

Viaggio verso l'ignoto. Lucio Saffaro tra arte e scienza



by Pier Francesco Sciuto

The work of Lucio Saffaro (Trieste 1929 – Bologna 1998) has aroused much interest in the past and continues to be appreciated by mathematicians, artists and literary scholars for its ability to penetrate seemingly distant spheres. It's enough to read a brief list of those who have studied him to realise the multiplicity of cultural perspectives that converge in this singular personality of artist, writer and mathematician. Among the most famous names: Giovanni Maria Accame, Luciano Anceschi, Francesco Arcangeli, Giulio Carlo Argan, Renato Barilli, Maurizio Calvesi, Giovanni Carandente, Flavio Caroli, Marisa Dalai Emiliani, Andrea Emiliani, Michele Emmer, Luigi Lambertini, Gérard-Georges Lemaire, Pietro Luxardo Franchi, Giuseppe Marchiori, Lara Vinca Masini, Filiberto Menna, Giorgio Odifreddi, Arturo Carlo Quintavalle, Giuseppe Raimondi, Silvio Ramat, Paul Ricoeur, Franco Russoli, Walter Tega, Marisa Volpi Orlandini, Bruno Zevi.

The current anthology exhibition in Bologna, *Viaggio verso l'ignoto*, offers a broad overview of Saffaro's pictorial and graphic production. A production aimed at combining art and scientific scruples in a tight succession of works that correspond to as many projects, experiments, verifications. A graduate in physics, Saffaro does not limit himself, as most academically trained scientists do, to a sectorial path that corresponds to his curriculum. On the contrary, he uses his scientific background to broaden the horizons of possible research, alternating between visual, literary and multimedia

research. The principle that guides his paths is the search for an inner and metaphysical dimension, common to the various fields he frequents. Mathematical-geometric rigour is combined with a plural vision of reality, and the results are fascinating. The most disturbing aspect is the emptiness that surrounds the objects depicted and described, whether they are architectural elements or pure polyhedral forms. Their consistency seems to depend on an unusually icy colouring, which is able to emphasise their degree of separation from reality. Saffaro's is a parallel universe in which the same laws as ours apply, purified of all chance and contingency.

The exhibition *Viaggio verso l'ignoto. Lucio Saffaro tra arte e scienza*, curated by Claudio Cerritelli and Gisella Vismara, will be on show at Palazzo Fava in Bologna from 26 May to 24 September 2023. The catalogue, with texts by the curators and Bruno D'Amore, is published by Bologna University Press.

*Homepage: three lithographs by Lucio Saffaro displayed in the exhibition "Viaggio verso l'ignoto" (photo credits Elettra Bastoni).
Below: the catalogue cover.*



Viaggio
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**Lucio
Saffaro**
tra arte
e scienza