

A Knight in Malpensa

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The anti-equestrian monument in the non-location par excellence: the “Idea del Cavaliere” (Idea of the Knight) by **Marino Marini**, is on exhibition at Malpensa Airport. **Until 31 August, travellers coming to the Porta di Milano**, inside the air terminal, will be able to admire one of the most significant sculptures by this Italian artist, which he produced in 1955. “It will be an unexpected encounter; the aim is to promote culture and art, also outside museums,” said **Marina Pugliese, the Director of the Museo del Novecento** (Museum of the Twentieth Century).

The reduction of the masses to edges, triangles and oblique trajectories, together with the vigorous joining of figures, there, where there is an unquestionable reference to Picasso, reopen the debate with a lesson by Arturo Martini. These features lead to other references, such as the charm of the volumes in motion of the British sculptor Henry Moore, which can be seen in the tension introduced by the rotation of the head on the knight’s body.

The public’s appreciation of the work was immediate, and the first selfies have already been taken.

“The experience of blending contemporary art and public spaces in the city, which started with the exhibition of Melotti’s “Seven Sages”, is continuing with another artwork that has a strong iconic power,” said **Milan City Councillor for Culture, Filippo Del Corno**. “This experiment has been a great success, also because of the strong symbolic power of this exhibition, which welcomes passengers from all over the world, as soon as they get off the plane, presenting the most beautiful side of the city, giving the opportunity to discover an extraordinary city of art and culture. The work will remain on display throughout the summer, ‘meeting’ passengers passing through, inviting them, discreetly and indirectly, to stay a while in Milan to discover it in depth. This invitation will be renewed in the next few months, and then also during the six months of Expo 2015, with new artworks and different artists from the city’s valuable art collections.”

As Marino Marini himself pointed out, in 1958, “When you consider my equestrian statues of these last twelve years, one after another, you’ll notice each time that the knight is unable to tame the horse, and that, as the horse’s anguish becomes increasingly wild, it becomes more rigid, instead of rearing up. I sincerely believe we’re heading towards the end of a world.”

“This agreement is a very important step forward in SEA’s cultural policy, which is traditionally intended to highlight Milan’s cultural heritage,” said Pietro Modiano, the Chairman of SEA. “We’re rightly proud of this partnership with Italy’s most important museum of contemporary art. The airport is no longer just a necessary thoroughfare for people coming or going, but has become an exciting place. For years, SEA have promoted this aspect, with numerous initiatives ranging from art, to music, to sport, different forms of entertainment, to meet the expectations of an extremely varied public.”

About the sculpture

Produced by Marino Marini in 1955, “Idea del Cavaliere” is part of a group of five works on the same theme, which include a version in multi-coloured plaster, kept at the Vatican Museums. The dual, horse/horseman concept expresses a constant interest in Marini’s work. After the first work in 1935, the artist returned several times to this theme, creating a concise series of sculptures and paintings, over the years. Created as an anti-rhetorical investigation of the vitality of the thousand-year tradition of monuments of figures on horseback, the series stands out in 20th century Italian sculpture as a structural analysis of the forms of sculpture. In the progressive succession of variations, Marini explored the combination of the bodies, betraying a visual culture that feeds off different aspects, from the retrieval of classical and primitive forms to the revival of the rounded profiles of the little Chinese horses in the Musée Guimet, and finally to the interest in the excited battles of Delacroix and the dramatic twists of Rodin. In this context, “Idea del Cavaliere” encapsulates a significant phase of research. Interpreted by the critics as an existentialist sculpture, and insisting on the idea of a hardening of the composition due to the tragic experience of war, the work is part of a convincing dialogue with modern times.

The Porta di Milano is an architectural work that represents the “twelfth door” accessing the city, built by the architects Pierluigi Nicolini, Sonia Calzoni (who also set up the exhibition), Giuseppe Marinoni, Giuliana Di Gregorio, winners of the international competition promoted by SEA Aeroporti of Milan, in June 2009, with a project, which was selected from more than 90 from all over the world.

IDEA DEL CAVALIERE by MARINO MARINI
Malpensa Airport, Porta di Milano (Terminal 1)
15 May – 31 August 2014
Opening times: from 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.
Admission free

Information: Tel. 02 232323

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