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**ANGELICA LIBRARY - THE GALLERY**

Piazza Sant’Agostino, 8 - Rome

**ERCOLE MONTI**

**OPERE RECENTI/RECENT WORKS**

*curated by Elena Cardenas Malagodi*

**6 - 30 June 2014**

grand opening on Thursday, 5 June at 6.30pm

*Press release 27.05.2014*

The solo exhibition “Ercole Monti. Opere recenti/Ercole Monti. Recent works”, which retraces the artist's work during the last ten years and is curated by Elena Cardenas Malagodi, is held at the Angelica Library – The Gallery of Rome from 6 to 30 June.

After Milan, Venice, Paris, London and New York, Ercole Monti eventually exhibits in his hometown, Rome.

The oils on canvas, among which there are **several never seen before pieces**, reaffirm the themes and the expressive language - in-between naturalism and abstract art - pursued by Ercole Monti during his long artistic career.

The inspirations that the artist receives from objects, people and environments during his everyday life are portrayed in his works through a translation of the senses where the artistic expression doesn't completely go beyond reality.

Starting from elements in the landscape, nature and everyday life such as seascapes, wheat fields, sand and fields, the artist translates the subjects into transfigured visions, in forms and colours which enhance the emotional aspect of nature and everyday life.

In the painting what comes out of it is an extraordinary state of balance between recollection and creativity.

*“In Monti the forms never come from an instant and free gesture like in action painting, but they obey to more deliberate rules of composition, such as in that of 'astratto concreta/ abstract concrete'”,* as per Fabrizio Crisafulli's words*.*

The soft and transparent paint, spread over large canvases with wide monochromatic areas of colour in greens, reds, yellows, whites, blacks and blues, expresses the idea of synthesis, which identifies the artist, as well as the strong sensitivity and intensity of feeling. Colour becomes the distinguished element that rules forms as Lea Mattarella states in the critical text especially written for the exhibition: *“…the magic of colour which builds, weaves, provides rhythm and breath, marks, divides, combines, embraces, caresses, sometimes rests and other times explodes*”.

What emerges from his works is a strong harmony, which also lingers in the use of dark shades of colour as implied in *Mare nero/Black sea* (2010), where a golden line is enough to brighten the whole work or in *Cielo Grigio/Gray Sky* (2013), which is crossed by a chromatic element of pink.

Also present among the works on display is a small group of pieces from the '90s such as *Grano e grano/Wheat and wheat* and *Terra bruna/Dusky land*, two unquestionable examples of the warmth given by a layer of warm and enveloping shades of browns, ochres and yellows.

The essence of colour and the element of light, constantly present, help to express the feeling of complete freedom which Ercole Monti means to give.

Accompanying the exhibition is a catalogue curated by Elena Cardenas Malagodi with critical text by Lea Mattarella.

**Biographical info**

Ercole Monti was born in Rome on 5 November 1927. When he was 14, being fascinated by the great paintings by Velasquez and Rembrandt, he began painting by making portraits of family members and friends. After arts high school, where he was in contact with the 'Roman school', he joined the faculty of Architecture, where he kept painting assiduously.

In 1948-49 during his first visits to Paris he met the great James Ensor. Still in 1948 he took part in the Quadriennale Romana and in a group exhibition at Palazzo Venezia, and in 1951 in the Roma Prize at Palazzo Barberini. He won 1st prize for artistic skills.

The contact with architecture was a source of inspiration in symbiosis with what interested him in painting: the organic architecture of A. Aalto, R. Pietila and especially F. L. Wright, as well as the formal freedom of Burri, Dubuffet, Tapies etc.

He worked in Paris for three years as an architect, getting in contact with French culture.

During the late '70s he developed the large canvases: shores, interiors and then seas and lands which define more and more the evolution of his free artistic painting journey.

In 1991 he met Elena Cardenas Malagodi who became passionate about his art and gave him the belief that he must finally exhibit his work.

There came the big exhibitions in Milan, Venice, London, Paris and New York. Through Elena he met Jean Leymarie, Henry Cartier Bresson, Josè Pierre etc., with whom he became friends.

He worked in Rome, Venice and Ortisei, which became evocative places of the objects for his canvases, imaginative re-creations of a vision that goes through the retina, with the belief that progress in painting consists of a slow stratifying of what is old and what is new.

**Details**

**Title**:Ercole Monti. Opere recenti/Ercole Monti. Recent Works

**Venue**:Angelica Library - The Gallery

Piazza Sant’Agostino, 8 - Rome

**Dates**:6 - 30 June 2014

**Grand opening**:Thursday, 5 June at 6.30pm

**Opening hours**: Monday and Friday 8am-4.42pm | Tue, Wed, Thurs 8am-7.15pm

Saturday 8am-2pm | Closed Sunday

**Entrance fee**: free admission

**Info**

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