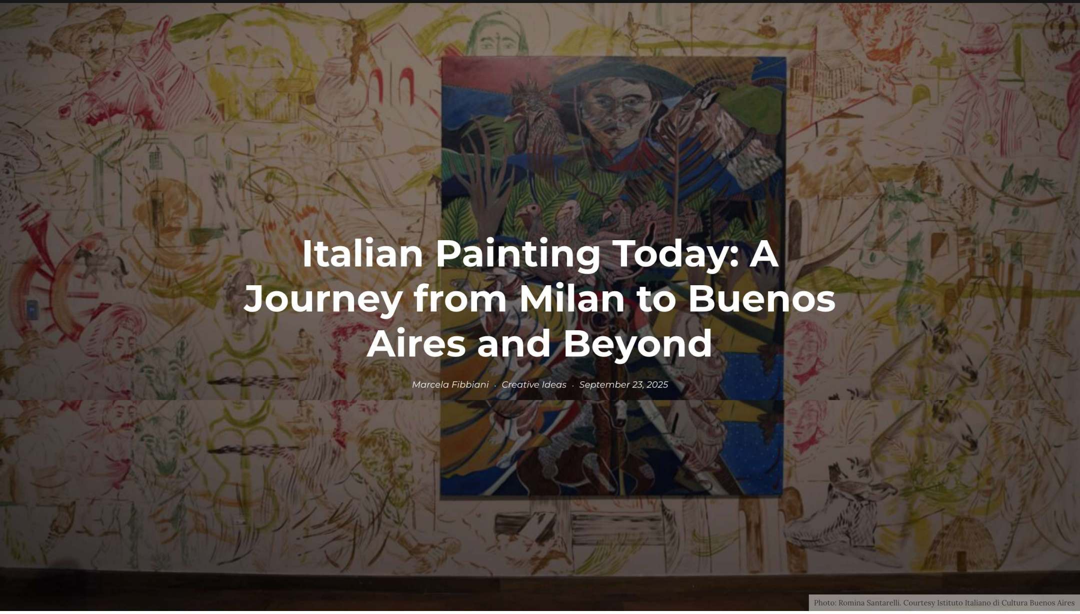


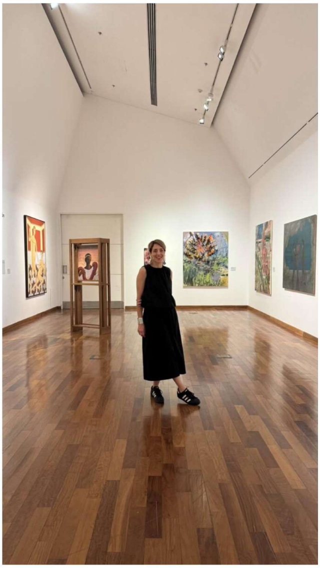
Italian Painting Today: A Journey from Milan to Buenos Aires and Beyond

Marcela Fibbiani · Creative Ideas · September 23, 2025

Photo: Romina Santarelli. Courtesy Istituto Italiano di Cultura Buenos Aires

"Italian Painting Today. A New Scene" is the exhibition that brought the best of young Italian art to Buenos Aires. A journey of color and light, curated by Damiano Gullì of Triennale Milano, uniting continents through creativity and tradition.

Art has a unique ability to build bridges, bridge gaps, and tell stories that transcend borders. I had the privilege of being part of one of those stories, the exhibition " *Italian Painting Today: A New Scene* ," an exhibition that began at the Triennale Milano and, thanks to the support of the Italian Institute of Culture in Buenos Aires and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs , had its first international debut in our city before continuing its journey through Latin America.



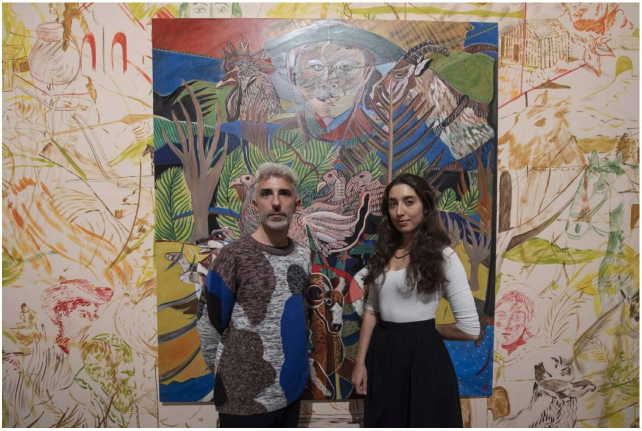
Solos / Juntos

I was invited to lead a special guided tour for the public, an opportunity that allowed me not only to fully immerse myself in this selection of works, but also to share my passion for art, design, and theater, as well as my perspective, with the audience. It was a moment of profound connection with the art and with the people who came to experience the exhibition.

A NEW SCENE IN THE HEART OF BUENOS AIRES

The exhibition, curated by Damiano Gullì (curator of contemporary art and the Public Program at Triennale Milano), is much more than a simple selection of paintings. It is a "snapshot" of the new generation of Italian artists, born between 1990 and 2000. This selection was specially designed for this Latin American itinerary, different from the original Milan version, which included 120 works by Italian artists born between 1960 and 2000.

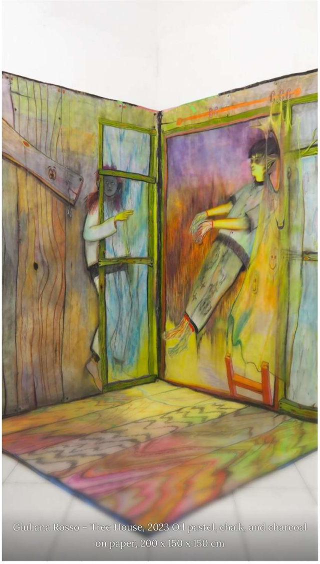
For the tour, Gullì made a new selection with 26 works, 23 of which are different from those exhibited in Italy. “I focused on artists under 35, with the aim of giving the younger generation a new opportunity for visibility,” the curator explained.



The curator of the exhibition Damiano Gullì and the artist Giulia Mangoni, author of the site specific work *L'incrocio di Vallefredda*

This vision materialized in an exhibition divided into five thematic cores, a structure that I found very useful in guiding the public through the various proposals:

Alone/Together. This core exhibition explores portraits, self-portraits, and social relationships, where reality blends with digital imagery and cinema. *History, stories, and tradition.* Here, artists appropriate memory and classical myths to give them new life. *Metaphysics of the everyday.* The exhibition invites us to change our perspective on everyday objects, creating unexpected connections and evolving the concept of still life.



Giuliana Rosso – Tree House, 2023 Oil pastel, chalk, and charcoal on paper, 200 x 150 x 150 cm

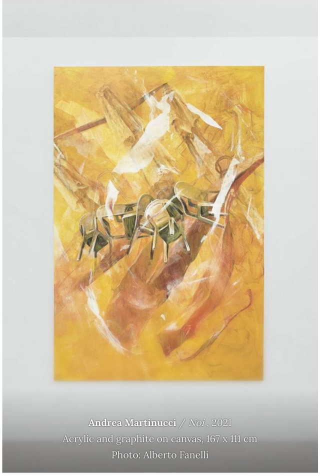
Between the figurative and the abstract. This theme explores the fluid boundaries between representation and abstraction, with mental and interior landscapes. *Form, color, time, matter.* The works in this section push the boundaries of the canvas, experimenting with alternative materials and techniques.

Walking through the exhibition, I noticed the solid academic background of these artists; all demonstrate a mastery of drawing and technique. They use all kinds of materials: from oil and watercolor to acrylic, aerosol, and graphite, creating a tapestry of styles that coexist in harmony.

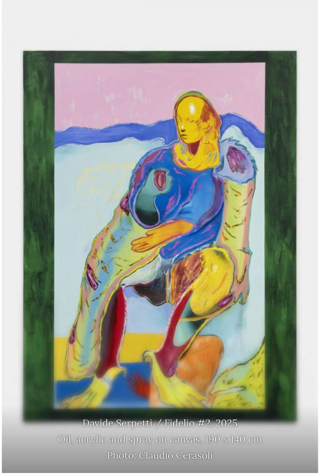
THE WORKS THAT MOVED ME

I was asked in an interview if I could name the "best artists." As a communicator, I consider that assessment inappropriate. However, I can point to some of the works that moved me the most, one for each thematic focus.

The first is *Noi* by Andrea Martinucci, a painting depicting a group of Monobloc chairs under an unexpected downpour. Monobloc chairs are a true design icon, the most affordable chair in the world and the first one made in a single piece. I found it surprising to see it represented in this work; and since I used to paint chairs myself, I felt strongly about it.

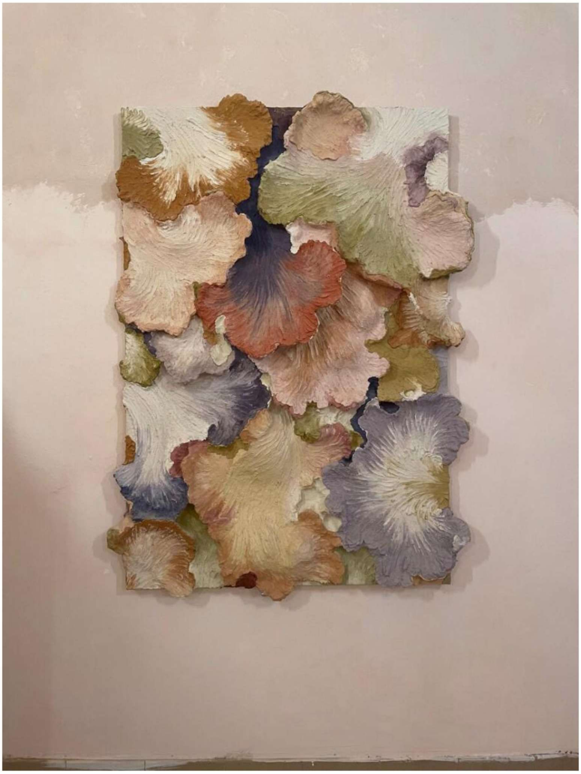


Andrea Martinucci / *Noi* , 2021
Acrylic and graphite on canvas, 167 x 111 cm
Photo: Alberto Fanelli



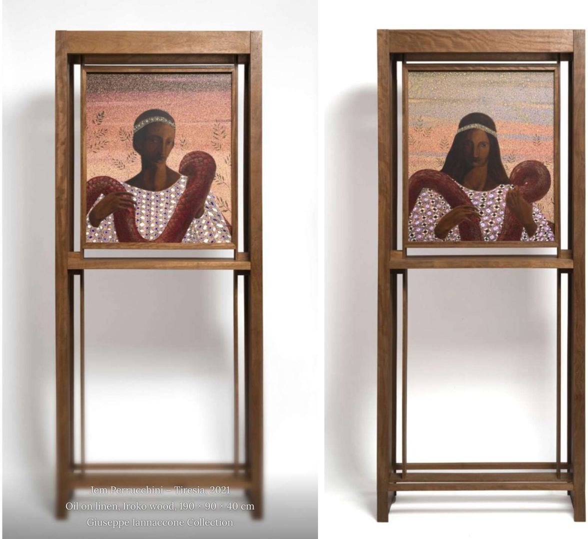
Davide Serpetti / Fidelio #2, 2025
Oil, acrylic and spray on canvas, 190 x 140 cm
Photo: Claudio Cerasoli

The second, *Fidelio #2* by Davide Serpetti, is a piece that fascinated me. It shows two people merging into one another, a warrior and his lover. Estimo is inspired by Beethoven's first opera, in which Leonora—disguised as a prison guard named Fidelio—rescues her husband Florestan from a politically motivated death sentence. It also suggested Francis Bacon's reinterpretation of Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X. The very Fauvist color palette creates a blend of styles that I found extremely interesting.



Genuardi/Ruta – Tre punti luminosi, una rosa semplice, 2024. Acrylic on metal, 230/300 x 100 x 50 cm

The artistic duo Genuardi/Ruta (formed in 2014 by Antonella Genuardi and Leonardo Ruta) is new to the traveling version of this exhibition. "I hadn't been able to include their work in Milan, but the opportunity presented itself, giving me the chance to also show what's happening in Sicily, with the intention of creating an ideal national mapping," Damiano explained. "It reminds me of biomaterials and the experiments being done in design today to generate organic materials from fungi, bacteria, etc."



Jem Perrucchini – Tiresia, 2021
Oil on linen, Iroko wood, 190 × 90 × 40 cm
Giuseppe Iannaccone Collection

Tiresia is the name of Jem Perucchini's work: perhaps the splitting of a single figure into two portraits mounted on a wooden structure. Tiresias was a famous prophet and seer in Greek mythology, originally from Thebes. He was known for his blindness and ability to predict the future, and for having lived first as a man and then as a woman for seven years. Since there is no gap between the pointillist-style background and the figure, the latter is cut out as if it were a collage. The combination of styles, combined with the wooden display device, is both intriguing and disconcerting.

The exhibition has concluded its run in Buenos Aires, but its journey continues. After enchanting the Argentine public, the works will continue touring Brazil (Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro) and Mexico, bringing with them a touch of Italian artistic vibrancy.

For me, who began studying Italian motivated by my love of Italian opera, art, and design, being part of this project was a wonderful way to unite my passions. It's an honor to be able to share my vision of this wonderful world and to have contributed to bringing more people closer to this "new scene" of Italian painting.

I am extremely grateful to the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Buenos Aires for inviting me!

Marcela Fibbiani

Editor and co-founder of 90+10 magazine. She specializes in the Sociology of Design from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Buenos Aires (FADU/UBA) and is a Set Designer from the Ernesto de la Cárcova School of Fine Arts (UNA). She is invited to cover local and international design fairs, such as Ambiente Frankfurt and the Salone del Mobile.Milano. She is a member of the Argentine Seal of Good Design Selection Committee since 2017 and a judge for the A' Design Awards. She loves sports: she practices spinning and running.

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