

GIOVANNI ROBUSTELLI MULTI-COLOURED GRAPHISM
Spazio Papel Art Gallery, Milan 2014

I am not sure that «Spazio Papel» art gallery can be considered as following a true publishing policy, which would not be in any case the right institutional task of an art gallery. However, the gallery's recent approach reveals a precise course of action, specifically aiming at discovering and promoting artists not yet widely renowned. In the past years, through the collaboration with internationally famous artists such as Emanuele Luzzati, Sergio Toppi, Ferdinando Tacconi, Ivo Milazzo, and José Muñoz, and by displaying and publishing their works, Spazio Papel created several meeting opportunities and facilitated cultural exchanges with young artists. That's why it might not be a "school", but it definitely plays the role of a "workshop", at least if you define as a workshop the place where an institution aims at discovering, pampering and "breeding" young talents. And actually Spazio Papel has really acted as a springboard in some cases, as it has happened with Giovanni Robustelli, an artist that came out with his head held high from this challenging opportunity. Robustelli owes to Papel his artistic debut as well as the starting point of a path bordered by unusual flowers, that blossomed in different smells, colours, and shapes, if we may use this symbolic suggestion. Robustelli is not a very popular illustrator as it was the case in the past of famous artists that we won't even mention here. And this does not seem to be his ambition either. His work is refined, almost as if it was to be appreciated only by discriminating taste, by connoisseurs, or experts with a cultured aesthetic sense. This is the impression that comes out from his works that Spazio Papel started publishing since 2009. In the same year the gallery exhibited Robustelli's works inspired by Carroll's Alice in Wonderland, Collodi's Pinocchio, and a collective exhibition on "faces" – together with Paolo Dalponte and Sergio Toppi. The gallery also published elegant portfolios for these works. In the following years, Spazio Papel and the artist kept collaborating with the same approach on different works, such as Hemingway's The Old Man and The Sea, The Magic Flute with Mozart's music, E. L. Masters's Spoon River Anthology.

It is a "palette" full of literary inspiration, counterbalanced by the incredible variety of Robustelli's graphic palette. He proves to master a remarkable ability, above all in obtaining detailed sketches with a very thorough visual technique by using the "humblest" tool: the ballpoint pen. With it, he manages to achieve incredible results that can be compared to the ancient classical engravings. But he proves the same competence in mastering also watercolours, acrylic colours, and the several chromatic nuances of oil colours and crayons. All this is not achieved by a "naturalist" approach, or a "photographic" style. On the contrary, though his images are always easy to read at a figurative level, Robustelli's perspective is always widely symbolic, often suggesting images that are on the border of surrealism.

Such a wide variety of techniques offers Robustelli the chance to reach a wide range of figurative results. Basically, it seems to represent the inner meaning of what is usually called "the multiple facets of an artist".

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