

Da Malta per L' Abruzzo

The Italian Cultural Institute is currently hosting a personal art exhibition by Marco Arcidiacono. The exhibition was inaugurated on Wednesday 13 May 2009 by the Prime Minister, Dr. Lawrence Gonzi, in the presence of the Italian Ambassador to Malta Dott. Andrea Trabalza and the Director of the Institute, Dott. Anna Maria Di Marco, the Minister of Education, Mrs. Dolores Cristina and other distinguished persons. A good part of the sales of the paintings will go to assist the earthquake victims of Abruzzo. In this exhibition we have a selection of works which include the traditional Maltese landscapes and seascapes, images taken from everyday life, memories of past sights and studies of different human situations.

Marco Arcidiacono comes from a family of artists. His father, a veteran artist, Giuseppe Arcidiacono is an important artist in the history of Maltese Art. Like his father, Marco specialized in watercolour painting, but he is also prolific in other mediums like oils, acrylics and mixed media. His father was a key figure in the artistic upbringing of young Marco. In fact he used to accompany his father painting outside on location. Later he also worked in the family run furniture manufacturing business.

At the age of eight Arcidiacono went to England and studied at St. Joseph College in Ipswich. He later received his artistic education at Birkfield School of Art under the tutorship of Professor Gabriel Deschamps. We can say that Arcidiacono had an excellent artistic formation and his creative powers served both his work in the furniture industry and his painting.

Typical of Marco Arcidiacono are his splashes of colour which produce a misty atmosphere and salient features in the composition. The shapes suggest drama and movement by creating a sense of space, while the lines give the dynamic force and rhythm. Such creativity, expressive colours and atmosphere can be found in

Arcidiacono's striking sailing boats, seashores, sweeping seas and foaming waves. The sea was always of great inspiration for the artist.

The images taken from everyday life are another aspect of Arcidiacono's paintings. The artist is also inclined to create figurative work and throughout the years he produced works about interesting themes like old men sitting on a bench, a solitary woman walking along the beach, and other human images that sometimes express poetic reflections of life.

His repertoire in this exhibition includes also representations of the pictorial conception of the Maltese environment which unfortunately was lost over the last years. Arcidiacono's depicts distinctive landscapes of lush vegetation, trees, shrubs, and rocky land. His watercolour works are executed with patchwork-like style in a variety of Mediterranean colours.

Marco Arcidiacono is a persistent worker, who feels independent of the necessity of waiting for inspiration. The artist has great motivation for creativity in many ways. He believes that the strong light so typical of our country and the deep shadows of large expanses of plain stone walls create dynamic contrasts that only watercolours can offer. With an eye for detail and through the use of both 'dry' brush and 'wet' brush techniques to produce several overlapping layers of translucent watercolours, he is able to recreate the delicate textures we find in the Maltese landscape. It is this individual approach to realism that gives his work its captivating depth and vitality.

I am sure that Marco Arcidiacono has much more to give to the Maltese public. Today the artist is still exploring new subjects and also experimenting with various mediums and this will eventually be another milestone in his artistic endeavour. The exhibition remains open until the 29 May 2009.

From Malta to Abruzzo, Marco Arcidiacono's exhibition at the Italian Culture Centre, Valletta, review on The Sunday Times, 24, May 2009.