



As a part of Rome Art Week (Oct. 24 - 29) it will be possible to admire a new artwork by Antonio Tamburro at Sesto Senso Art Gallery. Among some of his masterpieces, a new large painting will be on display: *The muses* (78.8x78.8 inches), will be revealed to the public on Friday, Oct. 28, with the presence of the artist.

The work shows six women in a minimal context; only few elements and a white drapery in the upper left corner characterize the setting; the garments of the female figures are masterfully realized to highlight the female bodies without excess. The simplicity and rigor of the composition brings out more of the melancholy tones and temperament of the characters depicted. The six "muses" in the painting are contemporary heroines inspired by the protagonists of Greek tragedy: Medea, Helen, Phaedra, Antigone, Electra, and Hecuba, important female characters challenging the role of women in the historical Greek society, but (at the same time) also with the drama of not being able to fulfill themselves as women: Medea, a foreigner in a country, Greece, that saw her as barbarian, was abandoned by Jason; Antigone, the princess who defied the rulers, paid with her life by dying alone; Helen, disputed between two princes, the main subject of the most celebrated war in antiquity; Phaedra, companion of the hero Theseus, killed herself because she was rejected by the chaste and devoted to Hippolytus; Electra, forced to marry a peasant by order of Aegisthus, illegitimate ruler of Mycenae, and Hecuba, who after losing her son Polysptore became aware of a prophecy that she will find a horrible death away from home. These courageous women become paradigms

at once of the tragic and of the idea of a profound self-sacrifice, and they stand opposite to each other in Tamburro's canvas.

The painting *The muses* is characterized by a great visual power in which the composition and formal arrangement succeed in creating a theatrical staging. The female figures are depicted together in the same place, but although they do not look at each other, the tense atmosphere highlights the inner strength of the protagonists by revealing their tragic fate. An unprecedented work that underlines the contemporaneity of Greek culture and mythology by making the protagonists not only contemporary heroines but also inspirational muses, sharing a desire to determine events or to be the subject of great disputes (as with Helen). The artist depicts this theme by managing to create a poetic and introspective dimension using shades of blue and white and with the gray backgrounds that give solemnity to the subject. The pale complexions contrast with the blue draperies of the robes, creating an evocative reminder of the solemnity of Greek statues, in the image we are left with after losing their original color. The blue background, the interplay of light and shadow, and such an intimate atmosphere seem to suggest a deep reflection that is already recalled by the style used. The color choice and the drapery of the woman standing on the right are very reminiscent of Picasso's *La vie*, a 1903 work exhibited at the Cleveland Museum in New York, considered one of the most emblematic paintings of the Blue Period and representative of an allegory of the cycle of life. In Tamburro's work the standing figure on the right has strong references to the one in *Le vie* both in terms of the sculptural rendering of the subject and the pictorial execution of the robe. The standing figure on the left against the white background is also very striking and seems to contrast with the other figures constructed from shadows and precisely placed in space. This figure, within the composition, barely hinted at by the artist's drawing, has an immaterial presence that seems as if it were absorbed by light. The other protagonists are lost in deep meditation, sitting in different positions except for the last woman standing. The viewer can see how

interesting the compositional choice is, with the painting divided into two groups: on the left the two female figures whose positions make them mirrors of each other, while on the right the woman in the center facing with her naked chest on the opposite side of the viewer and capturing our attention, flanked by the other two, one in the opposite position from it and the other standing with her face turned toward something that is invisible to the viewer, suggesting the presence of events that lie outside the represented space. Important formal balances characterize the painting and succeed in restoring to us the steadiness of these subjects, who, without directly engaging the viewer and looking away, suggest about the fascinating fate narrated by the greatest Greek tragedians.

We look forward to seeing you from 5 to 8 p.m.
Free admission

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