

HECTOR DIAZ

Stefano Puleo
Interviews

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Interviews | Héctor Díaz + Stefano Puleo

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Stefano Puleo The beauty of art in forms and colors

Media outlet: Conciencia Pública

By: Héctor Díaz

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Q&A: 20

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Introduction

Stefano Puleo is an Italian artist from Sicily, recognized for his unique classical style, with significant influence from masters like Cézanne and Modigliani.

His artistic proposal is deeply rooted in his Sicilian heritage, which is evident in his vibrant use of color and the emotional depth of his work. His paintings often reflect a Mediterranean atmosphere, with a palette that captures the warmth and intensity of the region.

Puleo's art frequently explores themes through different series, such as "Women," "Characters," "Faith," and "Landscapes," each offering a window into timeless narratives full of serenity and imaginative depth.

Recognized as one of the most important living Fauvists in Europe, he is represented in 3 regions of the world: Italy, England, and Mexico by the international gallery HECTOR DIAZ.

The interview

1. **What is Fauvism?** A movement that is identified by the use of pure color, the path toward the simplification of form, and the balanced construction of space, disconnected from a vision of objective reality, but an expression of subjective emotion, asserting the expressive freedom of the individual.
2. **What is the difference between past and current Fauvism?** The Fauve movement is an disorganized movement; it is the result of individual experiences, of artists with different backgrounds and temperaments who are identified by the use of pure color. It is not

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structured like other movements of the same historical period. I don't think there are many differences with the current movement. Matisse wrote: "The starting point of Fauvism consists of the courage to rediscover the purity of means." Today, as in the past, the search for painting as such is essential, trying to resolve all the inherent difficulties of the specificity of one's own pictorial language.

3. ***How do you decide what to paint?*** When you dedicate yourself to this work, any image, memory, or event can be a stimulus to find a subject to represent. One circumstance that happens to me is when I decide on a new subject, and often while I am painting, a new idea forms as if to go beyond the path already taken.
4. ***What is not seen in a photo shoot with models for your work?*** I believe the visibility of the color construction and its density is missing. Each color is composed of various tones, often complementary, which create vibrations in the painting. Since these are light and complex gradations, they are not perceived by the mechanical medium, which flattens the image.
5. ***How important is composition?*** Decisive for the success of a good painting. Composition determines the balance between the design and the surface to be covered; once it has been worked on and defined, you are already halfway through the work. Hence its importance.
6. ***How important is the subject matter?*** I don't think the subject itself is important; it becomes important when facing a good graphical or pictorial execution.
7. ***How important is the palette?*** When the painter fully trusts color to express all their feelings, fervor, and energy, the palette acquires notable importance and draws an indelible mark on the artist.
8. ***How important is the play of light?*** Undoubtedly, an essential component of a work. In a painting, light highlights the details of the composition, completes the plasticity of the sign and forms, enhances the brightness and contrasts of the colors, and above all, provides harmony and balance.
9. ***What are the most complicated works to paint?*** I don't believe there are more complicated works to paint. When an artist decides to create a work, they always conceive it in relation to the knowledge of their means; therefore, both large and small sizes present the same difficulties, only the construction times change.

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10. ***“A painting is a poem without words”, said the poet Horace.*** When I perceive a spontaneous personality, energy, simplicity, sweetness, and harmony in a work, I think the poet Horace was right.
11. ***Are seemingly simple works actually the most complex?*** I don't think so! When a composition is developed and the right balance is found between space and forms, the difficulties are the same between seemingly simple and seemingly complex works.
12. ***Not all works express something, why?*** Perhaps because the basic elements are missing. Inner impression in the pictorial form and the artist's personality, balance in the composition. All of this does not give the viewer the opportunity to penetrate the heart of the painting with their gaze and imagination. So, they express nothing.
13. ***Is it necessary for a work to tell a story?*** No, it is not necessary! But I believe that every work of art is a story. It will be a painted narrative for the observer, who will see and understand it in different ways and will live, with imagination, many other stories, each one different.
14. ***Can a drawing be as good as a painting?*** The drawing reflects the soul of the artist; if it conveys emotions with the mark and the composition, it will be as good as a painting.
15. ***What do you believe in spiritually? Does your work express this?*** I believe in peace, love, kindness, friendship... all of this feeds the passion that I try to transmit in my paintings, through color.
16. ***Is classical painting overshadowed by contemporary painting?*** Both are like stars; they shine with their own light.
17. ***Do you paint for pleasure, for solitude, for a living, to transcend—why do you do it?*** I paint because I am driven by passion, from which comes the pleasure of creating, the love of solitude, and the energy to transcend.
18. ***What is the difference between an artist and a painter?*** The artist creates, communicates, and transmits their emotions and impressions in their works. A painter simply paints.
19. ***Do you consider your works eternal moments of beauty or reflection?*** With my work, I try to achieve both goals; I still have a lot of work to do!
20. ***In life as in art, nothing is perfect, but is everything perfectible?*** Definitely perfectible!

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Stefano Puleo Sicilian Fauvism of the 21st century

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Introduction

The Italian painter with more than 50 years of experience shares his vision of art and the battles he fought to place his work on the market.

"I encountered complexities when putting my works on the market. Only through the pursuit of coherence in the production of my works, based on relationships with serious galleries, have I managed to overcome these difficulties".

–Stefano Puleo, Italian artist

Stefano Puleo (Sicily, Italy, 1950) is a man who has dedicated his existence to trying to discover the art of the painting profession and to understanding the meaning of art through the use of color, thereby solidifying a way to express his thoughts.

"The artist's success comes from recognizing and expressing their ideas, creating new values derived from a process where individuality manages to realize its own path," the Italian states.

The interview

1. **What was your childhood like?** I grew up in a coastal town among fishermen and boats. The sea and the light gave me a lot of energy and joy. A quiet childhood, in contact with nature... I miss it very much.
2. **What did you study?** I attended art school.

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3. ***What are your hobbies?*** I have no hobbies; I dedicate all my time to painting.
4. ***Why did you decide to be an artist?*** I don't think there was a moment when I decided to be an artist. Perhaps due to the need to express myself through art, combining passion and dedication and trying to improve my creative process, over time, unconsciously, I have become one.
5. ***If you weren't an artist, what would you have dedicated yourself to?*** I dedicated a large part of my time to another passion, teaching. I taught pictorial disciplines at the Liceo Artistico in Catania for many years, the same institute that trained me and gave me the seed that I cultivated over time.
6. ***Who or what inspires you?*** I have always found useful suggestions in the works of the great masters of the early 20th Century: Cézanne, Picasso, Matisse, and the Fauves.
7. ***What style characterizes you and why this one?*** The tendency of dominant color. The search for harmony between tones, linked to my imagination, which tends to reflect light. All of this allows each painting to achieve that necessary balance to find serenity and proportion in the composition of forms.
8. ***What message do you want to convey with your art?*** Through my unique expression, I would like to evoke and transmit joy, sadness, astonishment, or reflection, communicating through color, always stimulating creativity and offering a different vision of life.
9. ***If you weren't you and you saw your painting, what would you think of it?*** I would see lively and colorful paintings that convey joy and, of course, serenity.
10. ***What was your biggest challenge in the industry and how did you overcome it?*** Making art is an entire continuous communicative process; the artistic experience can generate many difficulties in the relationship between professional intermediaries in this world, such as critics or gallerists. In my case, I encountered complexities when putting my works into circulation on the market. And it has only been by seeking coherence in the production of my work and establishing relationships with serious galleries that I have managed to overcome these difficulties and gain a position.
11. ***What is your goal as an artist?*** To be able to express my personality through the use of color.

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12. **Why does your work bring something new to art?** Because it shows that the creative experience is a fundamental part of a person's normal faculties. The artist's success comes from being able to recognize and express their ideas, creating new values derived from a process where individuality manages to realize its own path.
13. **Why is art important in our lives?** It stimulates creativity, adds experiences to our lives, and awakens critical thinking.
14. **Does an artist make a work or does a work make an artist?** If an artist manages to create a work of art, that work will surely also end up defining the artist.
15. **Is madness necessary to be an artist?** Certainly not; on the contrary, the rule of method and balance applies here, as well as an almost maniacal constancy in the study and research of one's own artistic trajectory.
16. **What advice would you give to someone who wants to be an artist?** Give free rein to your inspiration and creativity. Above all, be yourself, because art is a unique and personal expression that can be cultivated by anyone with passion and determination.
17. **What do you consider your legacy to be?** I don't know yet.
18. **How would you like to be remembered?** As an artist!

The creator in question

Stefano Puleo was born in the town of Aci Trezza, in Sicily, a region with a long fishing tradition and maritime activity. In 1964, he began his artistic education at the School of Art in Catania and, not long after, in 1966, he made his debut in the art world with small exhibitions and his participation in competitions, then with small drawings and sculptures. Later, he successfully ventured into other formats, such as oil on canvas, watercolor, and engraving. His first solo exhibition took place in 1970, at the G7 Gallery. In 2009, he won the XXI edition of the Arts Prize for Culture (Critic's Award) in Milan. He currently works in London, and his works are permanently exhibited at the HJ Art Gallery, also in the British capital.

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Stefano Puleo

The Italian who seduces with classical masterpieces

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By: Héctor Díaz

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Introduction

The interview

1. ***Is vocation innate? Is it found, is it built, is it pursued?*** I believe that vocation is innate, although very often it is hidden. It is sometimes found by chance looking at a painting or the works of an artist that stimulates interest and curiosity. It must be cared for, often with sacrifice, and it is nourished, especially in painting, by the study of visual education, color, and nature in all its forms.
2. ***How would you describe your work to someone who doesn't know it?*** I try with my paintings to translate and reproduce, with my subjects and colors, the cultural experiences of the great European painting of the twentieth century.
3. ***What does it mean to be an artist in the 21st century?*** It's hard to say! Today, the market has taken control, and the figure of the artist has lost much of the guiding function in determining taste and the message of beauty that it had in the last century, losing much of the ability to influence contemporary society.
4. ***Why did you choose your style? Is it necessary to differentiate with one?*** I think that style is not chosen, it comes from itself. It arises unconsciously from your culture and experience. You materialize your thought, painting what your preparation allows you. You differentiate yourself because visual culture and pictorial experience are different for each of us.

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5. ***What do you try to express in your paintings?*** The values of beauty.
6. ***Which artists have influenced your work?*** Certainly Cézanne, Picasso, Matisse, and the Fauves, and I would say many other masters.
7. ***What is the hardest part of painting?*** This depends on the sensitivity of the artist; it is always difficult to face a blank canvas, even if you already have an idea of what you want to achieve. For my works, the greatest difficulty, or rather my commitment, I find in the search for the balance of the composition, of the forms. When this has been achieved through drawing, half of the work is already done.
8. ***What is the most satisfying part of painting?*** Definitely the search for color tones on the palette. Finding colors stimulates you and helps you transmit energy to the painting.
9. ***Why do people buy art?*** I like to believe that the main reason is because in art you can find something that is not evident in everyday life: serenity, the harmony of shapes, the strength of color, but above all the imagination that allows you to travel inside the painting, reinventing it. But also as a form of investment.
10. ***What gives value to art?*** Theme, composition, format, trajectory, quality, gallery, market? I believe, fundamentally, that the value of art is given by the ability of a painting to convey emotions that involve the observer. Quality is essential, more so than the theme, composition, and the artist's trajectory. The gallery is decisive in defining this value and must be capable of imposing it on the market.
11. ***Do you prefer your works to be in Museums or Private Collections?*** Why? I think it is important that the works are in private collections, but the presence in Museums would allow for greater visibility of the works with the consecration of your artistic path.
12. ***Do paintings find homes or do people find paintings?*** People find the paintings. Paintings find homes if they are well-guided by gallerists.
13. ***Is transcendence an important issue for you? Why?*** Very important! It is the necessary condition to give impetus and energy to my work. The attempt to always find MORE is the basis of my life as an artist. Never being completely satisfied with the paintings I create is proof of how crucial it is.

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14. ***What is the work of a Gallery?*** In addition to selling art and having relationships with collectors, I believe it must create value for the work of the represented artists and present them to the market.
15. ***What do you think about auction houses and art fairs?*** Auction houses are very useful for confirming the value of an artist, while art fairs, especially important ones, can give prestige and greater visibility.
16. ***How to stand out in a globalized market?*** By maintaining a high quality of work and relying on galleries with experience and international charisma, one can stand out in a globalized market.
17. ***Should an artist's personal life be private?*** Only if it does not directly affect the artist's work.
18. ***Is there anything you haven't been asked yet that you'd like to share?*** I don't know.
19. ***What is the most important thing in life for you?*** To paint and improve!
20. ***What could be the title of a book about your life?*** The Garden of Dreams: Nature and Colors in the Paintings of Stefano Puleo.