

FREE

# NapulitanaMente

NEAPOLITAN HERITAGE IN THE WORLD



## NA 57 THE NEAPOLITAN COCKTAIL. NABOMB

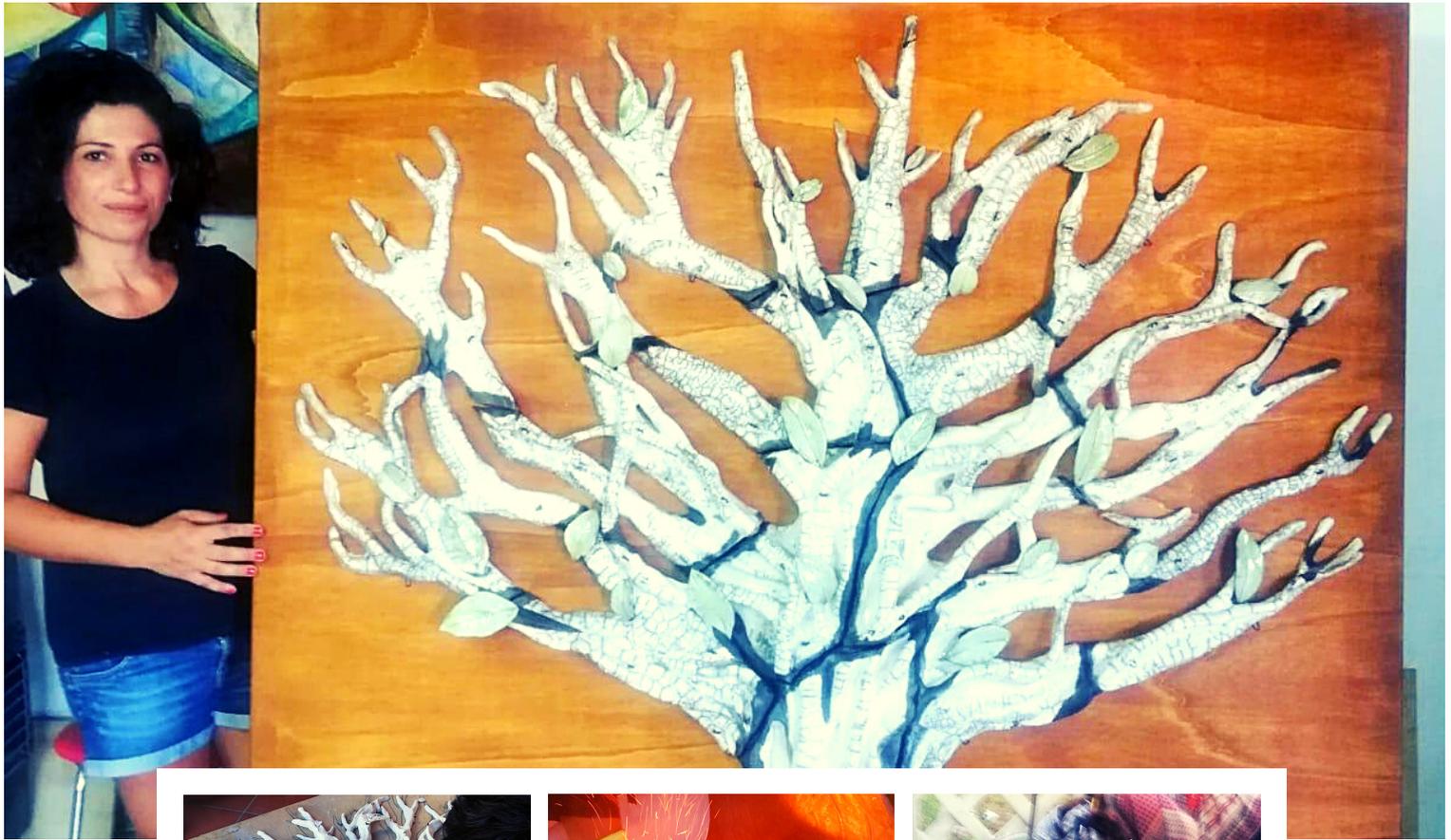
IL SUDPLUS LAUNCHES A  
NEAPOLITAN DRINK

## PARTHENOPE-CUBA AND AFROCUBANIA

INTERVIEW WITH GIOVANNI  
IMPARATO

## MAX MAZZOTTA & LIBERO TEATRO

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR,  
ACTOR AND PRODUCER



# IL DONO. A GIFT BY A GIFTED ARTIST

INTERVIEW WITH  
VANESSA CARIATI

Last Summer, on the occasion of the award ceremony for the scholarship "Costruisco il Mio Futuro in memory of Antonio Mamone", at the Tropis Hotel in Tropea (VV), a work of art by the artist Vanessa Cariati was inaugurated. It is entitled "Il Dono"(The Gift) (featured on magazine cover). The work is 2 meters high and it took 27 hours of cooking. This is an important and demanding work that the artist, strongly inspired by the engagement, has experimented with enthusiasm. The entire process for its creation, starting from the idea up to the inauguration ceremony, was intense and the result was almost unexpected by the artist herself. Il Dono was conceived and created in memory of the entrepreneur Antonio Mamone, who died prematurely a few years ago. Vanessa did not know personally the entrepreneur but she knew him through his family and through the memory of all those who knew him. She immediately entered into a connection with him. Thus a tree rooted in the earth was born. It is a broken tree that produces fruits so it will never die.



Just like Antonio who despite of being no longer physically among us has always looked to the future, a future well rooted in his own strengths and abilities. He has done a lot in favor of the evolution of the territory as well as for the future of young Calabrians. Yes he did. And his family is continuing to do it.

For this reason, especially in this historical moment, Vanessa sees *The Gift* as a resilient work.

Each work has its history as well as the one who made it. Let's start from the story of *Il Dono* told directly from the artist to conclude with an interview about her career and her thoughts. Also enjoy the images of some of Vanessa Cariati Mediterranean creations.

VC - On 14 July 2020 I received a call from the Mamone sisters. They told me about the project "Costruisco il Mio Futuro" the scholarship in memory of Antonio Mamone. The first edition had already taken place the year before. They asked me to create a work that could represent the spirit of the event for the 2020. They told me about Antonio with love and emotion and I felt overwhelmed. I did not know the story of such an extraordinary man. Antonio, a man loved and respected by everyone, is the example of Calabria struggling to improve, capable of changing things. While I was listening the story by Francesca, Domenica, Marialuisa and Mamma Vittoria, so united, strong, true, I drew a tree, I imagined it large, rooted to the earth, but with the branches facing the sky, and from those branches, every year I add new flowers, symbols of the fruits, of the dreams that students deserving of the scholarship can realize, thanks to the Mamone family.

I showed them the various sketches that they appreciated and approved. Mamma Vittoria participated in all our calls. I felt supported and free to create simply for the desire to do so. The love for the project was the energy in all phases of realization, even in those of discouragement, so many difficulties that I met in making such a large sculpture (the tree is about 2 meters high) .. Once the sculpture was finished, the drying phase took time and patience. I was afraid that branches could break. So the first cooking in the electric oven .. the second raku cooking at Cirò Marina in my Alchemy Laboratory, it took nine hours of cooking, for a total of 27 hours of fire, I was exhausted but happy. -

To complete the work Vanessa did not sleep. She started very inspired with enthusiasm. She finished the next morning at 6 AM and didn't even go to school, she was exhausted. But she felt that she had to do it all right away. Her best friend assisted her throughout the entire process. At a certain point they realized that it was difficult to extract such large pieces from the fire, a pliers would have risked breaking them. Vanessa didn't give up. Leaving the laboratory to reflect, she stumbled upon a Kanthal thread



a thread that resists very high temperatures, and thus she found her solution. Slowly she took each piece out of the oven with care and delicacy, like in a childbirth, like in the hook fishing.

VC - I documented every step of creation and shared it with the Mamone family. I have never felt alone and not only for their presence. The work was mounted on a panel and then I brought it to Tropea. The trip seemed endless. Every pit in the street was like a blow to the heart. Fortunately, everything went well and Il Dono arrived safe at its destination. It was the most important work of my life, because it was deeply, loved, felt, lived and donated with the heart. -

In addition to being a wife, mother and teacher, until now Vanessa has been involved in painting, sculpture, installations, photography, body art, land art. She is an Art Therapist and an extremely virtuous artist. The thesis that she presented at the Academy of Fine Arts was about Napoli and she presented a story that had characters from the dolls' hospital as its protagonists. In Sorano, Tuscany, she learned the Raku technique from the teacher Mara Funghi. Vanessa immediately fell in love with this ceramic technique. She explains that Raku means "to enjoy the day", that is, to live in harmony with things and with men. It is an alchemical technique that involves the four elements, namely earth, water and air, united by the fire element, in reference to the cooking phase. The hot piece extracted from the oven comes into contact with the sawdust and it catches fire. The enamel, due to the thermal shock, forms cracks in which the smoke enters, creating the crackle. The oxides contained in some glazes acquire iridescence ranging from emerald green, to blue-copper, to gold. Each piece is unique, unrepeatable. The combination of the different elements gives you the piece in its uniqueness. This is the exact process that saw the realization of Il Dono. Every work made in Raku ceramic is a work in progress. The creation process is part of the work itself. Creation takes an uncontrollable, unpredictable form. It is true magic, it is the divine that expresses itself and the artist, like a midwife, welcomes the fruit that she herself conceived in an encounter with the divine.

Q - How do you define yourself as an artist and as a woman? -

VC - I am a multifaceted artist, my first love was painting, in painting, from Van Gogh to Expressionism, my style refers to the painting of emotions, of strong and vibrant colors. In everyday life, I have to extricate



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myself between different roles, wife, mother, teacher, artist. I don't always manage to do everything as I would like, but I try. For me every woman is a diamond, and she doesn't know it, if we could bring to light every facet of the stone, we would see its full luster. -

Q - What's the relationship do you have with your homeland? -

VC - A relationship of hatred and love for a long time, so as a girl I went away several times, at some point I chose to return and stay in Calabria. The distance made me aware of the great bond I have with my land. I have always missed the sea, the colors and scents of the South, the harsh, the wild nature typical of the Mediterranean scrub. I have always missed Calabria with its thousand faces. I am from the Ionian Coast. My hometown, Cirò Marina, is a place with extraordinary energy. I lived the years of the Academy in Catanzaro, and with the "Gruppo di Artisti Senza A"(Group of Artist Without A), I traveled a lot, between Soverato, Caminia, Squillace, there I saw another Calabria. Today I live in Vibo Valentia, on the Tyrrhenian side, jagged by coasts overlooking the sea. The "Costa degli Dei" enchants me with its colors and its sunsets. When I encounter bad things in the South I wonder what it would have been like if I had left. Here you have to go looking for artistic stimuli or you have to create them, and, as an artist, I obviously feel affected by these absences. -

Q - What is the relationship between the Calabrian tradition and your art? -

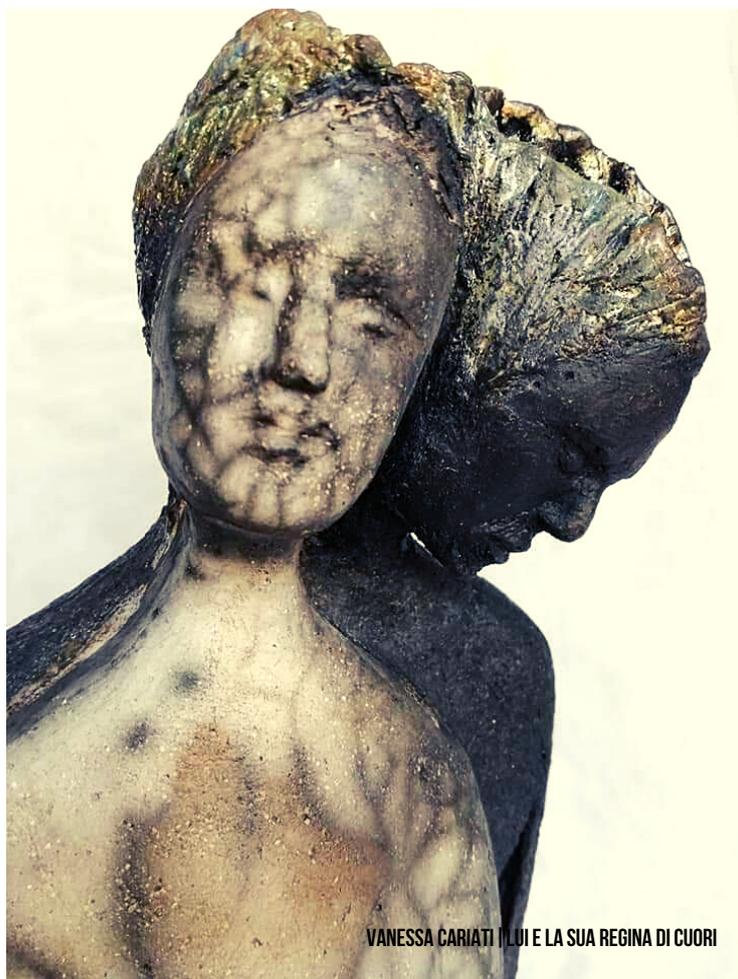
VC - The love for ceramics is part of my ancestral memory, I live in the cradle of Greek Art, it could not be otherwise. A feature of Calabrian ceramics is the use of magical-inspired symbolisms and rituals. In my creations there is always the symbol that refers to something else, both in red ceramics and in Raku. In painting and in my sculpture vases, I often deal with themes based on listening and attention to the others. People are for me a source of inspiration, relationships, evident and underlying emotions, and now more than ever; art therapy studies have profoundly changed me, as a person and artist. I like to tell stories. I learned the magic of the stories as a child, in the alleys of my village, where we approached the elderly aunts who told wonderful stories, handed down the traditions linked to popular festivals, culinary art, folklore. The wrinkled faces, good but pungent eyes, the smell of the ashes of the brazier, the scents of roasted peppers, their clothes, their dignity, are part of me. -

Q - What are the forms of art through which you express yourself? -

VC - When I am in the creative flow the first thing that comes to me is to drawing. I make lots of sketches. The line is for me like the word for the writer. If I don't draw, I write my thoughts, my emotions or just simple reflections in logbooks. Often my sketches on paper become three-dimensional sculptures in clay. To me clay is an inner journey, it is rooted, a high expressive channel. I also like acrylic painting. I love to paint on surfaces large, so that the gesture of the brush is a consequence of all the movement of my body. Painting is a dance for me. I always carry the watercolors with me, letting myself go to the movement of the water, unconscious images come out, which I look for to capture and define. -



Q - What is the value of time during your creative process? -



VANESSA CARIATI | LUI E LA SUA REGINA DI CUORI

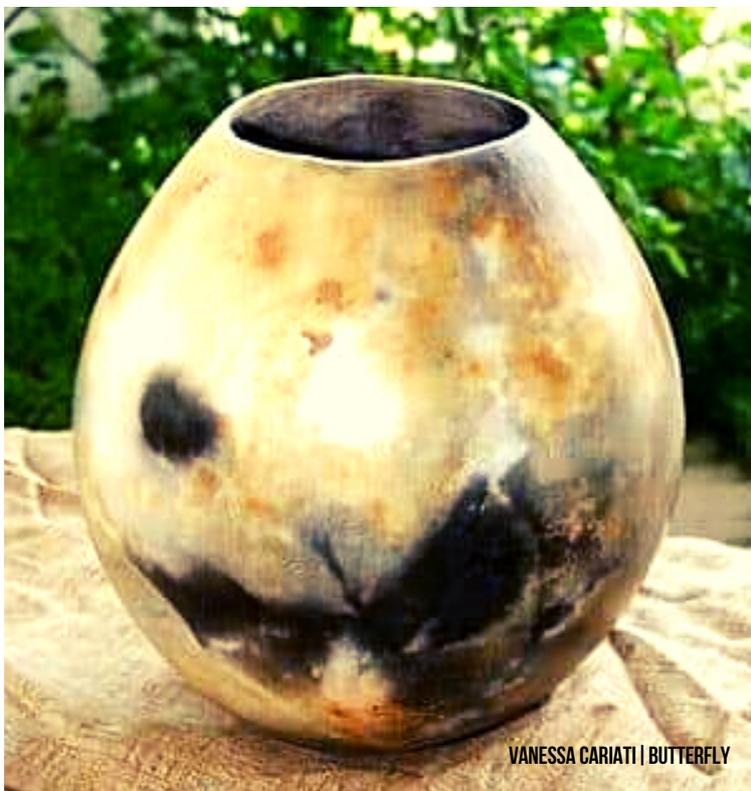
VC - Time is everything. Designing requires preparation, preparation and intention. In a first phase of preparation, I try to define the goal, what I want to achieve. In the next phase, I let the ideas be activated at a subconscious level, I also think of the unthinkable in this incubation phase. When you least expect it, revelation comes, the creative spark. If I consider it a good idea, I take the time to submit it not only to my evaluation but also to those who at that moment can tell me how they think. If the idea is the right one, the elaboration begins. An idea is a shapeless mass, only with work and dedication can it be transformed into a concrete work . Time is everything, Edison said: "genius is, for the '1% inspiration and 99% sweat ". If I work with clay, the time of matter also takes over. The great master potters say that clay "has memory", if we mold it strongly, without seeking contact with it, we will not be able to find the flow that unites the our energy to that of matter, in this case we work badly and the creative process stops. Time is the bridge between the artist who listens and the hands that create. -

In addition to being an artist, you teach teenagers. How do your students perceive art?

VC - I believe that students understand all the subjects according to how they are transmitted .. I teach art in middle school, and I do it with love, dedication and enthusiasm .. simply because I love my job, the students and the subject I teach. Students feel the love you put into what you do. They feel the passion you put in transmitting your knowledge, the time you dedicate to learning, with a smile that must never be missing, and a joke that is always ready, sitting next to you, supporting them, getting colored with them. Today more than ever the teacher is dynamic, a conductor, an actor, who wants at all costs not to lose the attentive gaze of the descendants ... playing with art, because the art is freedom, play, see beyond .. through creativity. All boys have only one access key: the heart. -

Q - Someone says that art can save the world. Do you think this is true? -

VC - The artist who has always been a chronicler of his time, through works communicates and awakens consciences, pays attention to what others go unnoticed . Art, divergent and creative thinking, can free us from mental schemes, from our cages, giving us a new perspective on things, events, giving us new opportunities, which allow us to change the way we approach everything. Through art, man creates a bridge between the inside and the outside, between the conscious and unconscious world. Today more



VANESSA CARIATI | BUTTERFLY

than ever with art therapy studies behind me, I am sure of the value of art in our life. Through it, processes of personal growth are implemented, focused on awareness, self-control, emotional intelligence, art sensitizes souls, creating empathy in relationships ... yes art saves the world from the grayness of fears, from white and black of mental rigidity, because art is for me the color of our existence. -

Q - In 2019 you attended the training conference as a teacher and artist "Deviance and Talent", on research and promotion in developmental age to counter and prevent phenomena of juvenile deviance. As a teacher, how do you define the concept of deviance? -

VC - In the past I worked in associations aimed at combating early school leaving, and for the social integration of young people at risk, many wasted talents ... I would add. The German sociologist Teodoro Adorno said: "Every work of art is a crime not committed", deviance is badly channeled energy, if we were able to direct this energy on a proactive path or if we could transform the shadow areas of the subject deflected into light, we could be amazed at the result . Every person has an inner demon, "daimon" as J. Hillman defined it. If we learned to know our gray areas, which are the seat of our hidden talents, the deviance is it would transform into talent and potential expressed. -

Q - Western culture considers art only and exclusively what is business, what is salable. Do you have any considerations to make about it? -

VC - In the West the sun sets, In the East it rises. The culture of death opposed to the culture of life. It is no coincidence that art in the West is business, the most important value that art has to play has been lost . Communicating, provoking, evoking, making people think, above all moving. We went back centuries, once the clients such as the Church, and then the rich bourgeois families, managed the artistic production. With the avant-gardes of the 20th century, the artists rebelled, and at the cost of dying to make, they produced free art, outside the box, free of academism and money, with courage, with original works, often rejected by the various Exhibition Halls of the time, they created the History of Art.

Now we have returned to the master of money, art is something of the elite, which widens the distances between rich and poor, between cultured and ignorant, forgetting a simple truth, art belongs to everyone and for everyone. Money, should support free artistic expression. -

