

Marco Mazzoni
Stramonium

December 15th, 2022 – January 21st, 2023

After seven years of absence Giovanni Bonelli Gallery is pleased to host a new exhibition by Marco Mazzoni. Well known for his almost exclusive use of coloured pencils on paper, Mazzoni presents a *corpus* of specially created artworks for this show. Since ancient times, Stramonium (*Datura Stramonium*) -also known as herb of *witches*- was known for its hallucinogenic properties and used in various combinations for therapeutic purposes. With this title, the artist introduces us to the world of ancient healers - present in many Italian regions until the early 20th century and not entirely disappeared in some rural areas- who used medicinal herbs for healing purposes. These women were repeatedly persecuted as women and repositories of a folk knowledge that no longer conformed to the canons of the Counter-Reformation and the emerging academic medicine that would remain, for many centuries, exclusively reserved to men . Mazzoni's skillful and refined use of endless pencil strokes of colour allows his to create evocative images in which the faces of these women healers-rigorously eyeless because they are universal-emerge from swirls of plants or animals charged with symbolic and esoteric meanings. Exhibited alongside these works are fifteen drawings on Moleskine paper belonging to the virtue cycle, where each virtue is represented by an animal in symbiosis with a plant or flower. In these seemingly simple and delicate visions the subjects, which Mazzoni has been elaborating with ever new inventiveness for more than a decade, reveal to a closer look an unexpected power and complexity. The plant-animal symbiosis is depicted with a caressing and rapid stroke that renders the subject as locked in a hallucinated instant that fits well with the dreamlike character recalled by the title. The artist contributes to this illusion thanks to the double register that characterizes his work: impeccable technique for subjects inscribed in a light "pop" type narrative that holds and hides, in the folds of the thousands of shades of colour, layered meanings of a deeper level. Testifying to the different registers that Mazzoni manages to alternate in his production, the exhibition concludes with a preview presentation of the original graphic plates created for the forthcoming illustrated Henry James book "Turn of the Screw"- outgoing in spring 2023-.

Marco Mazzoni (Tortona, 1982. Lives and works in Voghera)

Well known for his qualities as a draughtsman even in environments not directly related to the artistic one, Marco Mazzoni has developed over the years his own peculiar stylistic signature that makes him immediately recognizable. He has exhibited both in Italy and abroad in galleries and public institutions. Major solo exhibitions include Think Space Gallery, Los Angeles (2014 and 2017); Gallerie Benoni, Copenhagen (2016); Galleria Giovanni Bonelli, Milan (2015); Gallery B15, Copenhagen (2011 and 2014); Roq La Rue Gallery, Seattle (2013 and 2012), Jonathan Levine Gallery, New York (2013). Major group exhibitions include: Galleria Civica of Trento (2022); Spoke Art, New York (2018); LAMAG Museum, Los Angeles (2015); Foundation Le Stelline, Milan (2012); in 2011 he participated in the 54th Biennial of Venice, Italy Pavilion.