

Jean Dubuffet in Lucca

On show from 12th February to 15th May 2011 at the Lu.C.C.A. museum is the exhibition "Jean Dubuffet e l'Italia", curated by Stefano Cecchetto and Maurizio Vanni and produced in collaboration with the Fondation Dubuffet. An exhibit comprised of 60 works, for the most part unpublished, that brings Dubuffet back to Italy after about a decade and illustrates the links between the artist and our country.

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Rereading the works of the father of Art Brut could mean investigating Jean Dubuffet's artistic work on paper through a famous exchange of correspondence he had with Giordano Falzoni - journalist, intellectual and artist - who, through his article on the "Il Mondo Europeo" of 1st November 1947, presents this artist to the Italian public for the first time. By introducing the critical debate on the painter in Italy, in his analysis Giordano Falzoni catches the symptomatic features that pervade the various evolutions of Dubuffet's creative process, above all in this particular phase - between the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the '50s - of his artistic production. In this period, research turns into invention and the consequent works feel the effects of Art Brut and hence of a sudden dusting of innocence, catching the features of that unexpected marvel as only crazed men can.

In those years, a great friendship bound by intellectual affinity is born between Falzoni and Dubuffet, testified by the correspondence that the two hold starting from the moment when Dubuffet left for North Africa, in particular for the Saharan territory of El Goléa, remaining there from November 1947 until April 1948. The letters contain splendid drawings which, in the case of those made by the French artist, find an interesting equivalent in the notepads produced during the journey.

For the painter - then in search of new creative stimuli - fascination with Arab culture and with the desert is embodied through the representation of camels, gazelles, palm trees and other living beings of the area, object of a vital and partaken investigation of African life. About this experience, Dubuffet will write: «c'est un pays très extraordinaire». Feelings that, in parallel, will be elaborated in his paintings.

The correspondence exchanged by the two men thus becomes a veri-table artistic relic, precious vehicle of communication. Dubuffet wrote very personal artistic letters which, besides text, also contained small paintings on paper made with pastels or watercolors.

And all illustrated and exhibited at the Lu.C.C.A. Museum, in the show "Jean Dubuffet e l'Italia", where a hall is dedicated to the works typical of that period inspired by his journey in the Sahara desert.

Small gouaches and pastels on paper that allow the viewer to experience the fascination of the places and people that he met during that unforgettable journey experienced through a mixture of marvel, lucid dream and reality.