

PIRRO CUNIBERTI
Sognatore di segni

Art Warehouse Zattere
Fondamenta Zattere Ai Saloni 47 – 30123 – Venice

opening 11 May 2017 – 6 pm
11 May – 30 September 2017

*On the occasion of the 57. International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia and since a year of the artist's loss, the exhibition conceived and promoted by **Galleria d'Arte Maggiore G.A.M.** in the spaces of **Art Warehouse Zattere** pays tribute to **Pirro Cuniberti**, a great figure in Contemporary Italian Art. Imposing but discrete, the artist assimilated the european suggestions to create an original work in the world of painting or, better, of the drawing. The exhibition, curated by **Francesco Poli**, continues in fact the artist's choice to abandon painting to dedicate exclusively on on small dimension works on paper. In the exhibition a selection of works realised on the same sized paper, the usual A4, is transformed into a sort of mosaic made by little tiles composing Cuniberti's thought and his own unique visual language. The catalogue edited by **Silvana Editoriale** is enriched by a critical contribution by **Flaminio Gualdoni**.*

On the surface of the paper, Cuniberti develops his own imaginary alphabet with lightness and harmonic balance, using the basic elements of the pictorial language (like the sign, the line, the point, but also letters and numbers). In this way, the artist gives birth to landscapes, still lives and free figures which are suspended shapes on the border between the world of imagination and memory, stories that are not forced to answer to a logical order, but rather are illusive appearances quickly taken in their manifestation and so forever fixed on the paper by traces of graphite and shadows of colors. What clearly emerges from the exhibited works is the inspiration from Paul Klee's art, that Cuniberti could admire exactly at the Venice Biennale in 1948. "When I saw a Van Gogh I almost fainted, but then I saw Paul Klee's works and my feet were not touching the ground". Starting from the great master's work, Cuniberti transforms the most geometric traits in a more fluid language and in an open universe of improvisation, where we can find traces also of his acute irony. Works with "hard signs, soft and faded signs, signs that enclose clear shapes, signs that allude, shelled signs, thrilling signs..." like the artist himself loved to define them.

Therefore, the idea of the exhibition is to create a path that is entirely played into an ironic, lyrical, magic "signs' land", where the artist moves with a light walk, bringing to our attention, from time to time, a fairy tones' landscape, a private and intimate world, a secret journey that becomes, however, real thanks to his "exact and allusive" painting like Francesco Arcangeli defined it. An inexhaustible research accomplished by an artist defined "patient like an archaeologist, rigorous like a scientist, gloomy and fantastic like an alchemist".

Pier Achille Cuniberti, known as Pirro, was born in Padulle di Sala Bolognese on 10 September 1923. He studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti from 1945 to 1948 as a student of the famous artists Giorgio Morandi and Giovanni Romagnoli. He graduated in 1948, the same year that he visited for the first time the Venice's Biennial, a fundamental experience for his artistic career. He followed the Virgilio Guidi's class in 1949 and in the meanwhile he realized an important number of drawings, pastels, temperas on paper, a series of small oil paintings, but he will destroy everything of this initial phase. In 1952 he started to use the ballpoint pen to realize a series of drawings, on paper machine, that achieved abstraction. Among the solo and group exhibitions, his work has been exhibited in many important institutions, like the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo dei Diamanti, in Ferrara, the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and the Centre George Pompidou in Paris and the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna in Rome. He passed away in Bologna on 5 March 2016.