

Patience, the virtue of handiwork

Digressions

The Show's title *La Pazienza è virtù dei Manufatti/Patience, the Virtue of Handiwork* alludes not only to the dedication and constancy with which certain works are made by hand, but also to the innate capacity of such works to last, mute and immobile. Handiwork stays where it is put, even for centuries, watching us in silence, and remains.

Facing a terracotta bowl, this obstinacy is perceptible to me, just as clearly as if I had an imposing statue before me.

Some time ago I worked as a watch-person at an exhibition dedicated to San Rocco. At day's end, when the lights went off, I stood there a moment longer watching all those figures in the shadows revealing their thigh, with little dogs at their sides with loaves of bread between their teeth

The "simulacrum" does not evoke any other underlying reality or other subject, but demands instead to be taken as real itself. Not a statue that represents something, but rather a statue that *is* something.

In ancient times, the author's name was never provided.

In many cases, the name was lost: the author is unknown.

There are forms of popular art that are the fruit of combined effort: created by subtracting things or adding things. Then there are the works produced at a famous artists' atelier of mixed authorship. What if the author did not even exist at all?

I wish certain works of mine could achieve this autonomy.
(And I always start from personal questions).

Sculptures are positioned in reality, in our own space. The same material., the same light.

Unlike paintings or photographs, which demand a circumscribed space of their own (outside the world, so to speak), sculpture is subject to the same rules as all the other objects.

What difference can there be between a sculpture and any plain object?

In the tradition, the doubt was dispelled by the choice of the subject. The human figure a selected animals. A sculpted horse, for example, was clearly a sculpture.

What about an apple? As Arturo Martini once noted, a painted apple is a painting. A sculpted apple is an apple.

Then what about we living artists who use objects, objects already made?

I like marble apples and pomegranates. I recently saw some pine nuts enveloped in a glob of amber. In the wrappings of a mummy.

The human figure and the vase. Two taboo subjects .

In the same material, the same technique: terracotta worked "*a colombino*" or by coiling.

I modeled the limbs separately. The foot. The calf. The knee, and so on. Without a view of

the whole, while maintaining dimensions comparable to those of a container.
I made a mistake: I modeled two right hands.
I modeled a left hand, but it was the only piece that shattered during firing.
This was the birth of *Il Bidestro*, a man who found a name, an identity.
In the process.

Modeling “*a colombino*” or by “coiling” means proceeding by adding “snakes of terracotta” on atop another ; you *rise* in circular fashion. The technique is as old as the world itself, and requires no equipment.
The pieces are already hollow inside.

Il Bidestro could not be left hollow, however. I put branches inside to keep him on his feet.

In the end, he too was filled. Like the vase.

(The Warrior and the Vase. The Warrior is a Vase).

Whenever I don't feel like working “*a colombino*” (also known as “by wick”), I sculpt a solid form in clay and then empty out the inside.
This makes scraps fall out: curlicues, heavier plumes, chunks.
These parts are the interior/innards. I just can't throw them away, so I fire them up in the kiln along with the rest. Then I try to give them shapes, guide them along.

I could use a guardian. A wolf, or a dog (*L'autore sconosciuto, un diavolo pennuto/The unknown artist, a plumed devil*).

And then I need a blanket, a cape, a tapestry, a shadow. A show of Bidestro, the man with two right hands.

Nomads never carry paintings or sculptures, but fabrics and jewels.
So then I need some thread. I also need a necklace.

And then a bit of color...

I'd need some pink.

On the contrary, no... I'd need a *patch* of pink.

Of light blue, yellow, gray, and violet..