



## **ROME REVISITED HOMAGE TO BERTEL THORVALDSEN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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#### **I ROME 1987-2021**

My life changed the first time I came to Rome! I was overwhelmed, euphoric and excited about the beauty of the place, the people, the light, the architecture, the squares, the museums, the sculptures. And I loved the way of being together, the way of communicating with each other. Everything was lively and intense. To me there was clearly a stronger impact of positive energy than I was used to living in Copenhagen.

1st of June 1987 became the beginning of a dream to live my life in the Mediterranean: Immediately I got the feeling that I would become a better artist and a more qualified human being if I lived my life in the Mediterranean/Latin culture. At the beginning I was focused on the Project of making drawings, water colours and paintings for a book about 40 squares of Rome, "le piazze"; it was the most wonderful key anybody could have to know the physical anatomy of the eternal city! Because the concept was to do and finish the Works as much as possible "in situ", with the view point exactly in the same way as my hero C.W. Eckersberg did. When "the father of the Danish painting" was in Rome 1812-1816, his working method, painting and finishing the piece on the site, in front of the motive, was the avant-garde of European "plein air" painting.

Eckersberg was, along with John Constable, among the very first who developed this method that meant a decisive refreshment and innovation to landscape painting. To me it was essential to master painting without using photography in the process.

Years later I realised that the dynamic feedback between working directly from the motive or the model and simultaneously watch photographs was a perfect vehicle for me, recognising that several of the painters I admired most had done exactly that: Hammershøi, Krøyer and Tuxen amongst many others.

Altogether I have had the privilege to stay almost 9 months in Rome that have resulted in 3 solo exhibitions, visual material for two books, a great deal

of paintings, some of them especially commissioned; an enormous inspiration!

Thanks to my experiences in Rome and Italy in general, I decided to move from Denmark to Barcelona, where I have been living now for 27 years.

## **II TERNI FALLS FESTIVAL 2020-2021**

I was very happy to receive the offer from Associazione Porto di Narni to create an exhibition that would celebrate the bicentenary of Bertel Thorvaldsen's visit to Cascata delle Marmore on 14th December 1820. It was also a pride to have been recommended to the organiser of the Terni Falls Festival by The Thorvaldsen Museum in Copenhagen.

I am really pleased that, in spite of the difficulties the pandemic proposed for a long time due to which the exhibition had to be postponed, finally it has been possible to present it in the Museo Diocesano and be part of the Terni Falls Festival 2021!

## **III CONCEPT AND COMPOSITION**

Bertel Thorvaldsen and his Museum have been important references to me since my childhood. During my years as a young artist in Copenhagen this very special museum was a temple, a sanctuary for inspiration and an oasis in the heart of the city and I feel that stronger than ever today.

I have always wanted to investigate in painting the sculptures by Thorvaldsen. I admire his artistic vision and skills enormously and specially his extreme sensitivity. There is a specific focus on the sculptor as a portrait artist. From my experience, drawing portraits from live model since I was 13 and studying all kinds of portrait expressions, it is my opinion that B.Thorvaldsen is the best portraitist Denmark ever had.

His level of proportional accuracy, psychological understanding and harmonious sensitive presentation is unparalleled amongst Danish painters, sculptors and photographers.

The basic idea of the composition of this exhibition is to reflect the concepts I have developed since 1994; in the 14 works inspired by Thorvaldsen and all the works related to Rome: "Introspective naturalism", "Multiversal realism" and "Wo es war, soll Ich weden".

## **Introspective naturalism**

The aim is to consciously use a recognizable external motive, a kind of mirror or reflection point for an inner state of mind and to elaborate this interaction between inner and outer perception by juxtaposing abstract, or non-recognizable parts on a divided Surface. DIVIDED SURFACE to create suggestions to work out a visual introspection; an effort to transcend the separation between "inner" and "outer" reality.

## **Multiversal realism (Contrapuntal realism)**

The term "multiverse" was intended on 1895 by the american philosopher and psychologist William James (1842-1910). This initial idea of many "parallel" universes instead of only one has since been used in cosmology, physics, astronomy, philosophy, psychology and fiction. My concept of multiversal realism in painting focuses specifically on the act of visual perception and the complexity of seeing.

Conceiving the divided surface of painting requires a simultaneous perception.

Today I prefer the expression "Contrapuntal realism" for this artistic concept. Paraphrasing the definition of musical Counterpoint, we can say that: In this kind of painting "counterpoint" is the relationship between two or more separate parts (with different textures/types of canvas, different tonalities, different styles/manners of painting, etc.) which are harmoniously INTERDEPENDENT but yet independent (in "rhythm" and "melodic contour").

## **Wo Es was, soll Ich werden**

This was the strong and beautiful maxim of the whole psychoanalytical project by Sigmund Freud (\*) from his 31st Conference in 1933.

It is usually translated into English as: "Where id (the unconscious; "the unknown") was, there ego (the conscious; "knowledge") shall be".

Since very young I have considered that it should be a slogan for the artistic process; at least mine.

In 2008 I finished a painting, (which I started in 1981) (\*) with this title and since then, I have used the phrase to describe the continuous evolution in my artistic experience, concept and criterium.

During my whole life I have left works in the process because I didn't know how to finish them and many years later suddenly I see how they should be concluded as a consequence of what I have learned in art and life.