

****Translation to English****

****Helmut Richter Fürth Nürnberger March 1996****

****Vincenzo Guerrazzi: A Realist Painter Rich in Imagination****

Vincenzo Guerrazzi lives in Genoa and works as both a writer and a painter. In both fields, he is self-taught—but that does not mean he has nothing to say to his audience. He became known as a writer in the 1970s and as a painter at the end of the same decade in Italy. His first major exhibition, held at the Palazzo dei Congressi in Rome in 1977, attracted approximately 100,000 visitors.

"Vincenzo Guerrazzi is a painter who cannot be classified within any stylistic trend, whether of the present or the past," wrote Italian critics. "He speaks his own language."

An overview of his entire body of painting reveals three distinct groups of works. However, these are not to be understood as phases of artistic development. Rather, their entirety and mutual interpenetration characterize Guerrazzi's artistic personality.

It is not surprising that someone who began as a writer would also create paintings that tell stories to the audience. Included in this group of works is, for example, the cycle about Christopher Columbus or the series of "Festivals." Through an intertwining of various historical eras with the present, through literary, art-historical, and topographical references, and by incorporating contemporary portraits, the artist creates a society situated in an imaginary space and time. The viewer understands themselves as part of this society—or must understand themselves as such—because they are drawn into this magical world born of the artist's imagination while deciphering references and recognizing figures.

The paintings in this "narrative group" range from aphoristic brevity, as seen in *Eurocommunism*, where over a hundred famous European personalities from Dürer to the Beatles are united beneath the portraits of Marx and Lenin, to works that allow infinite exploration of their central theme, such as *Columbus in Space*.

A second group of works consists of those with social criticism or depictions of everyday life among ordinary people. Examples include *The Workers' Street*, *Workplace Accident*, or *The Factory Circus*. These works are not marked by particularly accusatory pathos. Instead, their impact derives from a monochromatic palette that can intensify to the point of near colorlessness. Conversely, paintings that depict daily life—like tuna fishing or olive harvesting—are characterized by an almost impressionistic use of color, which seeks to make the unique light of the South radiate in the painting itself.

A third group of works includes portraits, still lifes, and nudes, distinguished by Mediterranean chromaticism and a graphic linearity.

It is difficult to determine whether Guerrazzi should be understood and labeled more as a realist painter or as a fantastic painter. Even the label of "fantastic realist," commonly used in our region, does not do justice to his painting as a whole.

Can we agree on this?

****Vincenzo Guerrazzi is a realist rich in imagination, profoundly moved by the things, the course of things, and the conditions of human life. He possesses a unique visual language that enables him to share this with the viewer of his paintings.****
