

## THE ART OF THE SMILE

*"I try to convey something positive through my works. A pleasant emotion. Works providing peace of mind to those who observe or who owns them. What I love most is to see a smile from those who possess one of my works, and see that smile persist over time".*

**BY** Marco De Concato  
**PHOTO BY** Cinzia Poltronetti

**IN THIS PAGE**  
JULIENNE BUILE  
EMILIANO  
M. DEB. PAINTING



*An artist in  
CONSTANT EVOLUTION*

Jo Fabrizi, a young artist born in 1985, began painting focusing on portraits of famous people and not, only now she has begun to experiment new types of paintings, while keeping her focus on portraits, but also concentrating on entire bodies and objects. **ACRYLIC ON CANVAS** is her privileged painting technique, sometimes accompanied by other types of material, for instance tape. To amplify the impact of her work, she usually paints on canvas of a certain size, drawing inspiration primarily from photographs, highlighting the shadows and creating bichromatic images which she then recuts on canvas, with particular **ATTENTION TO COLORS**, the key factor in her work.

The first time I met Jo Fabrizi was for a lunch in downtown Milan; a gloomy day as those typical of Milan, of a listless late winter. While waiting for me, she was reading a book, "Secret Lives of great artists". In this society where technology is the mistress of communication and knowledge, it is rare to see someone reading a book in their spare time. Usually all the waiting times are busy with chatting, calling, getting worked up. She was reading. A good starting point for our meeting!

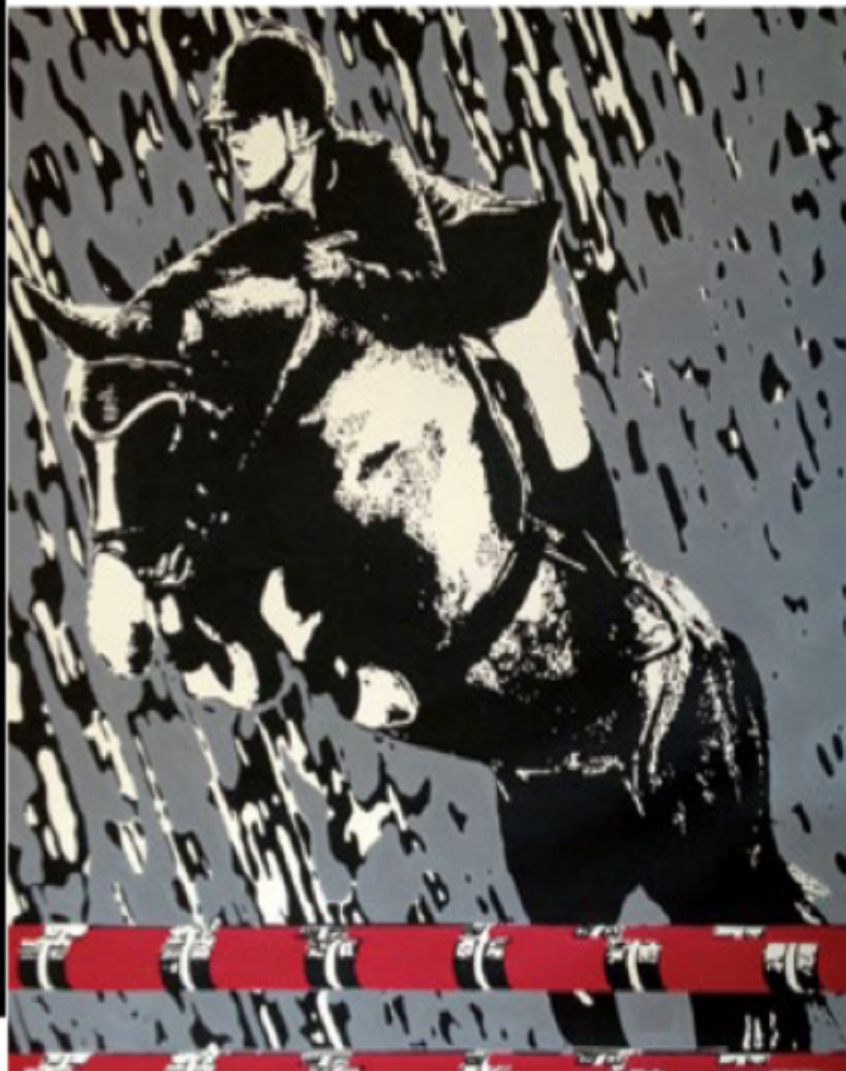
I knew her works, I had distastefully seen them several times but I never stopped to grasp their details and meanings, and least of all I knew about her artistic essence. When I write an article I always like to create a kind of empathy with the interviewee. I need to feel the passions, the creative reasons and above all because the circle of emotions that prompts the artist to carry out the works. With Jo it was easy. I immediately felt at ease, in harmony. In this first conversation we talked a bit of everything, but mostly about her impulses, her inspirations and her artistic urgencies. I quickly understood her talent and the potentialities of her art and I started to appreciate its contents with all the dynamics, the substrates and the worlds that she wants to show.

"Since I can remember, I have always had the need to draw", Jo tells me struggling with a plate of scallops and potatoes. "I loved fashion, I needed creativity. My dreams were to become a fashion designer and then an architect. As a child I spent a lot of time on the beach flipping through fashion magazines. All the other children were playing, while under the umbrella, I tore the pages with models or photographs that I loved the most. Once I got home, I cut out carefully the torn pages, I put them in order and inserted them into binders. Today they are pretty much a collection of the 80s and 90s fashion. Then I discovered art and everything changed. My parents raised me taking me to museums, this has definitely helped me to develop an interest for art".

**THE DETAILS AND COLORS TAKE ON A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF HER PAINTING. A SEARCH THAT STARTS FROM THE SUBJECT, FROM HER WORLD, FROM HER PASSIONS AND DAILY LIFE, AND THEN FLOWS INTO A COMPLEX CREATIVE PROCESS.**

"Over the years I began to notice the differences that have characterized the development of my work. The first works that I achieved were extremely detailed, I later began to remove more and more all the various particulars reaching the limit of the subject's recognizability, and in some cases beyond, keeping only the recognizability of the figure and not more than a particular subject.

After eliminating most of the details I started to add others, but obtaining a different result than the previous one. Even the colors have undergone several transformations over the years. I started working with black and white, sometimes adding one or more colored details. I replaced the black large areas of the backgrounds, first with tones of gray and then with more vibrant colors. Today I am experimenting a type of work characterized by the use of more strong colors together, keeping a space for black and white".



CONVERSING WITH JO IS LIKE TALKING TO SOMEONE YOU HAVE KNOWN FOR A LONG TIME AND WITH WHOM YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING, EVEN ABOUT THE FUTURE AND THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN WANTING TO PURSUE ONE'S PASSION UNTIL IT BECOMES A PROFESSION.

"Art starts as a passion, to transform it from passion into 'work', you need to be the first one to really believe in it. It is not always obvious, as in all things in life there are moments that lead you to believe more or less. It is a profession for which there is not a predefined route that can be followed as in other professions. Actually in any job there is no guarantee of success. In any case, it remains a challenge to always be able to have new satisfactions. Among the difficulties, there is certainly the initial one, to be exposed to the public for the first times. Each artist however has a different path, but certainly a little luck is needed, as in everything, in fact".

**BUT EVENTUALLY, INEVITABLY, ANY DISCUSSION ALWAYS BRINGS US BACK TO ART AND ITS MYSTERIOUS CHARM.**

"The art world attracts me for different aspects. I am interested in its history, I like to know about the person behind the work, I like to visit the contemporary art fairs and see what today's artists are inventing. In addition to the actual works, there is a whole world revolving around art that is fascinating, with fairs, exhibitions, galleries, artists, and even more individual passions, thoughts and doubts that this world raises in many different categories of people.

To name a few artists that I would particularly like to mention: Giacometti and César for the emotions that they cause through their sculptures, so different but so strong; Gigore, for his unique taste, the ability to give to the most common objects a strong impact and turning them alive, and above all to succeed through a wide variety of artistic techniques. I would add Carakian, for the purity of his works, generally repeated through simplicity".

**GOING TO A SHOW WITH JO IS NOT A BAD IDEA.**

"The last show I saw - she says - is a collection of works by Magrita at New York's MOMA. A truly wonderful show with an impressive amount of important works".

**AND IN ADDITION TO PAINTING?**

"In addition to painting I live with music always on" says Jo smiling, with sparkling eyes. "I love to travel, each trip brings new ideas, opens the mind. Few things are noticed, in the cities we live, for habit, for routine, because we are focused on everyday life, when traveling we tend to look around. Every place, a detail, an advertisement in a foreign city can be a source of inspiration".

At the end I greet her, our meeting in downtown Milan ends. She walks away with the book in hand and wearing a very bohemian hat, like a real artist. I am left with a smile, like the one that stays with you when you look at one of her paintings.



**ON TOP**  
PIA SIBORIC FORCER, 2011,  
acrylic on canvas, 120 x 130 cm

**BELOW**  
CHAMPIONS, 2014, acrylic and rough  
paper on canvas, 100 x 120 cm



**ON THE RIGHT**

2150, 2012,  
acrylic on canvas, 50 x 70 cm  
SERKIZI S. BRACCI, 2012,  
acrylic on canvas, 120 x 130 cm

**BELOW**

QUANTZAKUMU  
After Marco Biondini,  
2011, acrylic on canvas,  
120 x 130 cm

