



L. BALBI

LEONARDO BALBI, artist and designer, was born near Verona and lives in Mantova, where he works and paints in a historical building, a former industrial site now used as an atelier and an art gallery.

At first, the young Leonardo is determined to become a painter, so after attending the local art school, he goes to Accademia di Belle Arti (academy of fine arts) di Brera in Milan, the site of making art par excellence, where his artist soul is nourished, assimilates, takes the best of what he is offered.

Over the years, his painting gradually gives up figurative representation in favour of an informal and abstract path which originates from his cultural links with the great American maestros.

In Balbi's interpretation these different modes of expression coexist, giving birth to a perfect fusion.

His destiny as a designer takes him by the hand during a solo exhibition where an eyewear manufacturer, struck by his paintings, proposes that he can design a sunglass frame collection: it is the beginning of a job which still continues today.

After working for a decade as the company's creative manager, Balbi opens his own studio. It's the 80's which see the Italian fashion boom and Balbi becomes what he still is, the reference designer for the creation of eyewear collections for the world's top fashion stylists such as Valentino, Versace, Gucci, Calvin Klein, Dolce e Gabbana, Nina Ricci, Tom Ford, Persol and many others.

Painting and art are strictly interlaced in him and his experience as a designer greatly influences his artistic and pictorial maturity. The incessant reinventing of shapes, drawings and juxtaposition of colours perfectly blends with the world of art. With the beginning of the new millennium, his artist soul resurfaces, urging him to paint for the mere pleasure of creation, considered as the only genuine act of freedom.

The works of this artist show an extremely personal and incisive style, characterized by colour, gold, silver, the concept of harmonious beauty seen as a value which distinguishes the uniqueness of the painting and its perfect placement in very luxury and elegant sites.

This can be clearly seen in the recent evolution of his works. His abstract painting, more materic and marked by an expressionism relying on vibrant colours, is now integrated by a three-dimensional work.

To the canvas treated with the colour, Balbi imposes a movement, an "explosion" which causes cuttings and openings, making it three-dimensional and in communication with an elsewhere.

The comparison with the works of Fontana and Burri who paved the way comes natural, but with something completely new. Balbi's object is the result of an unprecedented spatial experimentation, where the set of possible perspectives multiplies like in a prism.

In his latest creations, the preciousness of gold, silver, copper interlaced with the pure and bright colours of the backgrounds pays homage to beauty, the ultimate aim of a man and an artist born to arouse great emotions!