

VareseNews

Bruna Brambilla had wanted to change the world

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The grandson, **Leon**, brought a drawing to his grandfather, Mario. On the drawing, there was the world. “Grandma Bruna is there, too.” Only children manage to express so well the feeling of belonging to the people, particularly when they are no longer there, when they have escaped the world of tangible things. And the world gathered to say farewell to **Bruna Brambilla**, in the place that was dearest to her: the Pyramid in Piazza De Salvo, in the heart of the “Bustecche” neighbourhood in Varese.

Sweat merged with tears, nostalgia of the past sought comfort in the present. It was a farewell full of positive energy, the same energy that Bruna applied to everything she did, starting with Universauser, the hotbed of courses, ideas, political and social commitment.

“What made our family great was this relationship with the outside,” said her husband, **Mario Agostinelli**. “And we’ve come here, because it’s somewhere we can embrace her, because there’s comfort here, there’s life among us and Bruna.”

She was a woman who “**belonged to those who want to change the world**,” said **Rocco Cordì**, who had shared a thousand battles with her for the emancipation of the neighbourhood. And, in some way, Bruna Brambilla had indeed changed the world, leaving her testimony of example and commitment. After graduating, she chose to teach those who had the right to education, but who lacked the funds; she became the **Mayor of Venegono Superiore**, and finally she devoted herself to trade unions, to the volunteer association, Auser, and to “her” Universauser.

“She was reserved, determined, clear,” Agostinelli continued. “She was a great woman. Hers was a Calvinism tempered by kindness. I don’t know how to deal with this emptiness, because you choose your wife every day, but I can’t choose her anymore.”

Saying farewell to her were the trade unions, particularly the **SPI-CGIL**, and all of the Varese associations: from the workers' associations, **ACLI** and **ANOLF**, to the Italian partisans' association, **ANPI**, the environmental league, **Legambiente**, the cycling association, **Ciclocittà**, the anti-Mafia association, **Libera**, and **the Consumers' Movement**. Then, there was the "**Luigi Ambrosoli**" **Institute of Varese**, the people in charge of **Auser**, and the directors of **Universauser**, the "**Anna Frank**" Middle School, the welfare association **ARCI**, **Agenda 21**, **Filmstudio**, the sport-for-all union, **UISP**, and the cooperative **Nuova Urbanistica e Coop**. Longstanding friends and neighbours, politicians and neighbourhood residents; there was a clear feeling that the whole community of people had been orphaned by the loss of this mother.

Emotions rose when **Bruna's daughter, Lucia**, began to speak. The intimacy of the family memories caused no embarrassment, in fact, it blended naturally with this moment of public sadness.

"I found her in the kitchen," said Lucia, "and I rested my head on her lap; I was in the only place I wanted to be. This strong, active present has given me a new relationship with hope. Let's look for Bruna, with a touch of silence, and everyone, make her heart beat."

Bruna never stopped making plans. While lying a **hospital** bed, waiting for the operation on her heart, she telephoned her friends of the **Universauser**, because "there's a lot to do." She, who had risen above all of the distinctions of the left, who did not believe in the easy recipes, but who "loved to listen and to find solutions, taking one step at a time."

"There's the pride of having been activists in the **Italian Communist Party**, something that calmed us, that gave our lives a civilised, quiet dimension," said Mario.

In the front row was Bruna's son, **Guido**, her daughter-in-law, her son-in-law, and her four grandchildren, Leon, Clara, Totò and Zeno; a fifth is on the way. Grandpa Mario raised them, one at a time, as a testimony of social commitment that had gone hand in hand with family commitment. And there, the world wept with them.

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