

SWEET ICONS

Roberto BERNARDI, Valentina DIENA, Claudio FILIPPINI

Opening Reception: **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 2024, H 11am – 1pm**
(The Gallery will then remain regularly open from 2 pm to 5 pm)
Dates: September 21 – November 2, 2024
Locations: **PUNTO SULL'ARTE** | Viale Sant'Antonio 59/61, 21100 Varese (Casbeno)
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www.puntosullarte.com
Visiting Hours: Tuesday – Saturday: h 9.30am-5pm
Critical text: Mario Chiodetti

Roberto Bernardi, a world-renowned artist, exhibits his exceptional works at the SWEET ICONS three-person show by PUNTO SULL'ARTE. Alongside him, artists Valentina Diena and Claudio Filippini showcase their refined works with a strong conceptual charge and exceptional technical execution. The OPENING RECEPTION of SWEET ICONS will be held on SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024, from 11am to 1pm at the main Gallery in Viale Sant'Antonio 59/61 in Varese (Casbeno). The artists will be present.

PUNTO SULL'ARTE reopens the exhibition season with a powerful trio show. Three artists, three different ways of ironizing and sometimes denouncing the superficiality of our way of life, often focused only on appearance and self-satisfaction. Their works go beyond the canons of hyperrealism, perfectly capturing everyday life with common objects and depicting famous Superheroes transformed into ordinary people dealing with everyday life.

ROBERTO BERNARDI relies on the magnificence of color to demonstrate how appearance is essential in the modern world, a world where we are surrounded by false, polished, and perfect beauty. The exhibition features oil paintings and sculptures depicting candy jars, lollipops, gum, and the iconic "Oreo" cookies. The artist's intention is to provoke, to stimulate reflection on how something that appears so perfect on the surface may hide a shadow, a hidden soul. "In my paintings, I capture the essence of exhibitionism that prevails in this world, the desire to appear aesthetically better than we truly are. I think, for example, of the profiles that many girls create on social media, especially on Instagram, where they appear so perfect that they seem unreal. Just like candies, beautiful and shiny, irresistible," emphasizes the Umbrian artist in the critical text. Bernardi's great art can be found in famous American and European collections, including the Eni collection and the prestigious collection of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. In addition, between 2022 and 2023, some of his sculptures were auctioned by the famous auction houses Sotheby's and Phillips with excellent results.

VALENTINA DIENA for PUNTO SULL'ARTE presents the series "Icons", symbols of the contemporary "wrapped" with white adhesive tape and the word "FRAGILE" in fiery red. The artworks are a clear reference to the great artists of the 21st century, from Jeff Koons to Maurizio Cattelan, and are entirely created with colored pencils, a tool that Diena has loved since her youth. Her work is almost a spiritual exercise, a sort of self-control of the mind, which must adapt to the slow rhythm of pastel drawing. The excellent technique and strong conceptual charge of her works have earned her a place among the candidates for the X VAF Foundation Award, and currently some of her paintings are exhibited at the Stadtgalerie in Kiel (DE). Following the German stage, the artworks will return to Italy to be presented at the prestigious MART Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Trento and Rovereto on the occasion of the award ceremony.

CLAUDIO FILIPPINI, a painter from Brescia, is an important witness and descendant of the Italian figurative research, with numerous exhibitions in public and private spaces and an important solo exhibition curated by Maurizio Bernardelli Curuz in 2003. Often compared to artists Ennio Morlotti and Edward Hopper, Filippini has always painted with oil, which is slower but allows for many more effects than acrylics, as stated in the

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critical text of the exhibition. On the occasion of SWEET ICONS Filippini wants to inaugurate a new vein of his painting, less canonical and more provocative. For PUNTO SULL'ARTE, he has created a series of large canvases in which the famous DC superhero Batman is confronted with the everyday aspects of existence. The artist performs a sympathetically irreverent act towards those who always take themselves too seriously, demonstrating that superheroes are much more human than we think.

The artists will be present at the Opening reception that will be held on SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 from 11am to 1pm at the main Gallery in Viale Sant'Antonio 59/61, Varese. The Gallery will then remain regularly open from 2 pm to 5 pm. The exhibition will be open until Saturday, November 2, 2024.

A BILINGUAL CATALOGUE featuring reproductions of the exhibited artworks and the critical text will be created by PUNTO SULL'ARTE.

ROBERTO BERNARDI was born in Todi (IT) in 1974. After finishing high school, he moved to Rome where he began working as a restorer at the church of San Francesco in Ripa, but he soon moved on from painting restoration to devote himself entirely to the creation of his paintings and moved towards a new form of realism closely related to hyperrealism. In 2004 he moved to Manhattan, his works were strongly influenced by the American culture and he began to have relations with the prestigious art world of the Big Apple. From 2004 to 2010 he took part in many artistic projects sponsored by American and European collectors along with other artists of the hyperrealist movement. In 2010 the Italian multinational oil and gas company, ENI, added Bernardi to the group of young talents from all over the world to uniquely interpret every moment of Eni's communication and commissioned Bernardi a work that they added to their prestigious art collection. Since 2012 Bernardi has taken part in an international museum tour that began at the Tübingen Museum in Germany and then continued in 13 other museums around the world. This exhibition tour included the prestigious Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum and the Museum of Bellas Artes in Bilbao (Spain), the Kunsthal Museum in Rotterdam (Holland), the New Orleans Museum of Art and the Oklahoma City Museum of Art (USA). In 2014 he was invited to the "Contemporary Realism Biennial" at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art (USA). He has exhibited in solo and group shows worldwide. Among the latest, the following are worth mentioning: in 2022 the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid acquired a painting of Bernardi to add to its prestigious collection. He has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in private galleries and public museums around the world. Among the latest there are "Photorealism. 50 years of Hyperrealistic painting" at the Art Museum of Rotterdam (2017), "Nopixel, Arte al limite" at the Pinacoteca G. Bellini in Sarnico (2019), "High fidelity, Anthony Brunelli & the Digital Age Photorealist" at the Arnot Art Museum in Elmira, New York (2020), "Hyperrealism in the Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection" at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid (2022). In addition, between 2022 and 2023, some of his sculptures were auctioned by the famous auction houses Sotheby's and Phillips with excellent results. At PUNTO SULL'ARTE he participated in the "Ultrareale" exhibition (2022) and in the group exhibition <20 15x15/20x20 (2021, 2022, and 2024). He lives and works in Todi (IT).

VALENTINA DIENA was born in Milan in 1996. Her interest for figurative arts leads her to the painting course at Brera Academy of Fine Arts, where she has a bachelor's degree in 2019 and a Master of Fine Arts in 2022 with full marks (under the guidance of prof Omar Galliani). Always fascinated by the movement and technique of hyperrealism, from 2020 she works on hyperrealistic drawings colored pencils on paper, briefly combining her personal artistic production with artistic collaborations as designer and studio assistant. In the last few years she has collaborated with many different Italian artists and has taken part in many solo and group shows, among which the group exhibition Self Portrait curated by Omar Galliani at Museo di San Pietro all'Orto in Grosseto (2021), the bipersonal Veleni Sospesi curated by Vittorio Raschetti at Galleria Lo Spazio Bianco in Milan (2022), the two group exhibitions <20 15x15/20x20 curated by Sofia Macchi at Galleria Punto Sull'Arte in Varese (2023 / 2024). In 2024 she is selected as finalist artist at the 10th edition of the prestigious VAF Foundation Award. Her artworks are part of Italian private collections. She lives and works in Milan.

CLAUDIO FILIPPINI was born in Castenedolo (IT) in 1953. He attended some drawing courses at the Bresciani Artists Association. His artistic activity began in 1976 when he held his first solo exhibition, followed by many other exhibitions. Among these, we remember, in 2003, the solo exhibition curated by Maurizio Bernardelli Curuz, artistic director of Brescia Museums, and accompanied by an important publication. Throughout his career, he has also participated in many art fairs. Claudio Filippini is a versatile artist, capable of developing classical themes such as landscapes and then moving on to more POP suggestions like superheroes, not remaining indifferent to the latest trends in the contemporary art scene. The characteristic that connects the different subjects of his extensive production is the ability of each work to attract the viewer, almost wanting to reassure and fascinate them with its execution and representation. Filippini presents comic book heroes in strange situations, outside the context in which we are used to seeing them, engaged not in saving the world, but in the everyday tasks that characterize each of us. Almost wanting to communicate that, in the end, every superhero is also deeply human. He lives and works in Brescia.

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