Andrea Cesari

TEXTILE AND VISUAL ARTIST · BIOGRAPHY (ENGLISH)

Andrea Cesari was born in Codogno, Italy, in 1950 and lives and works in Piacenza. Over more than forty years his work has crossed assemblage of natural and artificial elements, sculpture, works in cloth and mixed materials, original and editorial printmaking, painting, urban projects, murals and stage design, held together by one central idea: composition, the free balancing of colour, matter, sign and figure in mutual tension.

Training

Andrea Cesari was born in Codogno in 1950. Between 1970 and 1973 he attended the Istituto Gazzola in Piacenza, a figurative school of Cézannian and post-impressionist matrix, studying with Perotti, Donà and Callegari, and in 1973 he took his diploma in art at the Liceo Artistico of Busto Arsizio as a private candidate. From 1979 he exhibited within the figurative tradition and went deeper into printmaking: woodcut, etching, aquatint. In 1981 he held his first solo show, of figurative work, at the Il Capricorno gallery in Bergamo, and the same year he followed the international engraving courses at the Istituto Statale d'Arte in Urbino.

1982 was the turning point: at thirty-two he left his job and moved to Urbino. At ISIA, one of Italy's leading design schools, he studied graphic design under Michele Provinciali and Alfred Hohenegger, in 1984 also took, as an external candidate, the diploma of the Istituto Statale d'Arte in Urbino, spent his summers as an intern in Milan graphic studios, and graduated with honours in 1985, specialising in editorial design; from the great twentieth century tradition, from the Bauhaus and the Ulm school to Bruno Munari and Bob Noorda, he took the systematic working method that still guides every project. In 1984 he was stage manager of "Le emozioni del labirinto" by Zohreh Partovi for the Citizenkane company, at the Teatro della Vela in Urbino and at the Serate di Genova. After his diploma he was graphics editor of the weekly Neve Sport (1986-87), in 1987-88 he collaborated with Teatro Studio 75 and the Piccolo Teatro in Milan, and from 1986 he taught advertising graphics: at the Istituto Statale d'Arte in Monza until 1999, then at the IPSSCT Piero Sraffa in Crema (1999-2005) and at the IPS Luigi Einaudi in Cremona (2005-2011); in 1987 he sat on the jury for the new poster of the Codogno library, in 1989 he designed the poster "500 years since the conquest of America" with the Lega internazionale per i diritti e la liberazione dei popoli, and in 1990 he designed the graphic layout of "Kamen'", Amedeo Anelli's review of poetry and philosophy, in use since the first issue (May 1991) to this day.

The path

The Urbino years came to fruition in 1983 with "Il colore nella realtà dell'ambiente urbano": large dyed banners composed across the walls and the historic centre of Urbino, colour brought to the scale of the city, documented in audiovisual works and books. In 1985 at Cattolica, at the centre "Barche e gente dell'Adriatico", he showed an assembled textile work two metres by five. In 1986 "Colore nella città" dressed the seven arches of the Loggia Comunale of Codogno with lunettes of cotton dyed in the colours of the rainbow, and in 1988 and 1989 the Acquibaleno and seven new lunettes served as the stage backdrop of the Marche Producono fashion shows in Pesaro. In 1986 he put forward the Acquibaleno as a candidate for the 13th International Tapestry Biennial in Lausanne (1115 dossiers from 45 countries, 51 works selected). From 1986 he exhibited with the Gruppo di Grafica Originale (Pesaro, Lodi, Milan, Urbino, Castellón).

In 1989 he painted the mural "Cena fredda sul Po" for the Il Cammino association in Somaglia. At the end of the 1980s Giovanni Bellinzoni called him into the group of the Gelso gallery in Lodi, alongside Fabio Scatoli, Paolo Costa, Marcello Chiarenza and Paolo Tatavitto. With the 1990 solo exhibition

"Paradigmi del panneggio. Ipotesi sul bianco e nero e sul colore" the environmental studies were brought back into the traditions of painting: cloth on cloth, canvas on canvas, with plastics, wood, industrial materials, sacking and thread. In 1993 he was one of the five artists of Forte Crest in San Donato Milanese, with Pietro Arnoldi, Antonio Buso, Mauro Ceglie and Gabriele Nuzarello. In 1995 "Fra filo e segno" in Casalpusterlengo was a teaching exhibition dedicated to Bellinzoni: sketches, plates, proofs and the lithographic stone beside the works in cloth. In 2000 he took part in the Textile Miniaturen show of the Artemision Galerie in Görlitz, Germany, where he presented "Homage an Jacob Böhme", a work in brass and copper that condensed his textile research in paradigmatic form.

Since the turn of the millennium his work has concentrated on textures and on a material poetics of contrasts, glossy against matt, absorbing against reflecting surfaces, with original extensions into small sculpture, assemblage and unique artist's books such as "I 49 Raggi" and "Io Sono". Since the 1990s his exhibitions have often been curated by the poet and critic Amedeo Anelli: "Realtà e realismi nel Lodigiano 1970-2001" at the Banca Popolare di Lodi, "Fra filo e segno. Percorsi per la grafica" in Montodine (2004), "Forma e colore" at the Cesaris in Casalpusterlengo (2008), up to the 2014 retrospective "Percorsi artistici. Opere scelte 2014-1970" at the Vecchio Ospedale Soave in Codogno, 120 works on show, with a catalogue designed by the artist and photographed by Mauro Corinti. Recent years have brought a renewed attention to natural themes and to the reuse of obsolete industrial materials, alongside regular participation in curated exhibitions across Lombardy and Emilia-Romagna; a work from the 2024 "Marco Polo 700" edition of Arte in Arti e Mestieri entered the collection of the Fondazione Scuola di Arti e Mestieri of Suzzara. He lives and works in Piacenza.

In the artist's words

> *In these years of research I feel particularly close to what is called textile. Warp and weft are the sign, colour and quality the characteristics. Many of my studies use ropes, gauzes or metallic meshes for two and three dimensional works. Not only pictures on the wall, but objects in the environment, for a continuous and meaningful construction of artistic research.*
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> From a statement of 2002, quoted in Amedeo Anelli, Il Lodigiano, 19 October 2002 (translation)

Critical voices

> *A vast compositional field in which colour, matter, sign and figure freely balance one another and remain in mutual tension.*
>
> Amedeo Anelli, from the catalogue of the 2014 retrospective (translation)

> *Rough, peremptory and dazzling, his works point to the fragility of the world and to its impermanence.*
>
> Cristina Vercellone, Il Cittadino, 22 April 1998 (translation)

> *An artist who delivers his message with bare efficacy, without indulging in narrative or decorative concessions.*
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> Aldo Caserini, forme 70', 2020 (translation)