milan. Lonely characters are suspended in the exhibition space, almost forming a capillary network of correspondences, voices, cross-references, each one somehow associated with the other's loneliness. "Cerco, trovo" ("I search, I find") is the title of the exhibition curated by Marco Meneguzzo, as well as the central essence of a "tranquillitate animi" that pervades Deodato's small men: to look for something that, you know, you'll be finding sooner or later, without a care. Painted works in clay and bronze, together with a few experiments in pencil drawing on terracotta tile, contrast transient signs with firm material presence. The "rooms" where the small clay statues live allegorically exemplify, in a variety of ways, the means by which knowledge or wisdom is acquired, be it in a library or primordially infused, falling short total knowing. But maybe being content is enough, otherwise one would have to face the idea of never being able to achieve the real goal, or reach the finish line. Perhaps the continuous quest for wisdom, without the anxiety

of trying to reach the highest peak, is knowledge too. No existential crisis haunts these normal men. Their familiar thoughts have been intimately unveiled. While singularly placid in their daily meditations, they seem resolute in the collective experience of existence. The artist reaches a sort of "humanized symbolism" by telling small stories - what is intimately personal can become symbolic. In Deodato's work every "tile" of men imbued in their thoughts adds to a mosaic of relationships that fill the exhibition space. Little by little something is revealed, but only to those who will search.

WORKS



DEODATEO COSTELLATION, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 300 x 200 cm





GOOD NIGHT FLORET, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 15 x 17 x 13 cm





CLOUDS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 15 x 6 x 10 cm

BEAM OF A STAR, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 10 x 4 x 4 cm





THE UNIVERSE IS A BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta



FIXED IDEA, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 28 x 9 x 7 cm





BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 21 x 16 x 17 cm



BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 17 x 21 x 15 cm





THE UNIVERSE IS A BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta







BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 16 x 20 x 13 cm



BLUE TREE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 20 x 15 x 15 cm







THE ONE WHO SEES FAR AWAY, 2015,
polychrome terracotta, 20 x 21 x 10 cm

Black Think tank, 2015, polychrome terracotta,
24 x 15 x 3 cm



HOME SWEET HOME, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 200 x 150 cm







CIAO, CIAO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 52 x 20 x 7 cm







HOME SWEET HOME, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 22 x 17 x 7 cm

BUILDER, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 9 x 24 x 4 cm

HEAVEN, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 23 x 29 x 5 cm







BELVEDERE (VIEW POINT), 2015, polychrome terracotta, 100 x 70 cm

FAR, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 22 x 26 x 15 cm

SMALL LANDSCAPE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 28 x 19 x 3 cm









I SEARCH, I FIND, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 100 x 70 cm



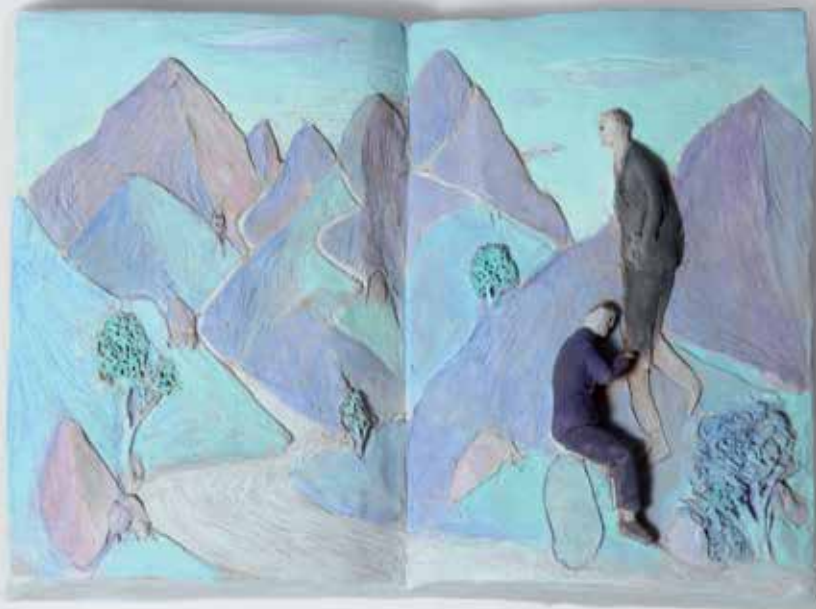
I FIND, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 17 x 13 x 4 cm



DOT, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 13 x 10 X 2 cm



I SEARCH, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 16 x 12 x 6 cm



UNDONE, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 200 x 100 cm

SELF-PORTRAIT, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 26 x 3 cm

INFINITY, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 19 x 19 x 10 cm



WITHOUT WORDS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 50 x 200 cm





GOLDEN RATIO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm





EMBROIDER, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm



WONDERFUL, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm



WITHOUT WORDS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm



WORDS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm



TOUCH AND GO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm



GOOD NIGHT, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 18 x 13 x 3 cm





THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO DO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 300 x 200 cm





THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO DO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 32 x 28 x 8 cm

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 22 x 17 x 2 cm





MANY LITTLE IDEAS, 2015, polychrome terracotta



LITTLE IDEA, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 15 x 8 x 5 cm

MANY LITTLE IDEAS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 23 x 19 x 15 cm

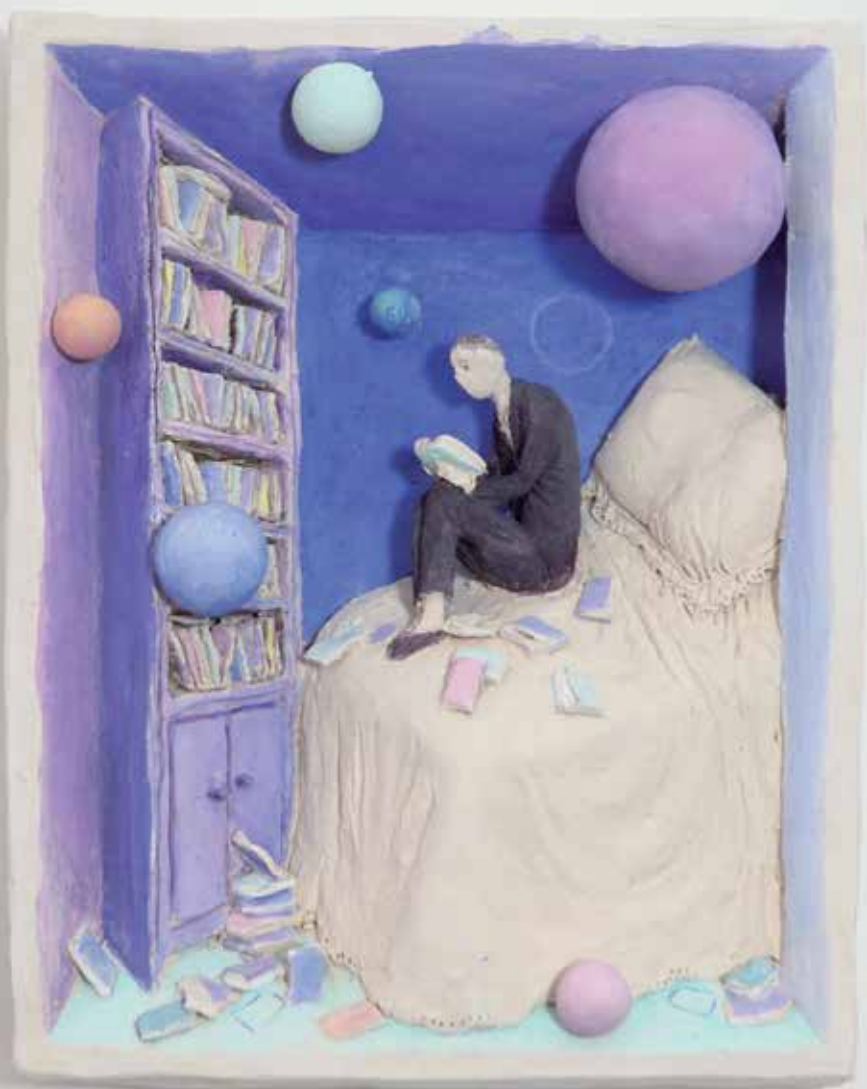




SMALL THOUGHTS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 300 x 200 cm



SMALL THOUGHTS, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 23 x 19 x 5 cm







HAVE A NICE JOURNEY, 2015,
polychrome terracotta, 15 x 25 x 3 cm

TOUCH THE SKY WITH ONE FINGER, 2015,
polychrome terracotta, 23 x 7 x 7 cm





THE DAY, 2015, polychrome terracotta, installation dimensions vary



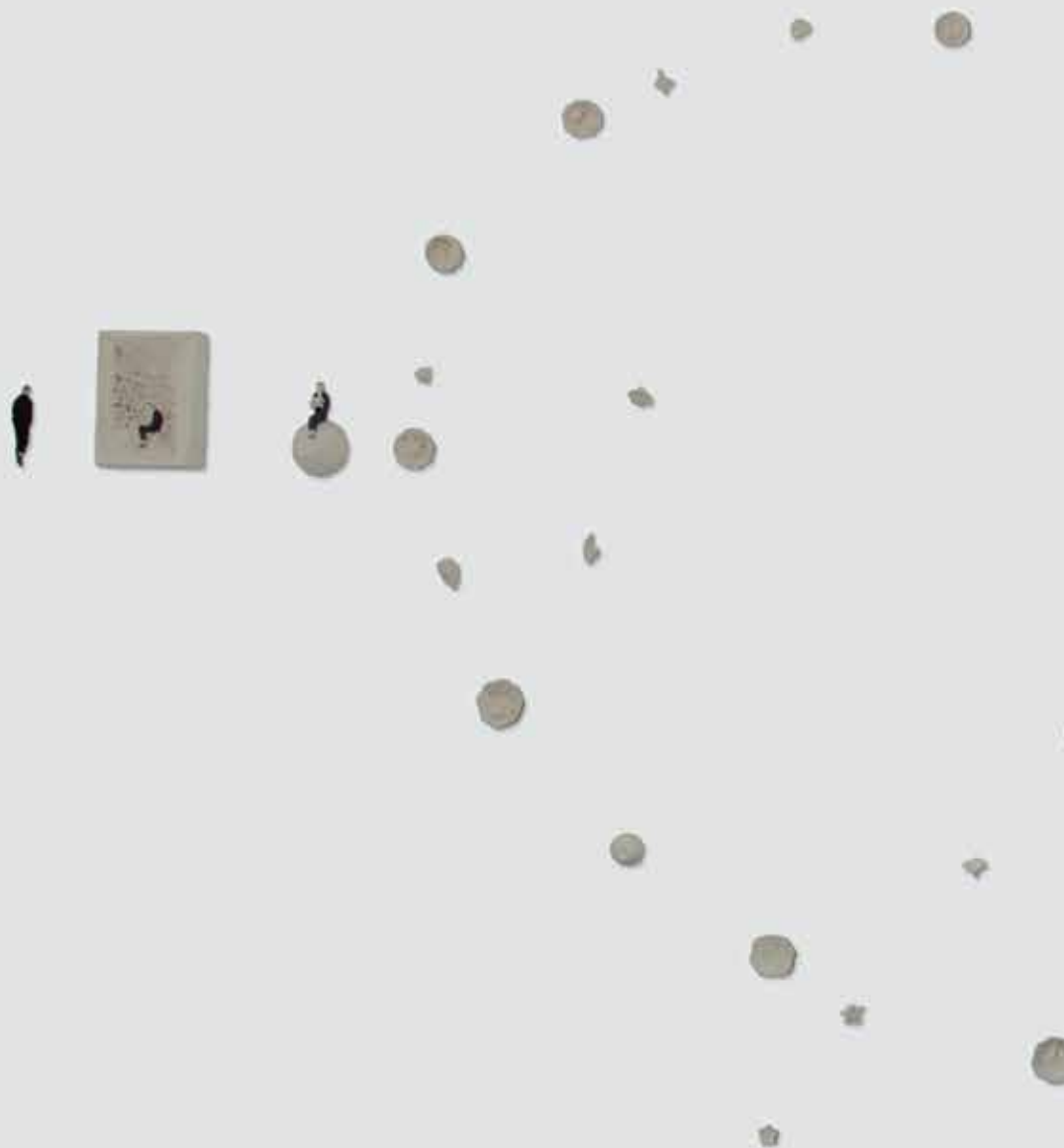




IN THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 15 x 20 x 14 cm
GARDEN, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 35 x 27 x 9 cm







THE DAY, 2015, polychrome terracotta, installation dimensions vary



GUARDIAN, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 15 x 9 x 6 cm
WHAT TO DO, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 21 x 17 x 5 cm







FIXED IDEA, 2015, polychrome terracotta, 14 x 3 x 3 cm











BIOGRAPHY

A path began in Nao di Jonadi (Vibo Valentia, Italy) where Deodato was born in 1950 and later completed his early studies and was granted a diploma in the arts in Vibo Valentia. Soon afterwards, in 1969, he decided to move to Milan to study at the Brera Academy; a choice that proved felicitous, considering that at the end of his first year of studies he was acknowledged as one of the best students with a group exhibition at Ciovasso Gallery. Meanwhile in Milan, Pino got in touch with the main players in the Milan art scene, including Paolo Baratella and Giangiacomo Spadari, who he later became the assistant to. Meanwhile he got in touch with the world of French art, approaching masters such as Gerard Guyomard, Ivan Messac and the Spanish Arrojo. In the seventies, in a time when culture walked hand-in-hand with political and social events, that Deodato started developing his artistic creations and toured them around Italy. He also represented young Italian painting abroad by exhibiting his very personal work in Salon de la Jeune Peinture at Musée D'Art Moderne, Paris, at Musée du Luxembourg and at Alvarez Gallery in Lisbon and Oporto.

At the same time, in a frantic yet brilliant period of deep inspiration, his paintings were admired across Italy in the Quadriennale d'Arte Nazionale in Rome, and in exhibitions at the Murat Castle in Pizzo Calabro and the Gagliardi Palace in Vibo Valentia. In the late seventies and early eighties the artists developed several murals, both solo and collaborative, that called for social change. In 1982 Deodato resumed his personal artwork and continued exhibiting domestically and internationally, including in Milan (Gastaldelli, Il Milione, Klerks and Cardi galleries), Bologna (Cristofori), Turin (Narciso), Lucca (Poleschi), Benevento (various art

events), Forte dei Marmi (Susanna Orlando), and Miami (Ambrosino). He has been commissioned by the Coni (Foro Italico, Rome), the Paolo Pini Museum in Milan, by the city of Turin (Manifesto d'artista) and Sedriano (San Francisco and the Wolf). His work was also featured in the "Videosapere" telecast.

Neodato's paintings that have been inspired by legends and fairy tales such as Tarzan, Tex Willer and Ulysses belong to the Trussardi, Coveri, Castelli, Pikler, Diamini and Manuli collections, amongst others. Magical realism was infused in the artist's work into the nineties. Paintings such as The firefly eater and The man who used to talk with birds because men cannot hear anymore were metaphors for life to the artist who had isolated himself from the confusion of the outside world. These allegorical metaphors are still at work today to tell the story of man, traveling, with successes and disappointments, pulled from the album of his existence. Here introspection and the will to fight on despite obstacles, are essential for each individual to define their own space within the universe.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

SOLO EXHIBITION

2015

The universe is a blue tree, CAP
Contemporary Art Platform, Kuwait
City, Kuwait
Pino Deodato. Cerco, trovo (I seek, I
find out)
progettoarte-elm, Milan

2014

Senza parole (Without words),
Giuseppe Veniero
Project, Palermo
Certo, cerissimo, anzi probabile,
(Certain, absolutely certain, even
likely)
Susanna Orlando Gallery,
Pietrasanta, curated by Ivan Quaroni

2013

Gli Angeli di Pino Deodato (Pino
Deodato's Angels),
Orlando Arte Gallery, Roncadelle,
Brescia
La Campana di Filippo (Filippo's
bell), PlusDesign
Gallery, Milano
11-1 -13, Atlantica Gallery,
Vicenza

2012

Il tarlo del chiodo fisso (To have a
bee in one's bonnet) , Progettoarte
ELM, Porto Mirabello, La Spezia
Lo Scultore innamorato della
Scultura (The sculptor in love with
Sculpture), Roccatre Gallery, Turin

2011

Il Circo dell'arte (The art circus),
Claudio Poleschi
Contemporary Art, Lucca, curated by
Enrico Mattei

2010

Equi...libri, Art's Event Gallery,
Torrecuso, (Bn), curated by Giorgio
Ognisola

2009

L'angelo custode (Guardian Angel),
Piccola Galleria
Maison, Pietrasanta (Lu)

Paesaggi domestici (Domestic
Landscapes), Progettoarte
ELM, Milan, curated by Gabriele
Sassone

2008

La Santa Scultura (Holy Sculpture),
Narciso Gallery, Turin
La Campana di Filippo (Filippo's
Bell), Forte
Belvedere, Florence

2007

Parlava agli uccelli perchè gli uomini
non ci sentivano più (He used to
speak to the birds because men did
not hear anymore), Palazzo
Pantiachi, Tuscany Region, Florence

2006

La torta della sposa (The bride's
cake), Klerkx Gallery, Milan

2004

Parlava agli uccelli perchè gli uomini
non ci sentivano più (He used to
speak to the birds because men did
not hear anymore), Sedriano
Township Palace, (Milan)
Gli sposi, il pensatore e il
mangiatore di lucciole (The bride
and groom, the thinker and the
fireflies eater), "Il Paese delle viole"
project bnadi, (Vv)
Pane e Vino (Bread and wine),
Mulazzo Old Town, (Massa Carrara)

2003

Silenzio (Silence), Narciso Gallery,
Turin
Panevino (Bread and wine), Cargo Ex
Silo del Cacao,
Milan, curated by Alessandro Riva

2002

Il sole tramontò alle 17.15 (The sun
set at 5,15 pm), Porto
Vito (Ro)
Nostro pane quotidiano (Our daily
bread), Art's Event Gallery, Torrecuso
(Bn)
San Francesco e il Lupo (St. Francis
and the Wolf), S. Bernardino Church,
Sedriano (Mi)

- 2001
Chiaroscuro, Narciso Gallery,
Turin
La Santa Pittura (The holy painting),
Galica Arte
Contemporanea, Milan, curated by
Luigi Dicorato
Con riso (Laughing), Monopoli
Gallery, Pavia
I Viandanti (Wayfarers), Gagliardi
Palace, Vibo Valentia
- 2000
Boccadirosa (Rose mouth),
Ambrosino Gallery, Miami, curated
by George Bolge
- 1999
Dalla Terra verso il Cielo e ritorno
(From heart to Heaven and Back),
Art's Event Gallery, Torrecuso (Bv)
- 1998
I Viandanti (Wayfarers), Santuario di
Nostra
Signora D'Oropa (Bl), curated by
Luigi
Dicorato and Marco Meneguzzo
- 1997
L'Elogio dell'attesa (the Praise of
Waiting), Studio Cristofori,
Bologna curated by Sara Fontana
Manufatto (Artefact), Cesarea
Gallery,
Genoa, curated by Marco Pierini
- 1996
L'Opera Rossa (The red work),
Susanna
Orlando Gallery, Forte dei Marmi
(Lw), curated by Paolo Sciortino
I Primari (The Primary), Cardì
Gallery, Milan, curated by Luigi
Dicorato
- 1995
Ritratti (Portraits), Il Milione Gallery,
Milan, curated by Pino Tripodi
- 1994
C'era una volta... (Once upon a
time), Vittuone Township (Mi)
- 1993
Tutti gli eroi sono buoni (All heroes
are good), Proposte d'arte, Legnano
(Mi)
- 1992
Confine (Boundary), Cardì Gallery,
Milan, curated by Elena Pontiggia
- 1991
Lupus in fabula, Gastaldelli Studio,
Milan, curated by Mario Perazzi
Per terre e per mani (Through lands
and hands), Palmisano Gallery,
Milan
Arte xerofita (Xerophile art), Centosei
Arte, Bari
- 1989
Porta Ticinese Gallery, Milan
Popolare di Milano Bank, Milan
- 1988
Gastaldelli Studio
- 1987
Literary Café Portnoy, Milan
- 1986
Accent. Kaiserlautern Gallery, Freiburger
Rinascita Cooperative, Vittuone (Mi)
- 1985
Marenaio (Sailor), Studio dei Rossi,
Verona
Ween Das Gras Hoch Ist Uns Das
Meer Tief, Panetta Gallery,
Mannheim
Portepietra Gallery, Verona
Steffanoni Gallery, Magenta (Mi)
- 1978
Town Library, Vittuone (Mi)
- 1975
Alternative Galleries (Parigi)
Degli Angeli Gallery (Riccione)
Galleria Alvarez (Oporto)
- 1974
Gagliardi Palace (Vibo Valentia)
- 1973
Murat Castle (Pizzo Calabro)

Text by
Ivan Quaroni

Translations
Michael Haggerty

Design
Sara Salvi

Photo credits
Bruno Bari

In collaboration with
progettoarte-elm

Unit # R-01
Gate Village Bldg No.08
DIFC
PO Box 212592
Dubai, UAE

T +971 4 386 2366
W artsawa.com

artsawa



Contemporary Art Platform Kuwait
Industrial Shuwaikh, Block 2, Street 28, Life Center, Mezzanine.
P.O.Box 102 Safat, 13002, Kuwait City, Kuwait
www.capkuwait.com
Phone: 0096524925636