

Franco Costa

This time he is not coming back from a trip, or just passing by, not even for a short jumping stay, and this is the first time is happening. When he called, to tell me of his new arrangements for the show of the latest paintings, he did it from a residential hotel in the Trastevere area. The very same he has been living in for almost a year now, just changing floor, in the meantime, from the second to the sixth.

Still fat, roundish, fresh, always ready to be amazed by everybody and everything, forever in love and desperate, more than willing to go ahead to make his movie: a mixture of real life and dreams, of autobiography and "autofantasia". His monk beard has gone; the only change.

"Hallo, it's Franco here", and this after almost a year we did not talk each other. Last time it was somewhere in South America where he was picking up locations for a movie, or in Sweden for the scenography of his movie or in Paris running around, always late, for the opening of a show.

After all, in our friendship time and continuity of meetings never had such priority.

In few words and with lots of enthusiasms he whips up a resume of his work, projects and love stories: I listen for a while envying his incredible inextinguishable energy to work for days and nights in a row, without a break for sleeping or resting or even for reflecting.

He thinks, meditates, doubts, inventing the very moment he creates scripts, scenographies, movie costumes, paintings or poems called "Oh, che Felicità!", naive, optimist but sincere and brave. Let's say it, one needs guts to pick up such a title for a poem or for his movie, one needs guts to make all of us wishing for, through his paintings, such a shining world of feelings, moods clear and generous relationships.

Franco Costa pays for his guts with desperation, hiding away, trying not to be noticed by anyone.

Optimism, trust in the fellow man, there are the ingredients for his canvas, the materials he spreads with tiny strokes of his spatula, sure and delicate as caresses. The painting he is showing now still keep colors, bright houses, roads, shadow less fields without a crack. An optimist world which hides, behind the brightness of the reds, yellows and greens, the sorrow and solitude of the man; a world of thoughts wished the past and the future.

Only once he allowed himself for a body, just a silhouette against the light, it's Valentina dancing for him and for the baby to be born in a while, Valentina, whose presence is actually in all the paintings.

If Franco Costa could explain the catalogue the way he sees it, he would say: "This is Taormina when I was there with Valentina", "This is the merry-go-round I spinned on with Valentina", "This is Tunisia, vacationing with Valentina": a catalogue which is the list of Journeys and emotions felt together and the sequence of his "Oh, che Felicità", a movie he is still painting before realizing it.

UGO MORETTI