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## A planetarium of the True Imagination

### Vinko Šaina's style and humanity

Over the years, Vinko Šaina's art production has involved a number of materials; it has been characterised by a wide range of figurative techniques and it has spanned different thematic time frames. Nonetheless, an utterly constant and central fact can be easily identified in it: the always varied configuration – at times rendered fluid through the permeation of plastic chromatic areas penetrating one another, much more often stretched between the coordinates of three horizontal 'zones' – of what seems to be a surreal landscape diorama. More difficult (and delicate) appears to be the task of defining it using exact terms. Is it a favoured theme? A representative solution balanced between abstraction and naturalism? A play of background painting, streaks and meanders carried out in such a wise and impressive manner that it ends up becoming an emblematic stylistic trait of an entire painting experience? Perhaps it would be better to define it as: a method of viewing. Or rather, the consequence of choosing a viewpoint which seems to have been used over the years – according to declinations that differed from time to time – for the categories of the real seemingly extremely dissimilar from each other. ...

... While in Šaina's paintings we see a cooperation, that ends up being a fusion, between the expressive rigour of an inventor of forms and the inspiration of a visionary poet, what constitutes a unique trait of his personality is the inspired gravity of a patriarch and the spontaneous jocosity of a little boy; the innocently malicious ludic taste of the Trickster and the proud planning skill of the Master Builder. All this combined in a singular synthesis of style and humanity that appears to find its emblematic feature in the magic privilege of being able to see the world with eyes capable of projecting, on the surface of appearances, the transforming and vivifying essence of qualities that the human eye cannot sense. In more than 40 years of our friendship, I have seen Vinko work with his brushes many times, but on a great number of occasions I saw him working with the aim of transforming everyday life into an event or a normal encounter into a ritual. ...

... These are, like the 'landscapes' in his paintings, events that gave way to that view towards reality able to transform, all by itself, matter into spirit, the sheer fact into inner music resonance, the repeating of the usual in an initiation ceremony. It is, to put it concisely, the gift of being able to transfer the works and the days of a lifetime from the level of everyday life to the level of time usually associated with a party, from economy to liturgy, from passion to love. It is, at last, a gift that is not that different from the artistic act that knows how to replace the visualisation of the real with the vision of an authentic *mundus imaginalis*. Humanity and style: mirroring one another.