

****Guido Arato, "IL SECOLO XIX," July 11, 1981****

****Guerrazzi One, Two, and Three****

The transition of Vincenzo Guerrazzi from a "wild" writer to a satirical and realist painter dates back to 1977, when this singular figure of our raw, restless culture exhibited his paintings at the Palazzo dei Congressi in EUR, Rome. This exhibition at the Civic Center in Nervi, Via Casotti 1, is Guerrazzi's second show in Genoa, following the previous one held at the Palazzo della Meridiana just over a year ago.

Broadly speaking, Guerrazzi's work as a painter can be divided into three series, all of which share an underlying realism. This realism, at times naive and rich in warm Mediterranean colors, has led some to compare his canvases to those of Guttuso—a daring comparison, supported by a relatively sympathetic critic, Maurizio Fagiolo.

The first and perhaps most strikingly ambitious section is essentially satirical. The protagonists of the "Palace" life—from Berlinguer to Agnelli, from Gaddafi to Queen Elizabeth—are all or almost all present, set against changing backdrops: parties, salons, but also cafés, factories, and the squares of vast gatherings. These are the preferred subjects and settings of Guerrazzi's paintings, where he is particularly committed to identifying power: its mechanisms and its living symbols.

What is missing in this recurring parade of familiar faces and polemical targets is dramatic consistency. The politicians to whom the writer-painter directs his attention become figures in an ironic nativity scene of contemporary Italy, devoid of the human passions and ideological conflicts that might inject dynamism into their actions. In canvases like **Eurocommunism** and **Secular Funerals**, the mosaic of familiar faces obsessively dominates the space, leaving no room for anything else.

But then there is a second Guerrazzi: the naturalistic and anecdotal painter of everyday and factory scenes, such as **The Olive Gatherers** and **The Bean Eaters**. Here, the results are occasionally interesting, as in **The Tuna Fishing Scene**, for example, where the faces of politicians resurface. These moments are engaging when the artist frees himself from the constraints of pure realistic reproduction to explore more textured materiality. In the majority of cases, however, a fairly confident graphic hand predominates—the same hand evident in his nudes. In these works, the beauty of simple, linear drawing stands out entirely.

This brings us to the third Guerrazzi: sensual and the ultimate facet of an artist who has managed to make a name for himself, if only as a subject of discussion—a feat not everyone can claim.

