

Roberto Nanni

Solo show

Pesaro Film Festival 2002

by Laura Sannio

from "Close Up. Storie della Visione", Italian national magazine

The extensive program was punctuated by the works of Roberto Nanni's solo show, new this year in the video room, testifying to the necessary purpose of verifying young authors who have had a career parallel to the traditional ones in feature films.

This desire was underlined by Nanni himself who, in the meeting with the public in just over half an hour, was able to "come clean" about a much broader topic than the sclerotic definition of cinema itself: the filmable.

"Filmmaker not director" is the definition that Nanni feels is most fitting for himself, meaning the philological need to stay closer to one's own content rather than riding the rhetoric of the feature film, productions, actors, etc.

The semantic alienation of cinema is resolved by Nanni with a luminous comparison when he states that if this were the case it would be like being in a bookshop that only contained novels. Consistent with his assumption, Nanni then conducted his speech even outside the audiovisual image, urging a return to reading, in particular to the verse which, for those who have been able to follow his expressive parable, knows how his statement is logical rather than provocative.

In his highly personal, maieutic intervention, he then retraced his origins as a videomaker always marked by experimentation and openness to other artistic codes.

In fact, Roberto Nanni is cited in Sandra Lischi's volume, "Visioni Elettroniche", as the Italian heir of the underground tradition.

The aspect of experimentation inherent in him should not be confused with a vague indistinct flow but always comes from a practice that is the opposite of excess, aimed at economy and linearity in the use of the image as in Picasso's assumption:

"First I find then I search". Films buried to be extracted at the right moment like good wine, expired films, covered with pastes like the one for dentures, films projected and

latensified with telecine, deformation work on the sound, mixing of signals, alterations of all kinds. This filmmaker wanted his work not to pass only through his eye.

Like an ancient, his work is tiring and what passes through his hands is also the distillate of his very existence, not just of the object and the cultural mediation it entails.

The autobiographical form that he shamelessly admitted consists in always being inside his works. It's not about the director-actor who knows what he has to do, it means limit, verification, irony.

So in "*Love Conquers All. Conversation with Derek Jarman*", first prize jury and first prize audience at the Turin Cinema Festival in '93.

With an exactly right quote from Francis Bacon, he managed to keep the figure of the English director sitting and answering his questions in constant deformation, in a perpetual, dazzling, unsettling oscillation: that of a man who calmly disposed with his simple sentences made up of memories and anecdotes the network of a prodigious intelligence but impatient and aware of its extinction.

Even here, the matter of the matter and the making of the film were a compelling lesson. As are the "rooms" of "*Piccoli Ostinati*", the 8mm short films made to the music of Steven Brown. Even in his other work with Brown, "*Pexer*", which is decidedly abstract and played on the association of colours/music, Nanni always carries with him a kind of internal path that goes from formal abstraction to return to great explosions of human tension captured on every possible occasion.

"*Antonio Ruju. Life of a Sardinian Anarchist*" opened and closed his solo exhibition, who aroused applause from the public on more than one occasion.

Made on behalf of Moretti - Barbagallo's Sacher Film, "*Antonio Ruju*" is one of the "episodes" of the "Diaries" that directors of different backgrounds have been called to film for a few years.

Well, the entire life of a man in less than thirty minutes of interview interspersed with a montage of period images and a very clever sound montage made up of mini interludes, almost as if they were music boxes. A breakneck film, very rich in rhetoric restricted to details that formally delved into the material without disturbing the light and very tense story of this great old man, this great Italian.

Ruju, born in 1911 in Tissi, Sassari, was a barefoot and illiterate child, later a financier, partisan, gold medal for military valor for having made 10,000 Germans surrender in Avigliana, Piedmont, without firing a single shot; medal "*disdainfully refused, because I fought believing in an Italy without servants and masters*".

And above all, an important anarchist exponent but also a stockbroker and millionaire and financier of anarchist press for half the world!

Roberto Nanni wanted to dedicate the solo show of his work to Antonio Ruju who passed away this year. It is done here too, quoting one of Ruju's statements contained in the film: *"Anarchy is a very noble ideal. The older I get, the more attached I become to it. To be an anarchist you must first of all be honest and respectful of others"*.

Laura Sannio