

# PORTRAIT OF MARCO LOCCI WRITTEN BY HIS WIFE SANDRA (LOCCI)

Marco knows the history of art in depth, from rock paintings to contemporary art.

His favourite classical artists are Katsushika Hokusai, William Turner and Caspar David Friedrich; as regards modern painters he loves Jackson Pollock, René Magritte, Mark Rothko, Alberto Burri and Emilio Isgro'.

Living in Genoa he came into contact with the *Bertesca* gallery and *Arte Povera*, but he does not like being part of a movement because he is a solitary person, an outsider, with a difficult character who prefers to explore the languages of art on his own.

He has had many exhibitions, but has never had a critic who has followed him continuously.

Painting is his life, but he hates publicity. He has a solid scientific background (he reads papers on physics and astronomy) but novels of adventure are his passion (Joseph Conrad, Herman Melville, Edgar Allen Poe, Robert Louis Stevenson) and science fiction (Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Philip Dick) and are always present in his works.

He studies contemporary art and draws inspiration from elements that he inserts into his fantasy world. He pays tribute to Pollock by painting the Ligurian woods with the technique of dripping; he has taken up the colour experiments of Mark Rothko and the rhythms of Emilio Isgro'.

In 1995 he was inspired by "Raphael Urbinas MDIII" (1969) by Giulio Paolini imagining the temple of "The Marriage of the Virgin" by Raphael almost submerged by the stormy waves of Cape Horn.

In 2007, in *Archetypes*, dealing with the theme of the mystery of sexuality, he portrayed a series of male and female organs that seem to allude to "Large Woman's Pelvis" (1964) by Pino Pascali. Throughout his artistic career he has played with the surrealism of René Magritte who he loves tenderly.

In the "Babel" series (2013) he experimented with the use of tar mixed with lard, carbon black and acrylic, recalling the lesson of Alberto Burri and cave paintings.

With *Arte Povera* he shares its recreational component and interaction with the public. Above all in the '90s he created many installations in the countryside around Genoa. I remember one in particular from 1998. He procured a lot of denture casts that he hung on a stone wall in the countryside. Title: "The wall of laughter/rice" (in Italian laughter and rice are the same word).

In 1995 he created "Painting the air of the great sky", a series of gauze panels (3m x 3m) representing a great sky that hangs from the ceiling of the Church of St. Francis in Chiavari.

He loves whales and builds them in wood, stone, metal and recycled materials, arranging them around his house in Rapallo and in the surrounding countryside.

In his works there is always a search for the essential and for an archetype that resists the passing of time, far from the consumer society.

In the *Archetypes* (2007) and *Babel* (2013) series he was influenced by the reading of Giambattista Vico, a philosopher who lived in the seventeenth century and author of "*La scienza nuova*" (1774) and the books of Jorge Luis Borges.

In "*La scienza nuova*" Giambattista Vico studies the history of humanity, especially primitive eras. Marco is fascinated by the life of

cavemen and their paintings. He imagines their feelings when for the first time they came out of their caverns and saw the sky full of stars. In reality, he feels he is a primitive man inside himself, he feels the very same wonder faced with natural phenomena. I remember one night during which he spoke for hours with an owl that answered him like a human.

Of him one could say what Ingmar Bergman said of himself: "My brain is atheist, but my heart is religious".

Marco is also fascinated by the Theory of Relativity from Einstein, who did not believe in a God creator, but in the beauty of the universe.

Starting from Einstein, he tackles the mystery of time. He lives in his own interior time – Einsteinian – where he does not use a watch and hates exterior time – Newtonian – which has brought him only sickness and death.

He does not reject progress, especially scientific, but looks with nostalgia on the civilizations of the past that were closer to the earth and to beauty.

While he was painting the "Babel" series he thought back to the history of the Tower of Babel of the Old Testament and to the story of Jorge Luis Borges "The Library of Babel" (short stories 1944). In it, Borges imagines the existence of an infinite library like the universe. Inside there is an infinite number of books written in all possible languages. Men seek the book that contains the truth, but it does not exist.

Even Marco knows this, but he continues to paint the myths of the past and his subconscious and the images of the future that he will not see.

Marco has a life full of interests: he loves music, from classical to rock (he cannot live without them); he loves cooking, taking care of his

vegetable garden; he is happy when he goes into the woods to look for mushrooms, wood or stones.

He is half Ligurian and half Sardinian and therefore introverted and a little crazy. He loves the sea, but cannot swim, indeed he is scared of it. He paints ships, but suffers from seasickness. He does not like travelling. He is happy when he is in his kitchen garden and in his woods.

He is an ironic and amusing man, but with his soul he lives in a secret world where nobody can enter, a world full of fantastic adventures but also of profound melancholy and fragility. Marco only speaks of this world in his paintings.

Sandra Locci