

The dialogue of David Booker's art with history.

In the enchanting setting of Tuscania, one of the most beautiful medieval villages in Lazio, about one hundred kilometres north of Rome, Australian sculptor David Booker presents 'Martyres'. On display, in the 16th-century Palazzo Fani, for a few more weeks, 40 works, including sculptures and drawings, exploring universal themes through an original approach to waste.

Contemporary art has accustomed us to the use of waste and found objects, but always reused as materials in assemblages or installations. In this case it is different, abandoned objects and waste are the main subject of works made with a traditional pencil drawing technique and appear as 'still lifes' of the post-industrial age.

The exhibition 'Martyres' is divided into three different sections: the Boxes and Cardboards Room, the Mechanical Pieces Room and the Martyrs and Sculptures Room. Every work that puts discarded objects and materials at the centre of our gaze leads to reflection on the themes of existence. Life, death, love, solidarity, memory.

The Cardboard Boxes and the compositions of Mechanical Pieces, are portrayed as individuals within their own journey and stories, revealed only to those who recognise their message value.

A true 'poetics of waste' that surprises for the unexpected expressiveness of these elements, chosen and taken from recycling containers to be drawn in large compositions, and subjected by the artist to a process of transfiguration that sublimates their physical form into a metaphysical still life and conveys a sense of intimate and profound connection with the subjects represented.

In the large central hall dedicated to Martyrs and Sculptures, the artist develops the theme of the testimony of ideas as an engine of cultural change through the memory of the Martyrs of the first centuries of Christianity. The figures are represented by the artist precisely as facts made of cardboard, yet vivid in their humanity. Alongside the works, in order to facilitate the understanding of his working method, David Booker also exhibited the models he shaped out of recycled cardboard and drew from life to bring to life the protagonists and stories of the Holy Martyrs, assimilated through the study of texts made available by the Tuscania Archaeological Group.

Two sculptures stand out in the same room, one two and a half metres high, carved from a large cedar trunk, and the other smaller in bronze. Both intensify the message of humanity and solidarity of the Martyrs' stories by presenting, each, two figures that support each other and merge into a single body. The sculptures, with archaic elegance and monumentality, represent the theme of human strength and vulnerability manifested in the bond between two individuals.

The exhibition 'Martyres' represents an important opportunity to enhance the artistic and cultural heritage of Tuscania. David Booker's works enter into dialogue with the history and beauty of the town, creating a unique experience for visitors who are involved in a contemplative pathway in which art creates connections between people and ancient artefacts, architectural spaces and landscape, transforming the visiting experience from emotional to cultural.

Booker's majestic and intense works are pregnant with meaning and emotion, and the 'Martyres', exhibition is an unmissable experience for all lovers of ancient history and contemporary art and can be visited free of charge until 8 September, from Friday to Sunday, from 6 to 8 pm.

An insider's tip! If you manage to go during the weekend, you'll be guided by David Booker himself in a truly unique experience.

Martyres has been organised by the A.C.T.A.S.Cultural Association Tourism Art Show of Tuscania.

For more information and pics visit the newsroom on artist's official website:

<https://www.davidbookersculptor.eu/>

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ACTAS exhibition curator

Martyres

Palazzo Fani

Tuscania

13 July to 8 September 2024

Free admission