

Timeless Art

"Finally I have found my Maestro", Pablo Picasso was quoted as saying (although proof of this uncertain) in the presence of the enigmatic paintings of Lascaux. Undoubtedly, the fortuitous discovery of the grottoes of Lascaux in Dordogna had a strong impact on the European culture of the 19th century in terms of both visual scenes representing every day life, as well as the representation of formal language, science and philosophy. These visual sequences gave a glimpse into the worlds of reality and symbolism. Codes of communication that pose even more questions and are open to complex interpretation.

From Altamira, Pech Merle, Lascaux and onwards, the role of primitive art in recorded contemporary research has been so significant and extensive as to propel the visual art of language to its outer limits. Even amongst the great Italian abstractists, many have derived inspiration from Rupestral iconography. Intellectual curiosity and subjective questioning was born from visits to prehistoric sanctuaries or archaeology lectures on the origins of art.

Case in point, Giulio Turcato's sequence of hand prints (displayed at the monographic exhibit of CAMEC of Spezia) illustrates the way in which an artist (thanks to the advances in research in the latter half of the 19th century) resolves the images from amongst the most classic and diffuse of the rupestral repertory from the Gravettian to the Magdalenian periods.

It's not surprising that Andrea Benetti, born in the mid 1960s, developed a potent interest in Rupestral art. In recent years he has conducted research on the figurative and philological of the most ancient testimonials in human history. All of this for the purpose of the imaginative re appropriation of those fantastical origins of the artistic expressions, at the limits between cosmogonic laws and magic that pertain to the presence of the human race on earth. With the passion of an ancient explorer, armed with archaeological methods, Benetti was led to study the places, the materials and the techniques with which the paintings were executed in the grottoes. He reintroduced these paintings in his new compositions, that are strongly suggestive of the repertoire of the superior Paleolithic caverns.

Not only are certain materials such as red ochre from Fumane, used to create a mystical, romantic matrix, but to question our responsibility in regards to nature, both ethically and for our future survival.

Not all are aware that the earth does not have limitless resources and the reparation of inflicted damages must occur as soon as possible. Benetti harkens back primeval art as the voice of conscience and a signal to act responsibly in our real life.

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