

**HECTOR DIAZ**

**Stefano Puleo**  
Biography

# HECTOR DIAZ



The artist at his studio in Italy | Art & Photo © Stefano Puleo

## **Stefano Puleo**

B. May 29, 1950 - Catania, Sicily, Italy.

His childhood was joyful, full of regulated and serene freedom.

His is a lower middle-class family, his father dedicates himself, for a certain period of time to politics, obtaining the position of mayor of the Municipality of Acicastello, of which the town of Acitrezza is a fraction.

He loves playing among the rocks of Acitrezza and spends much of his time among the fishermen who mend and pile up the nets.

He always waits for the approach of spring, when in the small boat yard, on the seashore, painters arrive to decorate the boats ready for launching at the beginning of the summer season. They use enamels with bright colors, he is fascinated by them, he stays for hours observing

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them. His favorite game is to pick up the empty jars and with a small dry twig extract traces of color, making drawings on old tables.

In 1962 he moved with his family to Catania.

At 14 he enrolled in the Art School of the same city.

From the first moment he was clearly aware that he had to improve his technical - graphic skills, the city presents rare specific cultural events that stimulate his interest. He often visits the municipal library, begins to study the graphic works of the masters of the twentieth century, begins a series of drawings to improve his sign, each subject attracts him, the desire to make art manifests in him.

In 1965 he worked in a studio on the ground floor of via Crociferi in Catania, living with three other friends, a painter, an architect and a graphic designer. He began to create his first paintings and sculptures. He felt that his first pictorial works were still immature and naive, so he began a period of great work to improve himself, often ignoring the behaviors corresponding to the life of a teenager.

His artistic debut dates back to 1966, exhibiting in group exhibitions and participating in numerous awards in Sicily. He felt the need to deepen the level of his technical painting skills. Using the money earned from the sale of some drawings, during the summer holidays, he decided, involving his mother, to travel to visit exhibitions and museums in various cities in Italy.

1968 is the year in which the season of youth protest, struggles and social conflicts begins in Italy, he is involved, he begins to deal with social issues.

In 1971, after obtaining his artistic high school diploma, wanting to extend his vision of art, he begins to visit various European capitals. He studies and observes the expressionist masters and the Fauves very carefully. He needs to find confirmation for his work. He moves alone to a more spacious studio.

From 1968 to the mid-Seventies, he draws inspiration from social reality, without useless concessions to fantasy. Depraved women, rubber-faced politicians, senses lost in the carnage of passions, human figures with deformed and grotesque faces. He uses simple shapes and pure colors to obtain greater expressive force.

Until the end of the 70s, he felt the need to make his work known and to confront the market. He began to travel in Italy, carrying his works rolled up under his arm. He visited galleries, met gallery owners, other artists, art dealers. He established working relationships and friendships with some of them.

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In 1974 he was appointed "assistant to the chair of Pictorial Disciplines" at the Art School of Catania.

In the years from the mid-70s to the mid-80s, he varied the construction of his paintings. He created a series of very expressive paintings, even grotesque, expressionist. The color is extremely sunny, he uses tones of yellow and ochre, the drawing exaggerates the anatomy, to the point of deforming the faces in the expression of fury and scream. He created a cycle of large-scale paintings, based on the novel "I Malavoglia" by Verga, among the most important "L'attesa della Provvidenza" and "La Pesca notturno".

In 1980 Giuseppe Fava, a well-known writer and journalist, killed by "Cosa Nostra" in 1984, invited him to collaborate on the editorial staff of "Giornale del Sud", a daily newspaper against the mafia, creating drawings of political satire and grotesque satire for the newspaper. He obtained the chair of Pictorial Disciplines at the Art School of Catania.

From the mid-eighties his painting has a turning point, with a real mythographic refoundation that places youth and beauty at the center of the change in the figures, differently from those of the early eighties. He takes care of the construction of the image, he paints trying to educate and develop the solarly with very rigorous rules, such that if a tone is above or below even a minimal fraction of light, that color out of tone, makes the whole image jump. He makes Matisse's words his own: "Without a doubt, you have to paint as you sing, without constraints. The acrobat performs his act with ease and ease. But let's not lose sight of the long preparatory work that allowed him to achieve this result. The same happens in painting. The taking possession of the means must pass from the conscious to the unconscious through work, and then you arrive at this impression of spontaneity". This is a period in which he undergoes an evolution of capital importance to understand the subsequent stages and the general whole of his work. His influence on the Fauves is highlighted, especially in his landscapes and characterised by the predominance of new, more dynamic, more optimistic and more serene colours.

In 2010 he was invited to join the "Movimento degli Arcani" founded by the art critic Paolo Levi. Exhibitions of the movement are organized in Italy, Europe and the United States.

Since 2020 the artist has been represented by the HJ Art Gallery in London.

In 2023 he starts to collaborate with HECTOR DIAZ Gallery in Mexico.

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