

“EZIO GRIBAUDO - Beauty will Save Us”

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SYNOPSIS

The early 1930s were hard years that conceded nothing to hedonism. The first day of kindergarten Ezio Gribaudo was struck by the graffiti of a Pinocchio engraved on the school desk. The encounter with this attempt to give shape to the unshapely, creating beauty, took on the value of an event that enchanted him to the point of its becoming the pivotal point on which he then built his life.

In this documentary 90-year-old Gribaudo welcomes us into his studio, a *Wunderkammer* with large windows framing the Mole Antonelliana and the snow-capped Alps, overflowing with canvases, photographs, dinosaurs, aviaries, theaters of memory, pyramids and tools of the trade of a lifetime.

He tells us that there has never been a day in which his hands have not traced a drawing on paper, given life to a sculpture, a painting or created artifacts of all sorts; hands that have never ceased to be animated by the curiosity to experiment with techniques, materials, tools, to be engaged for the simple taste for craftsmanship. His eyes still sparkle with the freshness, playfulness and poetry of his first encounter with art. It is thanks to these traits that Gribaudo was able to conceive the enigma of the logogrifi and flani, saccogrifi and metallogrifi.

In his life he was bestowed with some of the greatest awards in the world, the XXXIII Venice Biennale (1966), IX National Quadrennial of Art in Rome (1965), IX Biennial of Sao Paulo in Brazil (1967). In 2003 he was awarded the Gold Medal of Cultural Merit, for his maturity as an artist and international fame, by the President of the Italian Republic, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

Today his works are exhibited in the most beautiful temples of art: MoMA in New York, Museum of Imagination in Hudson, NY, Peggy Guggenheim Collection and Ca 'Pesaro in Venice, Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris, Petit Palais Musée d'Art Moderne in Geneva, Kunstverein in Göttingen, Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, Accademia Albertina of Fine Arts and the National Museum of the Risorgimento in Turin.

From his early twenties, he always merged his artistic work with that of publisher, creating more than eighty monographs on the greatest achievements of twentieth-century art. He gave rise to a publishing house of significant relevance offering, for the first time to a wide audience of readers parched for life after years of cultural numbness, an opening on the most important artistic avant-gardes. He contributed to disseminating Italian excellence abroad, knocking on Abrahams' door in New York to propose the publication of the first book on Turin's Egyptian Museum, a publishing masterpiece that has its roots in the best Italian *savoir faire* of Renaissance tradition.

All the major artists wanted to be part of his collection: Chagall, Miró, Moore, Max Ernst, Kandinsky, Bacon, de Chirico, Fontana and many others. In a few brushstrokes he carries us on the carousel of his encounters bringing to life astonishing memories.

Ezio Gribaudo participated in unique seasons: in 1967, the creation of the great *Cuba Colectiva* mural in Havana; on a trip to New York with Fontana in 1961 he went in search of the beating heart of *action painting* ; in Tokyo he met Gutai. His global immersion in the world of artists runs from watching a Wimbledon final with H. Moore to slight regret when he confesses to having met Picasso when he was too young to be able to fully appreciate the stature of the giant he was so lucky to meet. He consumed his eyes seeing such beauty and discovering landscapes around the world hardly imaginable even in a dream.

Strolling through Turin he vehemently sculpts a portrait of a narrow city prone to power with which he has not wanted to identify. We follow him to Moncalieri and witness the unveiling of his latest work: a dinosaur engraved on the side of a stunning prototype by famed car designer Giorgetto Giugiaro: *White on White*. He becomes inflamed at the paradoxical rhetoric of *ugly* that informs so much contemporary art and enhances the saving function of beauty. He assures us that the future is still full of promises.

In the succession of stories and anecdotes, Gribaudo also discloses his particular connection with the city of Milan. He moved there as a young student to graduate from the Brera Academy, preferring it to the Albertina Academy in Turin, because he was fascinated and intrigued by the great personalities that attended and taught at Brera. It is during this period that he makes acquaintances with artists, critics and gallery owners of the Milanese capital, some of whom later proved to be among Gribaudo's strongest human and artistic relationships, like the one with the great Lucio Fontana.

Thus the singular story of an artist, who was able to shape his life to his vocation, widening his boundaries and possibilities to experience the world in a surprising manner, scrolls before our eyes. Viewing this documentary Gribaudo's legacy is in our hands: the shining example of a life constantly oriented toward what really animated it, the ability to continuously infuse it with new vital lymph and thus give it its fullest meaning.