

The Sound of Angel Wings

The Greek artist Vangelis Rinas comes from Samos, the famous island of the Aegean Sea where the temple of Hera stands and the ancient philosopher Pythagoras was born.

In his works inhere sea, ships, modest nymphs and goddesses, like neighbourhood girls. Through his works you can hear the sound of the waves and smell the aroma of the sea. He himself is the child of the sea. All of his works are an ode to sea and land, a sacred way that reaches the whole world through Greece; that reaches God through the mortal world.

There are various dimensions in Vangelis Rinas' works. One of them has the dawn's breeze, which is created by abstract lines and sides. A dimension that bears characteristics of the Chinese calligraphy and of the splash ink painting techniques (Po-Mo) (thick brushworks and/or paint poured according to Chinese painting). We can detect the melody and the solo dance of lines; we can discover the intense and infinite blots and the drunkenness of the ink, as well as the air of serenity and the tacit emotion of the East.

Vangelis Rinas has never been to China before. He loves, however, the things related to China and the things that come from far away. Through his work, his creations and his senses, he has reached unexpectedly the profoundness of the Chinese Civilization.

China may not be the country of his body, but it unexpectedly seems to be the country of his soul. Every Chinese will be able to discover a part of the hidden sky of his soul, through the works of an artist who comes from such a distant country, Greece.

Vangelis Rinas loves wood. He loves the warmth and snugness of it. Wood has life and soul. It is mute and eternal, like the palpitation of the distant country. It has a fragrance and it hurts. It weeps and sings on the edge of the saw. Vangelis Rinas said: "I love wood, because it has life". Woods from different forests and of different soul construct a ship. Vangelis loves ships, the ships of Homer's time and those of the heroes from Argos as well as today's tankers. He played in shipyards for small boats as a child, and that's where he started dreaming; they are his own Dream Factory.

He once had a nightmare, when he was still a child; Vangelis Rinas saw the sea being left without water. The sea had run dry! This inspiring but also terrible nightmare appeared only once in his dreams, something that rarely happens in real life indeed. If the sea runs dry, everything will either disappear or be born again.

Looking at Vangelis Rinas' works is a spiritual adventure. His works possess great creative energy but include omens of destruction at the same time.

Devoutness of heart and soul and also doubt and questions that overwhelm you and take your breath away coexist in his works. Vangelis Rinas walks on the sharp edge between creativity and destruction and walks the fine line between darkness and light.

But still, he holds the love candle in his hands. Therefore, we don't have to worry about him. It is the light of the love candle that shows him the way home. It is the power of love that holds his hands and helps him confront the sharp edge of the darkness of demons.

Every part of his work is a small piece of his world. Vangelis Rinas, a thinking person, between the castle, the ship, the girl and the bed, creates a dreamy and complex dimension. He imitates gods' and Christ's point of view in order to look at the world and observe it. Through the unique structure of this dimension, he guesses

God's thought and imitates His play. How exciting and magic this is! But still, God can understand the heart of Vangelis Rinas and knows that there is a precious value in the heart of this man. And this is love. Due to this love, God forgives him. Due to love, Vangelis Rinas escaped self-destruction.

His wife, Vassiliki, his son, Diamantes, and his daughter, Anastasia, all of them have the face and the soul of an angel. In the library of their home, on the fireplace and, generally, in his works, pictures of angels are to be found everywhere. These angel faces are godsend. They will help him in the mission that his destiny has entrusted him with.

Just like the thirsty seeks water and air, so he seeks angels. He relieves himself through his work and breathes through the angels.

His works contain a terrifying energy and at the same time the power of darkness. This is the power he himself gained through the fight, the struggle and the dead end with the demons. However, you can't find demons in his works, because, beyond your sight, he resists the demons with his soul, blood and love. The Chinese writer Lu-Xun has said: "I carry alone the heavy burden and I guard the black gate letting the children fly towards the bright side and become forever happy".

Like Dante, Vangelis Rinas experienced the spiritual adventure by travelling through paradise, hell and the mortal world. However, the only thing that he wants is the picture of paradise. He holds abyss deeply in the bottom of his heart. He is capable of turning abyss into paradise. In his works, we can find some mystic symbols made by rapid brushstrokes, such as circles and semicircles, lines and crosses, the classic Greek screw. All of them remind us of his homeland, Samos, and of the existence of the power of the mystic symbol of Pythagoras in his paintings.

He has the energy to change the war of steel and fire into peaceful shapes of water; hence, his works are like pictures immersed into water. We look at his works through the calm, safe and crystal clear water. It is worth noticing that the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao-Zi has said:

The superior goodness is like water

It benefits myriads of things without competing with them

It lies in places that people dislike

that is why it reaches Tao

... ..

The Sage does not compete

that is why he makes no mistakes

Vangelis spent his tender childhood years in two islands, Samos and Icaria. The first one is the native land of Pythagoras and the second one is the spiritual destination of the big dream chaser, Icarus. Vangelis Rinas departs from the island of “accuracy” and mathematics, Samos, heading to the dreamy island of beauty, innocence and magnificence, Icaria. He sometimes is the eighty-year-old Homer’s Odysseus and sometimes the eight-year-old Little Prince of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

His work is a blend of two ambiances: sorrow and joy. This is what we call in Greek “charmolypi” and in Chinese “Bei Xin Jiao Ji” (sorrow and joy in total coexistence). These nymphs and muses find shelter in the arms of sorrow or joy, just like they nestle in the mother’s womb. This is the rebirth of the adult, it is the sorrow and the joy before the endless floating of life begins.

In his life and art there is an impulsion to sacrifice. His life and art are prepared to be sacrificed to a pure mission. His works represent a square altar and his atelier

a small church for worship. In the atelier of Vangelis Rinas, we can see the purity of sacrifice, we can hear the angel rubbing carefully his wings.

His works constitute a path for pilgrims, where he goes by alone, but there are several other shy and noble souls walking next to him. His works send this message: “Oh! I am not alone; so many people come in the dark night with me and in this road of pilgrimage”.

Vangelis Rinas’ name in Greek means “Angel who brings God’s holy message”. His works constitute a constant letter that he sends to the beloved human creatures and to God. These “letters”, gathered all together in an album, create the personal and visible “Bible” of Vangelis Rinas.

The exposition consists of works of mixed technique, constituting an evidence of the power of contemporary Greek artists. Through these works not only do we see the outline of Modern Greek Art, but also the vivacity of ancient Greek tradition in Modern Greek Art. This will be a great inspiration for the Chinese artists.

This exposition is not only a modern dialogue between two countries with a long tradition of civilization, but also a new start for the artists of the East and of the West.

It is the Endless Floating to Ithaca.

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