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A Brush with a passion!

JOSEPH CASAPINTA

A Brush with Passion - Joseph Casapinta

In recent years, Joseph Casapinta increased his interest and passion in watercolour painting. His latest collection of watercolour work is a testimony of the great development of the mastery of this not so easy medium. Joseph successfully shows that this apparently delicate medium of watercolour can be bold, rich and dramatic. He is awfully intrigued to show the public that viewing the everyday life in another way by taking what is not first noticeable and then bring that into focus gives the viewers a new perception. His watercolour paintings make us understand to see beauty and simplicity within complexity.

Most of his paintings are done while working outside in the countryside or near the sea, many times working on his own and sometimes with other friend-artists. Plein-air painting for him is not just a means to have a direct visual exploration of what surrounds him and what exists outside in the country side or near the sea, but also serves for him as a mental therapy. Painting outdoors became an everyday matter whether it is a hot sunny day, windy or raining. Joseph enjoys including the reflections of images of people, buildings, trees and other fascinating objects which are found in urban and countryside vistas and near the sea. Some of the best examples of the Maltese coastal seascapes which the artist depicts in his work range from the fishing villages around the islands, to intriguing scenes of the grand harbour, fortifications, bastions and historic coastal towers built by the Knights of St. John. Typical of Joseph Casapinta are the studies of boats and their reflections in the sea. The artist also likes other sorts of reflections especially those captured after a rainy day in an urban setting. Interesting are his street scenes particularly those painted on the spot in Valletta. In his work one can also see the hectic city life with people bustling around the shops and historic squares with the superb cafés where one can relax and enjoy the sun during the day. Joseph also likes depicting indigenous wild fauna along typical rubble walls, wayside chapels and solitary objects like a concrete 'pill box' near the seaside which forms part of what the British left of our fortification heritage.

Light and movement play a very important role in the artist's watercolour paintings. This is achieved with an acute observation of the subjects and their surrounding environment and then expressed spontaneously with pencil or ink and then with washes of fiery colours.

Joseph Casapinta is inspired mostly by the Mediterranean atmosphere and context. In fact his watercolour paintings reflect the warmth of the Maltese stone in contrast with the deep blue sea and the brilliance of the blue skies. One can say that the use of the artist's palette is very limited. It is divided into three tones of colours, that is, the warm tones which include alizarin crimson, yellow and orange and the cold colours made up of mostly cobalt, prussian, ultramarine and moonglow blue. Many times Joseph employs mid-toned mixtures like raw umber, burnt sienna and a range of ochres. The sepia colour is also another important hue which dominates some of his compositions of his exquisite landscapes.

Joseph continues his artistic journey through watercolour painting and is always ready to explore new subjects and fresh ways to articulate his vision by frequently travelling abroad. This latest experience while working in other foreign countries provides the artist with new vistas and pictorial comfort. For him it is also a voyage of self-discovery to record nature and the splendour of what he sees. It is the artist's spiritual attitude which is also an expression of the 'sublime'.

Today Joseph Casapinta has reached a new level of technical ability and skill in watercolour painting, and his mature and elegant style in painting will surely bring him more success in his creative endeavours.

Dr. Louis Laganà

