

Cometarum interceptors. Art covers for lost books

Although we are not sure if we will see again the Halley Comet (or what remains of it) by the year 2061 hereby, I think that by the next TempelTuttle 55P comet's passage, in the year 2031, most of the things that surround us nowadays will be completely changed. Among these, certainly books, which seem very antique and that some strange people, like the writer and the person I dedicate these lines, continue loving them deeply and dangerously. Actually, books, from a scientific point of view, are mutating quickly into different things. According to this idea, let's say that mutation has always been a way of salvation against a species's extinction, and this can relief us. Maybe, the comet will sow again this almost desert field where humans seem to be losing every characteristic element of their *humanitas*, and consequently, of their *pietas*.

Talking, using the terms above, to Antonio Teruzzi, a man of faith, of art and constant and patient listening, would rouse at least his always calm reaction, based on his indestructible trust on humans' destiny, due to the *misericordes oculi* that converge towards us from any place. For this reason, I write to him.

I met him in his studio, immersed among an infinite number of volumes that would have certainly been lost, books fortunately saved from books stallers that sell by weight, from fires or waters, from the fierce *black hole* that is completely devouring the western culture. In this atmosphere, you are surrounded by hundreds of volumes, written in all living and dead languages, dating from the 1600 to the 1900, like *evangelia quatuor graece et latine, imitatio christi* and other meditation books, as well as Greek and Latin classics, *Teubneriana* volumes, Philosophy documents, volumes of History, French, English and German well binded books in high quality editions, together with veined paper flyleaves, silk covers, plenty of the most beautiful editions art books, in big formats, with applied images and gold backgrounds that seem true: in short, all the aspects that a severe bibliophile possesses to develop curiosity and passion (a bibliophile? Who was this one?)

At a first glance, all or most of the books were to be closely kept, a lot of them were at the top bookworms' appraisal, just a few left behind in a second place and almost none to be excluded (and with the inventory benefit). In this great accumulation of books, some irrelevant pocket editions, like *Formigini* in Rome, appeared and disappeared, concerning twisted pre-war stories, in poorer covers than the content itself, together with great Science and Sociology works of the latest 800's talking

about rare and disused arguments; and also saints' lives stories mixed with more or less distinguished people's biographies...

Once you have done the right choice, excluding the unreadable books, those remaining were the works deserving a restoration, a new placing and a new use.

However, who could inherit this harvest appearing in its usual, abused form almost lost? Who could carry the weight of all these old relics? Who could have touched the perfume (or the dirt) of the old press's ink in the punched cellulose? Who could have enjoyed admiring the adorned capitulates, the old incisions, the embossed leathers, the gold capitals, the frayed bookmarks, the almost rigid spines and the faded sides, as well as dedications written in English italics, which were real love offers that have accompanied the gift of the volume centuries ago? Only one of the followers of the almost secret real friends sect, that is, a few rare specimens, thin and with big glasses, whose fingers are impregnated by the old enriched dust containing on the other hand millions of microbes as well as the poison of the past scorpions.

In order to attract the attention of the unwary persons, like the Medusa does with its shield, and to make them feel in love at the first glance, we had to elaborate a strategy, to leave apart the evidences at the first impact, to free the outlook from all *fanè* traces, to encode again the *ancien régime* statement, and to provide the object, i.e, the book, with a new, surprising, unusual and gleaming appearance. Consequently, the artist has followed the path of this new appearance, a semirigid cover as a light but a protective shell in order to hide it from new black and white secrets as well as to engrave signs of a new and old light, combining, in a very smart way, hard techniques with a lovely oversensitivity towards this subject.

The project has quickly taken off. He has created this "*Officina*" based on the same solid Renaissance style of engraving and chiselling, absolutely convinced that the creative act, in Arts, has to be the expression of a deep spirituality. As well, he shows an authentic passion for a mysterious luminarism and its singular fascination.

Antonio Teruzzi, in this way, binds together a new invention stage to his already decades long creative coherent symbology path. *Hard covers* strictly single pieces on copper or silver slabs, canvas, tablets and cards reflect likewise these characteristics and represent the *continuum* space-time line, where we can recognize germinating nucleus and cycles, centers and perimeters, and indescribable beautiful and suffering icons, all together in one score full of sparse signs, limited colors but full of an imperious light.

We still face new pages where frequencies stick out from background silences, *en dehors* compositions are absorbed by mobile shadows and material groups assimilate flow remains.

The Word's body fecondates the earth, multiplying itself and becoming a figure; at the same time, the figure becomes a word, and explains its meaning to all the surfaces, no matter how big or small they are, so that they become home to an infinite number of presences. The fact to highlight is that, in this metamorphosis where writing becomes painting, and signs become figures everything has a sense to exist, as well as that the artist is always on guard against every sophistication of the message. He invites us to discover the hidden beauty of the world from the real need of testimony.

Thanks to his long and coherent work, Antonio Teruzzi has achieved to establish solid foundations for his continuous creations, where we completely recognize this archeologist's sign *habitus*.

What will happen to this invitation to recognize through the metamorphosis the ancient object that for centuries has always passed on the knowledge? These books, being again available, raising from darkness, forgotten in our days because being cancelled along periods of history, are ready to reach, like bread, new altars. They will be at hand, together with other creativity documents like an added value, *strictu sensu*, being this the intention of the person that, having elaborated them, anyway wants to present them to the others, like a scholar to a pupil, or a man to a man.

Looking through the thin pages, maybe someone by chance will identify, thanks to a single word, a far off story coming out by surprise. Maybe someone will read you some lines or will try to understand the meaning, taking us back to an old story that seems to be timeless but full of love. Beauty will have touched our souls once again, and that is enough.

"*Reliquie*" as our *artifex* states, represents symbolic objects reflecting themselves out of their content and their inherent value. Antonio Teruzzi, who has already created artist's books for so long, with this new creation, that is and will be a spectacular *performance*, opens a new way of communication suitable for saving the origins bypassing beyond the time refinement of the objects that document them.

At the time comets will cross the sky, probably one of these relics will still have something to say.

Alberto Crespi
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