

# Art of Inclusion



Strategic partnership for the Exchange of good practices – Erasmus+ Programme

Art as a vehicle of learning and sharing of methods and techniques for the creation of learning opportunities for adults with disability

## to the discovery of local artists around Bragança, Bremen, Palermo, Sfântu Gheorghe

The partnership is composed by:  
Associazione Uniamoci Onlus (ITALY),  
Diakonisches Werk Bremen e.V. (GERMANY),  
Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires (PORTUGAL),  
Fundatia Crestina Diakonia Filiala Sfantu Gheorghe (ROMANIA).



# *Art of* **Inclusion**

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## Introduction

How exploring Arts can be not just a learning opportunity but also a vehicle of inclusion? With the first months of local activities foreseen by our strategic partnership “Art of Inclusion”, funded by the European Programme Erasmus+, all the four partners of the project gave their practical answer to this question. Associazione Uniamoci Onlus (Italy), Diakonisches Werk Bremen e.V. (Germany), Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires (Portugal), Fundatia Crestina Diakonia Filiala Sfantu Gheorghe (Romania), partner of the project, are organizations working in the field of social inclusion of people with disabilities, who had some months to work on the creation of descriptions of six local artists’ career and works (some from previous time and some living ones): target group of the activity were groups of learners made of adults (volunteers) and adults with disability. How to actively involve them? Each organization used his own method to reach the result and overcome the differences; here a summary of how the workshop was held.

At first each national group organized some meetings with the group of learners for the selection of the artists to be explored: each learner had the chance to propose some artists, some information about them were collected and presented and the six artists were chosen by voting or by drawing; interesting the choice of the German partner to make an open casting for the selection of the artists from former time on facebook, which gave some public attention to the partnership activities.

After that it was time to collect information and write the texts about the artists: the groups were made of people with very different abilities so tricks were used to make the activities more dynamic and allow the active involvement of all the learners, for example the Portuguese partner proceeded to search for historical details of their region and in particular the rural world so the users made several walks where the physical activity was successfully combined with the search and collection of interesting data of cultural heritage or both the Italian and the German partner visited some art exhibitions; about the living artists it was also possible to meet them and to interview them or to invite them to have a live exhibition, so the research for information were combined with the opportunity to meet the artist, asking questions, enjoying their art in live performances or even working together.

About the process of collection of information and creation of the texts, in Italy the educators or some volunteers or users with a higher cognitive abilities looked for a big text about life and while some small groups of learners were looking for the artists’ work and small description, another group was reading the information underlining the most important ones to be included in the text to be typed on computer; the works to be explored were selected by voting and considering specific criteria and their descriptions were enriched with the considerations by the learners. The final text was read and discussed in the group to share and consolidate the learning outcomes; in this phase, if we were working on a living artist, the group prepared and interview for the artist to be made during a meeting with him. This collaborative and supportive approach allowed to people with physical and or mental and or cognitive disability and able-bodied volunteers to work together giving their active contribution to the workshop. “This experience was rewarding for all, including the technical team, because it was very good to research the artists and their importance in the region behind the mountains in Portugal” - Sergio Afonso, the responsible of the project in Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires.

Wishing you a pleasant journey into our local pieces of art, a deal to think about by Jürgen Stein, the responsible of the project in Diakonisches Werk Bremen e.V.: ”even if we did not look specifically for this point - each of the deceased artists showed in the biography some impairment (early trauma, psychic depression, walking impairment), which was indeed not unimportant for the life and work. This supports our statement that each one, artist or not, is different and in a way impaired.”

Eleonora Di Liberto  
Responsible for the project in Associazione Uniamoci Onlus



## About the Project

Inclusion is an “art” in each society as well for people responsible for social and political developments as well for the individuals who need a certain “art of life” to overcome obstacles.

Our partnership – organizations responsible for day centres and leisure time activities for people with disability based in Germany, Italy, Portugal and Romania - aims at the exchange of best practises among the partner organizations in the field of social inclusion of people with disability, through the creation of a common learning path for their staff, users and volunteers who will explore art as a vehicle for learning and sharing; this path will lead the reflection about the art of inclusion in the participating Countries and in the participant’s life.

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“Art of Inclusion” wants to give a concrete response to the still perceived barriers to mobility (creating real and virtual mobilities for the beneficiaries), to education and leisure (creating an international and inclusive learning process), to the fruition of art and culture, to employment (through a deepening on the possibility of matching art and income); it will also promote the use of easy language and ICT technologies to overcome language and physical barriers. The international cooperation created by this project will lead to identify effective, shared and generalizable operative strategies in the perspective of a European Strategy for social inclusion of people with disability, while empowering its learners, giving voice to their needs and suggestions, and making them aware of their power to produce a change.

The project will have a duration of 3 years (September 2016 - August 2019) and will involve 100 participants (25 adult learners for each partner) among people with disability, volunteers and staff members. They will be involved in some local workshops and activities, and other joint activities and meetings realized during the 4 bended mobilities on the topic of art and/as social inclusion:

- analysis of cultural sites/art objects to be found in the local area and how to encounter them with disabilities;
- deepening on local artists for the creation of reports;
- art workshops with artistic guidance;
- case studies about disability and art of life;
- workshop about the European regulation and politicians and opinion leaders attitude about the art of creating a more and more inclusive society;

- workshop about the possibilities to create an income from artistic and artisanal activities for people with disabilities;
- comparisons about the state of social inclusion in the partner countries.

The implementation of the project will be based on a collaborative approach among the four partners who will share tasks and responsibilities: each partner will host a blended mobility and all the partners will work on common local activities sharing techniques and results through a constant communication using different channels.

The project activities will be based on non formal learning methods: group work, task division, open discussions, learning by doing, group or individual analysis under the guidance of local artists and/or pedagogical specialists. The results of the local activities will be constantly shared inside the partnership. An inclusive approach will be adopted in all the undertaken activities: the use of easy language will be encouraged and the use of technology will be promoted as a mean to overcome the physical barriers.

**Art of Inclusion is a strategic partnership for the exchange of good practises in the field of adult education, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union; it is coordinated by ASSOCIAZIONE UNIAMOCI ONLUS (Italy) with the partnership of CENTRO SOCIAL E PAROQUIAL SANTOS MÁRTIRES (Portugal), DIAKONISCHES WERK BREMEN E.V. (Germany) and FUNDATIA CRESTINA DIAKONIA FILIALA SFANTU GHEORGHE (Romania).**



DR. TRINDADE COELHO

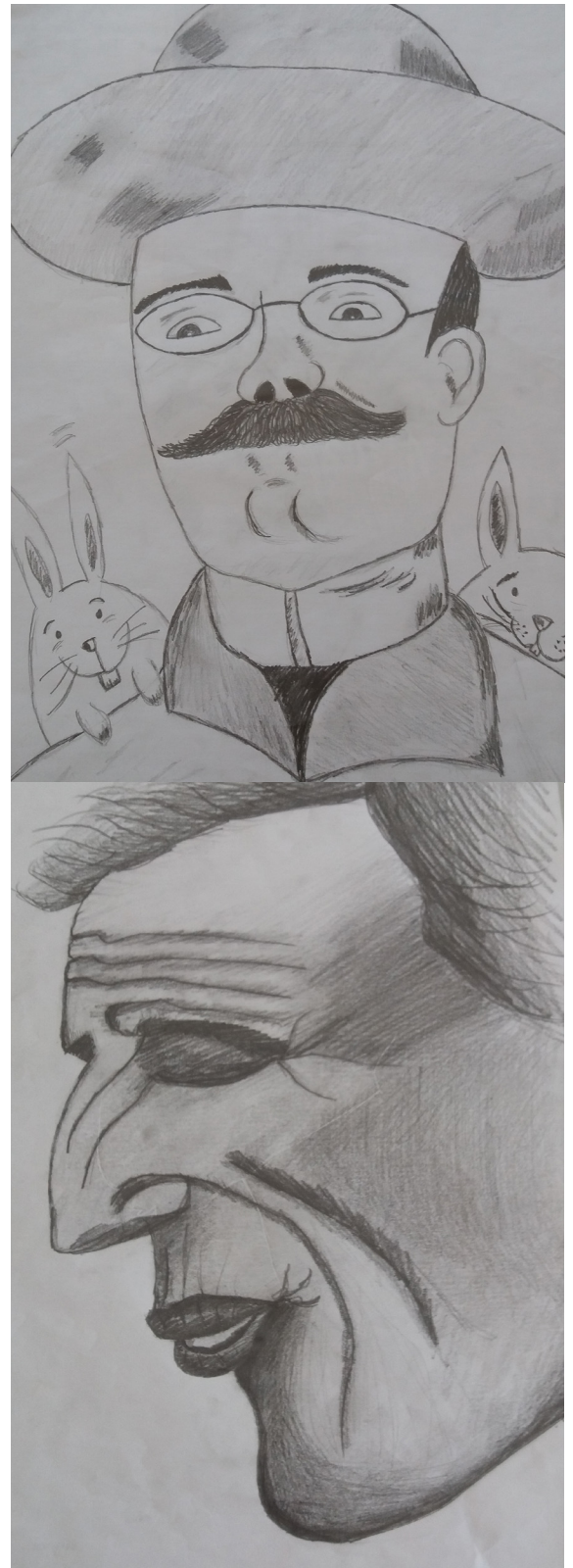
**Trindade Coelho**

## Trindade Coelho

José Francisco Trindade Coelho was a writer of great merit, native to Mogadouro. His work reflects his past childhood in Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, in a traditionalist environment that he faithfully portrays, although without moralizing intentions. His natural style, the simplicity and candor of some of his characters, make Trindade Coelho one of the masters of the Portuguese rustic tale. He dedicated himself to an intense pedagogical activity, in the path of João de Deus, trying to elucidate the Portuguese citizen for democracy. It has a library with its name in Mogadouro.

### IN ILLO TEMPORE PARÓDIA AOS LUSÍADAS

*“Os grandes paspalhões assinalados,  
Que nas reuniões da Academia  
Foram solenemente apezinados  
Por sua telha ou sua fidalguia,  
Que nas guerras das mocas esforçados  
Mais do que a força humana permitia  
No Teatro Académico asnearam  
Tolices de que todos se espantaram;  
(...)  
Ó musa da ironia e da arruaça,  
Que tens excepcionais o gesto e o peito,  
Vira-te para mim e põe-te a jeito  
De inspirar um poema de chalaça;  
Quero um poema esplêndido, perfeito,  
Que vos celebre e que subir vos faça,  
Num pulo só, da glória à mor altura,  
Cavaleiros da mais triste figura!  
Haviam sido há pouco apezinados  
Os meus heróis, que andavam murmurando  
Que na Trindade ou para aqueles lados  
Se estava contra eles conspirando,  
Quando uma noite andando endiabrados  
Pela Feira sobre isto conversando,  
Uma moca que os ares escurece  
Sobre as suas cabeças aparece. (...)”*



Drowings realized by the users of  
Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires  
(PORTUGAL)



**Nadir Afonso**



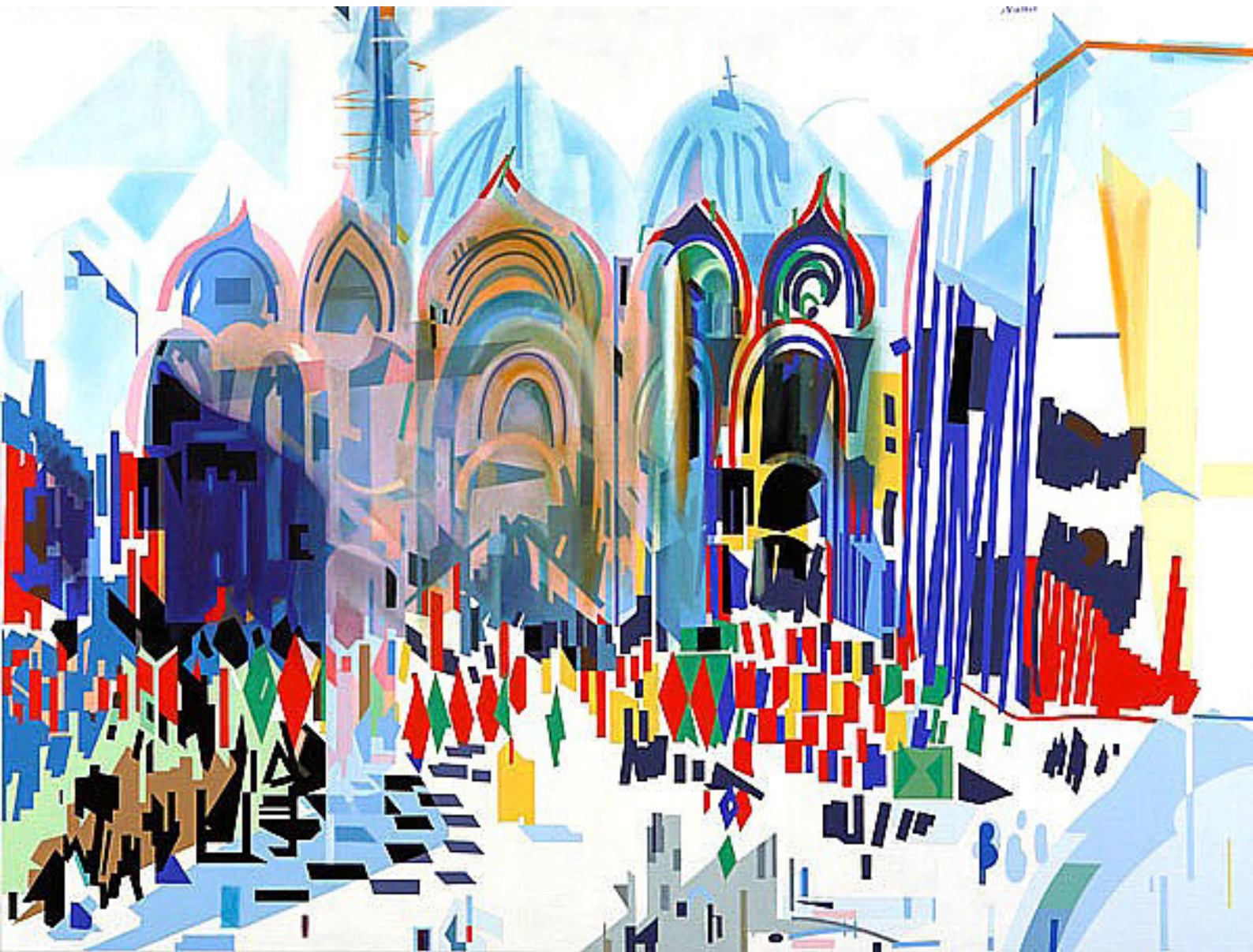
## Nadir Afonso

Nadir Afonso Rodrigues was an architect, painter and Portuguese thinker, native of Chaves, Vila Real district. Graduated in architecture, Nadir Afonso studied painting in Paris and was one of the pioneers of kinetic art. Nadir is the author of an aesthetic theory, having published several books in which he argues that art is purely objective and governed by laws of a mathematical nature, which treat art not as an act of imagination but as observation, perception and manipulation of form. Nadir Afonso has achieved international recognition and is represented in several museums.

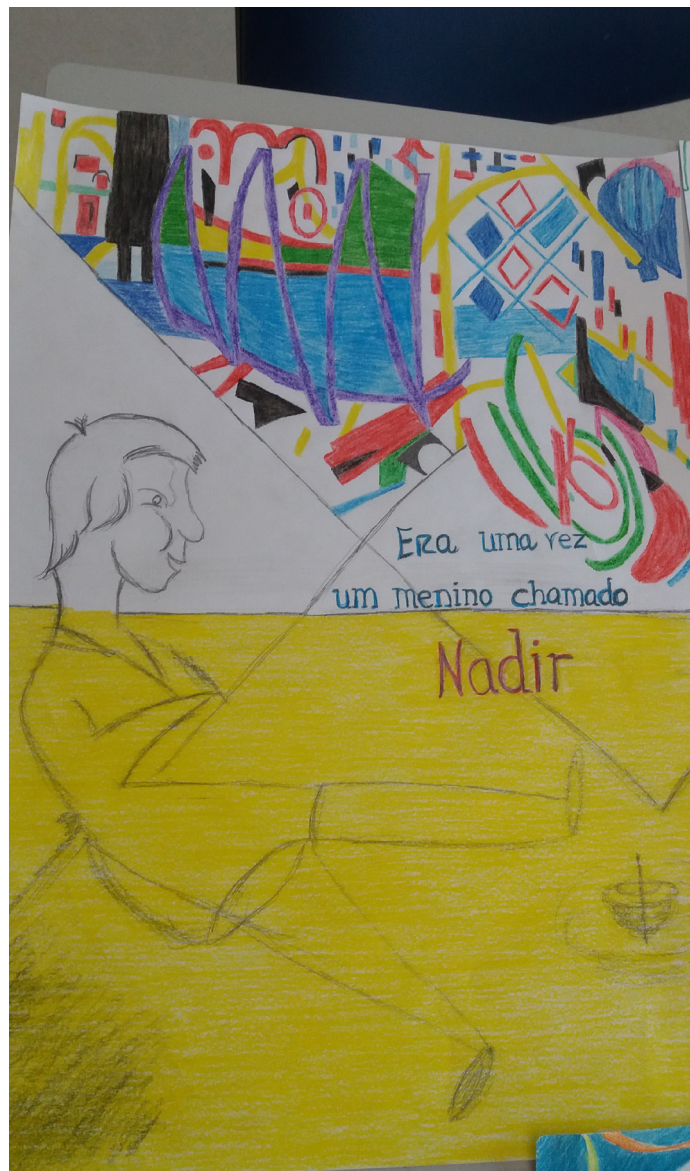
A CIDADE DOS PRÍNCIPES, 1999, acrylic on canvas, cm 96 x 135.

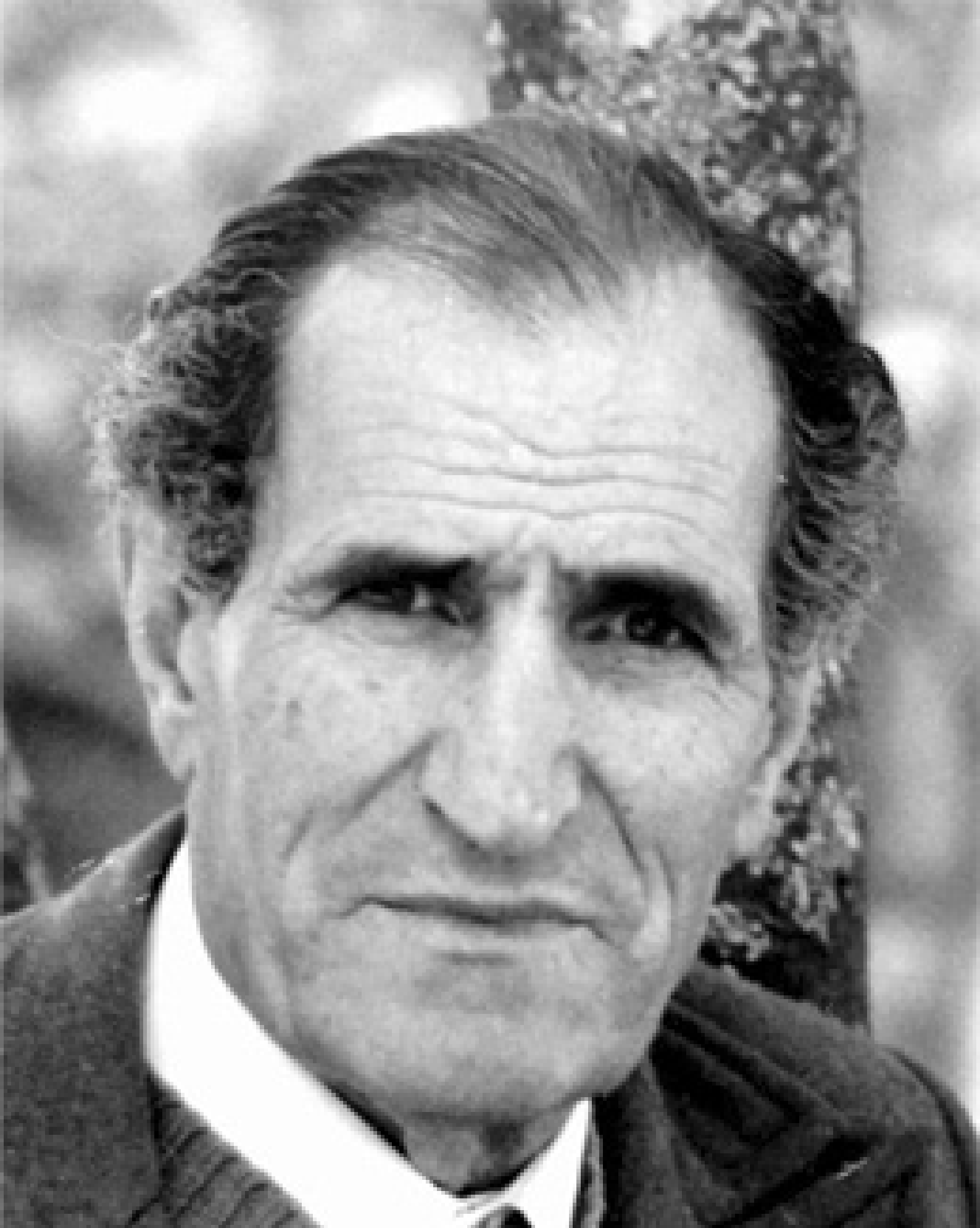


PROCISSÃO EM VENEZA, acrylic on canvas.









**Miguel Torga**



## Miguel Torga

Miguel Torga, Pseudonym of Adolfo Correia da Rocha, was born in Vila Real, São Martinho de Anta and was one of the most influential Portuguese poets and writers of the twentieth century. He excelled as a poet, short story and memoirist, but also wrote novels, plays and essays, leaving more than 50 published works.

Torga's work reflects his rebellion against injustice and his nonconformity in the face of abuses of power. It reflects his village background, medical experience, contact with poor people, and his five years in Brazil (from 13 to 18 years old).

### SEGREDO

*Sei um ninho.*

*E o ninho tem um ovo.*

*E o ovo, redondinho,*

*Tem lá dentro um passarinho*

*Novo.*

*Mas escusam de me atentar:*

*Nem o tiro, nem o ensino.*

*Quero ser um bom menino*

*E guardar*

*Este segredo comigo.*

*E ter depois um amigo*

*Que faça o pino*

*A voar.*



Drowings realized by the users  
of Centro Social e Paroquial  
Santos Mártires (PORTUGAL)







**Paulo Bragança**

## Paulo Bragança

Paulo Bragança is a modern Portuguese singer and fadista, who reached the peak of its popularity in the 1990s. He was born in Luanda in 1967, in the then Portuguese colony of Angola. From a very young age he listened to Fado, a genre admired by his father, who also played the Portuguese guitar as an amateur. When the family moves to Portugal, they will live in Bragança until they move to Lisbon, where they attend the Lisbon Law School. By that time he began to sing in the Bairro Alto, also acting in a night of fados promoted by the Academic Association of Lisbon. This experience leads him to pursue a musical career and Paulo Bragança records his first album in 1991. The appearance of Paulo Bragança shocked the traditionalist spirits of the Fado world. Right from the way of wearing, wearing short-sleeved sweaters or leather jackets and wearing combat boots or singing totally barefoot, which became his main brand image.

### “Que fazes aí, Lisboa?”

*Que fazes aí, Lisboa,  
De olhos fincados no rio?  
Os olhos não se levantam  
Para prender um navio?  
Que fazes aí, Lisboa,  
De olhos fincados no rio?  
O barco que ontem partiu  
Partiu e não volta mais!  
Chora lágrimas de pedra  
Em cada esquina do cais!  
O barco que ontem partiu,  
Partiu e não volta mais!  
Lisboa, velha Lisboa,  
Mãe pobre à beira do rio!  
Seja o xaile dos meus ombros  
Agasalho do teu frio!  
Lisboa, velha Lisboa,  
Mãe pobre à beira do rio* In “O Mistério do Fado”  
– CD álbum



Drowings realized by the users of  
Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires  
(PORTUGAL)



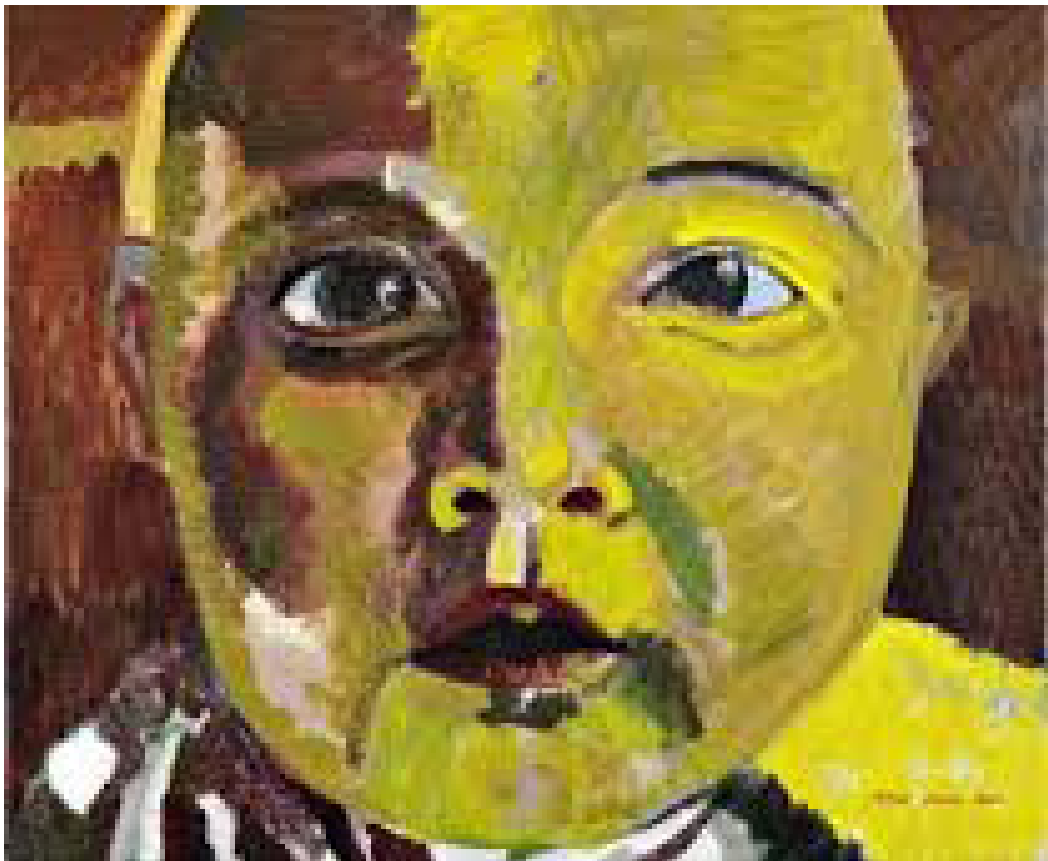
**Graça Morais**



## Graça Morais

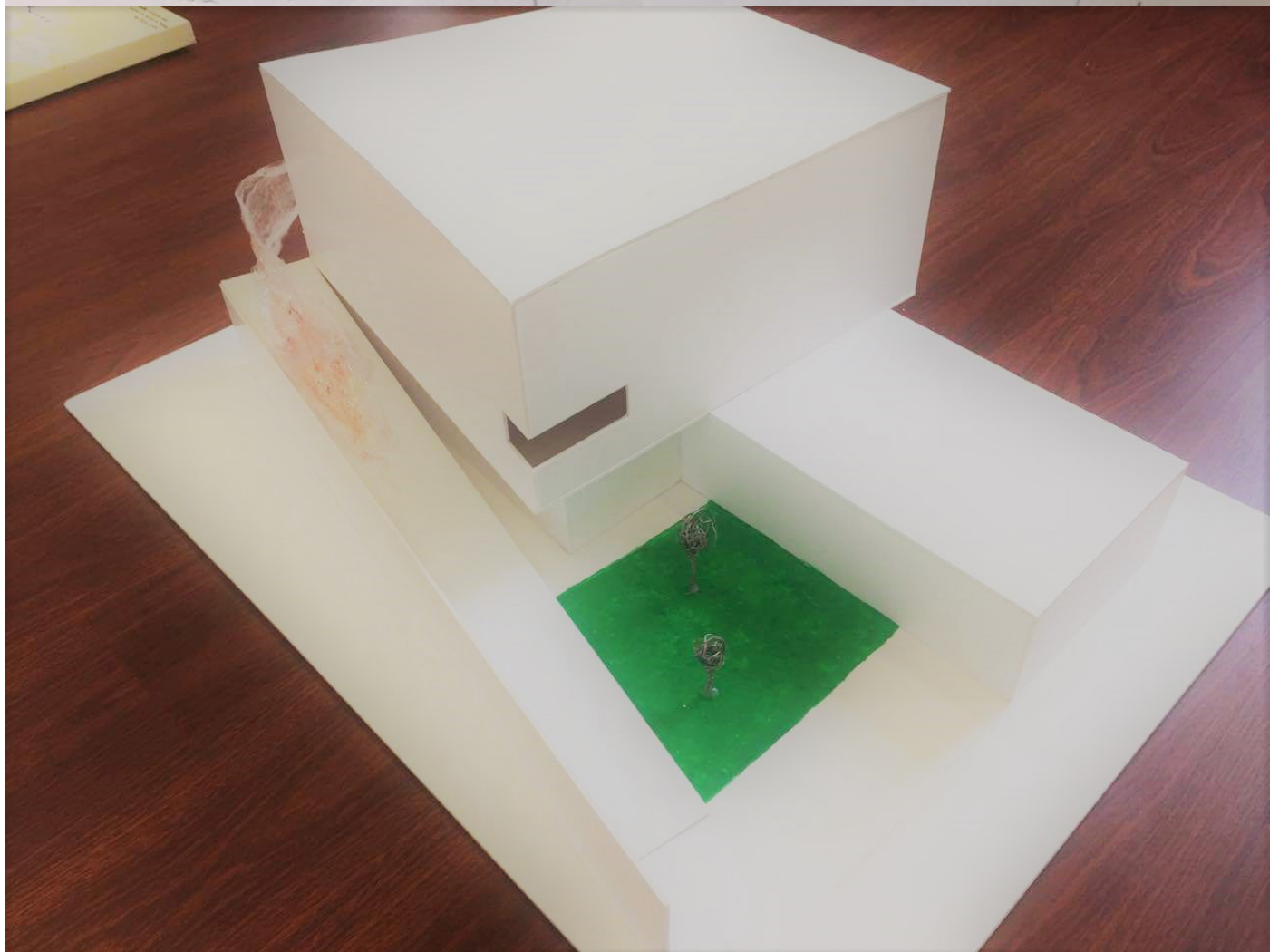
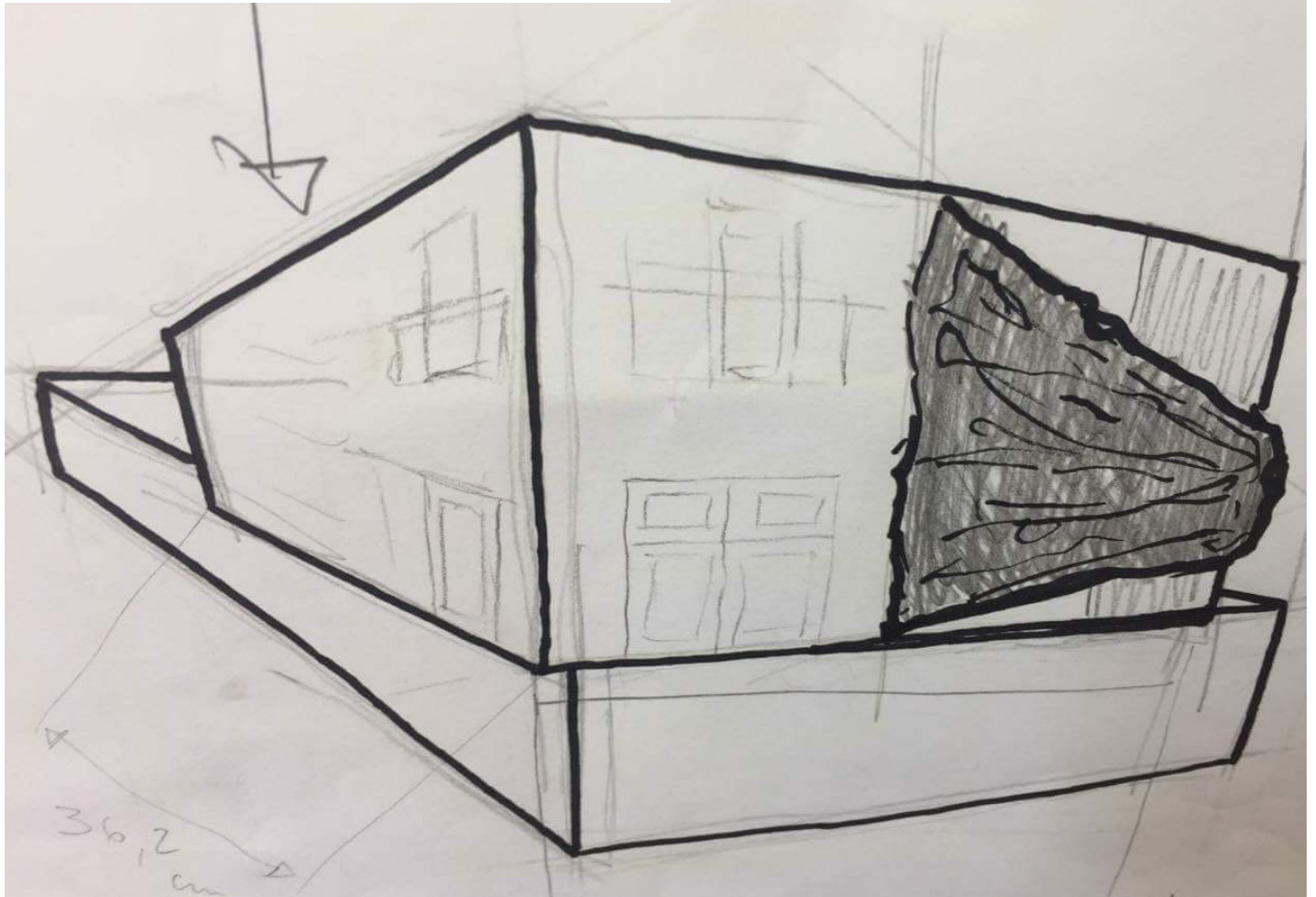
Maria da Graça Pinto de Almeida Morais, born in Vila Flor, Freixiel, Vieiro, is a Portuguese painter, member of the National Academy of Fine Arts and of various associations, confraternities and cultural foundations. He collaborated with several poets and writers such as Manuel Antonio Pina, José Saramago, António Alçada Baptista, Pedro Tamen, Nuno Júdice, Clara Pinto Correia, José Fernandes Fafe, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen and António Osório, illustrating several books and other publications. He produced drawings for tapestries executed by the Portalegre Tapestries Manufactory and tile panels for various public spaces. It is represented in public and private collections, distinguished among others by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, MAM of S. Paulo, Fundação de Serralves, Culturgest -CGD, Banco Espírito Santo, Banco Comercial Português, Ministry of Finance and Assembly of the Republic. In 2008 the Graça Morais Contemporary Art Center was inaugurated in Bragança.

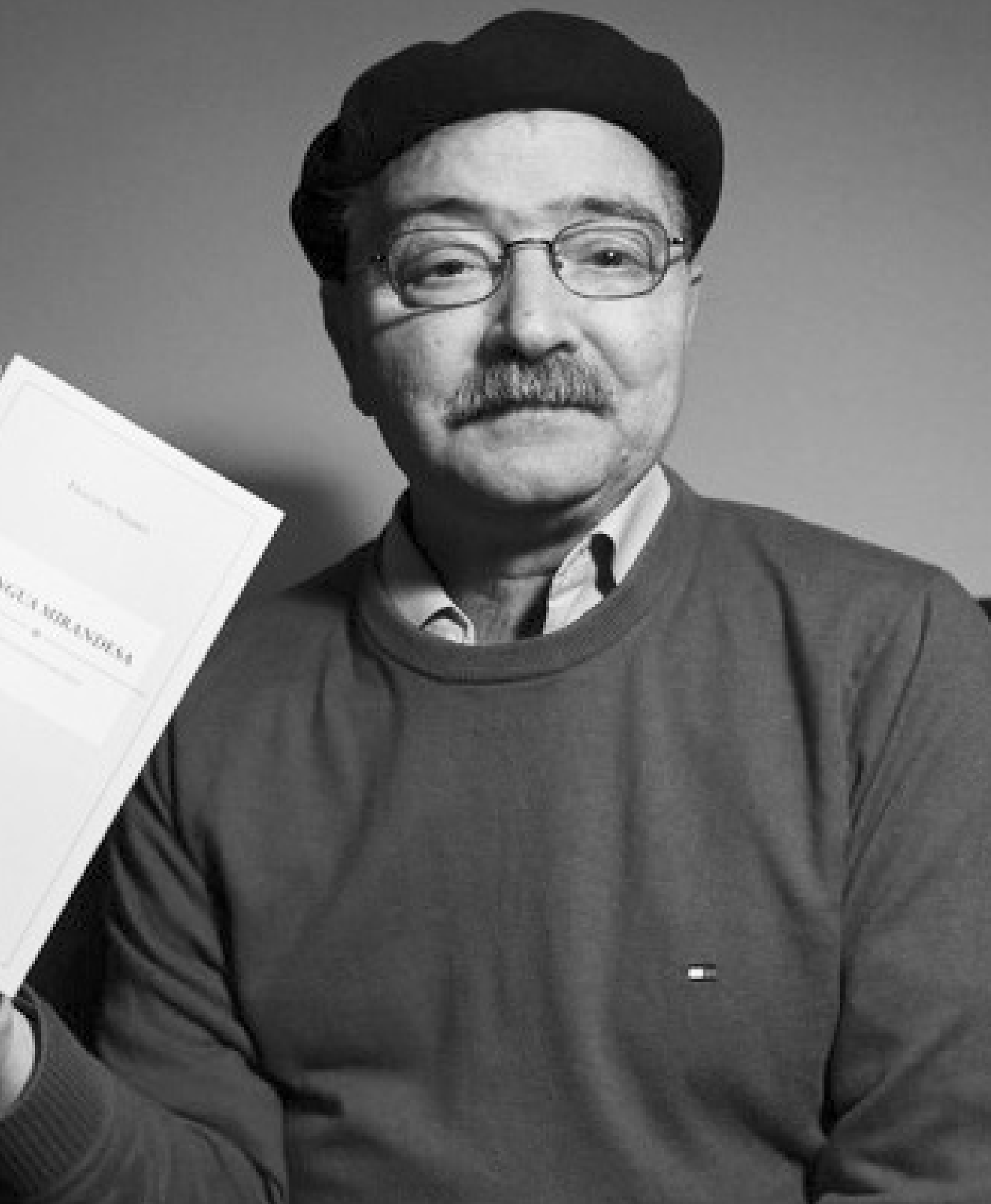




“Porquê!” – um rosto, um olhar para as crianças que sofrem de leucemia, acrylic on canvas, 59,9 cm x 72,5 cm.







**Amadeu Ferreira**

## Amadeu Ferreira

Amadeu Ferreira was an inescapable figure in the defense of the Mirandese language. He was also a man connected to law, an area in which he developed his profession. Accidentally linked to securities, this jurist quickly became a teacher and an indispensable professional in the faculty rooms and the capital market because of his intelligence, work ability and humanism. Was, is Vice-president of the Securities Market Commission (CMVM), professor at the New University of Lisbon and author of much of the legislation that is still in force in this area. After all, he never gave up his roots or forgot the language he absorbed: Mirandese.

*“Há Homens cuja força de carácter se pressente à distância e se afirmam através da vontade férrea do seu querer.*

*Há Homens que por vezes sobrevoam o próprio Tempo, transformando sílabas de alfabetos perdidos em linguagem compreendida pelos outros homens.*

*Embalando a montanha e os seus musgos, ou simplesmente cumprindo alguma promessa antiga, trazem consigo e como testemunho a marca indelével do Tempo.”*

*António Afonso, in “O Fio das Lembranças – Uma Biografia de Amadeu Ferreira”*

Drowings realized by the users of Centro Social e Paroquial Santos Mártires (PORTUGAL)







**Paula Modersohn-Becker**

## **Paula Modersohn-Becker**

Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876 – 1907 ) was the “off-course!” – choice of Bremen artists in our project group, as a whole art museums here is named after here and she is certainly the most important and best-known artist who lived, worked and exhibits in our city, even as she was exceptional unsuccessful and ridiculed during her lifetime, being an innovative artist and woman, too. “Paula” as we all like to call her today was born at Dresden but lived at Bremen during her later youth, when her father worked here at railway administration. During her infant days she was involved in an accident at a sand pit, where one of her young friends died – biographers see this episode as one of the keys of her life and art. She showed interested in art and paintings very early and this was encouraged and supported by parents, family and friends as long as it was thought to be a “hobby” not a set-up for a profession. During a painting course she found contact to the artist colony at the near-by village Worpswede where unconventional artists painted countryside, animals and people in free air and without academical sets of methodology. Here she met the artist Otto Modersohn, whom she married afterwards. As Paula did not try and not want to paint her subjects in detailed similarity to “nature” but according her impression of their inner value and importance, she found little support by the artist community and even her husband, who supported her artistic work wholeheartedly, but brought forward many declarations that she could not “really” paint. Paula never came in a position of independence as her work did not sell and even if she found many friends in the artists’ community of Germany, Austria and France (for example the writer Rainer-Maria Rilke) she was until her death depended on financial support of family and husband. She died some weeks after giving birth to a daughter and her early death is often commented by her own statement that “I want to die young, after painting two or three good pictures”. Bremen Kunsthalle museum, where during her lifetime paintings of her were removed from exhibitions because of criticism about the style, started her rehabilitation with a workshow in 1917. The Bremen art supporter Roselius, who made his vast fortune by the invention of decaffeinated coffee) cherished her memory, too, and funded the today called Paula Modersohn-Becker museum at Böttcherstraße Bremen. Again and again her work is exhibited in Germany and world-wide under various angles of performance and her life and work is subjects of several features and films, lately in 2016.

<http://www.museen-boettcherstrasse.de/english/> English page of the Bremen museum



Paul M-B. monument









**Friedo Lampe**

## Friedo Lampe

Friedo Lampe (1899-1945) was born in Bremen worked in the 1920ies at the lectorate of a Bremen publishing house (later in Berlin) and published himself various novels and stories which were collected in samplers. It was remarked by himself that the working-disabled artist had the “bad luck with his books” which were published at very bad time, just in the months of Nazi ascendance to power and later in the after-war period where other subjects and styles were current and asked for than his well-educated, realistical and somewhat ironical way of narrative. Giving this, he could never make a career of this work, kept in employed positions and died without the success he merited. At Bremen, his memory is still present and often newspaper and review articles show him as an artist with relevance to all time. His first work, published end of 1932 “At the Edge of Night” described a number of situations and happenings during one late evening and early night at Bremen, in a style which makes it quite possible to recall parts of the city which were later disfigured by terror or destroyed by war bombings, as the old harbor surroundings. That he described very open-heartedly sexual relations, not only in the Bremen public gardens, but between a white women and a black man or homosexual feelings of circus catchers did not make friends from him in the city or with the Nazi art politicians who forbid this work immediatly after coming to power. Lampe himself was not prosecuted, but get no support for further works. In “Summer Torrent” with the background of a balloon flight over North Germany and the North Sea, Lampe again described various situations in cities and countryside, again recalling Bremen, where reports about an ugly murder confronts the happiness of a Sunday park afternoon. Typical for Lampes style is the final conversation of the balloon flyers, where the father reflects melancholically on the possibility of meeting an early death in the recent thunderstorm whereas his daughter just mentions that she were happy having put a second set of undergarments. Lampe’s word of his “unluckiness” proved self-reliant when he was killed some days after the end of the war by mistake – soldiers took him for an fugitive member of SS.

We like to mention here that Friedo Lampe was voted to join this selection of Bremen artists by an internet “casting” among the Diakonie Bremen fans, getting some votes more than the barrocco poet Joachim Neander (1650 -1680) who is still famous for several church songs and melodies (“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the king of Creation”) as well as giving his name to the “Neanderthal” at the Rhine valley, where many decades later the bones of the famous early-humans species were found.

A black and white photograph of an open book. The focus is on a page with the word "Poetry" written in a cursive script. The word is underlined with a thin line. The book's pages are visible on the left side, and the cover is partially visible at the top left. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle shadow across the page.

Poetry

**Lucy Einstmann**

## Lucy Einstmann

Lucy Einstmann (1871 - 1942) concludes our selection of deceased Bremen artists because of her remarkable fate and recovery of her memory. She was daughter of a wealthy family and published to collections poems in the years before First World War. Still quite young she showed some symptoms of psychic illness, which led first to stays in private pensions, than to long-time hospital stays. One sees today that her early work focuses on issues of death, probably first impressed by the suicide of her father. She was put under legal guardianship, and in later years under ambulant treatment. She could leave the institutions and the guardianship after some years but never published works again. As she did not live in an institution she was not a victim of the Nazi murders of psychiatric patients after 1938 but died in a hospital for stomach disease in 1942. There is no sign that the imposing of a guardianship had anything to do with her art work (the idea comes into one's head when we read that Paula M.-B. was several times threatened by this possibility to stop her "disqualifying herself" as women and artist by her unconventional work) but her work was certainly stopped in this process of treatments. This way, her last known work of art is a scissor cutting that was obviously meant as a personal present to one of the hospital managers, but it was just put into her patient file and found there later. The merit to recall Lucy Einstmann rests with the Bremen initiative Kulturambulanz (<http://www.kulturambulanz.de>) which organizes art events round the unique Hospital Museum at the Bremen Ost psychiatric hospital, among them in 2016, just when our project to look for Bremen artists was at sway, an exhibition on the painter Sefa Egbers who was indeed a victim of the Nazi murders. Here several tables were focused on the fate of Lucy Einstmann who lived several years in the same institutions, showing details of her life, her poems and her patient file. So we are happy to use the opportunity of this European project publication to do our part for remembering her person, life and work.

Lucy Einstmann (18761-1942)

[http://www.kulturambulanz.de/presse/downloads/sefa\\_17/Flyer\\_Sefa.pdf](http://www.kulturambulanz.de/presse/downloads/sefa_17/Flyer_Sefa.pdf)



**Nicholas Bodde**



## Nicholas Bodde

Nicholas Bodde was born 1962 at New York. He studied painting at the Bremen Art High School and lives and works now in this city (atelier at Ogohaus, an old car factory building). His concept of Color Field Painting which he persistently pursues and for years has further developed is in the tradition of constructive art. He paints on light and thin materials as aluminium and keeps his fixed geometric formats in the "Rhythm of the Color Timbre", playing with the different colors like musicians on the piano. The results are circles, ellipses or rectangular forms showing straight or angular color fields.

Works are shown and sold internationally, especially in France, U.S. and South Korea. He designed a collection of Rosenthal café porcellan and in cooperation with other artists ("I'm shy of ladders", he tells us) his work Circle Game is shown, too, in 14 x 14 meter dimension on a Bremen building wall.

During the Bremen meeting of Art of Inclusion partnership, our guest visited his studio and got an introduction into his methods.

Nicholas Bodde, Im Rhythmus des Farbklangs. Hrg. Corona Unger, Bremen 2014.







**Jonas Luksch**

## Jonas Luksch

Jonas Luksch was born 1985. Since his birth he was impaired in sight capability (20 % visual capacity) and his mother recalls even today that she would never thought of the possibility that her son becomes painter. He went to Waldorf School at Bremen and worked today in gardening, living in the facilities of anthroposophic community Bremer Lebensgemeinschaft (<http://www.bremer-lebensgemeinschaft.de>). 2008 he got an interest via art projects to painting and is since 2009 member in the inclusive art projects of Bremer Blaumeier Ateliers, for whose exhibitions and publications he had made many paintings, mostly with acrylic coloring – to be seen at <http://www.blaumeier.de/de/malerei/>, where he is shown at work, too. Paints are exhibited and for sale at [http://www.blaumeier.de/de/shop\\_kunstwerke/](http://www.blaumeier.de/de/shop_kunstwerke/) (click for „Luksch“!). He drives two times a week by tram to the Blaumeier Atelier and his dream and intention is to work and earn money as an painter and artist (he does some sculpturing, too, lately). For this purpose, he tells us, he must learn to paint smaller scale pictures, who are easier to sell than his current way of big formats. He is always eager to enlarge his artistic repertoire and developed during the recent “Icarus” project with Blaumeier new styles to shape paper, wire and textiles to individual works of art. We like to present in this way, apart from Jonas Luksch, the work of the Blaumeier Atelier, which is certainly the most important inclusive Bremen art initiative, with national and international fame and experience of its painting, theatre or film productions. The use of the atelier is flexible (open to everyone once a week) and free of charge – many information on [www.blaumeier.de](http://www.blaumeier.de)

Recent work show of Jonas Luksch and others is published at: „Das Ikarusprojekt - Blaumeier und der Traum vom Fliegen“, Ausstellungskatalog inkl. 90-min. Projektdokumentation auf DVD, Bremen 2016

RAT DER GÖTTER, 2013, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 200 cm.





**Anja Fußbach**



## Anja Fußbach

Anja Fußbach was born 1965 in Soltau (Niedersachsen). She works and lives now at Bremen with a workshop in the old facility of the former Freight Train Station, where several artists of different approaches have their place of work. Most of her work are sculptures in different, sometimes very big (life-)size which are made out of various, often every-day materials, and waste or recycled things. Metallic tools and objects are combined with dolls or toy animals, paper flowers or plastic bottles. In this way her objects stand alone as the Bremen-famous Little Hare in the entrance hall of the urban Childrens' Hospital (winning an award for art in public places 2003) or are combined to groups as the animal figure installation which was arranged as a demonstration march "Serengeti Must not Die" (using the title of a popular German 1960ies book and movie - 2015). Anja is always prepared and eager to cooperate with youth and social initiatives to realize creative and outstanding works, maybe in her workshop, maybe in other places. She demonstrate artistic and technical skills and gives the participating persons of all ages and with or without certain impairments wide freedom for their creativity – the results surprise everyone, last not least herself. Diakonisches Werk Bremen cooperated with her when we build a "Tree of Friendship" with long-term unemployed persons from Bremen and guests from the Turkish partner-city Izmir and during the Bremen meeting of Art of Inclusion Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership when all delegation and Bremen guests built and decorated Revolving Doors.

Revolving Doors, realized by the Art of Inclusion's participants.





**Renato Guttuso**



## Renato Guttuso (1911-1987)

Renato Guttuso was an Italian painter born the early twentieth century in Bagheria. Son of a surveyor and amateur watercolorist, since childhood he showed his talent in painting.

Just thirteen years old he began to produce and sign his paintings, thanks to his father's hobby and the attendance of the painter Domenico Quattrociochi's workshop and of the painter Emilio Murdolo; furthermore he began to attend the artistic circles of Palermo. His art was linked to expressionism and characterized by a strong social commitment, which also led him to go into politics as a senator of the Italian Communist Party.

The young Guttuso lived the Sicilian crisis of the postwar period and the complete decay of the nobility of the eighteenth-century villas, all this moved the painter deeply, as he was already scarred by the poverty of his family. He completed his high school and university studies in Palermo. His education was based on the style of European painters, in particular Courbet, Van Gogh and Picasso; this took him to Milan and to travel all around Europe.

In his style are more and more present Sicilian symbols, such as the lemon groves, the Saracen olive tree, the Palinuro: this led him to participate in 1931 in a group exhibition of six Sicilian painters. Back in Palermo, he formed the "Group of Four" along with the painter Lia Pasqua-lino Noto, and sculptors Giovanni Barbera and Nino Franchina. He became part of the artistic movement called "Corrente", which was opposed to the official academic standards, giving much importance to the color with the addition of free figures in space; with a strong anti-fascist opposition. In his stay in Milan he reached the idea of "social art", with an increasingly evident political and moral commitment. Later he moved to Rome, getting in touch with the Roman artistic circle.

The artist will never stop to work even in wartime, alternating still life paintings, to glimpses of the Palermo landscape, to the representations of Nazi repressions. In the '40s he married his faithful companion Mimise, who he painted in 1947. Between the '40s and the '50s he devoted himself in his paintings to the representation of his childhood, of his land, of Sicilian peasants who had the first place in his heart, as he considered himself one of them. In the '60s, the female figure became a dominant element in his painting, in fact he portrayed Marta Marzotto in a series of paintings, who was his muse and his model. He also created a series of 37 drawings, called "Cartoline", where the artist represents the memories, feelings, emotions, fantasies and moods towards Marta Marzotto. In the '70s he devoted an entire cycle to his autobiography in painting, paintings of exceptional value for the knowledge of the man-artist Guttuso. In 1974 he painted the famous painting "La Vucciria". Guttuso sadly died in 1987 in loneliness.

Two funerals were celebrated: one secular and one religious. He had no biological children, but had a foster son, Fabio Carapezza Guttuso, who was the only one who took care of his father in the last years of his life.



Vucciria, Renato Guttuso, 1974, oil on canvas, 300×300 cm.



## Vucciria

Vucciria is the most famous painting by Renato. It was realized in 1974 when the painter was 63 years old. The painting is an oil on canvas and measures 3m x 3m. It is currently exposed in Palermo at Palazzo Steri. The artwork represents a daily life scene, located at Vucciria market, one of the most important markets in Palermo. The word Vucciria stems from the French word “boucherie” (butcher’s shop ) and it is still used nowadays with the meaning of confusion in order to represent that mixture of voices, people and objects that is typical in the Sicilian markets. It is a painting with a traumatic impact. The artist defines the painting as a large still life that has a passage in the middle where people flows and meets. The artwork is characterized by the gritty realism of the cut in half meat and fishes; the attention of the observer is caught by the chaos of goods and people that is moving around in a crowded space but rhythmically chanted by fish, shellfish, fruit and vegetables boxes. The author emphasizes any good thanks to the well balanced use of colors (for example: the red color of the swordfish and the bright red of meat). Guttuso aims to the dynamism, paying attention to the composition of the painting, so the mess is only ostensible. The composition is almost asymmetrical but there are some alignments that provide balance and harmony: for example one of the lamps is aligned with the bowl of mozzarella in the middle. Actually, the painting reflects the reality of the market in Palermo. Guttuso was used to say: “Even if I paint an apple, there is the Sicily in it”.

### **The Art of Inclusion learners’ own impressions on the painting:**

Benedetto: “I like this painting; I used to go shopping there with my mother and there was a bar that has been used to sell staff for 50 cents, I remember it since when I was a child. In the painting it seems that there are a pig and a rabbit hanging.”

Alberto: “I like the whole painting but most of all the people.”

Vincenzo: “It reminds me my childhood because in the past we were used to go shopping at Vucciria. But nowadays it is not anymore like this, it’s smaller they sell other goods.”

Davide: “It inspires folklore, multiculturalism and wellness.”

Simona: “It makes me feel happiness and confusion at one time.”

Giulia: “The painting represents a scene of my everyday life, when I go to the greengrocer with a lot of people in queue.”

Martina: “It seems almost to hear the sellers’ shouts, the smell of fish and the people pushing to move on.”

Antonio: “Hunger, confusion, harmony of the colours and gastronomy.”

Serena: “I like the dried fruit, the onions and the colors!”

Davide R: “Folk culture.”

Mary: “Tradition of Palermo with some interesting images of people and gastronomy.”

Gabriele: “It makes me think of all the markets and I see the people walking and selling.”

Flaviana: “Beautiful, it conveys life.”

Veronica: “Holy Mary! It reminds me that beautiful mess of the times when I went there as a child.”

Maria Giulia: “vivacity and joyful confusion.”



Crucifixion, Guttuso, 1941, oil on canvas, 200×200 cm.

## **Crucifixion by Renato Guttuso**

This Guttuso's painting is one of the most important because it made him known to the public and the critics.

The painting was displayed in 1942 and it gave to the painter the nickname of "Pictor Diabolicus" because of the presence of naked Magdalene.

The painting is inspired to the scene of Golgota but using a new space scheme where the three crosses are one behind the other rather than in a diagonal. This effect creates a sense of alienation in the observer.

The Christ's face is hidden by one of the two thieves' Cross and we can just imagine his grimace of pain.

The painting is expressively charged because of strong shades and bright and pastel colors that were used by Guttuso.

Guttuso's brushstroke is decisive and the figures are angular.

The figures' nakedness in the painting did not want to stir up scandal among the audience; it was a decision of the author in order to place the scene in the space-time context of a bombed city during the war.

The artist continuously refers to the Gospels so that the name of the painting is "Crucifixion". It is no coincidence but it was chosen by the author to highlight that Jesus death is the drama of the entire mankind. Painting the Gospel episode of Jesus who is dying on the Cross for our sins, Guttuso highlights the universality of human pain.

In the painting a soldier is holding a rod with a sponge soaked in vinegar on the top in one hand and some stones in the other; the taut strings that bind one of the thieves seem to be almost frayed, painful and sharp.

This painting shows to the audience that we are living in a time of massacres, decapitations and suffering.

In the painting the houses in the background are squared in the Cubist style. Because their lines are essential, they could be the houses of those times as well as our everyday houses. The landscape represents in general Guttuso's homeland: Sicily. About that the bridge in the background is telltale: it is an Arabic-Norman humpback bridge.

### **The Art of Inclusion learners' own impressions on the painting:**

Antonio: "The painting gives rise to emotions of displeasure and sadness."

Davide: "Personally this image do not satisfy me because it is caotic."

Serena: "The painting is very beautiful."

Vincenzo: "To me the painting elicits dismay and indignation!"

Mary: "The image of the painting is a bit confused but also vibrant and very colourful."





**Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa**

## Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa was born in Palermo in 1896, he was an Italian writer, author of the famous novel "Il Gattopardo". He was a very taciturn and solitary character who loved reading, he preferred to stay with things than with people. After the death of her sister he remained an only child, he was very attached to his mother who had great influence on the future writer, while with his father he hadn't a wonderful relationship.

He began his studies in his big house in Palermo under the teaching of his mother, his grandmother and a teacher. The lineage of the Tomasi di Lampedusa was characterized by a great religious fervour, not shared by the writer. He undertook classical studies in Rome and later in Palermo, then he continued with his university career at the Faculty of Law of Rome, but in the same year he had to interrupt his studies because he was drafted into the army as an artillery officer. He took part in the defeat of Caporetto where he was captured by the Austrians and imprisoned in Hungary, but managed to escape and to walk back in Italy. After his resignation he returned to his house in Sicily where he spent time travelling and studying foreign literatures. In 1925 he was in Genoa for about six months where he worked at the literary magazine "Le opera e i giorni".

In Riga in 1932 he married in an Orthodox church the scholar of psychoanalysis Alexandra Wolff Stormersee called Licy. They went to live with his mother in Palermo, but soon the incompatibility between the two women brought back Licy in Latvia. In 1934 his father died and he inherited the title of the family. In 1940 he was drafted to the arms, but as he was the head of the farm inherited by his family, he was soon discharged. To escape the war he and his mother took shelter in Villa Piccolo in Capo d'Orlando, where Licy joined them. In 1944 he was appointed provincial president of the Palermo Italian Red Cross and then regional president until 1946. After his mother's death (1946) he started going to a group of young intellectuals, to which Gioacchino Lanza Mazzarino belonged with who established an emotional connection that the writer adopted him and rebaptised him as Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi.

In 1954, Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa accompanied his cousin Lucio Piccolo who was a poet, in San Pellegrino Terme to pick up a literary prize. It was on this occasion that he met the writer Eugenio Montale and Maria Bellonci. After he returned from his trip he began writing "Il Gattopardo", which was completed two years later in 1956. Initially the novel was rejected by the Mondadori and Einaudi publishing houses, in particular, it was rejected by Elio Vittorini who subsequently also rejected the publication of "Dottor Zivago" by Pasternak and "Il tamburo di latta" by Grass.

In 1957, he died of lung cancer. In 1958 the novel was published posthumously by the publishing house Feltrinelli. In 1959 the novel won the Premio Strega. Also the writer, like the main character of "Il Gattopardo", died far from home, in Rome where he had gone for medical treatment. Having no heirs, noble titles were shared among collateral relatives.

## Il Gattopardo

“Il Gattopardo” is a novel written by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, published posthumously in 1958, a year after the author’s death.

He drew inspiration from historical events of his family, aristocrats Tomasi di Lampedusa, in particular by the great-grandfather’s biography, Prince Giulio Fabrizio Tomasi. For the topic dealt with, it is often considered a historical novel. It was written between late 1954 and 1957.

In 1963 it was reproduced in the film of the same name by Luchino Visconti.

The title of the novel has its origin in the Tomasi’s family crest and it is commented on in the novel itself: << We were the Ocelots, the Lions; those who will replace us will be the jackals, hyenas; and everyone Ocelots, jackals and sheeps will continue to see ourselves as the salt of the earth. “

The story begins with the recitation of the rosary in one of the sumptuous rooms of Salina Palace, where Prince Fabrizio, the ocelot, lives with his wife Stella and their seven children: he is a distinct and charming gentleman, expert in astronomical studies, but also careful observer of the progressive and inexorable decline of his own social class. With the landing of Garibaldi and the Mille, a new social class becomes quickly popular, the bourgeoisie, which the prince looks angrily. The enterprising nephew Tancredi Falconeri instead, in search of economic power, fights in Garibaldi’s army, he is also in love with the beautiful and polished cousin Concetta, who reciprocates him. The prince spends the holidays with the whole family in the summer residence of Donnafugata; the country’s new mayor is Don Calogero Sedara, a very intelligent and ambitious man who immediately tries to gain the affection of Salina aristocrats; also because of the charm of Angelica, which Tancredi succumbs to and she will be the girl who he will marry, thanks also to the richness of her. When it comes the moment to vote on the annexation of Sicily to Sardinia; the prince, reluctantly, vote for it, contributing to the positive plebiscite victory. Later, he will be offered the position of Senator of the Kingdom, that the prince will reject. The prince will live a retired life, until the day he died, surrounded by the care of family members in a hotel room in Palermo after the return trip from Naples, where he had gone for medical treatment. The last chapter of the novel set in 1910, tells of Carolina, Concetta and Caterina’s lives, the surviving daughters of Don Fabrizio.

The author makes, in the novel, a narrative process that is not only historical, but also current. This is deduced by the dialogue between the knight Chevalley of Monterzuolo and the Prince of Salina. The prince in fact explains that the new Kingdom of Italy is nothing more than one of the many meaningless changes, because many times throughout history, the Sicilian people has become accustomed to several invaders, without changing themselves and their pride.

The novel is divided into blocks, with a sequence of episodes, which, while head to a main character, they are each provided with their own autonomy. We have the Risorgimento failure, which seems to refer to the constant failure of human events; to this the topic of the passage of time and death approaches, shown in the death of the noble class of the Gattopardi, but also throughout the novel: the dance description, the chapter of the death of the prince, and the dust of time that it accumulates on his three daughters and their things.

The story described in Il Gattopardo may at first suggest that this is a historical novel, but it is not so because it leaves out the description of many other important historical events, and the author himself in fact denied that he wanted to write a historical novel, although later Lukacs will consider it like this. Vittorio Spinazzola recently attributed to the novel by Tomasi di Lampedusa no more optimism on the future of man, but a painful awareness that human history



does not proceed towards its happiness. Despite this consideration, the question remains open. Surely the narrative of the novel is not the typical nineteenth century, but at times decadent in the description of the sense of loneliness and death that pervades the main character.

### **Famous sentences and paragraphs from “Il Gattopardo” by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa**

*“If we want things to stay as they are, everything must change.”*

*“In Sicily it does not matter doing bad or doing well: the sin which we Sicilians never forgive is simply to ‘do’.”*

*“Take a problem of any kind (political, social, cultural, technical or other) and give it to solve to two Italians:*

*one Milanese and the other Sicilian. After one day, the Sicilian will have ten ideas to solve this problem, the Milanese even one.*

*After two days, the Sicilian will have a hundred ideas to solve this problem, the Milanese even one.*

*After three days, the Sicilian will have a thousand ideas to solve this problem, and the Milanese will have already solved it.”*



**Ernesto Basile**

## Ernesto Basile

Ernesto Basile was born in Palermo in 1857, son of the architect Giovan Battista Filippo, after he graduated in architecture in Palermo in 1878, he cooperated with his father in the important committees in the university chair, and, after his father's death (1891) he concluded the most important work of Palermo nineteenth century, the Massimo Theater. There the collaboration was born with the painter Ettore de Maria Bergler who with Vittorio Ducrot of workshops of the same name, they would have become protagonists of the season of Art Nouveau in Palermo. The architect worked in his hometown throughout his life, carrying on several committees in different places in Sicily and southern Italy. His career takes flight with the pavilions for the National Exhibition of Palermo (1891-1892) and includes: Villa Igea (1899-19009), the Villa Florio at Olivuzza (1899-1900), the Utveggio House (1901- 1903), Fassini Cottage (1903, now destroyed), Basile Cottage (1903 -1904). The exhibition was an opportunity to show the progress of the art and examples of art and traditions.

Ernesto Basile was very active as a designer of architectural pavilions, either of indoor or of individual furniture, in fact started since 1902 a partnership with the Ducrot firm in Palermo, with which he created some pieces of furniture for mass production and they were intended for a wider category of users, for an art to serve the community. Thanks to his partnership with Ducrot, the pieces of furniture designed by Basile arrived at international exhibitions in Turin and Venice, and they were considered so appreciated to be reviewed by the most important furnishing magazines. The architect also worked in Milan, Rome, Reggio Calabria and Messina he created several works for the reconstruction of the city after the disastrous earthquake in 1908. His studies are devoted to Sicilian Arab-Norman and Renaissance architecture, which combines the knowledge of the most innovative European artistic and architectural experiments of that era. It is also dedicated to the design of pieces of furniture imprinted on a cutting-edge design, which make him famous in Europe. Basile, as his father had a passion for botany and he became an excellent draftsman. He had grown up in the saturated atmosphere of art of his region, Sicily, appreciating the commission of different styles and became the most original interpreter of Art Nouveau in Sicily. He died in Palermo in 1932. The modernity of Basile will prove with the construction of the Florio Cottage, the first Art Nouveau architecture that appears in Italy. The architectural interventions of Basile were not confined to the residence. He also tried his hand in public buildings, large and small, such as kiosks, little gems that, along with the villas give to the town of Palermo a decided Art Nouveau air.

Basile was inspired by the plant kingdom to derive a repertoire of decorations to apply to his constructions. The personal style of Basile adhered closely to the demands of Art Nouveau, but it was not overwhelmed by it removing the roots of Sicilian architecture. His reference to tradition, has meant that the architecture designed had never intended by users as episodes out of the context of the city, but as a fusion work between old and new, between tradition and renewal.

In 1897 he became director of the Institute of Fine Arts in Palermo. In 1898 he traveled to Vienna where he was able to observe the works of the Viennese Secession. The following year, animated by the same spirit of discovery is in Belgium, France and Holland. In Rome it will build the new room for Members of Parliament.



## The Florio Cottage

The Florio Cottage at Olivuzza is a monumental historic building, located near Zisa in Palermo, in Viale Regina Margherita.

The Cottage, set in a garden, and now surrounded by other new buildings, was built in obedience to Florio's family, one of the powerful Italian business dynasties in the 1800s, by the architect Ernesto Basile and built between 1899 and 1902. It represents an extraordinary example of what the architect meant by "integral design"

And 'one of the first Art Nouveau architectural works of Italy and is considered one of the masterpieces of Art Nouveau at a European level.

Vincenzo Florio being a man of cosmopolitan and very dedicated to travelling attitude, Basile in this work seems to want to recreate all the stages affected by the rich middle-class entering in the structure several elements, as part of an itinerary, mixed in a masterpiece of originality: baroque curved surfaces, typically Nordic trusses, cylindrical towers that recall French castles, Romanesque columns and Renaissance rustications.

Basile designed the interior and furniture, made by Ducrot in 1902.

The exterior of the elegant building has a set of intriguing towers, battlements, dormers, columns, loggias, capitals, polychrome glass walls and rusticated walls that startle our heart as soon as you are in front of the wrought iron gate that encloses the cottage. Wherever openings from moves lines, multiplied by columns, they animate the building elevations giving architectural dignity together with the charming wrought iron inserts that go from pinnacles to the gazebo on the back terrace, from the magnificent railings to lightning rods.

The interior furnishings, furniture, parietal fabrics (specially designed by Basile), doors, wooden ceilings, the metal parts, decorations were consistent with the exterior; the large fireplace was beautiful at the living room wall on the ground floor.

The villa will live a legendary season with glitzy receptions and lavish parties hosting the beautiful aristocratic world not only from Palermo but also international until 1911, the year of Annina Alliatas of Montereale's death, young wife of Vincenzo Florio, to fall almost into oblivion until the entire Olivuzza park where once stood, was divided into plots and built in the years between 1930 and 1940. After the war the villa was abandoned until the fire of 1962, a case of arson that damaged the wall of the villa and it almost completely destroyed the building's interior. Currently Florio Cottage, after the restoration completed in 2009, is one of the representative offices of the Sicilian Region and occasionally is opened to the public during special events.



The Florio Cottage



## **Massimo Vittorio Emanuele Theater**

Massimo Vittorio Emanuele Theater of Palermo is the largest opera theatrical building in Italy and one of the biggest in Europe, the third in order of architectural magnitude after the Opéra National de Paris and the Staatsoper of Vienna. representative rooms, halls, galleries and monumental staircases surround the real theater, forming an architectural complex of magnificent proportions. With a neoclassical – eclectic style, it rises up on the area of the church of the Stigmata and of the monastery of San Giuliano that were demolished in the late nineteenth century to leave enough space for this magnificent construction. Works started in 1875 after some troubled events that followed the competition in 1864 won by the architect Giovan Battista Filippo Basile, after his death, his son the architect Ernesto Basile took over from him, who agreed to complete the work in progress of the father on request of the City of Palermo, completing also the designs needed for the continuation of the work of the theater.

### **Architecture**

The compositional symmetry around the axis of the entrance, the constant repetition of elements (columns, arched windows), the rigorously composed decoration, define a simple spatial structure and a clear, harmonic and geometric volume, of Greek and Roman inspiration.

### **Interior and Ventilation**

The hall, horseshoe shaped, with five orders of boxes and gallery (gallery). The stall has a special movable ceiling composed of large painted wooden panels (the so-called petals) which are moved by a management mechanism of opening adaptable upwards, allowing ventilation of the entire environment. The system will allow the theater of not be needed of forced ventilation for ventilation and for the indoor climate.

### **Acoustics**

In the rotunda of the south or Pompeian room, the room originally reserved for men only, we can see a very special resonance effect, especially obtained by the architect through a slight asymmetry of the room, such that those who are at the exact center of the room have the perception of hearing their own voice dramatically amplified, while, in the rest of the environment the resonance is huge and such that it is impossible to understand from the outside of the rotunda what is said in its interior.

### **In the cinema**

In 1990 the theater was the setting for some scenes of the film *The Godfather Part III* by Francis Ford Coppola, starring Al Pacino, Andy Garcia and Sofia Coppola in which the godfather Michael Corleone goes to Palermo to attend his son's debut in *Cavalleria rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni.

### **The exterior the porch**

A large marble staircase, on the central front leads to the entrance porch with six columns decorated with Corinthian - italic style capitals that support the pediment where on the architrave an inscription of unknown author is inscribed "Art renews peoples and it reveals their life – the



delight of the scenes is useless where it doesn't aim to prepare the future". At the ends of the triangular tympanum there are two great tragic masks.

On all sides of the central part there are two other entrances, behind than the staircase, addressed a side to the entrance for pedestrians and the other side for nobles (in the latter the Press Club was hosted for years in), and in succession two rounds, called "scarrozzi, at the time intended for the access by carriage of the public and of the king.

### **The dome**

With a diameter of 28.732 meters, the dome, has a skeleton made of iron and a cover with large bronze scales. To let the thermal expansion act, the dome lays on rolls which slide on a circular plate made of cast iron in which there are eight crescent – shaped windows. On the top of the dome a large bronze vase richly decorated stands.

### **The stage tower**

A large scenic tower rises on the top of the dome, covering the immense stage and which looks like a huge rectangular block on top of which stands a large terrace overlooking the panorama of the city.

### **The outdoor furniture**

In memory of Giuseppe Verdi, who the square has headed, near the staircase the bust of Verdi is located, by Antonio Ugo, and also advertising posters, along with the iron gate finely decorated and the elegant chandeliers cast iron, as the two Ribaudò's (1894) and Vicari's kiosks (1897) located on the sides of the sidewalk that separates the square of via Maqueda, they were built on his project.

### **The interior**

#### **The vestibule or entrance foyer**

By the great door of the porch you can enter to the vestibule: a large rectangular room, which large windows open in correspondence of the second order of loggias and door windows leading to the right side and left side stairs. Although it's not very bright, it only takes light from the entrance, the environment is soberly decorated with bas-reliefs anyway. The entrance to the hall is located exactly in front of the large door while the box office is currently located on the left side. The ornamental decorations of the hall are made by Geraci Gaetano and Salvatore Valenti.

#### **The hall of mirrors**

From the vestibule you enter the hall of mirrors, so called for the presence of eight large mirrors (two per corner), this is a way to bring out the vanity of the public. The hall is located in correspondence of the king salon and then it has the same large size and a four columns structure. Minutely decorated and illuminated with bunches of corollas sconces, by itself leads to the room and on the sides of the stairs leading to the loggias.

#### **The public reduced hall or Pompeian room**

Located at the second order of the loggias, there is the Pompeian Room circular, attributed to Ettore De Maria Bergler: one of the biggest jewels of the theater either for the particular circular plan or for the rich symbolic decoration that is all a triumph of colors and variegated fantasy. Between a door and the other, candlesticks are drawn (very similar to the lamppost designed by

Ernesto Basile for the exterior of the theater and of the square) surrounded by tangles of vines and ending each one in a sconce with a chain of four corolla – shaped lamps. On each door an overdoor with chimera is designed and, in sequence, a band on a dark blue background of little angels with musical instruments.

### **The emblems hall**

Between the Pompeian room and the royal box there is the emblems hall, for a long time used as a public bar and now venue for conferences, meetings and small events.

### **The king salon**

The vestibule of the Royal Box is a stylish room completely covered in mahogany with four columns always made of mahogany embellished with Ionic capitals which divide the hall itself in four small furnished lounges with armchairs and sofas in red brocade. On the ceiling nine coffers are placed where Ettore De Maria Bergler represents the spring season with almond trees and roses.

### **The royal box**

It is on the external front of the stage, which occupies the space between the second and third order of loggias with a surface of 28 square meters and a width of three stages, it is framed by a beautiful wooden and plaster decoration covered of pure gold, the work by Salvatore Valenti, with a central royal emblem, draperies, eagles and two feminine figures at the sides.

### **The coffee hall**

The hall, built by Enrico Cavallaro, is decorated with rich festoons of flowers and fruit, and with theatrical masks together with overdoors representing allegorical figures. Located on the ground floor on the left side of the theater, it opens onto an open space organized as garden.







Massimo Vittorio Emanuele Theater







**Alfonso Moscato**

## Alfonso Moscato

Alfonso Moscato is a young artist from Agrigento, but living in Palermo. It was part of a band, “Le Cordepazze”, which won the Fabrizio DeAndrè Award in 2007, they were guests at the Tenco Award in 2008, then they played at the Ariston Theatre in Sanremo and in 2009 and in 2014 they won the Critics Award of the Rai Press – Room to Musicultura Festival.

Le Cordepazze are independent in everything and from everyone, effective in demolishing normal practice. Clear sound that floats between fluid electro-pop and new wave rock frequency; catchy, simple and smart lyrics. Le Cordepazze is made up of Alfonso Fofò Moscato (voice and guitar), Francesco Incandela (violin), Vincenzo Lo Franco (drums), Michele Segretario (keyboards). After five years by their first album “I re quieti”, they return with a huge amount of visionary madness, nourished by bitter Sicilian theatricality, inherited by Pirandello’s humour and with a subtle and biting sarcasm. Perhaps the four artists will not be commercial to the point of being a safe investment, but on the web the liking for their music grows. And heard the first song, it’s hard to suddenly stop listening, that is fluid, fresh, spontaneous.

When is asked them which dish could match their music, Francesco Incandela (violin) answers a Sicilian caponata because tasty and full of essences, and indelible multi-ethnic origins, bittersweet as it is their music. Vincenzo Lo Franco (drums) adds that the caponata might be too heavy and it would be better something lighter, comparing it to their sound and their lyrics flowing light and that you don’t stop to listen.

Comparing their music to a look, they said they would look like a casual chic look with an accessory that minimizes the whole look, as a top hat. The group can boast in its curriculum collaborations with Paola Turci, which goes with them on tour in 2010 for historical theaters in the Marche, and with Morgan in concert at Live Forum Assago. In a short time, they accumulate a roundup of successes, also getting several awards.

“Malacarne” is the first Alfonso Moscato’s album. The sounds range from tropical rhythms of Palermo’s suburbs to love and Renaissance jail moaning in old Sicilian. And it’s an esoteric record, an identity way, and the proceeds will become “pasta” and “blanket” for the brothers of the “Hope and Charity” mission, refugees of Biagio Conte.

It ‘was written when I recognized Jew following the hidden traces of my name and my family. 10 stories of men and women, where Moscato tells the old age, the offense, desolation, sickness, misfortune, the horror, the destruction of Palermo’s suburbs; tropical rhythms, love and Renaissance jail moaning in old Sicilian, there is everything. The word “MaLaCarne” alludes to the Hebrew word Malchut (the Kingdom), the first Sephirah of Jewish tradition. It’s the door of a journey that is changing a lot Moscato. Malacarne is the lost humanity in the crime, in contrition, in disrepair, in the disaster, in the shipwreck of themselves. And it’s the attempt to regain the splendor of divine torch that is in the heart of every man, it is a record that is teaching artist tolerance, peace, clemency. All this is reflected in the photographed places in Sicily.

Like all records it is distributed on line on all megastores and in all concerts, even if the objective of the work is not commercial, but it is to make a trip into the depths, and before returning to take back souvenirs and bring them to the surface. For Moscato is necessary self-production without necessarily waiting for the chimera of an editorial structure.

## Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nydvhs6fXVM>

Me: Good morning!

Moscato: Good morning!

Me: I'm Maria Giulia. We are here on the occasion of the "Art of Inclusion" Project, during which we are examining some local artists, both contemporary and noncontemporary, so we are here with you...

Moscato: Contemporary.

Me: Who you are contemporary.

Moscato: I'm not dead.

Me: So far, at least.

Moscato: And how do you do with noncontemporary ones?

Me: With noncontemporary ones we are doing some research, we are gathering information...

Moscato: Ah ok!

Me: About their lives, their work...

Moscato: Of course!

Me: Then they'll be translated in English too, instead, for noncontemporary ones...

Moscato: We take advantage until they're still alive.

Me: We take advantage to interview them.

Me: So, today we are here with you, Alfonso Moscato...

Moscato: Yes.

Me: As you are in a band called "Cordepazze", we decided to interview you

Moscato: Thank you.

Me: To start, I wanted to ask you when and why did you move from Agrigento to Palermo?

Moscato: It was the year 1998 when there was unemployment, I had to keep on studying and I went to university, so as I had chosen a university in Palermo, I came here from Agrigento to study. So I started my studies in 1998-'99 and I kept on studying at the university of Palermo. For this reason I moved and I've been staying in here.

Me: Okay. And what was the first song you sang?

Moscato: The first song I sang... overall? Not one of mine, right? A song.

Me: Yes, yes.

Moscato: The first song I sang, I think it was a song by Enzo Iannacci, I sang it with my father in the car in 1986. I was 6 years old, and the title was "Il primo furto non si scorda mai". It was a wonderful Enzo Iannacci's song. It talks about a chicken thief during Italy's fascist era. This very unlucky thief because he had to steal a chicken, but he finds an imperial eagle in front of him, so the eagle pecked at him, he fainted and then he found himself in prison, so it's the tragicomic story of this thief. And I sang it with my father. This was the first song I sang.

Me: And how did you feel to work as a solo artist after this experience with the "Cordepazze" band?

Moscato: They were two different moments. This new record I wrote alone, without the "Cordepazze" band, represented a moment of maturity than before. Let's say that when I was with my band, I had the 25% of control on the total work, while on this one I have the 80% of control. There is more me, today, inside these new songs, than inside the old ones. I also was with the others so in the way we wrote songs, obviously any of them put inside these songs, what they considered beautiful, so we had to find a sort of... we had to find a middle way... anyone had to mediate his influence in the song as we were four. On the contrary in this record I wrote, I played with other friends, too, such as Luca Bergia from the band "Marlene Kuntz". We produ-



ced it in the living room, at home. My wife, I think, hated me for three months. We emptied a room, we filled it up with musical instruments, microphones and these songs came out from the apartment.

Flaviana: Poor her!

Moscato: I know it, but she must bear me.

Me: Is there any artist you are inspired by at a vocal level?

Moscato: No. No, there aren't any. Obviously anyone has his own tradition, his loves, but to be inspired by an artist, no. Probably what you have listened to in your life, loves that you had for some songs, or for some writers, some singer-songwriter, some poet, obviously is included in who you are today, but to be inspired by a specific artist... More importantly, when I write songs, not when I sing them, cause I'm not a great singer, maybe I'm a decent scribble... When I write them I think about the cinema, more than music. I think about the song as a film story, in fact all songs are stories if you pay attention to it, so they have this film story. Anyway I'm not particularly inspired by anyone.

Me: As you had firstly the experience with the "Cordepazze" band, then as a solo artist, have you had an evolution in your way of doing music?

Moscato: Yes, of course! And I think this evolution is continuing. Both in writing and in composition, then in arrangement, and production of the song itself. In writing, I think there is a greater maturity, than some songs that are in the first record of the "Cordepazze" band for example, than this last work that is "Malacarne".

Me: Is there any band or singer you want to collaborate with?

Moscato: There are many artists I could collaborate with, I could write with, but in this moment I'm in a solitary writing phase, at the moment I'm writing, then who knows.

Me: We saw that with "Malacarne" you wrote songs in dialect: Have you ever thought to create an album entirely not in dialect?

Moscato: I'm just thinking to create an album maybe totally in dialect.

Me: Just the contrary.

Moscato: Just the contrary. Cause I'm rediscovering in the Sicilian dialect the origins of our culture, of our ancestors, of our grandmothers, of our villages, of our roads, of the life you did in villages, of our grandparents' life. So an authentic extremism in the Sicilian language. Then the Sicilian language is a wonderful one, in fact I invite you to do some readings in Sicilian, cause there are some words, such as the word... The Sicilian language is a mix of almost any people in the world. And it's a unique case, there are few languages that have this particularity and it's a very rich language. For example let's think of the word "scaffa" (hole). I've taken a hole. It stems from "skafos" in Greek, or "tuppiare" (to knock) stems from "tupto" in Greek, or "sciarriare" (to argue) stems from "sciarrah" in Arabic, "Garraffello" Square stems from "garraf" in Arabic, "tabutu" Do you know what "tabutu" is? It's a coffin and it stems from "tavùt" in Arabic, "mappina" (rag) stems from "mappà" in Hebrew, it means "little cloth". Tell me Venera.

Venera: "Vucciria" for example stems from the French language.

Moscato: "Vucciria" (chaos) stems from boucherie

Venera: That means slaughter.

Moscato: that means oxen slaughter, no? There are many vocabularies that stem from all languages in the world, from all cultures. What?

Flaviana: I didn't know "mappina".

Moscato: Didn't you know "mappina"? Me neither I've just learned it. And so it's a language to rediscover and to maintain, that means to guard the language to let it live again, cause you don't

put inside a coffin a dead thing, but you let it live again in art, in the alive language. For example I listened to a concert of Cesare Basile who did a song about a poetry by a poetess from Scordia that is wonderful. I'll tell you these four verses: "I plunged the clothes when I was ten years old, being a washerwoman is a dirty job. I left my beautiful knees on the stones, my hands was buried in to the river" they are wonderful verses. They tell a woman's life in the Sicilian streets, of a poor washerwoman who hurted her knees and her buried hands as a sort of tragedy, of drama, these buried hands like a wreck in the river. The Sicilian language has still... and this is a poetess who is 29 years old, so a very young poetess, I'm not talking about the dead ones, I'm talking about guys younger than me. So the Sicilian language has still many things to give, and to say.

Me: So an album entirely in dialect.

Moscato: Yes, at the moment I'm writing a lot in Sicilian.

Me: Can you talk about your experience at Sanremo Festival?

Moscato: Actually it's an experience that we didn't have, in the sense that the experience at Sanremo on the Ariston stage, during this unbelievable festival that Sanremo is, that is the showcase per excellence of the Italian music, we didn't have cause we got close to it in 2007 and in 2009 cause we were selected among the last 40-50 artists, from which they took 8-9 or 10 of them, based on the editions, who could have the right to get on the Ariston stage. We got close to it in 2007 with a song entitled "Sono morto da cinque minuti" that I wrote in 2004...

Dolce: And Pippo Baudo wanted to change the lyrics

Moscato: And Pippo Baudo wanted to change the end, cause he wanted to change... probably when he asked to change I don't know how it ended, cause consequences of the events are always very obscure, but I probably didn't give this enthusiasm in change it, cause it was an end that changed all the sense of the song, and then it ended that took another artist called Frank Edd, or something similar...

Dolce: It was nice that song.

Moscato: Exactly! It was nice. I think the singer is Francesco Testa, from Rome and that year he won the critics' award and he was taken in place of us.

Flaviana: You lost an opportunity.

Moscato: Life is full of opportunities and many times all that glitters is not gold.

Flaviana: But why? You could sing...

Moscato: Yes, it was a beautiful opportunity indeed, but it ended in this way. I'm happy.

Flaviana:.. in Sicilian.

Moscato: In Sicilian, there? But that song was in Italian.

Me: So, in the end, you don't have regrets. Do you?

Moscato: No, in the sense that it went well, as it had to.

Dolce: But if even Irene Grandi with "Bruci la città" was rejected at Sanremo and later it had a lot of success. It's not a big deal.

Moscato: Yes, it's not a big deal, it's not so decisive for a writer, I don't think it's decisive doing a thing or not doing the other one, cause then these events give you the possibility to sell more records, to do more concerts, so to take more money, but regarding writing, if you write, you don't do it to take money or to sell. A writer writes and that's it.

Me: We read that with your album "Malacarne", you rediscovered your Jewish origins.

Moscato: Yes, basically this album was written and produced in a period when I discovered that my name is a Jewish name, in fact "Moscato" stems from Arabic - Spanish "Mesquitos" that is the person of the mesquita, that is the synagogue. I don't know if in Palermo you went to

Maqueda Street. Near Law Major, there's an arch, called "mesquita arch". That little square belonged to the synagogue and so still today there's the name "mesquita square", "mesquita alley", "mesquita road" and in that road a new synagogue was born.

Me: In which way has this influenced your music?

Moscato: It has influenced my music, cause the main literary tradition of Judaism is the Bible, that one you all know, I don't know if you have ever read something from the Bible. I don't think it's a normal book, like the others. For sure it's a radical book, it's one of the first books of humanity, cause I think it was written in 1400 B. C., so 3500 years ago. It's a book that made Judaism, Christianity and Islam be born. It's very important. The Koran, "Qur'an" in Arabic that means the reading, tells biblical episodes, so it takes inspiration from a more ancient tradition, that is "the Torah" that is the Jewish Bible. Reading "the Torah", that you must read from the right to the left, I rediscovered a familiarity with letters, in fact I immediately learned the alphabet. I started immediately to read and to translate and it has to do with lyrics and with this record cause it tells a discovery of a hidden part of my name, that then our name is the thing that it's most evident about us, but it was hidden. The evidence was hidden. In the album "Malacarne" the stories tell about hidden people, abandoned people, the elderly, prostitutes, transgenders, murderer, criminals, prisoners, and also about our land. It's a look towards hidden things. I chose "Malacarne" as title cause it has also an assonance with "Malakha" that means angel, that is announcer. In fact they are 10 stories that announce, any story is an angel, any person who is sang in these songs is an angel who tells his own story. For this reason it has a lot to do with writing, composition, recording.

Me: What did you encourage to address the earnings of the album to Biagio Conte's refugees?

Moscato: Cause it always has to do with "the Torah", cause as it was an exercise of spiritual writing, I didn't want to make it material. So, to avoid... I fortunately work, so I don't play to live, but while I live, I play. So I don't have the necessity of earn money. It's a thing that makes me easier to make some choices. As in the writing phase, this was essentially a spiritual writing, so I thought that the earning couldn't become money in my pocket, for material needs; but give it to who is abandoned, who is hidden, who is unlucky, so that these songs become bread, so "the Torah" is also bread for the spirit, these songs become bread again for who needs it... bread, covers.

Me: We have arrived at the end of this interview.

Moscato: Thank you.

Me: We thank you.

Moscato: Thanks to you.





**Salvatore Bumbello**

## Salvatore Bumbello

Salvatore Bumbello was born in Palermo. He has been building puppets for his company “Opera dei Pupi Brigliadoro” at il Capo, for amateurs and collectors. His father Luciano did this job, but he didn’t come from an artistic family. He lost his parents when he was seven years old, his grandmother worked, he couldn’t look after him and sent him to the workshop of Francesco Sclafani: the puppeteer Commander. Sclafani became attached to him, so Salvatore’s father began to grow up in the laboratory. The first thing Salvatore learned were the frames, then the armors, then heads. He was seven years old, when he came down the first time to the lab and he made his first puppet 35 cm tall, when he was twelve years old.

But the work is patient and meticulous; twenty days of work for every puppet. He began working in 1999, not only as a manufacturer, but he also helped the puppeteers Mancuso and Cuticchio, to maneuver and to do shows and since 2012 he decided to do shows for his family company. The old workshop of Francesco Sclafani was bought from him and now it’s his home, with his wife and their three children, his young puppeteers aides. Salvo has been a puppeteer for two generations, it is responsible for spreading the tradition of puppets and puppeteers in Sicily, Italy and beyond. He is the soul of the puppets, but he is primarily an artisan working wood, cloth, metal; beats, smooth, rubs, firm, chisels.

His puppets are still used for shows and theater performances added to the UNESCO list of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. His company organizes shows at schools, on the occasion of various festivals of culture and at hospitals. Many, however, are the performances at the Antonio Pasqualino International Puppet Museum, a precious place in Palermo that supports very interesting cultural activities and representing the symbol of Sicilian par excellence in the world. Reality these that perhaps due to so much proximity and the fact that we always have them in front of us, we forget to appreciate, as well as the history and evolution of our popular traditions promoted by big names such as Pasqualino, Buttitta and many others, but also and especially by small companies such as families and companies of puppeteers. In the ‘20s there were those who made the frames, the inside of the puppet, who made the armors, who maneuvered the puppets and who helped him and each one had his job. Now do the puppeteer means doing everything from building the staging, it means manufacturer, who maneuvers and acts. The oprante is who maneuvers and makes the puppets play, while the maniante is his helper.

The opera puppet tradition was born between ‘700 and’ 800, after the example of the shows of the Neapolitan companies that they staged their own culture obtaining financial gain. Then Palermitan artisans and then from Catania took awareness of their ability to shape the wood and fabrics and decided to stage their crafts, puppets, trying to lighten the dramatic stories of the knights of France of Charlemagne cycle and his paladins, with comedy. So Sicilians give the start to “vastasate” from whose ashes will be born just the puppet theater, the largest theater dialectal expression of our region, but it has always been considered as a form of paratheatrality and not a real alternative to the bourgeois traditional theater. The idea of narration over, that is the voice of the puppeteer that simulates the voice of his paladins, has been borrowed from the long tradition of the Sicilian puppet theater, that of the “cuntastorie” who have always roamed the streets and that turned out for artisans a real resource to draw from. This kind of theater is certainly an attraction for tourists, but it no longer has the roots from which it was born that is the idea of community, of collective participation. In fact, the beginning, it was a kind of festive ritual, a liturgy for the community that found itself every night at the same hour, in the same

place to attend various “episodes” of the glorious events of the paladins who always repeated according to the same general story and the public had the opportunity to protest against the puppeteer at a time when they had not complied with the usual canons of the play.

For Salvatore, one of the reasons why the tradition is slowly fading is the difficulty of puppeteers and in general of the profession connoisseurs to be open to the community and want to hold jealously for themselves the knowledge of this creative art. According to him, it must be taught to others, even non-family members in order to involve as much as possible citizenship, ensuring continuity in the memory of what characterizes the history and the Sicilian costume. The public did not flock more as a time when this theater was the only one that the “common people” could see. Now the audience has changed and it is mainly tourists and children to watch the adventures of Carlo Magno and his paladins. According Bumbello children give him the strength to get ahead in this business. When a child sees the puppet theater this means that, among an audience of 70, 80 children, there can also be the puppeteer, because this passion comes out when you are a child. He does workshops with children, even construction, and involved them. Whenever they gave a hammer blow, they made a mark in the metal, they were right in their world of fantasies ... And they like it so much, they like it.

## Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8MQhJIZMDk>

Bumbello: Salvo, I'm Salvo.

Me: I'm Maria Giulia. We wanted to ask you some questions about your job, what you do... and we wanted to know what being a puppeteer means to you.

Bumbello: So, I started this job as my father did, cause I come from an artistic family unlike my father. He was left orphan when he was 7 years old, as my grandmother had 4 children, we are talking about in the '50s, so life was very hard, so she went to work and she left my father to a puppeteer called Francesco Sclafani, so he didn't come from an artistic family, but he had a master. So this child grew up in this world and he created puppets, and then he became an helper on the stage, cause in this job we have puppeteers, who maneuvers, helpers... anyone has his duty. When a person can create, can maneuver, can act so he is a puppeteer. So my father was only a manufacturer and a person who maneuvers. So like my father, I knew this job when I was 7 years old. I attended to his workshop after school, I observed what he was doing and I tried to imitate him, as Francesco does now and Luciano, who he is 19, did.

Me: So have you always known to want to do the puppeteer like your father?

Bumbello: Yes, yes! Cause we are four sons and only me, the youngest, I learned this art. I have two sisters and another brother and they don't even know who Orlando and Rinaldo are. So, to let you understand that when a person has it in his blood... My father had this talent and me too.

Me: So have you ever thought to do another job?

Bumbello: No, no! I did many jobs, such as the carpenter, cause my uncle is a restorer. But I always worked with my father. Sometimes I told him: “Dad I'm going to help my uncle Totuccio to restore furniture”, but after 1-2 weeks I came back to my father cause I didn't like that job. I liked creating puppets. In fact I'm a manufacturer first of all, cause my job is creating puppets. Then I became also a puppeteer, cause I helped many puppeteers and slowly you become a master, who is located on the left, on the first scenery flat, where Christians play, cause on the stage there are heathens and Christians. So the first puppeteer is there, on the left, on the first scenery flat that is this, behind here. From there he does all voices, as I did, and he gives signals to the kid to play and to stop the music.



Venera: with the step.

Bumbello: Exactly! With the noise. When the kid hears two noises, he plays the music. When I say it, he stops the music and I start to act. Then there's a reason why he is on the right side of the stage: cause the kid looks at the first puppeteer and he starts to learn how to maneuver puppets.

Flaviana: They fought and they lost their head.

Bumbello: Those are puppets with the effect, they can be reassembled. Any time they fight they lost their head.

Bumbello: These are ready puppets. Look! This is a head. Here there is a groove.

Flaviana: Can I touch it?

Bumbello: Of course! Can you see it? There's a groove on the back. When I give the signal to my helper to let they lose their head, cause the fight is led by the base. That sound that you heard was the base. That is used to make swords coincide, to understand when me and my helper must cross with each other. When I give him the signal with my head, he does like this, the head breaks off by the iron stick and there's the effect. We didn't invent these things, there was already in the '800. We pass on what we saw.

Me: So the puppet opera is considered as the origin of TV series.

Bumbello: Exactly!

Me: Why?

Bumbello: Cause firstly TV didn't exist, so people instead of going to the theatre, cause it was too expensive, they went to the puppet opera that was a popular theatre, cause they could afford it. The puppet opera was born not with armed puppets, but with pages. The two Sicilians you saw who presented the show. The puppeteer went around the village, he collected stories and he put together the show about saints, bandits...

Venera: As Neapolitans.

Bumbello: Exactly! As Neapolitans. This was a way to entertain the audience but it wasn't a continuous cycle. Rinaldini's came. They were the story-tellers in the Sicilian squares and came with the story of French paladins, these you have seen today, but they don't have puppets, they only tell the story. They are in the square, put a hat on the ground, cause they collected money. Either with a stick or with a sword, they told this story and people thanks to this Greek prosody they had, cause it's particular. There's a particular cadence, so they told the story of French paladins that had a beginning and an end. Every night there was a new episode, in fact the story-teller said, every time he finished: "for today we have finished, tomorrow we will start again" so he gave them the appointment to the next night. Theatres get empty and squares fill up, so the puppeteer thought to put armours to puppets and tell the story of French paladins. Since then the puppet opera starts to tell the story of French paladins that had a beginning and an end, about 300 days. Every night, episodes that lasted 2 hours and a half of an hour. People finished to work, they sat down with something to drink e to eat and they spent their free time.

Venera: For this reason TV series.

Bumbello: And this is was a TV series. Today we have concentrated this show that collects about 20 episodes of 2 hours and a half an hour. We concentrated the show, cause now the audience has changed. Once they knew all the characters, now the audience is occasional, so they know Carlo Magno, Orlando, Rinaldo, Angelica, Rodomonte. Everything is always faithful to the original story, we only concentrated it all.

Me: So what's your target? And how has this job changed over the time?

Bumbello: This job has changed over the time, cause before the audience came every night, then a crisis came when TV was invented in the '50s. Only in Palermo there was only 40 theatres of

the puppet opera. Imagine how many people came to see it. Over the time theatres started to close, in the '50s Tv was invented, then people didn't go to see the puppet opera. So the Palermitan puppeteer moved in the villages, so it becomes a wandering theatre. He went around all the villages and told the story in each village. In the '60s and '70s there was a crisis, but this thing started again, also thanks to people and to Antonio Pasqualino who created this museum, he made this collection, he protected this job, cause most of the puppets exposed here we can admire them in this museum, but puppeteers who failed the activity, they sold anything. In fact there are puppets in America, in Germany, all over the world. We got our history back. Today the audience is made by scholars, cause tourists are not so many, in fact I have some requests from university, some do thesis about the puppet opera, we do workshops for children. We changed the way, but we try to maintain tradition otherwise it'll get lost.

Me: A short while you talked about the fact that you consider yourself more a manufacturer, an artisan than an artist. Why?

Bumbello: Mimmo Cuticchio's father was Giacomo Cuticchio and he didn't create puppets, he bought them by Nicola Pirrotta who created them in the '20s-'30s. Giacomo Cuticchio bought puppets and he was a person who maneuvers, he maneuvered puppets and acted. Mimmo grew up with his father and became first a person who maneuvers, and then a puppeteer. He learned to create puppets and liked it, but he was born as a person who maneuvers. I also create clothes with the sewing machine, I paint, I do anything. As my father was born manufacturer, the first thing I learned was to create, on the contrary of Mimmo Cuticchio who first learned the story, how to maneuver puppets and then learned to create, cause when he opened his theatre he created the first series of puppets, he was very young, he was about 23, maybe they were bigger and heavier, but he did them. Then my father created another series of puppets, cause they were peers, then my father died in 1995 and I created a hundred of puppets.

Me: Your job needs time, dedication, passion: can you tell us the process of realization of a puppet?

Bumbello: To create a puppet you need of almost a month of work, 20 days working on it every day. I only do this, when I don't do shows, I'm in my workshop to create. Let's start with the tailor's job: we have metal sheets, models passed on by my father and new models that I made, but maintaining the same line. We start to draw on the metal sheet, we cut out with scissors, and with special hammers made by us, we have a tool that is an arch with two tips and this is called "pen of hammer" that is a pen that writes on metal, that hitting makes lines, it hems. Then we have ball hammers and we emboss the shield and the helmet. After that we weld it with a tin welding. Now I let you see a puppet. Samuele take me Rodomonte. This is a puppet cause I am a manufacturer, but I create puppets when I have time. The last time was 5 years ago. Because people want I create a puppet for them, so I have little time left and sometimes I do it for myself. This is Rodomonte. Now it's ruined cause it has worked. It's a puppet that can be disassembled. If you have a look it has joints anywhere. It can be disassembled piece by piece and this is Rodomonte. As I said before to emboss means give these hits you see here, we weld decorations. Look! This is a welding sign, it has detached and it has welded again. When it's welded it's like this, then you clean it and you remove the tin. When the puppet is all decorated with arabesques, Rodomonte has a crown, a star and a half moon, Orlando has a cross, Rinaldo has a rod, any puppet belongs to a dynasty. When the character is decided, we clean it and we start to make the structure that it's made of wood. This is a worm-eaten structure, my father made it. As it's an old structure I wanted to give it to Rodomonte. Then we create clothes with a sewing machine, we paint the head with glass eyes that look real and we assemble it, we put feathers on it and it's ready to fight.

Look how it takes the sword. It poses for the fight, it raises the shield to protect himself and I give the rhythm with my foot. One, two, three and it raises the shield.

Mario: Also rhythm gives orders.

Bumbello: Of course! Then it hits and then it sheathe its sword. Any puppet weighs 8 kilos. Take it to the handle, it's heavy. In movements it looks light, but it isn't.

Veronica: Oh my God!

Vincenzo: Oh my God!

Veronica: Flaviana open up your hand.

Bumbello: By the handle.

Mario: Can you do it?

Veronica: Lift it up! See if you can do it.

Bumbello: I created this 5 years ago. To create it you need 20 days of work. There are some collectors who order puppets for the theatre, if you want to buy it, it costs about 1300 euros, cause you need 20 days of work, plus materials. This is an alloy called German silver made of brass, zinc and nickel, then there's copper, wood, etc. Only to buy materials, they will cost 400 euros, plus 20 days of work. Indeed at 1300 euros it's donated, but if you say a higher price tradition ends.

Me: We also know you do workshops for children. What's their feedback?

Bumbello: They're very happy cause they want to work. This is positive.

Me: Which one is the pleasant side and which are difficulties in your job?

Bumbello: The pleasant side is that the puppet opera likes to everyone. Anywhere I go, anyone is very happy, especially children. It is an everyday fight. You have to stay strong and go on. It's not easy to continue something that is unknown.

Me: So, as your father did with you, you transmitted this passion to your children, too.

Bumbello: Yes, I try. If they want to do this job, I'm happy. But you don't have to force them, cause otherwise it's worse.

Venera: Is someone of them your child?

Bumbello: My children are Francesco and Luciano, he's 19, who is around. I have three children: a daughter who is 5 years old, he's 10 and Luciano is 19.

Venera: And does he want to do the same job?

Bumbello: If only! He wants to.

Venera: And also Luciano?

Bumbello: Yes. He studies, but when he doesn't, he helps me, too.

Me: So, is the biggest feedback among the local audience or among the foreign audience?

Bumbello: In my opinion, the biggest feedback is with children. When I go to visit children at school or they come here, they participate in a very beautiful way. I also hear it backstage. I let Orlando talk to children.

Me: So you have a positive feedback from them.

Bumbello: Yes, yes. This is a little cylinder piano that didn't exist before. Before live music existed. There was who played the piano, who played the guitar. As the puppeteer was moving around villages, he couldn't take the band, his helper, his wife, their 7 children with him. Otherwise he needed a train!

Bumbello: So He replaced music with this little cylinder piano. When he was moving, he took his children, who once were at least 7-8 children, so they helped him, his wife and this little piano. They arrived in a village, they rented a very large place and they prepared the stage, and they used that place as a theatre and as a house, too, cause otherwise costs were too high. After that, they found immediately a helper. In fact, in some villages I went for my shows, there was some



old people who remember they helped the puppeteer, so there are helpers all around Sicily. The puppeteer could find easily a helper cause he knew the story, so I tell you the story and every night we do the show, but the most important thing was the he knew the story. This is a little cylinder piano that has 6 melodies. I'll let you look inside of it, that it's a thing that you can't find anymore. It comes from a Spanish fabric that closed in the '50s. This is one of the smallest one, there are 5 sizes. So this is a real piano. It has a studded cylinder, this cylinder touches some hammers, and so we have the melody. Here we have the number 3 the "Valencia". Then when the music changes, the cylinder moves and touches another melody. It moves again, another one, and the last one, the "Waltz". This is the little cylinder piano.

Bumbello: Thank you! There's the biggest one. That is a little cylinder piano, too, but it's not from the same fabric. It has a little wagon that I have at home. This is a rare instrument, hard to find, so we must be careful if it breaks, cause no one can repair it.

Venera: What's its value?

Bumbello: As it's a rare piece, it's priceless. Once I saw a similar one in America, so I tried to buy it to take it to Italy, but they asked me for 1200 euro to transport it, plus the price of the little piano that was 2500 euros, totally 4000 euros. I already have it, so I am careful cause it's too expensive to buy it.

Simona: Can I ask you a question, too?

Bumbello: Yes!

Simona: You said that your father created puppets, but how have you become a puppeteer? Where did you go?

Bumbello: Cause my father who is dead in 1995, helped Cuticchio, helped Mancuso's, helped many companies. He took me with him and I played the little piano. When I was playing, I could see the puppeteer and since then I've had the passion.

Simona: So he helped, he not only created puppets.

Bumbello: No, no. He was a person who maneuvers, cause he didn't act. He helped to move puppets. So my father died in 1995, Cuticchio took me with him to help him, when I grew up I did the puppet opera. It works that you start from the last scenery flat, then the third, the second, the first and then you become the helper of the master. As Nino Cuticchio then closed the theatre, I opened my own theatre. It's been for 6-7 years I do shows.

Simona: We noticed that moving them is challenging, You must do many things at the same time. We heard the noise that Maria talked us about, we saw move them, then there was a moment with dead bodie, when you left one, and took another one. It's a mess!

Bumbello: When I started at the beginning, it was difficult because...

Simona: You have to coordinate many things.

Bumbello: Palermitan school and Catania school are different. In Catania school there are people who maneuver, who act who reads the script... Francesco don't make any noise! So we have who acts, who checks the lights, anyone has a different duty. In fact, during a show they are 10-12 people. And this is their tradition. Instead, Palermitan puppeteers have a console for the lights that is behind this panel, So I check the lights, then I play the drums, I act, I move puppets, I give signals... but this is the tradition.

Venera: For this reason you consider yourself a puppeteer.

Bumbello: Of course, cause I can do anything. I can create...

Simona: But I think we saw a puppet... She said about the legs of the puppet from Catania that Maria explained us. I think one was there.

Bumbello: No here you can reassemble all of them.

Simona: There was one with a sword.

Bumbello: Ah no, no! Here there are some puppets with the sword into the fist and those are soldiers, not armed puppets that unsheath and sheathe the sword, cause they must be ready for the fight. I always have Orlando or Rinaldo.

Simona: You need a faithful helper who understands you without speaking.

Bumbello: I'm here and I always have a puppet, so I take the sword and I fight. If I should do it any time, I would waste a lot of time, so I attached the sword with a wire, so any time he needs it, he already has it. It's just a question of comfort.

Flaviana: But they told us that the one from Catania can't move legs.

Bumbello: Maria told you.

Flaviana: Cause they are too heavy.

Bumbello: they weigh 25 kilos

Vincenzo: At the end of any show, oh my God!

Bumbello: In fact they have stiff legs, cause they drain all the weight to the ground. If they were jointed they would bend over and would be complicated. Anyway, they take advantage of the length of the stage, they are over the scene on a bridge where they expose themselves, and also lay their hands. We use the same story, Carlo Magno's but all is different. Even colours. Here Orlando is green and Rinaldo is red, in Catania Orlando is red and Rinaldo is green. All is different.

Venera: Instead talking about Neapolitans ones, Maria told us that they are a middle way among Palermitan puppets and puppets from Catania, but which one is the difference?

Bumbello: Neapolitans puppets have a different structure.

Venera: Yes.

Bumbello: But they are a mix, cause they have stiff legs, so it's a mix between Palermo and Catania, with Naples in the middle.

Simona: There's another question.

Simona Rizzo: You do all voices?

Bumbello: Yes, I do all voices, even feminine voice, cause the puppet theatre, once it was forbidden to women, they couldn't enter.

Vincenzo: Ah no?

Bumbello: Yes, it was a theatre only for men. It was forbidden to women cause they commented, but then the puppeteer to make them come, He told the story of Saint Genoveffa from Bramante, Saint Rita, Saint Rosalia and women came with their husbands so the theatre was full, and in the end they could enter. But do you have to keep on with the interview? Cause maybe I've already done the visit.

Davide Di Pasquale: Thanks from all of us!

Bumbello: You're welcome, it's been a pleasure!





**Alessandro Bazan**



## Alessandro Bazan

Alessandro Bazan was born on February 21st, in 1966 in Palermo, he got the diploma from the Urbino Academy of Fine Arts in 1987. He was among the first Sicilians, together with Fulvio di Piazza, Andrea di Marco to rediscover Guttuso's painting. In 2010 she exhibited at the Villa Guinigi's National Museum in Lucca, the "optical" exhibition. He began to move himself among the audience and gallery owners, until he got the first space to exhibit at the "La robina" gallery in Palermo in 1988. In 1994 he was entrusted with the frescoes in a cell of a restored former prison in Pretorio di Fucecchio (FI).

In the paintings of Alessandro Bazan we find a centerless painting, dynamic by vocation: on the plane of iconographic references, tonal and formal articulations, of energy, everything moves. Metropolitan nights, emptied of every sound; the small enchanted scenes. The picturesque road contradicts, the story tells, the story is shaken and then denied; in an open and sinuous syntax. The title of the anthology set up at the convent of the Carmine of Marsala tells all this in a word. Rambling. Here and there Bazan's painting proceeds, focusing and then wandering, evading. And here, on the thread of Sergio Troisi's deeply critical reading, all the hidden complexity emerges behind lightness. Alessandro Bazan at the beginning of the 90's in his first exhibitions elaborates a synthetic and expressive language that takes inspiration from the tradition of pop, visual culture, comic and noir cinema. The favorite setting of his paintings is a hallucinatory and indolent everyday, sometimes grotesque, melancholy, where men and women move in domestic interiors, such as forests or beaches. Each painting of Bazan uses the grammar of cinema. Unique shots lock the frame of the highest human tension. The color becomes fiery and very similar to the bright rainbow pulsating under the black and white noir. Even here we do not understand the geographic location of the places. The universal character is transmitted to the rooms, clothing, gestures, everything transmigrates to the truthfulness of total people. Women, passion, sex and violence. Alessandro Bazan. The Sicilian artist is the new protagonist of the cycle of exhibitions dedicated to contemporary art by the GAM of Palermo. Bazan has exhibited 60 unpublished works realized in recent years of work able to mark a turning point in the artist's search. Through the pictorial instrument, Bazan reflects on man's condition in the contemporary era, amplifying his fears and impulses and he arrives at a syncopated painting made up of individual fragments and collective memory. The final intent of his works points to an "active" engagement of the observer. "For this," says Bazan, "I chose the technique of murals, because it allows you to overcome the physical limit of the wall, like a dream vision". Despite this, Bazan considers his job a failure, involving the spectator through a unique image, through the mediation of the gaze.



Alessandro Bazan, Moderna – GAM, Palermo – 2012





Me: Observing some of your paintings we noticed some connections with Guttuso. In what is your work connected with Guttuso's?

Bazan: I consider Guttuso a great draftsman and painter. Probably for me Guttuso is a destiny because I'm from Palermo, Guttuso was from Bagheria and I paint the human figure as he did, and then there are some similarities. He wasn't look favourably when I was a guy and I started to paint, for very preliminary reasons, because Guttuso behaved badly, in the sense that he had a strong powerful cultural role in the communist party. He treated badly, in those years, the artists who made abstracted painting, so he had a bad reputation towards Italian culture, then instead we know he was a very generous person, but he didn't understand abstracted painting, because he was dedicated to a popular painting, that was available for everybody. He found the abstracted painting, hard and only for some people. Perhaps this is the most important connection that I have with Guttuso. I believe, as Guttuso did, that art is popular, for everyone, then you can have some more complicated meanings but art must be for everyone. We all understand Andy Warhol's art, then you can like him, or you can't, but his art arrives immediately to us. And then, there are other things in common with Guttuso that fascinate me. I wouldn't ever paint, for example, "La battaglia di Calatafimi" because I couldn't do it, but this is his way to travel over the time, in the sense that he tries to get back in time, seeing again costumes. This is another similar element with Guttuso. And then because we are both Sicilians and I believe a lot in the DNA. We are made of cells, the same of our land, of our olive trees. There's also something that goes beyond rationality, but before I was accused of this, in fact people told me: "You are like Guttuso". He was considered a corrupt artist, who only wanted to earn money. So being compared with Guttuso wasn't very nice. In fact, when I was a boy, I created a catalogue for an exhibition and Alberto Fiz, who is a scholar of art and economy, interviewed me about Guttuso asking me my opinion about him. I said: "Guttuso was a great draftsman", I tried to use different words than those that people used to talk about him.

Me: We noticed that in your paintings there are slender figures, that seem to grow apart from the context of your paintings. Can you explain to us what they represent?

Bazan: I have no idea. Sometimes when I paint, instead of a person, I think to paint his reflection on the water. I can't explain it better. It's a natural factor. Very often, people are made slender, reduced to the essential, because very often, for me, figures are the general architecture of the painting. They exist not as such; because then, very often, they are not nobody, or sometimes they are someone. That is, painting by heart, I realize that the figure has some features that are similar to someone I know, or someone who is part of my life. My children have been part of my paintings, many times, either on purpose or not. About this thinness of the figures, it's a natural thing for me. Sometimes I want to create the figure plastically, other times I want to make a sign, as a person was a written word, a sign and that's it. I think it depends on this. Because sometimes people tell me: "why do you paint these figures so thin?" I don't think to make them thin, actually I proceed naturally. What I care the most is to create a dynamics among colours and shapes, that gives the sense of the movement, that is the thing that permeates everything in the end.

Me: You can often notice the presence of musical characters. Why did you do this choice? And why are these paintings darker than the others?

Bazan: The first one is easy because actually... People has never asked me this second question, and this makes me think, I mean the reason of this darkness. As I told you I'm a failed musician,



so I threw my musical ambitions into painting. Actually I've been doing also for years, a sort of unions between these two things. For example, two weeks ago I went to Dusseldorf where I played with an important Palermitan musician called Gianni Gebbia, who is a jazz musician. And where, while I play the drums, I sometimes stand up and I start to draw on a big sheet of paper that I put there. I like drawing in front of an audience, this works because it's attractive, but I also did things where I was drawing with two musicians who was playing looking at what I was drawing, and viceversa, what I was drawing was connected with what they were playing. The presence of the music in my painting has always been steady in a natural way. In my atelier, a musical instrument has always been there, I have always painted and then I have sometimes stopped and I have played. Maybe this is an attempt to fuse the two things together, as maybe I haven't succeed either in one thing or the other one, because I tell to myself that I'm not a musician, but maybe I'm not a painter either. The darkness of my paintings, maybe stems from the fact that they have this atmosphere of the jazz music. Jazz has always been a music played at night, inside these pubs with few lights, with this very evocative semi - darkness. Perhaps the darkness stems from this, and then because the jazz music always has a melancholic element. The jazz I paint it doesn't exist anymore, it's of the '60s, I was born in the '60s, so perhaps this feeling of sadness is caused by this melancholia. For example I had a good time at putting together, in my painting, musicians who haven't played together in the real life. There is one that has as title "Impossible quartet", it's an impossible quartet with Charles Mingus, Chet Baker, Jo Jones, and a fourth one I don't remember. And they are four musicians who would have never played together. With painting you can go to a secret place, you can go back in time, you can do a thing that sometimes is impossible.

Me: Can you explain to us the contrast, in your paintings, between the wealth of the metropolis, and the poverty of the countries?

Bazan: I can't explain it. Thank you because you are letting me notice a lot of things. Probably this is our story, not only Sicilian's, but also of the world. Now we're having an opposite change. Cities all over the world, for example we know there are cities, like Mexico City, where 13 millions of people live. These cities have become built - up areas, and countries have got empty, then I have always thought of the Sicilian country. It's very beautiful and distressing because since the era of Greeks, when they arrived at Sicily, basically they understood that beyond the navigation, they could take care of the agriculture, of the olive trees, because Sicilians didn't cultivate, as they were shepherds. Greeks arrived and told them: "but what about all this beautiful olive oil you have?" and Sicilians answered: "Olive oil? But olives are disgusting!", and Greeks replied: "but you can do a good olive oil!" Sicily is a very prosperous land, it has a volcanic area, so the agriculture should be the first thing for us, unfortunately we had the mafia that controlled water, unlike the Arabian people that were good to find it. We still have the Arabian aqueduct that provides a part of the city of Palermo, in fact thanks to them Sicily became a garden. More than the architecture, they left us plants, citrus groves. The desolation of the Sicilian country makes me feel very sad, because you see a place that could be prosperous, wonderful, that can give many opportunities. I go to pick olives for a personal pleasure, because I know that to pick a thing for ourselves, has a great value, I like a lot doing it. At the end of a day passed picking olives, obviously your back hurts, you are tired, you want to have a shower, but at the same time you feel a great satisfaction that I can't define. It's not only that I have done something, but to have spent well my time. They made us believe that people left countries because they couldn't live, because they had to pay a lot of people and also water. I want to highlight this desolation, not because it's a natural thing, but because it isn't. Because

we must remember, returning to what we said before about the mafia, that our lives are strongly determined by this. Even though the mafia is not as terrible as it was in the '70s and in the '80s, it still exists. Until the mafia exists, nothing can develop, nothing can be cultivated, money doesn't arrive at disabled people, etc. because it's just the mafia system. I see it like this, it's an extreme point of view, but unfortunately I don't have any choice.

Me: Certainly the colour has a main role in your paintings. There's a strong contrast among soft colours and bright colours, that clash with each other, lights and shadows. What can you tell us about it?

Bazan: The lights and the shadows are the interpretation. The colour for me is light more than a shade. When I think about colours I don't think about them as yellow, green, blue... but I think about giving to the general image a determined brightness. Also impressionists considered the colour in this sense. Colour is an optical way to arrive at the light, that is the most important thing for the painter. I have always used very pure colours: blue, red.. up to a certain point, then I started to experiment with colours coming from the earth, with grey colours... but it's always a condition of your thought on a bright colour used as light. In fact, there was a period I used the violet colour and a woman told me not to do it because violet brings bad luck. I'm not superstitious in anything. Black cats have always crossed the street in front of me, and nothing ever happened, in fact I sometimes say that could happen something to say it's true, but nothing. For me colour is light that it's not only meant as lightning, but the relationship between light and shadow inside an image to call to mind something in common. Instead of saying: "do you agree with this?" I say: "do you remember this particular afternoon, or the hour of the day painted in this painting?" In fact, for example, the big one with the city looked from the top has the title "Night on day", in the sense that if you remove the sky to a landscape you can't understand if we are by night or by day, playing on the hour of the day when there's that kind of light, for me is essential. But they're not things I think, I just realize it doing them.

Me: You have an important role in the contemporary Sicilian and also Italian painting. Which message do you want to spread through your work?

Bazan: Of not to spread messages, but to do your job. I'm not a master, I have just had the fortune of teaching at the academy. Teaching is a big word, let's say that with my students I do a laboratory where we verify some things, and very often they give me more information than I give them. What I make available to them is the experience, in time, of this famous practice. But what I am trying to communicate, in this period, to my students, it's an easy concept: today the contemporary art is interested in the sociological and political science perspective, but for me the gesture of painting is always political, even though you paint a vase of flowers, it's always a political gesture, it's a will to say that you are here. One thing opposite to art is the caption, art loses its charm when... for example, Sebastiano Del Piombo is fascinating because revolutionizes the scene and he makes it become something else, this causes a mystery that you can't solve, this is art. Today's art tells about facts as newspapers do. There's an exhibition made by a Chinese artist called Ai Weiwei who did a great rhetoric about the will to do social things, so with an important international non - profit organization he organized this exhibition in many museums, in Palermo also, that tells about refugees, the Mediterranean Sea as a junction point, of all those things we know very well, so seeing them in art is a little bit frustrating. Art has to discover, not to repeat what we already know, it has to discover something different, has to find a different point of view at looking at things. Very often it was enough to change this point of view to change the human being. It's also thanks to artists if the female figure has changed over the centuries. She's passed from mother and slave of men, to authority, because the figuration of

the woman has been one of the centers of painting, but when in the past artists painted women, they didn't have such an important role as nowadays, and there's a long way to do, yet. In this painting can help our society, just being itself, without rhetoric, because in that case it becomes ridiculous and didactic. The best message is not attempting messages, but being happy with who you are, that is I am who I am, I have my limits, but I can get over them. This really creates miracles, in my opinion an artist has just to work a miracle, that the others can see it and can share this vision with him, like we do with Warhol, like you today have done with me, for me this is a miracle. For sure it will be meanings behind this. Meanings are given by the life I live, the life you live, anyone sees what it wants. Anyone of us has his own perception of the world. It's useless creating a regulation. There isn't one that regulates the perception. I say: "red" and some of you could say: "red is a nice colour!" others can say: "red is a colour I can't stand!" So how can I put a message inside? The message is the life I have and that I pass painting. That's all. When Picasso creates "Guernica", there's no anything in it, it's a bombardment, but there's no bomb, or a dead, or blood, or a broken wall, or smoke, or fire. Nothing. There's only a swinging lamp, because it is at the moment when the bombardment is about to start that Picasso fixes the image. He doesn't have the need of creating the caption of "Guernica", and yet that painting, when we see it at Reina Sofia's in Madrid, it's a big image in black and white, it tells us about all it is inside of it, even though there's no sign of anything. That painting tells us also about Auschwitz, because that is the new vision of the world. There was no need to write that that painting was made because it's absurd that in Guernica many people died due to Nazi bombardments, in fact a Nazi told to Picasso that that thing he made was horrible and he answered "this thing you made it, not me."

Me: So, do you consider painting an efficient, meaningful way, yet?

Bazan: Yes, absolutely. And it always will be, because it's a natural thing. Very often people have thought about painting as a media, but it's not like the cinema, the TV. It's a little bit like music. Until a human being will exist, he will beat the rhythm, he will dance, he will whistle, all these things are a part of us, until a child will exist he will draw. Many times people have said that painting is dead, it's meaningless, it's useless, because by now with technology you can arrive anywhere. It's not like this, because it has its own natural characteristics, that is the inner reality of the human being, and you neither can obtain it with the computer, nor you can post it on Facebook, unless you are Giacomo Leopardi. If he have had Facebook I would have logged in on Facebook every day to check what he would have written. Painting in the last century has died many times. Recently it has died again, but still today paintings are sold, because it has always been part of our culture, man has been painting since he was born.

Me: What does being a painter in Palermo mean?

Bazan: A catastrophe. I went away from Palermo, I arrived at New York. I don't say it because I am a good person, because I am not. I don't go to the church, I am agnostic. Tonight I was talking about how to see God with a friend of mine. Is God one thing or many things, or the UFO? But from a certain point of view, the fact of staying abroad, at a moment when in Palermo horrible things were happening... I went away in the early '90s, and when the Giovanni Falcone's assassination attempt took place, I was on the highway, but in that period I was in Palermo on holiday, I was going to Marsala to visit some friends of mine. The highway was blocked, policemen everywhere. Today when a thing happens you can read about it on your phone. So I turned on the radio and I started to drive towards the main road. We firstly thought an accident happened, then we passed over a viaduct and we realized that a piece of Sicily was missing, a piece of the ground was missing, and we realized that something serious had just



happened, and then we heard this news. It was heavy because it was as you were abandoned by your parents. At that moment I thought that I could have saved myself and I could have moved to New York where I would have worked more, but I didn't feel like it. I asked myself why I should have, as I couldn't do anything. I'm happy I decided to stay. For sure, my business is failing, but it doesn't matter. The point is that I could do something here, with young people, in my job. I'm not like Chinnici, a judge who went to visit a lot of schools, letting young people know about drugs. I have a less important role, but I thought that with my job I can do something with some Palermitan guys, also because they're good. In Sicily there are many talented guys, maybe because there are more difficulties. Also my colleagues who come here to work, say so. They are very moved by the creativity of the students, maybe in Milan it is rare. So I stayed here and I've never had any regret.

Me: Do you think that your carrier as an artist has been penalizing your private life?

Bazan: No. It's been penalizing my family's life, because seeing to each other is difficult. I have always been telling them: "think if I have been a judge!" It's been penalizing my financial resources. If I have had realized that years before I was richer, I would have saved my money, before to arrive at the economic crisis. Also because I've been lucky because my father supported me and helped me. I initially started this job, to get to know girls. When they asked me about what I was doing, I've always told them I was a student, then I started to paint, so I could talk about it. Once Benigni said that the reason why a person becomes an actor is to get to know girls. My job has never got into troubles, neither receiving criticisms, because it sometimes happens. Once a woman told me that I should have been arrested for my paintings full of violence, and she said I was violent in a sexual sense. I've heard any sort of things about me. Maybe there's a moment when you get tired and it happens you stop doing your job. I've never taken for granted that I paint until the end of my life. If one day I didn't feel like it, I will stop painting and I will go to pick olives, this time for work.

Davide Di Pasquale: Thank you so much!

Bazan: Thanks to you all for hosting me!



**Imre Baász**

## Imre Baász

Imre Baász (22th. February. 1941, Arad – 16th July, 1991, Sfântu Gheorghe) was a hungarian graphic artist in Romania. Between 1965 and 1972 he was learning in graphic arts deparment, in Ion Andreescu Highschool, Cluj –Napoca. His diploma work was the illustrations of the book Kalevala made at the request of the Kriterion publisher. With this work he won the II Award of Grafika Salon in Bucharest. He moved to Sfântu Gheorghe at 1976. Where until 1982 he was the guardian of the Gallery (currently the Jenő Gyárfás Gallery of the Secler National Museum).

Since 1990, he has been the decorator of the Hungarian State Theater of Cluj-Napoca. Between 1990-1991 he worked as a teacher at the Bucharest Fine Arts College (now National Arts University of București).

Since 1970 he has been participating in numerous exhibiton. He had six individual exhibitons in various different Romanian cities, and also in Budapest, but also he took part in a few group exhibitons in Lugano (Switzerland), Helsinki (Finland), and Szentendre (Hungary).

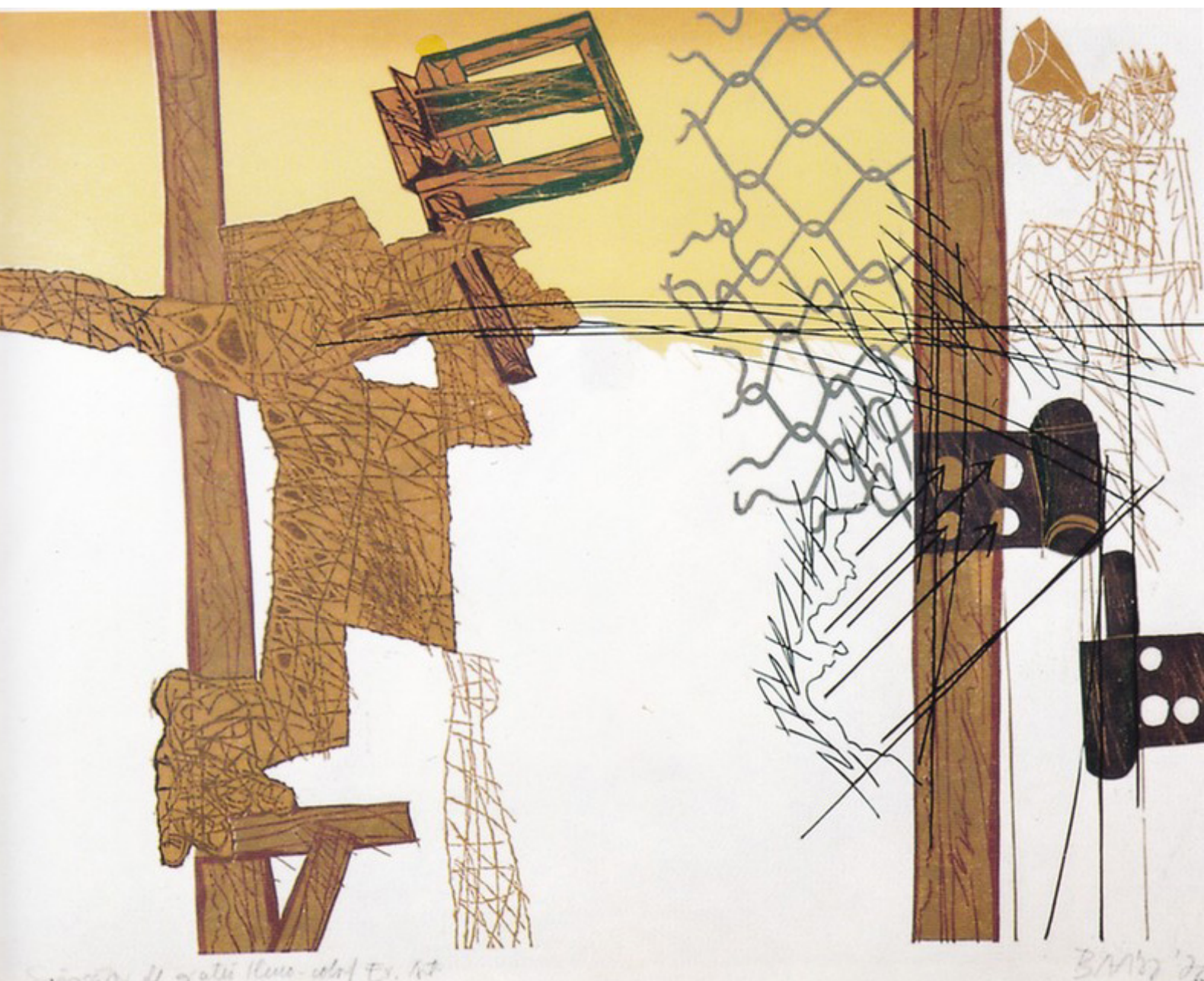
We had the possibility to visit his former atelier, where we had met his wife. She talk about his husbands work. And give to every youngster a few postcard, with Imre Baász's design.







**Imre Baász**



**Imre Baász**



**Pálma Baász – Szigeti**



## Pálma Baász – Szigeti

At 26th April of 2017 a few beneficiar of Iris House went to visit the atelier of Pálma Baász - Szigeti. She was born in Târgu Mureș, at 14th October, 1954. Since 1973 she was participating in 25 group exhibitions, mostly in Romania, but also in foreign countries (Austria, United Arab Emirates, Hungary, Switzerland, Netherlands), she had a few individual exhibitions in Romania. She lives in Sfântu Gheorghe, and she was a teacher in the Plugor Sándor Art High School. She was teaching us about a few technique, and she had shown us a few picture. We were talking about portraits, landscapes, still life, figurative and non figurative techniques.

Together we tried to draw a still life. She brought us a little table with a little box on it. She explained that firstly they have to make a frame, so they can work in this frame. And after this we were talking about perspective, they were sitting around the table, so everyone had seen the box from another perspective.

It was a really interesting meeting. The youngsters really enjoyed it. They said that it was good to work with her. They liked the atelier, there was a lot of picture. The youngsters were really happy that we could visit her, and that they could learn something with her.

Also Pálma Baász enjoyed it, she offered to us, that she wants to come to Iris House once a week, to have a drawing class with us.





**András Gyimesi – Nagy**

## András Gyimesi – Nagy

He was born on 19th of May, 1952, in Ghimeș-Făget, Bacău County. In 1976 he moved to Miercurea Ciuc, where he learned in a folk art school. He graduated in 1978. His first exhibition was in Târgu Mureș with the school. In 1980 he moved to Sfântu Gheorghe. In 1984 he joined the Jenő Gyárfás self – study group. Since he joined this group, he has exhibitions two or three times annually. He participates in individual and group exhibitions as well.. These group exhibitions were mostly in Romania (Gheorgheni, Miercurea Ciuc, Covasna, Brașov, Târgu Secuiesc, Lunca se sus), but also in Hungary (Tiszaújváros, Polgár, Budapest) as well. He had 15 individual exhibitions, in Romanian cities (Sfântu Gheorghe, Ghimeș- Făget, Lunca se sus) and also in Polgár, in Hungary. He attended in different competitions: in 1989 he won the third place in a national drawing competition, in 2001 he won the third place in an international exhibition, in Budapest. His paintings can be found in some private collections in: Vatican city, Germany, Canada, Finland, Italy, Hungary, Romania. Nowadays he is a volunteer at Iris House, occupational and daycare therapy center of Diakónia Christian Foundation. He said that he really likes to work with disabled people. He found interesting and creative to work with them. They had a spiritual world where they are living, and they are feeling good in there. He thinks that it is important to respect their creativity, to help them, but not to work instead of them, and to let them be free when they are creating something. In 24th of March, 2017 András Gyimesi – Nagy had a group exhibition together with three beneficiaries of Iris House, Iris Art Group. I interviewed Zoltán Perdi, Róbert Szabó and Levente Módi about their feelings and experiences in the work with András. Zoltán said, he knew another András in the city where he was born. He really liked this man, they had the same taste of music. And now András reminds him to this man, so he feels comfortable with him. Zoltán's favorite music is the rock, he was drawing some rock musician, but he is not sure if András likes this music. Zoltán said that he helped him to draw the lines, to have more beautiful pictures. He was really happy that they will have an exhibition together. Róbert showed me the room where he is working with András. He is really talented in drawings and paintings. He also showed me the draws he made for the exhibition, and emphasized a sketch with the Tower Eiffel. He is working a lot with András. Róbert is working with watercolor, tempera, crayon, colored pencils, graphite. He made lot of nice drawings with András. Levente said, that he likes to work with András. He has a lot of plush toys. He mentioned it that András was helping him to make the drawing about this toys. He enjoyed the opening of the exhibition, and was happy that he received a diploma and a gift from András.





András Gyimesi – Nagy

Activities with the users of Iris House







András Gyimesi - Nagy





**András Vetró**



## András Vetró

András Vetró is a hungarian sculptor, from Transylvania. He was born in 14. October. 1948. in Timișoara. His father was Artúr Vetró. He was also a sculptor. András Vetró graduated in Cluj Napoca (1973) in Ion Andreescu Academy of Fine Arts, Sculpture Department. Now he is living and working in Târgu Secuiesc. He teaches drawing and patterning in the art classes of Nagy Mózes High School. From the beginning of his career, he had interest in the historical and cultural themes. His circle reliefs and sculptures are made in wood, stone, plaster and metal patina (often aluminum).

He is a member of the Fine Arts Association in Sfântu Gheorghe, and a member of the re-established Miklós Barabás Guild. Since 1973, he participates in individual and group exhibitions. He had sixteen individual exhibitions between 1979 and 1999. These exhibitions had place mostly in Romanian cities (like:Sfântu Gheorghe, Târgu Secuiesc, Bucharest, Brașov, Cluj Napoca, Covasna, Miercurea Ciuc, Odorheiu Secuiesc). But he had exhibitions also in abroad, in France (Bourg en Bresse, 1995) and in Switzerland (Yvonand, 1999). In 13. March. 2017 a little group visited the studio of András Vetró in Târgu Secuiesc. Barbara Kiss shared her feelings about this experience. He showed us his studio, there was a lot of beautiful sculpture. He explained us, how he makes the sculptures. Firstly he made a model than according to this he creates the art work. I really liked his sculptures, I admired a few piece of art from this studio.

After this little meeting, we had a workshop together. We had to make a head, we were working with clay. I have not thought that there is so much work just with a head. I enjoyed to work with him. He taught us the small thing, which I did not imagined how can I make it. Like how to make the eyes, the ears, the lips. We had to work fast, because the clay is drying quickly. He said that the beautiness of this workshop came from the diversity. Every sculptures we had made was different from each other. It could be good if we know so much like he knows, and if he can teach us to work as accurate as he works. He said to us that it is important to pay attention to the little details. He is working also with wodd. I said to him, that once I also tried it, but I was carving my finger instead of the wood. He said it is pretty much dangerous, and if I try it again, I have to work attentively. It was so good there, I did not even want to come back.





**Ernst Barlach**

## *Ernst Barlach*



At 14<sup>th</sup> April 2017 we had a guest András Vetró. He was telling us stories how the cave man started to make art, what was the first creation of humankind, but also shared with us who was his favorite sculptor. The man whose art inspired him was Ernst Barlach.

Ernst Barlach (2 January 1870, Wedel – 24 October 1938, Rostock) was a German expressionist sculptor, printmaker and writer. Although he was a supporter of the war in the years leading to World War I, his participation in the war made him change his position, and he is mostly known for his sculptures protesting against the war. This created many conflicts during the rise of the Nazi Party, when most of his works were confiscated as degenerate art.

His first solo exhibition took place at the Kunstsalon Richard Mutz, Berlin, in 1904. After his studies, Barlach worked for some time as a sculptor in Hamburg and Altona, working mainly in an Art Nouveau style. His first solo exhibition took place at the Kunstsalon Richard Mutz, Berlin, in 1904. In the years before World War I, Barlach was a patriotic and enthusiastic supporter of the war, awaiting a new artistic age from the war.





This support for the war can also be seen in his works, as for example the statue *Der Rächer* (The Avenger), from December 1914. Barlach's fame increased after the war, and he received many awards and became a member in the prestigious Preußische Akademie der Künste (Prussian Art Academy) in 1919 and the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München (Munich Art Academy) in 1925.

From 1928 onward Barlach also generated many anti-war sculptures based on his experiences in the war. This pacifist position went against the political trend during the rise of Nazism, and he was the target of much criticism.

In 1936, Barlach's works were confiscated during an exhibition together with the works of Käthe Kollwitz and Wilhelm Lehmbruck, and the majority of his



remaining works were confiscated as "degenerate art", for example the *Güstrower Ehrenmal* (Güstrow cenotaph) and the *Hamburger Ehrenmal* (Hamburg cenotaph). Barlach himself was prohibited from working as a sculptor, and his membership in the art academies was canceled. This

rejection is reflected in his final works before his death from heart failure on 24 October 1938 in Rostock, Mecklenburg.[3] He is buried in the cemetery of Ratzeburg.

Someone asked Andrés Vetró why he became a sculptor? It was just a talent, or he inherited it? So Vetró told us a story. His father was also a sculptor, called Artúr Vetró. And his father was always thinking from where he got his artistic talent, because his father was a railway man. And after a few years Andrés with his father found a few reliefs, inspired by the sculptures of Ernst Barlach. This relief was made by his grandfather.

It was a really interesting morning; we had a meaningful time together with András Vetró. We learned a lot of new things. At the end he shared with us his philosophy about art. He thinks that art is joy and sorrow in the same time. He lives the joy of creating something new from an inanimate object, and the sorrow that when he is finished his work someone will take away his “child”.



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An international collection of descriptions of the career of European artists that have a link with the home cities of the partners of the project Art of Inclusion, realized with the active contribution of disabled learners and volunteers from the partner organizations.



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