GIANNI TESTA AND THE “DIVINA COMMEDIA” SET FREE

Like the “Nuvola” (Cloud), by Fuksas, in the “Palazzo dei Congressi” in Rome has the purpose to be an happy between reason and feeling, i.e. between the rational, classic soul of Ancient Rome and the imaginative and baroque spirit of the modern capital, in a similar way we can appreciate the inconographic idea of the Divina Commedia conceived by maestro Gianni Testa as a milestone along a road crossed before by Botticelli, Stradano, Blake, Delacroix, Doré and Dalì not forgetting, of course, Guttuso and Sassu.

Maestro Testa, according his ingenuos, personal style, pays an original tribute to the main Italian Poet of any time along the three kingdoms beyond human life: a painting as a *medium* between the *Ecce Homo* pending forever between the sorrow of the human condition and spirit.

This condition follow both the path and the task of Dante’s masterpiece; a *substantia in fieri* as a liason, a joining line uniting the human being and with eternity.

The first step, of course is inside the “selva oscura, ch’è la dritta via era smarrita”, from the sin through a voyage marvellous, terrible and impossible linking the sorrow of the human condition to the light of God which will dominate the paradise and the very night with the final stars welcoming our voyagers.

The matter maestro Testa uses is the very partnership *psyché* - God, something which cannot be explained, but which is, anyway, eternity and which dictates the images of the poem; a symbolic magician rich of colors, sometimes predictable, some other amazing, where any detail is the tile of a single mosaic, fruit of a flashing act that portray the souls like a wind blowing according a purpose we are unable to understand, just pushing us. Joy and sorrow in a never ending search inside and outside.

It would be too easy to limit ourself to admire the red of the hell, the ash grey of purgatory and the glorious blue of paradise.

Dante is far from a scholar. He could be considered the prototype of the future, romantic hero becoming, in its last version, the creature proposed by Nietzsche**.** But actually he’s dragged in a poetic maelstrom within his mind as, according Oscar Wild: “Art, as Plato was well aware and far prom happy, induces a sort of divine follies. It’s not the product of artistic inspiration, but let the audience to be inspired”

Maestro Testa’s aim is not mere aesthetics, even if this target is a direct hit, but an effort to consider the earthly transience and, more and more, the free will, right of any human being. A condition which changes any material state acting as substantia in fieri connecting psyché to eternity, the Lord and their common idea: art.

Maestro Testa may so propose a different review of the Divina Commedia playing a character looking not only for knowledge and redemption, but as the very history of mankind. A different and precious bridge between us and God.

Such a path is much beyond Caronte or Malebolge; it’s a confrontation, not a fight, between ourselves and ourselves, metamorphoseon according Apuleius, a road the modern society seems to have lost like during the XIV Century before the One Hundred Years war: nihil sub sole novi again.

It’s so quite understable the natural repulse to give up the enterprise of such a search. But the human condition again does not allow this choice as we cannot be as defiant as Dante. And Maestro Testa takes up the gauntlet for himself and for us, with no exception.

This is his reading of Dante: a battle cry for freedom.

Pavia, March 4th 2021 Giosuè Allegrini