

## Vision of wine

Alessandra Grandi (February 11, 2010)



Back again this year at Cipriani 42 in New York is the exhibition by Luca Maroni devoted to the senses we use to distinguish and appreciate wine. This year, sensory perception is enhanced through works of art by Italian artists from the Officina Materica.

Sens of Wine is the best name that Luca Maroni could give his creation, an international event dedicated to the promotion of wine culture. Because this is not an ordinary wine festival but a taste and sensory journey through a product that is not simply consumed, but one that should be discovered, understood, and felt.

The 2010 event was again held in the beautiful and impressive building that houses Cipriani 42 in New York City. Hundreds of people were drawn there over the course of the day on Thursday, February 4 and were seduced by the many Italian wines, by the excellent (and authentic) Italian food offered at Cipriani, and for the first time by the powerful works of art which allowed visitors to look at



wine from a new perspective.

It is an experimental form of art that doesn't have a name and that so far seems to be an exclusive pursuit of two Roman artists. Fabrizio and Piero's artistic adventure came about two years ago in front of a painting on wood made by Piero's father in the 1970s. In a moment, the two friends understood what they wanted to accomplish, and from there they could not stop.

They told us how they go about creating their work. The beginning is primal – everything begins with a primitive gesture, one that's "male" and aggressive: splitting the slab of wood.

Equipped with a chisel, they rip off the first layers of wood and allow the idea that is hidden within to emerge.

Piero has a different approach than Fabrizio, one that's more reflective. He often begins with a precise idea, although in most cases the idea is transformed over the course of making the art and it eventually becomes what it wants to become. The artists give form to an idea that in some ways departs from will and awareness.

This follows a softer phase, using filings, where sand and paint imbued the painting with a feeling of calm and balance. These two states of mind, the aggressive and the most gentle, met and balanced each other in the work.

At their studio, Officina Materica, is where the release, creation, and discovery of senses take place. In exactly the same way shapes change as compared with an original idea, they change in the viewer's vision in the same way. They are abstract works that are left open to interpretation and which inspire the primitive and sensitive imagination of the observer. They are works that hold secrets, the secrets of those who invented them and who read their own emotional experiences between the splintered grains of wood.

At Sens of Wine the paintings accompany and enrich the journey of those viewers who recognize a combination of colors and emotions reflected between what he tastes and what he observes. It's like watching and actually seeing what you taste.

In his studio on Isla Negra, Pablo Neruda had a desk that essentially consisted of a piece of wood found on a beach. He would say that it was a gift from the ocean.

I look at these paintings, which at one time were mute planks of wood, and I see the vision and sensibility of the men capable of giving new meaning to gifts from nature.

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