**Palazzo Reale – Conference Hall**

Milan, Piazza Duomo 14

**book presentation**

**Rossella Gilli**

**Il Potere degli Elementi [The Power of the Elements]**

*edited by Fortunato D’Amico*

**Skira Editore**

**Monday, 6 March 2023, 17:00**

speakers:

**Domenico Piraina**, *director of the Palazzo Reale*

**Fortunato D’Amico**, *independent art curator*

**Rossella Gilli**, *artist*

*press release 06.03.2023*

The Conference Roomin Milan’s **Palazzo Reale** hosts the **presentation of the book** *Rossella Gilli: Il potere degli Elementi* [The Power of the Elements], published by **Skira** and edited by Fortunato D'Amico. This important trilingual monograph includes texts by Fortunato D'Amico, among them an extensive interview focused on the crucial aspects of Rossella Gilli’s work.

The event on **Monday, 6 March at 17:00** features speakers Domenico Piraina, director of Palazzo Reale; Fortunato D'Amico, the book’s editor; and artist Rossella Gilli.

The monograph provides a **complete survey of Rossella Gilli's artistic career** from her debut to the completion of her latest works. It analyses in detail the evolution of her art and her continuous exploration of different techniques and materials. In fact, her multifaceted, symbol-rich work finds expression on **canvas** and in **sculpture**, **engravings** and **jewellery**.

Constantly influenced by the great master painters, from Caravaggio, Leonardo and Titian to Degas, Turner and Casorati, her inspiration also comes from illustrious sculptors such as Medardo Rosso.

Rossella Gilli’s attention to drawing, to the rendering of volumes and the study of light and colour, emerges in nudes and canvases with architectural or naturalistic subjects; it is also consistently accompanied by a spiritual aspect, often related to the five elements of Chinese philosophy: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. These are the principles through which vital energy is developed, since they all coexist and contain a part of the other four in varying quantities and forms. Consequently, Rossella Gilli's works are referred to as **‘alchemical works’**, because they show how the boundary between concrete reality and abstraction can be extremely tenuous. Her aesthetic approach reveals a continuous reworking and reinterpretation of signs and symbols that generate an outward change connected to the inner dynamics and motions of the soul. This is an alchemical transfer, a passage that occurs independently, without a predetermined process; it requires a special sensitivity and leads to an awareness of the transference of knowledge beyond the impermanence of matter. Everything is subject to relativity, a law applied by artists and alchemists alike as they forge, mould and shape in order to give tangible form to what is present in the abstract and ideal world.

The **eighty images** of Gilli’s work reproduced in the book are arranged according to macro-themes: Nudes and Portraits, Sea, Earth Sand Rock, Architecture, Sculpture, Flowers and Jewellery. Each reveals the fine-tuning of the alchemical process, namely the transformation of real subjects into allegorical representations. This can be seen in the rendering of bodies, which although realistic, constantly reveals information related to aspects of the soul, just as the image of water, when illuminated by a certain kind of light, refers to a dimension beyond itself. The material qualities of elements such as sand, rocks, stones and architecture suggest and give rise to different interpretations; jewellery pieces lead to the discovery of stars and new planets, while sculptures are proponents of the principles of the Hermetic tradition. Among traditional alchemical symbols, the most representative of Rossella Gilli is the flower, often depicted by the artist. Ideally, it conceals the mysteries of life, which are revealed through a careful analysis of its form and perfect geometry.

**Rossella Gilli**, Milanese painter, sculptor and engraver, graduated in art history from the University of Milan and received her PhD from the University of Florence. She based her research on drawing, which led her to open a gallery in Via del Gesù, Milan, that specialised in ancient engravings and drawings and was frequented by various luminaries, among them **Federico Zeri, Dennis Mahon.** Rossella Gilli exhibits in major public and private venues. Her work appeared in the Italian Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale, curated by Vittorio Sgarbi (2011), and in the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale (2014), where she held a solo exhibition at Spazio Thetis alongside Michelangelo Pistoletto. In 2013 she created the 5-metre-high canvas *Guglia della Madonnina* for a column of the Nucleo Presidenziale at the Lombardy Region headquarters in Milan. In 2015 she exhibited at the GAM Galleria d'Arte Moderna – Nervi (Genoa), and in 2021 she took part in the group exhibition *Eternal Feminine, Eternal Change* at the Florence Biennale. Rossella Gilli's works are present in important public and private collections. For many years she has divided her time between Paris, Milan and Marrakech, creating paintings, sculptures and engravings, as well as art objects and jewellery.

www.rossellagilli.com

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**Book profile**

Rossella Gilli. Il Potere degli Elementi

edited by Fortunato D’Amico

**Skira Editore**, 2022

trilingual edition (Italian-English-French)

24 x 30 cm, 176 pages

80 colour and b/n, hardback

ISBN 978-88-572-4910-0

€ 35,00

**Book presentation**

**Title** *Rossella Gilli. Il Potere degli Elementi* - Skira Editore

**Venue** Palazzo Reale – Sala Conferenze, Piazza Duomo 14, Milan

**Date** Monday, 6 March 2023, ore 17:00

**Press office**

**IBC Irma Bianchi Communication**

Tel. +39 02 8940 4694 - mob. + 39 328 5910857 - [info@irmabianchi.it](mailto:info@irmabianchi.it)

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