

**HECTOR DIAZ**

# **Stefano Puleo**

**Essays on the artist**

# HECTOR DIAZ

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# HECTOR DIAZ

## Stefano Puleo

By Héctor Díaz

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Stefano is an Italian artist recognized for his distinctive classical style, deeply influenced by Cézanne and Modigliani. His art captures the essence of the Mediterranean, both in its vibrant color palette and the emotional depth of his subjects. Focusing on simplicity and harmony, Puleo invites viewers to explore narratives that transcend time, immersing them in a universe where emotion and form coexist in serene balance.

Puleo's compositions range from portraits to landscapes, all imbued with contemplative energy that goes beyond literal representation. Whether it's his series on "Women," "Characters," or "Landscapes," his works convey a quiet atmosphere that reveals hidden beauty in the everyday. Through his balanced use of color and form, Stefano creates visually captivating compositions filled with calm and introspection.

Color is a central pillar of Puleo's artistic approach. He employs a Mediterranean palette full of warm and vibrant tones that reflect the light and warmth of his homeland. This use of color is not merely decorative but becomes a visual language that communicates the passion and emotional depth of his themes. For Stefano, color is the essence of painting, a tool to express the energy and spirit within each piece.

Throughout his career, Puleo has developed an aesthetic that blends the classical with the contemporary, respecting tradition while still innovating. His large-scale formats and mastery of technique allow him to create works that, although seemingly simple, conceal visual and emotional complexity. Light, another key element in his work, is used to highlight forms and create a sense of volume, giving his paintings a dynamic quality that invites exploration from multiple angles.

Represented in Mexico by HECTOR DIAZ Gallery, Stefano Puleo is considered one of the most important contemporary Fauvist painters in Europe. His ability to combine a clear, balanced composition with deep emotional resonance has captured the attention of collectors and critics worldwide. Through his art, Puleo continues to create moments of timeless beauty and reflection, establishing himself as a key figure in the contemporary art landscape—an artist whose legacy will undoubtedly endure in the history of art.

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## Stefano Puleo, the visual poet of Sicily

By Javier Arizabalo

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Stefano Puleo, born in Sicily in 1950, was shaped by classical tradition and the beauty of his land, which invites viewers to immerse themselves in a world of optimism and vitality, offering a respite from the monotony of daily life.

From an initial period of more expressionistic and monochromatic work, he transitioned in the mid-1980s to a mythographic re-foundation with youthful and beautiful figures, also diversifying his chromatic range. In 2010, he joined the "Movimento degli Arcani," led by art critic Polo Levi, a promoter of modern and contemporary art. It was through this group that Stefano's art expanded into exhibitions across Italy, Europe, and the United States.

The first analysis we can make of his work is that of its structure. Figures are defined by strong lines, and space is created by the accumulation of different perspectives, sometimes with slight support from straight vertical or horizontal lines. The lack of vanishing points and atmosphere makes this formal organization, along with the intensely vivid and saturated color, give us the sensation that the painting is rushing towards the observer.

His use of color is related to Fauvism, exciting the observer with the use of strong contrasts of complementary colors—reds and oranges against greens and violets—but with a warm dominance that brings tranquility and joy. He employs the Italian knowledge of using earth pigments, such as those extracted from Mount Etna itself.

The second aspect worth mentioning is the use of archetypes in timeless scenes of characters who could be part of a film, while in other works, he brings us closer to the warmth of tranquil Mediterranean villages, their bar and terrace, their church, pine forests, orchards, and the maritime horizon.

Puleo explores several themes that reflect his concerns: cultural identity in the relationship between humans and their environment, that of the Mediterranean landscape of Sicily; historical memory, through references to archaeological ruins, traditional architecture, and everyday objects; the sea as a border and connection, a barrier simultaneously a path of communication between cultures, reflecting the island's position as a crossroads of civilizations; and finally, the

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transformation of mundane elements such as tables, vases, fruits, and boats into symbols loaded with cultural and historical meaning, relating him to Italian metaphysical painting.

Puleo does not copy reality but transforms it into an idyllic and dreamlike universe where people live, love, dance, play music, and interact, and landscapes seem to have a life of their own due to their organicity. He is not, therefore, an analyst, a cataloger, or an illustrator, but a seeker of essences, who seeks to extract all the mystery and spirituality from things and people.

His work reflects international influences, expressionism, abstract art, which prioritizes color and expressiveness, post-impressionist painting of Van Gogh, Cézanne, from the late 19th century, until reaching the avant-garde of the 20th century, with Modigliani, balancing global influences with local particularities, creating a dialogue between tradition and modernity.