**PALAZZO REALE**

Milan, Italy

**PERCORSI RECENTI / RECENT PATHS**

*Una Città per I´Arte* / A City for Art

**from 17 June to 17 September 1997**

**SANDRO CHIA**

**Palazzo Reale, Arengario, entrance from staircase in Piazzetta Reale**

*Press Release 04.03.2010*

In the illustrious rooms of Palazzo Reale the Council of Milan - Culture and Performing Arts department in cooperation with the Mudima and the Antonio Mazzotta Foundations - presents 95 recent works by Sandro Chia created in 1996 and 1997, including works on paper, oil canvas and sculptures.

Among the most famous artist on the international scene Sandro Chia is one of the main characters of the Transavanguardia, the artistic movement born in Italy in the late '70s organized and theorized by Achille Bonito Oliva. During these years there is a return to the narrative art painting, which is linked to the tradition of the Italian 20th Century. The experience of reality induces the artists to turn their attention mainly to nature and man's stories, giving new importance to manual skills and overturns the idea of a progress of art meant only towards conceptual abstraction. Sandro Chia works in a wide range of styles thanks to his great technical skills, highlighting an idea of art which contains its own explanation. The reasons lie in the pleasure of creating a painting, at last freed from the tyranny of novelty and, on the contrary, entrusted to the capabilities of using the most different "ways" to get to the image.

The references present in the path of this artist are several: from Chagall to Picasso, from Cézanne to De Chirico, from the futurist Carrà to the metaphysical 20th Century Carrà. The recovery of figurative arts in 1975, following its conceptual and abstract introduction, has allowed Chia to give new life to his own images in a heroic and fairy-tale atmosphere, but at the same time disenchanted. Even the limited number of his subjects is meaningful: man and his environment, that is nature and its vital system. Such subjects are enlivened by a palette "always above the lines", using in turn warm and cold colours. The references to the fauves/*wild beasts* or to the Italians of the early 20th Century are not quotations and merge in a style which is strongly Italian.

It is necessary to underline how the artists of the Transavanguardia take on a double reference to the high tradition of European art styles and to the current production of images, servant of the mass society. So Sandro Chia is able to "seduce" the popular imagination of our society, arousing a look of wonder and causing that moment of bewilderment which keeps alive the attention of an otherwise distracted audience.

As Bonito Oliva says: "Chia's work raises the issue of his own destination, underlines the belonging to his own time", keeping his unique features, even after he moved to New York. Convinced that the artist preserves the memory only of real things, Sandro Chia creates a visionary painting, which interprets and depicts the same dreamy realities that life never stops to put in our path, evoking more and more questions.

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