

Oliviero Rainaldi – About him

Achille Bonito Oliva

Critic and art historian

"Sculpture is a genre that wants to be forgiven, because of its concrete and three-dimensional intrusiveness, and its physical occupation of the space that surrounds us. (...) The sculptor is a builder who, as Arturo Martini once said, speaks with the accents of a dead language. You, dear Oliviero, have the task of uttering to the sculpture the command: "Lazarus, get up and walk!" You have the task of removing the work from any suspicion of monumentality, even if this is miniaturized by the good taste of the materials. On the other hand, for grace received, we are equipped to perceive a swift resurrection of sculpture, but also to wish this for you." [Oliviero Rainaldi, *Il Ponte Contemporanea*, 2004, Rome]

Danilo Eccher

Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome (MACRO)

"Rainaldi's is a sculptural practice that is based above all on an extraordinary technical ability. He is able to create a dialogue with plaster, lead, bronze, marble, terracotta and glass, by using a well-established and extensive vocabulary of materials that has its own soul, an own expressiveness and a voice, which is instantly recognizable. In this way, the skin of the work is not only limited to its formal aspect, but it re-appropriates its own linguistic value that indelibly marks the story that is being told. Among these materials, Oliviero Rainaldi has a certain predilection for plaster, because of its fragile instinctiveness, and its sudden ability to freeze a gesture, coagulate an expression and retain the liquidity of a form. At the same time, due to its fragile whiteness, plaster represents an absence, a distance and an emptiness that makes every image impersonal, taking it away from the descriptiveness of daily life and placing it within the sphere of the memory and the symbol. The same impalpable poetic complexity can be found in the tender

resistance of folds of lead or in the stiff veins of marble. On the one hand an undefined figure emerges from the shapeless manipulation of a sheet of matter that seems so cumbersome and resistant, while on the other hand, there is the discreet suggestion of a story that can be seen emerging from the countless gradations of the marble surface. (...) Oliviero Rainaldi is an anomalous sculptor, skilled and assured within his own plastic language but also poetically immersed in the atmospheres of pictorial improvisation and the fragile spirituality of drawing. His art is the result of a delicate balance between the sophisticated elegance of pictorial narration and the powerful presence of authoritarian materiality. It is a form of art that is suspended at the point of overlapping of several different languages, and that clings to the conspiratorial silence of a poetic meditation." [Oliviero Rainaldi, *Electa*, 2006, Milan]

Claudio Strinati

Superintendent for the Roman Museum Complex

"What we see in this exhibition explains the fairly simple fact that, by greatly enriching his creative horizons, a master at Rainaldi's high level can, or perhaps should, sink as far as possible into the idea of a quintessence that is neither sacred nor profane but that is

profoundly "true".

The journey through the works of this exhibition, most of which are fairly recent, is a coherent and homogeneous journey, often supported by a confident and rigorous relationship with a type of clientele towards which the artist has a mentality that is strongly indebted towards the Renaissance and Baroque periods of the past. Rainaldi has thus constructed a world of signs that are plainly evident and that can be immediately deciphered, which stem from a gruelling struggle against the most abstruse complications, complications that he astutely decided to face even beyond his most spontaneous intentions (...). It is appropriate to say that in the context of contemporary discourse Rainaldi "emerges" as the constructor of a dimension of high awareness and dignity from which springs a kind of solemn

elegy that consecrates an idea of art marked by discretion and firmness, born from the creativity of a gentleman who is overloaded with many noble sentiments but who is also reserved and sober. "[Oliviero Rainaldi, Electa, 2006, Milan]

Ludovico Pratesi

Critic and art historian, journalist for "La Repubblica", and director of the Pescheria Market Visual Arts Centre of Pesaro

"At the dawn of the third millennium, there are very few contemporary artists who are able to produce sacred art while maintaining the interpretive force of their own language, without becoming too dry and didactic. It is a trap from which very few have managed to escape, and they are connected by a thread that unites masters such as Henri Matisse, Renato Guttuso and Gino Severini with personalities who have been active in more recent times, such as Dan Flavin, Mimmo Paladino, Enzo Cucchi and Marc Wallinger. "[Oliviero Rainaldi. Santa Maria degli Spiazzi, Terni, for the In-Sacro collection, 2005, Rome]