

Here I am, as always, when I set out to write a critical text—or better, to pour emotions, sensations, and knowledge like a raging river in front of a blank sheet of paper with my pen. This time, the contrast with contemporaneity and technology is even stronger... not the keyboard of a generation 2.0 computer, but in the old-fashioned way: I write, I revise, I correct, I add. Usually, I write late at night, in absolute silence, muffled; today, however, the sun is shining, I am accompanied by music, loud music, full of energy, coming from my iPod... at least in this, I am contemporary.

I immerse myself in Stefano Bressani's studio, located in a historic building in ancient Pavia, among vivid colors, fabrics, and his vintage Vespa, an iconic presence of his being... and here my hands stitch his art with words. To those who are fortunate enough to know him deeply, Bressani appears almost surreal, like a character from a fantasy world but with rare concreteness; the imaginary friend everyone wishes they had; the male protagonist missing from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, perhaps. His top hat makes us smile, his colors captivate us, bringing serenity back to our minds, while his tenacity, precision, and determination surprise and inspire us.

His art attracts generations and cultures, it is universal, immediately readable even though it is rich in symbolism that only the most attentive viewer can fully grasp. It communicates powerfully on its own, but with Bressani, more than ever, knowing the person behind the "fantastic" art is essential to truly enter and become part of his colorful world. Contaminations of times and historical eras, thanks to his technique and undeniable artistic knowledge, as well as his innate sense of belonging to the world and the miracle of life, seem to create a continuous dialogue between past and present.

His passion for the golden years, the decades of the Dolce Vita and Pop Art, combined with the inner desire and need to discover the unknown, evolution, and the future, allow his works to float magically in space, taking infinite journeys through time. These works are of absolute contemporaneity, yet hide a precious engraving technique almost unknown to the new generations; knowledge of the American Pop Art movement, but without being exclusively bound to it; photographic skills and the ability to deconstruct images; sculptural planning and plastic surgery-like precision—all make Bressani a starting point for new forms of artistic expression. In this sense, he does not break the patterns of art history but, perhaps with even greater mastery, deconstructs and reassembles them into something entirely new.

Bressani is not only the creator and father of his paintings and textiles, but also of the technique itself, which he has skillfully developed over the years, refining it to perfection. Each of his works conceals secrets, hidden behind every color, chosen not randomly or merely for chromatic harmony, but with emotion, tactile sensation, inspiration, and research; secrets embedded and fixed with the strength of his nails, sewn with his textured black brushstrokes that indissolubly unite every weave, fold, and junction... like scars of beauty, of perfection, wrinkles full of life, awareness, and strength that, with their essential presence, give three-dimensionality to the work, bringing it to life as if they were the soul of his art.

Life's inconsistencies, experiences, and pains are fundamental ingredients in the human journey; they often appear useless and mysterious at first glance but constitute the labyrinth we must traverse to become who we are. In this sense, Bressani's nails symbolically hold fast

moments of lived experience, and the black wrinkles of his works appear to us as the paths taken, the daily essential choices necessary to write our existence.

His contemporary textile engravings represent an absolute but balanced contrast between Arte Povera, like Pistoletto's *Venus of the Rags*, Aubertin's nails turned upside down because they are essential and non-violent, and the richness of the Byzantine mosaic tradition... two eras that, thanks to Bressani, inhabit the contemporary and the future; two Italian schools of excellence in the world brought together, like a journey through time only possible by a skilled hand such as the "tailor of art."

A continuous play of surfaces that grow, turning from canvas into sculpture and then back again, resulting in works that, even to the most expert eye from afar, appear pictorial, leaving the viewer in surprise and wonder before approaching them closely. *Sculture Vestite*, as contemporary art history now identifies them, unite three seemingly distant worlds—painting, sculpture, and architecture—which Bressani skillfully shows can coexist on the same canvas.

Entering his works, following the black wrinkles, deep lines like ravines and valleys in his colorful landscapes, one finds oneself surrounded by monuments, skyscrapers, mountains, traveling along roads sometimes long and direct toward a destination, often winding and full of detours, choices to be made, like a labyrinth in which colors help with a game of visual memory, but also surprise, as happened to the heroine of *The Wizard of Oz*. To reach our essence, life imposes decisions, renunciations, beliefs, and mistakes—sometimes absurd paths that together compose our "self."

Bressani's colors satisfy the spirit and erase anxieties, like the magic of a rainbow, giving us a sense of belonging to a world that, in the frenzy of daily life and its dramas, we often seem to have lost... like when a musical piece ends... or when the sun seems to fade behind a powerful storm. Entering the colorful world of his contemporary engravings and *Sculture Vestite* allows us to take another fantastic journey through time, dimension, and technique, discovering an abstract world carefully hidden in the wrinkles of the figurative. Even where everything seems written and elementary, there is always a deeper essence, a necessity for research.

Just as colors generate light and energy, so does Art serve as fundamental vitamin and energy for our lives, constantly communicating something new in every moment.

Serena Mormino