

"Agostino Arrivabene has worked in many areas of modern painting, updating models and iconographies with themes of great importance... we could define him as the last of the great surrealist painters who poses questions and riddles to which it is not necessary to give answers".

Piero Marani

AGOSTINO ARRIVABENE

A highly cultivated and extremely refined painter from a stylistic point of view, Agostino Arrivabene places his paintings in an enchanted and magical atmosphere, rich in references and quotations, ranging from symbolism to surrealism, passing through Renaissance and seventeenth-century painting, using a style pictorially and surprisingly fluid, at times dense, at times rarefied and changeable, which points almost to abstraction. The mythology, the strong link with the culture of Ancient Greece, the sacred, the dark atmospheres in which his timeless characters are immersed, are the visual and cultural references that characterise the artist's research. Among his collection of quotations, we can also find echoes of Bernini's sculpture, in other cases references to seventeenth-century sacred painting, to the heads of the Arcimboldo or to the still life of the Flemish painters, but the game of references does not exhaust the strength of his painting. Arrivabene's research moves on an ambiguous terrain, where myth, antiquity and contemporary life come together in a unique dimension, out of time and history.

He moves in a visionary universe populated by cosmic underground obsessions. Mysterious characters, landscapes that evoke the scenario of ancient mythological fables of which we cannot find the exact temporal collocation, of mutant beings that seem to come from a mythological tale both ancient and modern, populate his canvases and tables. That dilation of the figures in the shapeless drama of the indistinct, those small, monstrous little animals that infest the body of mortals, those bacterial flowers, those lichens, bacteria, strange coral growths, those fluorescence, both organic and purely mental, highly and authentically lysergic, are the result of a hallucinated and strongly spiritual vision of reality, as the artist went to look for in not visible details the secret meaning of existence. This attention to the detail has resulted in Arrivabene's paintings actually embodying a process of alchemical transformation, in which the physical matter of painting itself is transmuted into extraordinary light-filled visions. Investigating eternity, time, the process of change, the rites of transformation, and sacred love and death, Arrivabene utilises symbols and images that are seemingly distant from the contemporary in order to create art that crosses the boundaries of time.

Agostino Arrivabene was born in 1967 in Rivolta d'Adda where he still lives. Among the exhibitions that marked his career, in addition to attending the 54th International Art Exhibition of the 2011 Venice Biennial, we remember *Deliri*, on the occasion of the 53rd Festival of the two Worlds in Spoleto in 2010, *Urania alla Casa del Manzoni* in Milan in 2010, *Tó Páthei Máthos* at the Panorama Museum, Bad Frankenhausen in 2013, *Hierogamy* " in New York in 2016, *"Anabasis"*, Civic Museum of the Capuchins of Bagnacavallo (RV) in 2015, *Anastasis* at the Mantegna house in Mantua in 2016 and *The parasitic guest* at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Lissone in 2017. Many of his works are in museum collections including: the AF Foundation, Frankfurt am Mein (DE), the Chateau du Gruyère Collection, Gruyère (CH), the Achille Bertarelli Collection, Sforza Castle, Milan, Michetti Foundation, Franca Villa al Mare, Cappuccine Museum, Bagnacavallo, Maramotti Collection, Reggio Emilia. He has also created numerous theatre sets for operas in Italy and in Europe.