

70's



Marrakech. This is the first "Arab" journey of the Adami's, a journey of memory in search of the places that inspired André Gide, Pierre Loti, but also Delacroix and the Orientalist painters. In Marrakech, Adami works on the series of paintings "Les Arabes." In 1970, the Musée de la Ville de Paris (ARC) dedicates a large retrospective to him, curated by Pierre Gaudibert; the exhibition was then transferred to the Kunstverein in Ulm. Gaudibert, presenting the recent developments in Adami's painting in the 1970s, writes:

"A total triumphant evidence of the image and a total disturbing ambiguity of that same image; this is the paradox of every new work in the last phase of Adami's itinerary," "After 'crisis' the structures (G. Gassiot-Talabot), 'shattered' (A. Jouffroy) the present, here he is now moving towards an increasingly synthetic recomposition of the image, abandoning the disarticulated puzzles that made him famous."

On the occasion of his first exhibition at the Galerie Maeght in Paris, where he will exhibit regularly from then onwards. The issue 188 of *Derrière le Miroir* is released, with a written piece by his friend, the poet Jacques Dupin.

"Very current painter, and painter faithful to painting. But for Adami, painting is not just throwing colors on canvas, it's writing. It's not arranging or soliciting objects, but pictorially objectifying the return of the real in a shattered consciousness, 'When I paint, I am nothing but a cartographer,' but the cartographer of daily



Galerie Maeght of Paris



Adami & Miró in Saint Paul-de-Vence

cataclysms, circumscribed epidemics, imminent collapses, and resurfacing future." writes Dupin.

The meeting with Aimé Maeght is crucial and happens thanks to Jacques Dupin, who introduces Valerio to the renowned French dealer. The environment created by Maeght is not simply a stable of artists but rather a real family, where Camilla and Valerio are splendidly welcomed. Camilla is practically adopted by Marguerite, Aimé's wife, who becomes a second mother to her. Occasionally, the Maeghts would summon all their artists to the Fondation in Saint Paul de Vence, where, for a few days, a climate of communal living was created with Chagall, Calder, Chillida, Tal-Coat, Miró, and Alechinsky.

Those were magnificent years, rich in cultural exchanges, parties, football matches between gallery owners and artists. Saint Paul de Vence was a special place of total art. The artists had personally participated in the conception and realization of the future Fondation as early as 1964, each appropriating a space. Joan Miró, Marc Chagall, Alberto Giacometti, Georges Braque, Alexander Calder, and Fernand Léger found it an ideal place to create, in those harmonious gardens facing the village. Adami was the youngest artist in that exceptional stable.

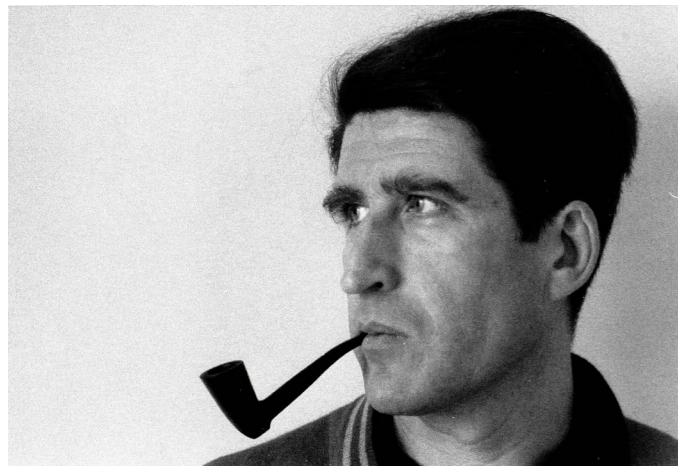
In 1971, he painted the portraits of James Joyce and Anton von Webern and a series of large political paintings, including "La domenica di Amburgo" exhibited the following year at the Galerie Maeght in Zurich; "Attentato I" and the following year "Attentato II" introducing political and social themes into his painting where the tragedy of the event is suffocated under the grace of soft colors and controlled lines.

Also in 1971, he moved to New York and inaugurated his new studio, where he would work for several months every year thereafter. He painted "Gustav Mahler a Dobbiaco" and "Dr. Sigm. Freud." That same year, with his brother Giancarlo, he shot "Vacanze nel deserto" at Villa Cantoni in Arona, an experimental feature film shot in 16mm. Among the actors were Camilla, the painter Errò, Dino Buzzati, Aldo Mondino, Adriana Bogdan, and Franz Thomasin. The film was awarded at the Tolone Festival.

Regarding the film, in the magazine "Art Vivant" No. 22 of 1971, Adami declares: "The directors who have influenced me the most in my work are those who have tried to tell stories

Adami with Errò during the filming of "Vacanze nel deserto"





that cinema had never told before. Dreyer, for example, in *Ordet*.”
 In 1973, he published an announcement in some newspapers:

“SEND ME AN IMAGE. Valerio Adami, painter, is looking for images. All images will be accepted. Images previously employed include tennis courts, bathrooms, assassinations, safaris, toilet articles, sex, scenes from private life, old movies, dates, famous people, and the sea. They will never be paid for nor returned, but eventually used as a basis for study.”

He stayed in Bavaria, where he worked on the book *“Das Reich”* with the writer Helmut Heissenbüttel, with ten tables with original screen prints by Valerio Adami in color. The work reconstructs the history of the German Reich from 1871 until its collapse in 1945, in the tension between militarism and anti-militarism. In 1975, the friendship with the philosopher Jacques Derrida was started in Paris, with whom he created a poster for his book *Glas*, which became a kind of icon of the deconstructionist thought of which Derrida was the leading exponent.

On the occasion of the exhibition at the Galerie Maeght in Paris, Derrida writes + R (over and above), later published in his volume *La vérité en peinture* (Flammarion, 1978). In the same year, Marc le Bot dedicated a long essay to his work entitled *Valerio Adami-Essai sur le formalisme critique* (Galilée).

“In these years, the human figure enters more and more prominently into his painting: no longer just bodies scattered among objects, in the décor of interiors or public places. Faces appear, and neoclassical memory recomposes modern symbologies. A new mythological body is now revealed in Adami’s painting,” writes M. Ferraris.

In 1976, he set off with Camilla for his first trip to India with his friend Hubert Damisch and stayed as a guest of the Sarabhai family in Ahmedabad, the city where Gandhi had decided to found the ashram from where he set out for the *“Salt March.”* He drew *“Arabesco”*, *“Oedipus,”* *“Psalms”*, *“Il salto del cammello”* and *“Prolegomeni a un viaggio in India”*.

“At Gandhi’s ashram, we take off our shoes. Photos on the river, wind, meditation practices? Drawing becomes a practice. Symbolic devices and pantomimes on the terraces of the old center, and everywhere in the sky, a hysterical population

of kites doubles and tears itself apart. We leave the city following the Sabarmati. Small camel trips. Wide nocturne for lone voices. At the ford of the river, we meet another caravan. The life of the fields, layers upon layers, etc. A physical and metaphysical experience without Baggage.”

In his New York studio, he painted *“Il vitello d’oro”* e *“Selbstbildnis - Il ruolo dell’artista è rappresentare il tragico”* and began painting a series of mythological-themed paintings.

“I work on a painting ten, twenty times, I have to check every detail, go over the whole design, point by point. The color must be precise, purified of all parasites. I read and reread every line, etc. A drawing stands up when it goes from the horizontal of the table to the vertical of the canvas, etc.”

On the occasion of an exhibition of his drawings at Transgaarden in Hellrup (Copenhagen), he set off on a long journey to the Nordic countries. He discovered the paintings of Akseli Gallen-Kallela.

“The north taught me that color is the graft of light, etc. The landscape is painted yellow and purple if the sun is on the horizon, etc. From the south, I learned tactile notion, color as the plastic element of things, etc.”

In 1979, he stayed in Mexico, while the Museo de Arte Moderno in Mexico City dedicated an exhibition to his paintings from 1971 to 1978, at the behest of director Fernando Gamboa. During the summer, he was in Jerusalem, where the Israel Museum hosted his retrospective, transferred here from Mexico City.

Trip in Messico

