

Matthew Antezzo

Matthew Antezzo (Connecticut, USA, 1962) lives and works in Berlin.

Matthew Antezzo's work consists mainly in retrieving and reprocessing images from the Western tradition through painting; "icons" looked for, and found in different sources: often illustrations published in magazines and newspapers, books of art or cinema history, photographs and more recently from the Internet. Shown as if original, these document "copies" reproduce the images together with their captions, thus facilitating the shift from one plane to another.

The chosen images often refer to famous personalities (like those of conceptual artists taken during important exhibitions, or portraits of well-known protagonists of the world of scientific and cultural research) as well as still frames from well-known movies. By re-painting these images, Antezzo makes reference to his cultural, as well as visual, memory and creates his personal universe between painting and conceptual reflection, by also questioning even his role as artist between legitimation and autonomy. This process extending the field of painting to the world of technology and mass media hints at the power of suggestion in contemporary communication.

In his work *Out* (1997), Antezzo uses an image of Pier Paolo Pasolini: the painted transposition of a photograph published in the magazine which gives the title to the work, and depicting the filmmaker during the shooting of his last film, *Salò or the 120 days of Sodom* (1975). The choice of a historical document aims at exalting the director's inner life as he is captured next to the camera at a moment of intense concentration. In this work, Antezzo orchestrates a multiple-level dialectics, by overlapping visual and verbal icons. On the one hand, the painted reproduction becomes an ambiguous icon within a space between photographic past, memory and present painting; on the other hand, the sentence used as a caption becomes a reference point for other images. The quotation sounds enigmatic, extrapolated from a longer remark that Pasolini had made on the film itself: "Salò is a Medieval mystery, a sacred representation, very enigmatic. Therefore it should never be understood, it would be terrible if it were understood".

Matthew Antezzo studied at the Parsons School of Design of New York and the University of Utah at Salt Lake City. He recently exhibited at ISCO of New York (2012), PSM Gallery and Klosterfelde Gallery in Berlin (2012), at Monterrey in Mexico (2011 and 2010), at Die Schute in Hamburg (2009), at Michele Maccarone Inc in New York (2005) and Sprüth Magers in Munich (2003). He participated in the exhibition "Mehr als zuviel" held at Handmade Berlin in 2012 and the exhibition "Painting as a Radical Form", Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia (2012), the exhibition "Oh how time flies" at the Kunsthalle of Bergen (2011), in 2006 he exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art of New York during the Whitney Biennial, and participated in "Ex Post Facto" at Galerie Georges-Philippe Vallois in Paris (2005) and in "Painting into Photography/Photography into Painting" at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Miami (1996).

Kim Dingle

Kim Dingle (Pomona, California, 1951) lives and works in Los Angeles.

For more than twenty years Kim Dingle's art has explored the delicate boundary between childhood and adolescence and issues linked to American history also in its most critical developments, like racism, for example.

Her mother and niece have been her inspiration for the creation of several painted series: the artist's beginnings were in fact characterized by paintings portraying her mother together with the portraits of historical figures like George Washington. Instead her niece Wadow has been the subject inspiring the artist to portray irreverent and mischievous little girls, and through them the artist ironically denounced the "bad behaviors" of American society. The artist even calls herself a "bad girl"; this self-image takes form in the creation of *Priss*, a half-adult half-child doll, the metaphorical representation of the artist: "All my work is based on my story, it is my identity" (Kim Dingle).

Fatty and *Fudge*, as well, the protagonists of the painting *Two Girls Standing Back to Back* (1992) represent the artist's alter ego: the two girls bring back the painted and double version of the *Priss* sculpture. The work belongs to a series of paintings where the two little girls, sometimes allies and other times rivals, behave naughtily, doing mischief with aggressive and subversive actions.

Their bodies stand out from a monochrome background, on a surface of unbleached linen, on which the artist has applied a palette of neutral colors, from beige to brown and white. The two girls stand together, one leaning on the other's back, mirror-like figures in their attitude, but differing from their look: *Fatty* is white and bald and almost naked; *Fudge* is black and wears an elegant and flowing white dress. The only element they have in common is their shoes, in a representation where the artist points at the importance that race, gender and stereotypes linked to the definition of the body play in defining the identity of an individual.

Kim Dingle graduated in 1988 at California State University, and later received a Master in Fine Arts at Claremont Graduate School.

Her work has been exhibited in many museums and galleries, including for example the Otis College of Art in Los Angeles (1995-1996), the Renaissance Society at Chicago University (1996) and the Bell Gallery at Brown University, Providence, in 2000. Her works were exhibited at the Whitney Biennial in 2000 and participated in many group exhibitions, including "Sunshine and Noir: Art in L. A., 1960-1997", a traveling exhibition in several European museum institutions, such as the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen.

Her works are present in the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Orange County Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego.

In 2000 the artist stopped her activity as painter to open a vegetarian restaurant in Los Angeles called "Fatty's & Co". She started painting again in 2007 for a solo exhibition at the Sperone Westwater Gallery.

Lalla Essaydi

Lalla Essaydi (Morocco, 1956) lives and works in New York, Boston and Morocco.

Lalla Essaydi's art explores the complex reality of Arab women starting from her personal experience. Many of the women portrayed in her images belong to her family and wear traditional dresses and are often decorated with Islamic texts made with henna through which the artist speaks about herself and the condition of Arab women, by opening a reflection on the issues of isolation and repression in their societies.

Her paintings incorporate the orientalist imagery of the Western painting tradition and invite the viewer to reconsider the orientalist mythology: She takes over their structure with exotically decorated spaces, with the presence of female bodies "available" to the viewer's desire, but replacing the *topos* of the odalisque with that of a naked male hermaphrodite, thus deconstructing the false realism and the experiential falseness of an entire phase of Western painting. "I wish to present myself through multiple lenses - as artist, as Moroccan, as Saudi, as traditionalist, as Liberal, as Muslim. In short, I invite the viewer to resist stereotypes" (Lalla Essaydi).

In *Two Thousand and Two Nights* (2002), a Moorish woman, fully covered by an overflowing vermilion dress, invites the viewer to enter the space inhabited by a naked hermaphrodite standing on top of a stack of art books.

The setting is consistent with that of orientalist paintings, but here all the decorative and ethnographic details are eliminated in favour of a staged minimalism: the empty room is washed by the golden light coming from an open window, on the walls there is a frieze of Islamic calligraphy which does not compose any text. The only decoration is given by the mystical red of the Moorish dress and the necklace and bracelets worn by the hermaphrodite.

Lalla Essaydi grew in Morocco and Saudi Arabia and later moved to the United States. She has worked with many media, including painting, video, film, installations and photography. Her works were exhibited at the Miller Yezerki Gallery in Boston (2013), Edwynn Houk Gallery in New York (2013), Jackson Fine Art of Atlanta (2011), La Casa Encendida in Madrid (2009), the Museum of Photographic Arts of San Diego (2005). More recently she participated in the exhibitions "She Who Tells a Story: Women Photographers from Iran and Arab World" at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (2013), "Undercover: Performing and Transforming Black Female Identities" at the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art in Atlanta (2009), "Fire Walkers" at the Stefan Stux Gallery in New York (2008). Her works are exhibited in many collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago and the Fries Museum in Holland.

Nicky Hoberman

Nicky Hoberman (Cape Town, 1967) lives and works in London.

Famous for her exploration of concepts such as isolation, identity and individuality, Nicky Hoberman makes figures with large faces which float freely in two-dimensional spaces against flat and densely colored backgrounds, somewhat inspired by Medieval paintings. The subjects share the same canvas and the same emotional space, without however truly inhabiting it.

Her production is characterized by the frequent recourse to images of young girls or adolescents whom the artist says are her primary source of interest for the opportunity they offer to be modeled and shaped physically and psychologically ("the Marshmallow factor"). The young girls, often portrayed in their unripe femininity, look directly at the viewer with an "inner" gaze. They are dressed-up, posing, unable to hide an embarrassed attempt to seduce and a deep-down unhappiness. "I want to trick the viewer into engaging with the work, seducing stealthily. There is no way to avoid the models' gaze" (Nicky Hoberman).

The representation of the body is distorted: heads are blown to the point of being grotesque, the eyes are bulging, while the bodies shrink to child's size, hands and feet are torn.

Nicky Hoberman creates her works starting directly from a Polaroid snapshot, and proceeds by changing and distorting the subjects being represented, thus merging photo-realism with caricature.

Every detail of her works reveals her love for painting: nothing is imperfect, no detail reveals the lines of the brush strokes. The final result does not show anything childish, but it is rather sophisticated in showing us the narcissistic nature of the girls.

Toffee Treats (1996) is linked to the series *Sweet Nothings* and shows two little girls against a deep green background: one stands with folded arms, the other plays with the hem of her dress, they have an intense and aware look, as adults. They are close, but seem to ignore each other.

The title is misleading, contradictory and playful in comparison with the image it represents: "I used puddings as title and offset the sickly sweet confections of the titles with the blackness of the children's mood, as well as challenging the traditional depiction of little girls as good enough to eat, 'made of sugar and spice and all things nice'" (Nicky Hoberman).

After having studied Modern History at Oxford University, Nicky Hoberman studied painting at first at the Parsons in New York and later at the Chelsea School of Art.

Her works were exhibited at the Hof and Huyser Gallery in Amsterdam (2008), Gow Langsford Gallery in Auckland (2008), Carl Hammer Gallery in Chicago (2003). The Feigen Contemporary Gallery of New York held four solo exhibitions of the artist, in 2004, 2002, 1999 and 1998. She was chosen in 1996 for the "New Contemporaries" exhibition at the Tate of Liverpool. She participated in the group exhibitions "Offspring: Representations of Children in Contemporary Visual Culture" held in Boston at Boston University Art Gallery (2006), "Out of Place" at the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art (2004), "Skin Deep" a Cook Fine Art" of New York (2004). Her works have been exhibited at MOCA in Chicago and Melbourne National Gallery.

Dietmar Lutz

Dietmar Lutz (Düsseldorf, 1968) lives and works in London.

Both Dietmar Lutz's large-size paintings and watercolors are permeated by a strong narrative structure, they are often inhabited by male characters, the protagonists of a story drawing inspiration from cinema, photographs or sketches from travel journals. Lutz's paintings mix images from travels made by the artist with fictitious figures within multiple scenarios, where the suggestion of the story merges with a strong sense of reality and verisimilitude linked to one's personal recollections. The bodies and places depicted in Lutz's paintings are defined by an extremely essential style deriving from wide and fast brush strokes infusing into viewers a feeling of extreme clarity and immediacy in grasping their deep meanings. When looking at Dietmar Lutz's paintings the imagination rushes immediately toward cinema fragments, like the painting *Querelle* (2005) referring to Rainer Werner Fassbinder's film from 1982 with the same title (in its turn the film is a treatment of the novel *Querelle de Brest* written by Jean Genet and published in 1947). Like other works made in recent years, also in the painting *Querelle*, the male body is the focus of the representation, as seen through the image of two figures in the foreground and a sunny and clear blue harbour landscape in the background. Something evoking the yearning sensuality and the romantic melancholy of Fassbinder's film transpires also in Lutz's painting where the artist seems keen to explore the theme of the journey through the *cliché* of characters mingling around a port, and looking for adventure and reveling.

Dietmar Lutz studied at the Fine Arts Academy of Düsseldorf and is one of the founding artists of the group hobbypopMUSEUM, born in 1998. He has recently exhibited at the Center Gallery of Berlin and the Schnaky White Gallery of Düsseldorf. In 2008 he participated in Documenta and in 2005 he presented his exhibition "Querelle" at the Emily Tsingou Gallery of London. In the same year he showed his paintings also in the exhibition "Controfigura" organized by Alberto Peola Gallery in Turin.

He has participated in many group exhibitions as part of the HobbypopMUSEUM group, including events at the Schauspielhaus of Düsseldorf (2013), Max Mueller Bhavanm, Mumbai (2012), Palais de Tokyo in Paris (2008) and the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

His art works are part of the permanent collections of the Los Angeles County Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, the Francois Pinault Foundation for Contemporary Art in Venice, the Cranford Collection in London and the BAT Artventure Collection in Amsterdam.

Margherita Manzelli

Margherita Manzelli (Ravenna, 1968) lives and works in Ravenna.

Margherita Manzelli's works portray almost exclusively female figures; young women are the sole protagonists of the scene and "recite" an intense monologue between the backdrop and the viewer's space. The background is completely detached, brought out in high relief and evolving in an increasingly synthetic fashion, at times emphasizing but also competing with the figures.

The artist does not use models nor photographs; painting, which is the simplest, the most instinctive tool for the artist captures the precise images in her heads, bringing the invisible inside what is real in the painting. Painting, in its layering and fading away, its decomposing and recomposing, becomes the only reality in which the images on the canvas and the immaterial images come to brush against each other, in their overlapping. The images inhabiting her paintings are human female archetypes, increasingly archaic figures, formally made more contemporary with often forced gestures and postures, whose purpose consists in bringing the figures back to the role of concise shapes in space, subjected to the rules of formal values. The focal point of her artistic interest are faces which seem to always focus on a detail, an expression, at times imperceptible, of the artist's face: "Existential statement, specific moments of a long and constant introspective path" (Margherita Manzelli).

The blending of reality, memory and personal projection makes these figures take up a "non identity" or a multiple identity. It is precisely all this uncertainty which makes them so perturbing but also so enigmatically attractive for their magnetic eyes. An example of that is *Mr. Grigio* (2003), where the artist painted a fully naked girl emerging from the dark, an unnatural light cast on her face and breast, highlighting the background composed of an inlay of fish and birds "à la Escher". The malevolent face is looking with hypnotic eyes lost in an empty alluring exercise. It shows itself fully to the viewer in its solitude, its strength hidden by insecurity.

Margherita Manzelli graduated in sculpture at the Fine Arts Academy of Ravenna, and started her career with small group and solo exhibitions, approaching at first installation and performance to later move to her favorite artistic medium, painting. After a period spent in Milan, London and New York, the artist decided to go back to her home town where she now lives and works. Recently she has exhibited at the galleries Greengrassi in London (2013), Kimmerich in New York (2011), Studio Guenzani in Milan (2005). In 2004 a series of important exhibitions were dedicated to the artist at Castello di Rivoli, the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, the Art Institute of Chicago and in 2003 at the MAXXI in Rome. In 2002 she represented Italy in the 25th Sao Paulo Biennial in Brazil, in 1999 she was one of the 56 painters invited to the exhibition "Examining Pictures" at the MoCA of Los Angeles and also participated in the Sixth Istanbul Biennial.

McDermott & McGough

David McDermott (Hollywood, 1952) and Peter McGough (Syracuse, New York, 1958) live and work in Dublin and New York.

David McDermott and Peter McGough are two artists who have been working together since the beginning of their career; they create works together by producing paintings and photographs in an openly *rétro* style on multiple subjects such as religion, sexuality, AIDS, medicine, bigotry and hypocrisy in society.

McDermott and McGough have chosen to plunge themselves fully into both art and everyday life in Victorian time or some time later (around the 1930's) with a rejection of the present time.

"We were experimenting in time, trying to build an environment and a fantasy we could live and work in": they wear costumes of the time and live in houses without electricity or heating systems. "I've seen the future and I'm not going" (David McDermott).

This obsession for the past has led them to indicate in their paintings – as for example in the work on exhibit – imaginary dates linked to the historical time where they have chosen to live and work. For the two artists the historical contrivance and the skillful reconstruction of the past have also become elements which are essential for analyzing strong contemporary and present political and social issues with freedom, irony and provocation.

Their art draws inspiration from *art déco* illustrations and drawings or prints from Victorian time and mixes a multifaceted repertory of images also taken from advertisement, comics, films from the 1950's and 60's, especially in their more recent production, with an approach closely recalling *Appropriation Art*. From a technical viewpoint, they use, for example in photography, alternative and obsolete procedures, such as blueprinting or carbon printing.

The Night Light (1987), describes an urban landscape at night, in an imaginary post-Victorian town, where the first automobiles drive through a tree-lined avenue. This landscape is dominated by a "surreal" effect created by a hanging light bulb inside the room of a flat with an unmade bed. In the middle of the bedroom hangs an eye-shaped lamp reflecting its light beam onto another side of the city, an alleyway with a brick wall, against which two *dandies* are caught in the act of consummating their object of desire (the color of their garments is the same as that of the two bathrobes or housecoats hanging on the wall of the bedroom). This complex composition, which is developed on two pictorial planes, stages on the one hand the collective morality, and on the other hand the individual transgression, thus subverting principles and notions linked to morals.

David McDermott and Peter McGough studied at the University of Syracuse in the Seventies, but met each other only in 1980 when both moved to New York.

McDermott and McGough's work was recently displayed at the Vito Schnabel Gallery (June 2014), the Cheim & Read Gallery of New York (2013), Galerie Andrea Caratasch in Zürich (2013), Galerie Jérôme de Noirmont in Paris (2012), the Manezh Central Exhibition Hall in Moscow (2011) and Kunsthalle in Vienna (2011). Previously important exhibitions were held at Pat Hearn Gallery, Massimo Audiello Gallery, Gian Enzo Sperone Gallery, Sperone Westwater in New York, Galerie Bruno Bischofberger in Basel, at Frankfurter Kunstverein, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Centre Pompidou and the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin. Their participation in the Whitney Biennial three times, in 1987, 1991 and 1995 was also relevant, as well as the retrospective dedicated to the two artists held at the Provinciale Museum voor Moderne Kunst of Oostende.

Luigi Ontani

Luigi Ontani (Vergato, 1943) lives and works in Rome, Vergato and the East.

Ontani's figurative language incorporates historical influences and inspirations from art history, fairy tales and folklore, classic and eastern myths, rituals and symbols combined with his personal imagination, generating an "eccentric" and extremely personal universe, a full-fledged, constantly flowing "creation myth". His cultural eclecticism is combined with the use of media and techniques contaminating each other; he creates an intersection of links between the rational and the intuitive, male and female, native and exotic, ornamental and fundamental, in an uninhibited "cut and paste" anticipating and interpreting the shattering of the global notion of contemporaneity by using sculpture, painting, photography, performance, *tableaux vivants*, videos.

The founding core of his poetry is the idea of transformation that encompasses the self in the artistic field and expands over every possible area of imagination. The artist represents and presents himself in different poses and garbs, transposing the close order of the traditional portrait into an open order made of contamination, allusion, intermingling of styles and coexistence of language modules quite distant from each others.

His work is characterized by a constant vocation for traveling: he has chosen the East as a perfect and absolute destination of his personal aesthetic journey, taking place within a luxuriant collective imagery, through photography. An example of this is *Geografia (Hanumane)*, a photograph from 1979 depicting the artist seated cross-legged in a typical yoga posture, when practicing a pranayama exercise, by holding his breath through deep concentration: everything – posture, clothes, accessories – evokes Indian culture. The title of the work reveals his disguise: Hanuman is a Hindu mythological figure, half-man half-monkey, the symbol of wisdom, devotion and faith. The photograph enables the artist to be projected out of himself although keeping his features, his goal consists in generating the in-between territory where it is possible to lead a double life: "In my works I am constantly involved in a journey of identity with a sort of mirage where I use the appearances of my face, my feature, as the image of other identities" (Luigi Ontani).

Luigi Ontani was born in a small village on the Apennines between Tuscany and Emilia Regions. He made his first solo exhibition in 1967 at the San Petronio Gallery in Bologna; he moved to Rome in 1970, where he exhibited at L'Attico Gallery and started to work at his first *tableaux vivants*. He has traveled extensively in India, Mexico and Japan.

He participated in several editions of the Venice Biennale (in 1972, 1978, 1984, 1986, 1995 and 2003). His more recent exhibitions include events at Galleria Mazzoli arte contemporanea of Modena (2013), Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (2011), Centro Arti Visive Pescheria of Pesaro (2011), Museo di Capodimonte in Naples (2009), at MAMbo in Bologna (2008) and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center of New York (2001). He participated in the exhibitions "Anni '70. Arte a Roma" at Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome (2013), "Corpi in azione / Corpi in visione" at Museo Pecci of Milan (2013), "Points of View: 20 Years of Artists-in-Residence at the Gardner" at Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum of Boston (2012) and "Surreal versus Surrealism" in Contemporary Art at the IVAM of Valencia (2011).

Vettor Pisani

Vettor Pisani (Naples, 1934 - Rome, 2011)

In his work, Vettor Pisani, architect, painter and playwright has combined conceptual exploration with irony, plays on words with role playing, disguise with the search for truth, the sacred with the profane, the art of the past with today's provocations.

All of Vettor Pisani's works eliminate the boundaries between art, literature, theatre, music, architecture, philosophy and science, and depict the artist not as a single and unique subject; suffice to see his constitutive reference to symbolic figures like Marcel Duchamp, Yves Klein, Joseph Beuys and the articulated cooperation with Michelangelo Pistoletto.

His activity, rich in references to the tradition of art history and culture, is characterized by themes recalling esoterism, alchemical rituals, symbols of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, by practicing a form of comic-educational theatre. Pisani took up elements derived from other artists and art history by reinventing them: though quotations he did not analyze the world but its language. Formally his research developed through installations and performances as actions impacting on real space and time.

In the early Seventies he focused on scenic art, by preparing stage designs where it is evident that the theatre is for the artist an initiatory place and a metaphor, with symbolic and mythological references. At the Venice Biennale in 1976 he presented the work *Theatrum*, the forerunner of a research that would continue throughout his entire artistic career.

The famous *Scorrevole* (exhibited in "Documenta 5", Kassel in 1972) presents Maria Pioppi imitating the posture of Meret Oppenheim in a famous photograph by Man Ray: the series presents the woman at several points along the cable in the same position, with imperceptible changes of expression along the course of her performing progression, within the space-time perimeter created by the artist. The assembly of the work was designed by Vettor Pisani.

The work on exhibit is a photograph mounted between two plexiglass plates, probably the sixth of the series of takes made in the studio of Elisabetta Catalano.

Beside the Venice Biennale of 1972, Vettor Pisani participated in the Biennials of 1976, 1978, 1984, 1986, 1990, 1993 and 1995, the Rome Quadriennale of 1973, 1986 and 1992 and Documenta V in 1972. He exhibited in very important shows, including "Il Bello e le bestie - Metamorfosi, artifici e ibridi dal mito all'immaginario scientifico" at the MART of Rovereto (2005), "Minimalia. Da Giacomo Balla a ..." (1997 - 2000, Venice, Palazzo Querini Dubois; Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni; New York, P.S.1, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, "Pittura italiana da Collezioni Italiane" at Castello di Rivoli (1997). In 1982 the Museum Folkwang of Essen dedicated an anthological exhibition to the artist, followed by other shows organized in 1990 in Valencia and at Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea of Trent in 1992.

He participated in some of the most important exhibitions of the Seventies: "Settimana internazionale della performance" at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Bologna (1977), "Contemporanea" (1973-1974) in the parking lot of Villa Borghese, "Vitalità del negativo nell'arte italiana 1960-70" (1970) at Palazzo delle Esposizioni and "Maschile, Femminile e Androgino - Incesto e Cannibalismo in Marcel Duchamp" at the la Salita Gallery in Rome (1970).

Mario Schifano

Mario Schifano (Homs, Libya, 1934 - Rome, 1998)

Schifano's story is the story of a long journey exploring the boundaries between Ego and Es, between the purity of childhood inspiration and the anxiety of living.

Eclectic artist, he learned to paint by himself, making his debut in 1959 with works showing a strong informal matrix. Starting in 1960 Schifano shifted to color with his *Monocromi*. His interest was no longer focused on matter, but rather on the space described in the painting, where signs, writings, numbers and letters stand out. Later on, the word became sign. The Sixties were characterized by the subject of the screen, more explicit references to American pop Art, with signs taken from the urban landscape, fragments of advertisement messages turning into fragments of everyone's memory, more than an exploration of the relationship between objects and consumer society. After a study on landscape which did not become realistic in his works, but rather filtered by memory, Schifano took up again the world of childhood and the interest for photography, film, movement, and therefore for artists like Duchamp, Man Ray, Piacchia and mostly Futurism. In fact in *Futurismo rivisitato a colori* we find again the most important Italian avant-garde, images found in the memory, dream-like apparitions, represented through a metalinguistic operation.

In the mid-Sixties Schifano developed the "yearning to escape", where on the one hand he took up again the advertisement motif of the stars in Baci Perugia, and on the other hand the myth of the journey, of the East and escape from reality. In the Seventies the encounter with media (especially television with images brought back onto the emulsified canvas), and the trip to the United States, where he wanted to make a movie, never shot, were crucial events for the artist. From 1979 to 1980 he rediscovered painting, with colors becoming even more brilliant, denser and full of matter: new themes were developed, sea landscapes, houses, burned-down building spaces. Schifano looked at German neo-Expressionism, at Baselitz, Penck, Polke, Kiefer, the Transavanguardia of Cucchi, Chia, Clemente, Paladino, De Maria, and at the urgent feeling of time and journey leading him to the origin. He was exploring time but his path ended in 1995 with a work depicting a telephone and a few TV screens, again a reflection on space and communication.

With *Futurismo rivisitato a colori* (1967-1970) Schifano established an aware, explicit and ironic dialogue with the artists of Futurism, quite understandably due to his interest for technology and urban landscape. The starting point of the work is the photograph taken in Paris in 1912, portraying the protagonists of Futurist avant-garde, Marinetti, Russolo, Carrà, Boccioni and Severini, and in particular their *silhouettes*: their faces have disappeared, only their coats, bowler hats and a cane are left. In the photograph all details are removed, along with the original backdrop, with just the cut-out of the five figures remaining, and defined with air-brushed colors, isolated from any context, with the writing "Futurismo rivisitato a colori". His intention was to represent Bergson's movement, time and duration, which belonged to the Futurists, as well as opening a dialogue with Etienne Jules Marey's photography, and the artist's representation of his roots (those of the only avant-garde reaching an international success).

The artistic debut of Mario Schifano was the exhibition "Cinque pittori romani: Angeli, Festa, Lo Savio, Schifano, Uncini" held at La Salita Gallery in Rome in 1960 and curated by Pierre Restany. His success was later linked to gallerists Ileana Sonnabend and Giorgio Marconi, and to the artist's participation in international exhibitions like the Venice Biennale (he participated in 1964, 1978, 1984, 1993), the São Paulo Biennial in Brazil (1965) and the 10th Quadriennale of Rome (1973).

During the Seventies he had solo exhibitions in Rome, Naples and Parma, where his first retrospective was organized at Palazzo della Pilotta.

In 1981 his works were exhibited in the show "Identité italienne" at Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and in 1989 he was one of the protagonists of the show "Italian Art in the 20th century", organized by the Royal Academy of London. His exhibition organized for the reopening of Palazzo delle Esposizioni in 1990 was also of great import.

In 1994 he participated in the exhibition "The Italian Metamorphosis" held by the Guggenheim Museum of New York.

Some of his works have been recently presented in the exhibition "C'era una volta Roma. Gli anni Sessanta intorno a Piazza del Popolo" at Fondazione Malvina Menegaz in Castelbasso (July - August 2014).

Ena Swansea

Ena Swansea (Charlotte, North Carolina, 1966) lives and works in New York.

Since the Nineties, Ena Swansea's paintings have been characterized by a peculiar painting technique consisting in applying a layer of graphite on the canvas on which a color with metallic tones is then applied. The preparation with graphite is the first step of a historical narrative, in which the physical qualities of the material rise to the symbolic sphere. The chiaroscuro effects, the dark, oily and shiny surface charge the images of her paintings, where the night seems to replace the day, with mystery, depth and at the same time intimacy. The thin and thready stripes of Swansea's brushstrokes define flowing images tending to fade by taking up an evanescent quality leading the viewers toward the shadowy space of their subconscious.

"When I look through images of the last hundred or so paintings I've made, there's an almost subconscious drive to answer paintings from the past" (Ena Swansea). The painting from the past is an essential reference in Swansea's artistic production; her art, in fact, is characterized by a blending of situations from everyday life, contemporaneity and images inspired by art history, as shown in the painting *Exhibitionist* (2004), whose iconographic reference should be traced back to Diego Velázquez's painting, *Jesus in the house of Martha and Mary* (ca. 1618), in the National Gallery of London. As in Velázquez's painting, in Swansea's as well, the subject of the scene is focused on the action of *looking*. Swansea's painting, which in reality is drawn from a photograph taken by the artist of two friends during dinner, represents a man and a woman sitting around a table laid out with plates, glasses and bottles. Both keep their heads turned to the left and are shown as they look at a character, out of the picture, invisible to the viewer, possibly a person with exhibitionist behaviours, as hinted by the title of the painting.

The painter, looking at art history projected in today's world, creates subjects which are eternal and at the same time contemporary, veined with melancholy, made by the skilful use of the light, the chiaroscuro contrast and the different shades of gray on the canvas.

Ena Swansea grew in North Carolina and studied at the Film School - University of South Carolina. Today she is an artist of international renown.

Recently her works have been exhibited at the Friedman Benda Gallery in New York (2014), Locks Gallery in Philadelphia and in 2012 in Seoul in the 313 Art Project space. In 2011 the show organized by Deichtorhallen/Sammlung Falckenberg in Hamburg raised a lot of interest; it consisted in more than 40 works from European collections, while the show dedicated to the artist by Musée d'Arte Moderne Grand-Dic Jean, Luxembourg in 2008 marked the international success of the artist.

The most significant exhibitions of the artist also include "The Triumph of Painting" at the Saatchi Gallery in London in 2006 and "Greater New York", at the P.S.1 MoMa of New York in 2005.

Cesare Tacchi

Cesare Tacchi (Rome, 1940 - 2014)

Cesare Tacchi's images have the physical thickness of objects and things: his paintings open up and speak out in a space which is no longer circumscribed by the painting, but also encompasses the real space of the viewer. This is made possible by his technical prowess and the use of materials like the upholstery of arm chairs and couches: padding, protrusions and recesses of fabrics push figures out of the traditional boundaries of the painting, by involving the viewer in the scene depicted in the painting, which is turned into an everyday life experience. The artist started creating "padded paintings" in 1965. Thanks to these works he became one of the protagonists of the fertile artistic season in Rome during the Sixties. He belonged to the group of artists meeting at Caffè Rosati in Piazza del Popolo or the Tartaruga Gallery run by Plinio de Martiis, together with Mario Schifano, Renato Mambor, Franco Angeli, Tano Festa, Giosetta Fioroni, Sergio Lombardo, Jannis Kounellis. The attention of these artists was focused in particular to images conveyed by mass-media, as underlined by Tacchi: "There was the new urban landscape, the signs, mostly those from advertisement, to look at. We were immersed in a fast-changing society". Such attitude, being developed at the same time as American *Pop Art*, was different from the latter in the retrieving by Italian artists of features and motifs pertaining to Italian art within the framework of new social changes. An example is given by the work *La Primavera allegra* made by Tacchi in 1965, ironically recalling the famous painting by Botticelli. "The fundamental difference was in the tradition and culture each one of us carried inside" (Cesare Tacchi). On the canvasses with padded fabrics, the artist outlined figures, *silhouettes* traced with enamel or black ink, by portraying characters taken from magazines and advertisement, or famous actors or friends, as in the work *Coppia felice* (1966), where the faces of artist Renato Mambor and actress Paola Pitagora may be recognized. The image is outlined in two parts: the upper part is red, the lower is covered with flowered fabric, in a sort of diptych, where even the symbolic references, the red colour and the flowers, stress the intimate and idyllic moment between the two characters. The two separate parts of the painting are joined together in the love scene and the figures are defined not only through the line and the colours, but also through the material support, in a blending between background and figure.

Cesare Tacchi was born in Rome in 1940. The artist made his debut at just 19, at the gallery Appia Antica of Rome, together with Mario Schifano and Renato Mambor, later with a solo exhibition at La Tartaruga Gallery in Rome in 1965 and in 1966 at the Apollinaire Gallery in Milan. In the Seventies the artist held a series of important exhibitions in several important institutions and events, such as Palazzo delle Esposizioni, the Rome Quadriennale, the Modern Art Gallery of Bologna; later he participated in different editions of the Venice Biennale. In the Eighties and Nineties, he held important solo exhibitions in the galleries La Salita and Planita in Rome. One of the last occasions to see his works exhibited before his death, on March 15th 2014, was the exhibition "Anni 70. Arte a Roma" at Palazzo delle Esposizioni. One work by Cesare Tacchi from Collezione Maramotti has been recently loaned for the exhibition "C'era una volta Roma. Gli anni Sessanta intorno a Piazza del Popolo" at the Malvina Menegaz Foundation in Castelbasso.