

Nuvolo, Liana Baracchi, Paolo Ascani,  
*Nuvolo. La pittura e l'atelier di grafica,*  
interview by Aldo Iori, 1992

**Aldo Iori:** I wanted to talk to you a little bit for a moment to begin to do the history of this work for third parties...and I saw that the first things you do, according to Colla's catalog, are – I don't remember the dates – in the early years; corresponding to "Arti Visive"

**Nuvolo:** Yes, they are from '53-'54.

**AI:** Because a lot of things turn out with Ettore Colla! There are illustrations for "Arti Visive" ... of these I understand you also did silkscreen series of 50 that were then unsigned and un-numbered ...

**N:** That they are missing.

**AI:** No they went into the archives.

**N:** Ah! I thought they were missing...

**AI:** No, no...I found them in Colla's archive, some were signed and given to friends, but very few copies...

**N:** I don't know; I haven't heard back.

**AI:** It turns out to be precisely a silk-screen series of an illustration, another silk-screen series of another painting... on Colla's catalog

**N:** Yes, on the Pinto ballots...

**AI:** Do those match?

**N:** Yes. Those can be very faithful...

**AI:** Then there are, one-two-three cover... four covers - of 6-7, 10, 1 and 2 - plus the *Carro Solare*.

**N:** Plus the 70x100 cover for Piattelli

**AI:** How is that one considered? Does it have a title?

**N:** is a silkscreen, it had a title on it but I don't remember it...that one is posthumous though...

**AI:** We see on "Arti Visive", but like this one of the *Carro Solare*, specimen dedicated on behalf of Roberto Gatto, Rome; it says. This one is also authenticated by whom? Were they numbered and authenticated?

**N:** Yes, yes; always from Mariolina [Maria Colla, ed] I think. The one I have is not numbered but Mariolina authenticated it for me also. One for me and for Piattelli another one.

**AI:** Is that *Carro Solare* also authenticated by Mariolina?

**N:** Yes. This is the first phase, super artisan; Via Margutta, let's say, of working for third parties. Which then I say for third parties, but it was for Colla and friends of the magazine. But basically, because it cost him the right amount (to Colla) it's not like he was paying me for them. It gave me ease, for me it was already an achievement since I was very young; with the excuse of this story here, I used to spend the weeks-because to make the magazine took a month-and at the hour a month expensed was quite a lot, after that you could go even a few days without eating. These are the first works done in screen printing in Rome, after the real activity - the establishment - of a real atelier for third party work was done later, in 1964, to be seen with the first works for Cagli. Because it was born for Cagli.

**AI:** The first works are from '67-'68. *I fiori, Il Bacco a Giarre* ... you started in '67?

**N:** Now the exact date I don't remember, but it can be transposed from a folder that Rizzoli printed on papier velours paper; which Crispolti attributes to me in the speech he makes in "Two asterisks for Cagli"; instead it is wrong. I didn't print them; Rizzoli printed them. And the thing was born in this sense, that with Corrado it had been a while since we had seen each other because of the question that had arisen like that, [...]. Well, one evening I got a phone call from Corrado, and it was with great pleasure that I received the call, also because I was very fond of Corrado and I was sorry to see him and not say hello; so he called me: "So Nuvolo, you know, I wanted to see you...are you coming to the studio?" I went to the studio and he showed me these four silkscreens that Rizzoli had made for him and he said, - "Nuvolo you of these things, you work in this field, you are a specialist! Give me an opinion on this work"; and I told him - "Corrado, these two are two silkscreens and they are quite simple and basic; the rendering is minimal and you could do much better. And these two are not serigraphs, they are two gravure." - "But how, Angelo told me they are serigraphies...he assured me," I told him, - "Corrado, you called me to get an opinion" (he demanded that I call him by his first name, but I couldn't do it I always called him by her) "I gave it to you, you say I'm an expert and I tell you that's the way it is. However, if Angelo Rizzoli, who is a person of great esteem and quality, tells you this; trust Angelo Rizzoli; but with him I would like to have a talk separately to see if he also tells me that they are serigraphs." And so we spend the evening together, we go to dinner at "La Villetta," and we say goodbye, "and then I will tell you something else about it, because I going to Milan I want to clear this up." After about a fortnight he calls me back and says - "Oh Nuvolo, look I'm in Rome and I have to see you; then come right away?"; - "of course I'll come right away!" I go up and he says - "Nuvolo you know what?! you were right! Those two boards are rotogravures really! They were making a big deal out of it, Angelo was so convinced that they were silkscreens because I told him to do them in silkscreen; then later at the end when I insisted saying that you said so and that your judgment was unquestionable, I get angry and he got worried. At one point he called the technicians: they told him it was true, but they had made gravure because in silkscreen you couldn't do it, because there are a number of shades that silkscreen can't do! Screen printing has a special feature that doesn't allow you to do the shades, and so at that point with my back against the wall I told them go ahead, if you can't do them you can't do them."

I told him - "So dear Corrado, they have fooled you for the second time! Because first they told you they were serigraphs and they weren't; now they are telling you that shades can't be done and that's not true, because they can be done just fine."; - "here's the catch! Would you feel like doing them?"; and at this point I was cornered and I said - "of course I would feel like doing them, but wait a minute Corrado, I am not Rizzoli! I can do them, I mean I know how to do them, but from that to doing them there is a difference: which is the equipment, which is the costs of some materials and all the preparation to be able to do them..." ; - "so listen Nuvolo, let's do one thing. Could you prepare for me - because it's going to be huge expenses! - an estimate of what it takes to do this work? because I'm going to do it continuously and so our relationship will be eternal hopefully; so you give me an estimate for the equipment that it takes to do my work, but not only on that, on everything." Within a few days I gave him this estimate, which was an estimate - in my opinion - with a huge figure, 3-4 million, I say a ballpark figure that could be even 3 times more or less, but I don't remember because at that time money was different from now; however, it was a pretty heavy figure, for me impossible. I went to Corrado and told him - "Look Corrado, to make it big it's do I count 2million 800 thousand liras between the printing press, the reproduction, the arch, the arch lamp, plus some photographs and other material that couldn't be found. Then there's also the camera that costs 1 million... it counts on 4 million in all," and he said to me - "here, this is the 4 million. Let's start!"

And from that moment we started. Of course the camera was bought later, because before we had to do everything by hand, I was still up in Via Magrini, there they were already doing other things like catalogs, books and "Carte Segrete". And then we started with this money to buy the useful and the necessary: the printing press, two printing presses one bigger one the "Golia" and one smaller one, all manual; and in short all the equipment that was needed to do this work. But the camera for example, we didn't buy it right away because 21 million who had it! And by the way, it didn't fit. Then after a while, I found it used at Carini's and we paid a trifle 1 million 200 thousand liras-a trifle since only the lens cost 6 million-it's still there, it worked for everybody until now, it still works. We had the first films made outside, by a photographer friend, who was Giorgio Fiordelli full of good will and also full of ability, but used to make films for the usual four-color silkscreen and I couldn't get him to understand how he had to make this machine work, what I needed. I had lost patience with him at one point I said, "Listen Giorgio, let's stop!"; he poor guy put everything into it, but there was no way, we had to do more than half the work by hand and it was getting heavy. So at some point we said, "Let's do everything by hand so at least we know what we want."

As with *I fiori*, as with *Il Bacco a Giarre* as well as *Lungo il lungo Bungo* that photographically there was the false line, however the colors were all redone by hand. Then later the camera came and we made it functional for how we needed it. Then through the important help of Bondani, who came to learn from us how eventually to make this thing work in this way (the funny thing is that he didn't understand anything about it however he put us in a position to understand how to do it, though - what was important), he suggested some tools such as the film - we still use that, they don't even make it anymore, we only find it at one in Rome - the Poletti 2568 which is a very rare film that can only be found in Caserta which was the general agency of Kodak. And Bondani was very useful for that, after that he too got fed up and left halfway through, because he didn't understand it, but we understood everything! And the whole of the last Cagli, and everything even Guttuso, was all done with that camera there.

**AI:** Both in the new studio in Rome and here [Città di Castello, ed.]?

**N:** Yes.

**Liana:** However, the camera does not give you the selection, but four negatives which are black, red, yellow and cyan. After from those you take out sixty counter-types, you close the colors that you don't need and you leave the counter-types that you need. The Burri for example many were all done by hand, because photographically...

**Paolo:** For Burri it was also done by hand printing even, almost everything by hand. Do you remember the forms that went next to each other, but wasn't there supposed to be the white thread or the overlay? And we did it all on the handlooms.

**N:** All touched up by hand on the frames ...

**P:** Yes, all retouched by hand; even on the press!

**N:** Yes. On all of Burri's work. In part even Guttuso was a very difficult work - compared to Cagli - because of the fact that you have to get the orange which he got by mixing colors even on top of the paper; then this orange came from the fusion of a red, of a yellow, of a ... and in the end he was able to get a ground underneath which in the end becomes a soldier's hat. Then you have to redo all these steps that go from the water that is just smeared with yellow, to a deep yellow, then a yellow that fades to red, then eventually the helmet that becomes orange; you have to do all these steps! This involves a continuous series of overlays, of these images diminishing as he precisely found the red color. In the end it's like you take a white brush, with white paint, you dip it on the black paint and then you go like this: zac, what happens! That first you print black, then as you come up, you mix the white with the black, then eventually the black ends up disappearing and only the white remains. Then you to get this result you have to print centimeter by centimeter, a color-as are the *Modulari* that go from zero to full and they are more and more transparent colors until at the end you can't see anything at all-in this case first you print black, then you print black with a slight amount of white, then more and more white, you print thirty times and at the end you have the feeling of having this effect; which certainly is not that of the brush but it's very close. If you instead of thirty times, you print it sixty times it comes out perfectly the same as the brush.

**AI:** What I wanted to specify for a moment is that you had started the screen printing technique quite a bit earlier.

**N:** Yes, already here in Castello at the school of Baldelli [Angelo Baldelli, owner of the Galleria dell'Angelo and director of the School of Graphic Arts, ed] they had been the first. I was the first in Italy who did photographic screen printing, because before, screen printing was there for advertising, but it was for all big faesite banners for roadways ...

**AI:** So in the immediate post-war period?

**N:** I used to do in '46-'47 with Quieti, who was a professor of engraving before Mario [Mario Bruschi, ed.] at IPSIA - at the Institute for Graphic Arts - experiments with rotogravure paper, that is, I used to do the processes, when there were no dichromate gelatines yet - afterwards gelatines came from America and Argon was the first; in '53-'54 that brought it to Italy for the

first time. I used to make with gravure paper, because I had read-I don't remember where-the quality of this gelatin of gravure paper, because this is used to engrave with gravure and it is carried from the paper to the copper roll. So I said, "that is a photosensitive gelatin, if I can find a system to detach it from the paper, like the rotogravure detaches it, I take it to a transparent support like polyester and then I engrave it." These experiments we did there at Angiolino Baldelli's, at this IPSIA they lasted several months; so much so that I when I went to Rome for the first time, and this was in '48, in '47 now I don't remember, that Alberto called me so that I could give him a hand on a job he was doing for two architects, there at the Fonti dei Fauni. They were two famous architects right after the war, Luccichenti and Monaco, you may have heard of them. This is the FAO and here in front is Via della Fonte di Fauno which then goes back down to where Cagli lives, here they had built a 'Le Corbusier' type house because they were in fashion at that time, and the President of the Palermo Football Club had bought an apartment-one floor-of this house and planned to do a wavy ceiling let's say, of low-relief sculpture and a painted wall. The moved ceiling was to be done by Carlo Canestrari and the wall was to be done by Burri, because Luccichenti had invited him. Now this panel, which by the way was not done directly on the wall, was huge and it was to be enlarged and arranged, and I had to give him a hand in that. At that time, Burri was friends with Miceli [..., who] had an advertising agency and he needed someone to do his photographic screen printing, because he had a very good engraver, he thinks he could engrave the letters body 12 on the tree by hand masking, as prints were before Gutenberg; but he needed something cleaner and more technical, more acceptable. And I tested him with this system of mine, which worked; in fact, I worked with this Miceli then for some time; I stopped because he had a bad habit: he didn't pay. [...] Here we will still be first of all, in '50-'51... but why was I telling you this?

**AI:** Because you were telling me about this new technique that you had learned here in Castello...

**N:** Then I would continue with small frames here in Castello.

**AI:** So you learned the technique here in Castello, at IPSIA with Quietì and with Baldelli, who worked at IPSIA?

**N:** Angiolino Baldelli was the director of IPSIA, while Quietì was the photogravure teacher.

**AI:** So did you do this school or was it extracurricular?

**N:** No, they were friends!

**AI:** Did you learn the technique there and then start experimenting with it for yourself?

**N:** No, I experienced it there. I went there, to Quietì - and Angiolino - I told him, "Look I need to do these things," and he said, "yes yes come, let's look at it, that I'm interested too," but he was only interested in it on the side, as fun.

**AI:** How did the interest in this medium come to you?

**N:** Ahhh! I don't know, because something had to be done. And then because I always had this need to do things that others had not done. I did things, that my brothers could tell you about,



I can't even remember them all.... My dad once bought a safe deposit box like the one in Monte dei Paschi banks to put there 20 cents at a time, because before the piggy banks would get their heads blown off and disappear, so he got this box because to open it, you had to go to Monte Paschi, otherwise you wouldn't open it... my dad convinced that it was safe put the money in there, but the day he went to open it there was nothing in it! I had taken everything out, always, with extreme ease; because it was a cinch. It wasn't so much about stealing the money as it was about fooling father who was convinced he had solved the situation, instead he hadn't solved anything!

**AI:** When did you start doing your own thing, though? In Rome or after that again?

**N:** No; here in Castello by the way there were small little things. For example, the Eliana Pirazoli has one from '52, which is made here in Castello.

**AI:** However, these are, let's say, the years in which you are already working in the field of advertising in Rome.

**N:** Yes. The stuff on my own, it was tiny little vignettes that would come out when I had a little piece of paper, a little piece of cotton, and then I would play games with it.

**AI:** So simultaneously you do the production for you; you process ....

**N:** No, first I just do it for me. Of course, before I did this work for Miceli for three or four months. Then after at Mannucci's, I used to sleep in his studio, and I had a little space, in Via Margutta; before I took Burri's studio. This was, I think, from '50 to '52, yes because of '53 I took Burri's studio, and in that year I started to organize with two partners, one was an accountant-I can't remember what his name was-and a Yugoslavian one named Savic; these two wanted to do some printing on transparent materials, and in fact, we partnered and bought the material to do it; the little machine not this one from suction but a glue machine, a primitive method, and already Argon had arrived in Rome, or was coming.

**AI:** This is '53, you already had the studio in Via Margutta, Burri's studio?

**N:** Yes, and this association with this Savic, they had me do a lot of rehearsals, I did everything. I even made some posters for myself, for the wakes here in Castello, but even that all stuff was lost. Anyway at a certain time what happened was that these were making me work, the money was not showing, but the stuff was inside my studio so I say, okay well these are gone... one morning I come home, around noon or one o'clock I go back to the studio, and I find that these-who had the key-had come in and taken everything away and I was left with nothing. And so after that I made some things on my own again. The thing with Colla was born, then the thing with others....

**AI:** So you lived at Mannucci's, but in this field of screen printing you did nothing with him?

**N:** No, with Mannucci nothing. I used to help him, he used to be a sculptor and I used to serve him as a helper to prepare things or what he needed. Beyond that, that for example, I'm very good at making plaster; things that for example other sculptors, [...], that I've seen working and

they can't do them.

**AI:** The school of Ruth and then of Colla...

**N:** Yes exactly, by Tot also; great master. I used to survive by working a little bit with Colla, a little bit with Tot, a little bit with Burri himself, then a little bit with Capogrossi, you understand? I used to do a little bit of everything for everybody-what there was to do, they called me, I was able to do everything there was to do.

**AI:** Okay. And simultaneously with that though, did you have this experience on screen printing technique with Miceli and this Pais? And were they commercial photos?

**N:** Yes, they were commercial photos. Then after that I started with Colla for "Arti Visive" in '54, and the work for me, which by the time I started working for Colla I had already retooled. Small things, but it worked, and as far as I was concerned, for all the stamps and all the confetti it worked very well, that's why I was working in small formats. It was Argon's and it was called the "Universal Printing Base", and it consisted of a frame holder and a glass; the first industrial things that came out manufactured in Italy by Argon, who then manufactured the one with the suction table and then started with the semi-automatics.

**AI:** That he was staying on Via San Giovanni, on the Appian Way?

**N:** Yes, good. Via San Giovanni Laterano, behind; near the walls.

**AI:** It then moved behind Piazza Ragusa.

**N:** Via della Mirandola. [...]

**AI:** And you were in Burri's real studio until what year? Did Burri take another studio also on Via Margutta?

**N:** No no, after Burri went to Via Aurora.

**AI:** Where Colla also went by the way...

**N:** Yes, Colla was already on Via Aurora; he found it for her. Liana? Do you remember when we left via Margutta that we got married?

**L:** In May you were gone.

**N:** May of what year?

**L:** 56, we got married in June '56. In May you took the house...

**AI:** In Via Magrini?!

**L:** No, no. At the Gianicolo, in Clivio Rutario.

**AI:** And then afterwards to Via Magrini you went there when?

**L:** To Via Magrini, I don't know exactly when we went there. From there we went to Via Portuense that I was two months pregnant, from April '57.

**N:** Near Topazia Alliata who had a house there...

**L:** On the Portuense, after when Giorgio [Piergiorgio, the first son, ed.] was already born and eleven months old, we went to live on Via Lungotevere Artigiani, it was in November.

**AI:** Excuse me, but then what does Via Magrini look like?

**L:** It was not the dwelling; it was the studio.

**AI:** And you took the house on Via Lungotevere, this was in '58.

**L:** So Giorgio...was born in '57, however when he was eleven months old it was November '58, and we went to live in Lungotevere Artigiani and we were still beginning to work on the first things in the house. In Portuense we had left altogether. Being there, when Riri looked for the house in Via Magrini she found us, under her attic, the studio on the sixth floor. Imagine with the machines ...

**AI:** And the paper-so what years are we in? '59?

**L:** No no, more! I think in about '65. The children were going to school and I remember taking them up and down. In '65, because Cagli's first work is dated '67.

**AI:** '68, it is reported like this here.

**L:** *Iacopone da Todi* what is it? The black and white one.

**AI:** I am based on this catalog and it is '68.

**N:** *I fiori*?

**AI:** *I fiori*, '68. All '68.

**L:** The first ones were *Baku* and *Iacopone*. But before '68 we had already been there for a few years, because "Carte Segrete" printed 12-13 issues and one came out every two-three months. '66-'67 the studio on Via Magrini. Even Fanfani [Amintore Fanfani, President of the Senate of the Republic 1968-1973, ed.] we have to put on the graphics but do we have it?

**N:** We have it, but we don't put it on.

**L:** Because he came up with a broken elevator. That we had told him to the doorman "make sure the elevator is working that Fanfani is coming today," which was broken, no wonder! Then



he said “let’s try the candy if it doesn’t go with the 10 liras,” which at that time with 10 liras they gave you candy change.

**N:** He was humorous as hell.

**AI:** Who is Riri?

**N:** My brother. He was director of “Arti Visive”. Ascanio Ascani.

**AI:** Ah, yes it is true. Because there is a portrait of Riri by Cagli, who dedicated to him.

**L:** Because Riri once started counting all the pellets that made up the *Buglioni*. So he said, “Well, with this patience, one I absolutely have to give him”; and so there’s one dedicated to Riri. And Riri died in ‘68; above us, he had a small attic, and he also occasionally collaborated. When the children were small and I was alone working he would give me a hand, take the papers out from under the machine and so on and so forth.

**AI:** He was in Rome since?

**L:** He was already in Rome with him.

**N:** He was in Rome with me from Via Margutta. He was working at the Prime Minister’s Office.

**L:** Then at SIPS

**AI:** And he never got into it with art except as an interest, as an intellectual interest.

**N:** Yes it was an interest. Because he was a journalist, he was registered as a publicist. That’s why he was editor of “Arti Visive”. But about him then there is a lot of material that he never wanted to touch, stories, letters and writings, but whatever... He was friends with Dacia Maraini, they worked together.

**AI:** To go back to your experiences let’s say screen printing, after the one with Miceli, then the one with Savic etc. etc., the first ones are with Colla. For the others...

**N:** Yes.

**AI:** You go on, you were already making your own - the confetti....

**N:** Yes, when it happened to me and I had it I worked for when I had nothing to do.

**AI:** And you there, you had already started your business as a self-employed person.

**N:** Yes, there is the ‘55 exhibition at “Le Carrozze”; also in ‘55 in Florence, there are the papers ... later in ‘57 with Plinio De Martiis, in ‘59 ...

**AI:** Yes, this is your independent path, but I wanted to say afterwards between these experienc-

es of yours as a screen printer and the one with Cagli - are there other experiences in between that you've continued to work for in advertising?

**N:** No. When I started working for Cagli, I worked only for him. Do you remember the speech I gave you?

**AI:** Yes, but first from '54 that you are still in the studio with Colla, you continue to stay with Colla?

**N:** Yes, with Colla, with Burri, with Capogrossi, with Tot...

**L:** With whoever it happened to be. With Tot for example I remember me, when I once came up you all had cartons cut for the canopy at Termini station.

**N:** Yes, even the *Porte del Mistero*, with all the forests; the ones made with Tot diaphragms, made of bronze. Those I made all of them with the Stanley cutting cardboard to make the shape.

**AI:** Because where did you have the studio?

**N:** In Via Margutta, I was staying at 17 and Tot was staying at 7. And at the time we were very very much together, I was with him working in Bari, at the Fiera del Levante, we were very much together; [...]

**AI:** Your need for your own practice in '56...

**N:** My wife changed the whole situation; because she set up the house, the family ...

**AI:** Okay. So you continued to do your own things at home, the screen printing things you didn't do yet.

**N:** What always happened at home.

**AI:** You continued to do things for publicity, "Carte Segrete" or things for exhibitions....

**L:** Yes, brochures, invitations, catalogs for exhibitions.

**AI:** For Piattelli...

**N:** Aren't they later?

**AI:** No, they are from '66.

**L:** Yes, they are before Cagli! Because we didn't do anything after that.

**N:** Then precisely Gatto, Piattelli...

**L:** Yes because you made the books during.

**N:** Then there are the Exoeditories, those were all done in the workshop, at home in short....

**AI:** Which Exoeditories?

**N:** Those of '54 with Emilio Villa, those of '57 with Emilio Villa, those with Vinci Grossi and that other one, the last one....

**L:** *Imprimatur ... Senza l'imprimatur?*

**N:** No. That other one.

**AI:** These are in the early 1960s as dates?

**L:** No, one before. Because he showed them to me that we were engaged.

**N:** This one, for example, is recent because the *Oigroig* are here and it can't be that far away. But still, there will be a date here....

**AI:** How are these printed?

**L:** Everything in screen printing, text, etc.

**N:** Here you don't know when this is done? You'll see that he has it written down....

**AI:** Here. These here, how should we regard them? Are these your works!?

**N:** Yes. This is called "Exoeditorial" by Bruno.

**AI:** Are these things in silkscreen printing, though?

**N:** Yes, all.

**AI:** So it is not a third-party work. It is a work together.

**N:** No. Of course it's a work together.

**AI:** is a work that for a tenth, because it is a collaboration with another person -- you do it together --, it is also up to him. It's kind of like the *Unici* made for Cagli, you had made them that way; it was coming a collaboration.

**N:** Yes of course, it is a job for me is for Villa.

**AI:** This page here is a work you did for Villa ... this other one you did completely for you. The outfit is together.

**N:** This other one with Villa is from '54....

**AI:** And this is all yours instead?

**N:** No they are the same! *Sì, ma lentamente*. It is the most beautiful poem by Emilio Villa.

**AI:** How many copies did you make?

**L:** Forty-nine! This is wrong here. It should have been fifty in all.

**AI:** Are these all original?

**L:** Each one is different.

**N:** They are numbered. See, this is number 48.

**AI:** Are they multiple, though?

**L:** No!

**N:** They are multiple silk-screen prints. The originals this is one...

**L:** That is an original. On another book there is another one. There is no equal to this one. Each book has five originals.

**N:** It says very clearly there. Read it, down at the bottom.

**AI:** What I wanted to know though, on another one is there a completely different work?

**L:** Yes, there is another original!!

**AI:** There is another original made on the basis of this frame.

**N:** No, no, no!!! On a completely different frame. The easiest thing is I'll show you another one.

**AI:** Do you understand what I want to say? That you were doing the reworking on the same...

**L:** No, no. Change the cover, change everything!

**AI:** You know what it is? I thought with the same frame reworking as you did with *Unici* by Cagli. But no, it's other things.

**L:** The frame is always free every time.

**AI:** These jobs as they were being done, okay, cleaning the frame...will these be 6-7 steps?

**L:** No on these the frame is free. What comes out good you keep, what comes out bad you throw away.

**AI:** So the *Esoedizioni* let's say it's from the '54 onward to the late '60... We had arrived that by the time you're at Magrini Street, in '66-'67, you already had an outside business in addition to your own.

**N:** No, nothing. At some point the collaboration with Di Bitonto and the Luciana Finzi for Esperienza Grafica was born. This was after Corrado had died though! After Cagli, who died in '75, Esperienza Grafica was born, again for the work of...for third parties.

**AI:** Here you are while you worked for this experience with Cagli, which lasted seven years ...

**N:** I worked only with Cagli. There was an iron self-defense of the fellowship; I could not do things for others and he was not to give work to others.

**AI:** And you haven't worked for others commercially either? Haven't you ever had to do...art direction?

**N:** I don't think so; but I don't think so.

**L:** There wasn't time.

**N:** There was school [as professor, ed]. I started going in '69.

**AI:** In '69 what did you start doing? The art institute?

**L:** Yes, in Vasto, Chieti.

**AI:** So you started school until?

**N:** Until '77-'78 after which I came to the Academy in Perugia.

**AI:** You came in '79.

**N:** No, right away. I didn't lose a single year.

**AI:** Mirko's books, Cagli's...when were they done?

**N:** The books were made with Esperienza Grafica, but they have nothing to do with the screen printing business.

**AI:** No, but inside there are graphics of your own.

**N:** Yes, okay, it may be mentioned but it's not a big deal. With Esperienza Grafica we started out with a real commitment to silkscreen art prints. With Bruno Corà who had to take care of the art part and the contacts with the authors, me who had to make the silkscreens and Bruno Di Bitonto who had to sell them. Now it happened that the only one that worked was me, because Bruno Corà - who as always - says "yes, yes," then he had to go and talk to people but he was still shy...



**AI:** Here, what did you do with this? Bruno [Corà ed.] had you met him before? When you collaborated together for Piattelli for the invitations and the catalogs? Then you did the cataloghine with Crispolti, then you did Conte, Salvatore Meo, Rotella, for Piattelli whose program Bruno was curating.

**N:** But to Piattelli, Bruno [Corà ed.] I introduced him; because Bruno [Piattelli ed.] was fed up with Crispolti and wanted someone who could do ... and I told him that I knew a person.

**AI:** So you already knew him?

**N:** Yes, I already knew him. I had met him either at Cagli's or at Luciana's.

**AI:** By Bruno Di Bitonto, because you knew Bruno Di Bitonto independently of Bruno Corà.

**N:** Yes, I knew Bruno Di Bitonto from Cagli; because he was very good friends with Luciana. And often these guys would come to visit Cagli.

**AI:** Because maybe Cagli was doing things for the party...

**N:** Yes, for the communists, for all the Jews [...]. But the period who remembers...

**AI:** However with Esperienza Grafica, let's say you were friends with Di Bitonto and with Bruno you had done things previously with Piattelli.

[interruption, ed.]

So, we were saying about Esperienza Grafica, first there is the experience with Piattelli, first with Crispolti, these catalogs are the first things you do in the art field? The first art direction you do. And then after that with Corà, and you do Conte, Rotella and these exhibitions here.

**N:** Yes.

**AI:** After comes Esperienza Grafica and you did: Mastroianni, ...?

**N:** Mastroianni, Turcato, Guttuso

**AI:** Guttuso, *Gli amanti*?

**N:** Yes, also *La Vucciria* and *La Crocifissione*. Then *Il Got mit uns* comes up but isn't longer from Esperienza Grafica, or is it?

**AI:** I think so. First you worked and had a big relationship with Cagli, your relationship with the others you go to work with, example Mannucci you know.. they are all people you know; however, when you go to do the first things with Conte, Rotella, Meo...

**N:** They are all lifelong friends. With Rotella there is an association even, so Rotella's first works we did together; although you can't say that. They were all friends who frequented my studio. I was in Via Margutta, you know, from that period there so, even Fazzini, Tot, they were all there.

**AI:** Here, Fazzini what year is it?

**N:** Fazzini comes next, there is another experience called the Borsa Grafica.

**AI:** Even with Guttuso you knew each other?!

**N:** Yes, with Guttuso was the one who, by the way, awarded me the Anagni Prize; I don't know what year; but once there was an important prize that the town of Anagni organized.

**AI:** So your relationship was always friendly?

**N:** Yes yes, with Guttuso we were on familiar terms. With everybody, Mastroianni...

**AI:** They were all from your generation let's say, ten years plus, ten years minus ... All post-war.

**N:** Yes, but then they were all colleagues and in that sense it was always the relationship. So much so that I never did author proofs; nor press proofs... of anybody. I never had *bon à tirer*, let's call them that, I never did them; because the agreements with all the colleagues were that I did the best possible result, after that it was absolutely impossible. Of course, if they wanted to change because they needed it, regardless of the type of the object, then he says "no this would be better to make it redder..." that is, to change it from how it was originally, then this work was done; however, for reproduction work if one gave me this, and I did this again, I absolutely did not want the issue of "here look it's not the same... here look it's slightly lighter, here slightly darker." No one ever dared to make that kind of remark because the agreements were this, "if I do this to you have to trust me because better than this doesn't come."

**AI:** This is also mediated by your sensitivity...

**N:** And also by the esteem of colleagues, of course.

**AI:** That they had faith in your sensitivity; if there was a need to change for the better, they would change.

**N:** Here, in fact sometimes this happened that they were amazed. So much so that the first approaches for example with Guttuso, with whom we were friends as a painter-to-painter relationship, but the first time we did *La Crocifissione*, he wanted to see the progressions and the stages of printing. Then when he saw that he couldn't manage to follow me because I was going further ahead of him, then at a certain point he let it go. Burri, he came here the first time and brought a work that he thought was not feasible-he had already given it to others to do but no one had done it for him-to test us, because he wanted to print the whole *Sestante* but no one had printed it for him.

**L:** With Burri he did as he did with Cagli, who told him those things couldn't be done. So he came here and had them try one, because he didn't trust... When he saw that they could be done, then he says, "Those guys played me."

**AI:** Did he give you a hard one in the beginning?

**N:** Yes, the one with the newspaper. It wasn't the most difficult, in his opinion it was because he had given it to others and they told him it couldn't be done. So he brought it here and said, "We have to start a collaboration, in the meantime start with this one." He gave me two: one that was difficult from a technical point of view because it was a very complicated thing, and another one that was difficult from a color point of view because he had used particular colors and so he says "let's see if you can do it." I mean, he brought me two things to test me; he came here and the first time he started to say, "buth, this one a little bit blacker, this one a little bit..." and I indulged him because what he was saying was not wrong; because he had an eye that others didn't have, you have to recognize that.

**L:** Burri didn't trust, though.

**N:** Wait, wait, let me talk. He came with Sarteanesi Nemo, who is a printer, he was the director of the Narni Typography for many years, then he taught at IPSIA. And they used to come here just to rehearse, when they noticed that we were at the "I salute you Giuseppe" [idiom, ed], then they used to come and do the little stupid things; and then I used to tell them "yes yes, like no," the first four or five times then after that it happened that a little bit it bothered Alberto (because he had pulmonary emphysema and at the time he was better now he's much worse) and the smell bothered him, then he used to come just to show that he was behind these things and he wanted the best. The second time he came, and he thought he had fooled us because he had done those things 20 years before, as soon as he came in he saw it through the door that we had almost finished printing it-"Nice like that! Don't touch it. You fooled me," he said, - "how?" - "yes because I thought it couldn't be done!" From that time he never came in here again, he signed like everyone else. With Guttuso for example he would give me this, I would ask him how big he wanted it, "70x100," I would bring him all 100/150 copies finished and numbered; she would number them.

**AI:** So he didn't even look at the original.

**N:** No, he wasn't looking at anything.

**L:** But Burri used to come there occasionally, it was Sarteanesi who looked at the hair. So Burri would tell him that it didn't matter that it looked the same, the important thing was that it worked as a whole. For Sarteanesi the beautiful thing was equal, for Burri the beautiful thing was that it worked. [...] You don't have to reproduce a character that changes its physiognomy, you have to reproduce it that works, with a balance, a weight, that is not unbalanced; because there were paintings with more orange...

**N:** No no, that's why with Burri we got along well because of that, because he is a painter and then he understands if there is a lack here and you correct it with a counterpoint, he says, "Yes, okay." He sees them on the fly, things that maybe Guttuso the early days didn't see.

**L:** So much so that he was very happy to work with us because he says - "When I go to other parts I look Fracchia [Giandomenico, fictional film character, ed.], because I have to explain everything," and those people say to me - "but that can't be done."

**N:** No but then he says, “I look Fracchia [Giandomenico, fictional film character, ed.], these people eat me because I’m a pain in the ass...,” but fortunately everything here is precise....

**L:** Yes, there was a fight just to get the money back. That these sons sent it to us and then afterwards he called back and told him the cue is from the wood.

**AI:** What did he say to you?

**N:** Yes, because when there was the economic issue I sent the children there, because I told them, “I don’t want to talk about these things with you because I don’t deal with them.” I sent Paolo and Giorgio there, but they argued about it because he wanted to give us so much so they told him nothing was being done. When they came back they told me, “You know with Burri you don’t do anything, because...” and they told me.

**AI:** Had you already done both?

**N:** No no; we had not started.

**AI:** He had not done any testing with you.

**N:** No, we were leaving. So much so that it was a complicated matter, because afterwards he even had the accountant do the accounts for me; [...]. In the end he had a fight with Giorgio and it ends there, the next day the phone rings - “Oh! It’s me how are you?”, - “Well Alberto, you?”, - “Eh, you know yesterday I had a fight with your children. Oh, cue comes from the wood!”, - “And why?”, - “Because you can’t say anything that they jump on you!”, - “but what happened?”, - “didn’t they tell you?”, - “yes, they told me you didn’t make the deal and that’s it”, - “but that’s not true, but who said that! But it is possible that if they take things by the top. But yes, but no...but here, but there. Somehow we will do, I have the money now unfortunately I don’t have it because I can’t spend that much now. Come down and we’ll talk about it.” [...]

**AI:** Then at least four archive copies, one for one at least....

**N:** There you see, he how he is. That’s why I say it’s not true that Burri is a miser, Burri is a generous one; you just don’t take money out of his pocket. [...] But the work has been immense, he told me-”When you told me it took two years, I didn’t want to believe it, for me it was absurd. But now that I see how the work works; now I believe it! So let’s do one thing, I’ll sign you four proofs, one by one.”

**L:** No, maybe. He said - “I give you one archival proof.”, when we were signing the first job then I told him - “Here how do you do it, the archival proof, we are four!”. You can tell it was a lucky day, I don’t know, the contract was that he gave tot per run and one archival proof; instead he gave us each one, so 16x4 and wasn’t it better that he gave us the money??!

**N:** No! No. He didn’t have the money, his job and that was all he needed to make a living. So in the end what happened? That he gave us for each subject four pieces, and he said, “However, don’t sell them,” and sure they are all dedicated and we don’t sell them as long as he is alive,

however you think how much he gave us.

**AI:** Of course, if you needed to sell a Burri to make an operation, you would sell it.

**N:** No, I don't sell it because, I don't know, we will do it another way. He however told us - "If you really need them, go ahead and sell them...Just try not to do it before me and not to sell them for less."

[...]

[..., interruption, ed.]

**N:** They are the *Unici*...

**L:** No, the *Unici* we used to do later, this way, where Emilio was.

**N:** Also at Via Magrini. Belletti came to Via Magrini.

**L:** Sorry but, we used to do the first board or *Belfagor*, no the horizontal one with all those dots.... *Motivi Cannibalici*, that there was that red....

**N:** The first is *Lungo il lungo Bungo*.

**L:** That one was made upstairs! The first board made downstairs with the "Golia", because upstairs was never there because it wouldn't fit!

**N:** However it was printed with "Golia", because it is 70x100. It is more than 70x100.

**L:** Yes, that's right. So the second one is *Motivi Cannibalici*. It was horizontal, that Carlo Dolcini came once while you were touching up the frame to make that central red. And from there, downstairs, I remember Carlini's wife and I were cleaning this room to equip it. How did the "Golia" fit upstairs, though, Nuvolo?

**N:** But the "Golia" above didn't fit....

**L:** Then the first one is *Il lungo Bungo* but at that time they were doing upstairs. The print below.

**N:** Yes but Gino [Carlini, ed.] came later. I, Liana the fairs I started in '64.

**L:** You finished the fairs in '69.

**N:** And I started them in '64. Gino must have come there in '65; because I used to take him to fairs.

**L:** Yes but it didn't come right away....

**N:** On purpose! It was in '66 when he came.



**AI:** So you started doing them with Meo...

**L:** When we did *Il mago Baku, Il Bacco a Giarre, I fiori...* Gino was not there; you started with Corrado's boards.

**N:** Yes; but after Corrado's works. After *Il Bacco a Giarre* when the work with *La grande madre* started, one of those there. That must have been in '70.

**L:** '68-'69.

**AI:** '68 are *Il Bacco a Giarre, I fiori*. '69-'70?

**L:** Ah yes, that's right!

**AI:** The *Unici* will be from '70.

**L:** For the Palazzo Strozzi exhibition, Gino I think was printing...

**N:** Raffaele was there for the Palazzo Strozzi exhibition.

**L:** Did Raffaele come right away? No...

**N:** Yes, I used to teach Walter, he sent him to us....

**L:** That alone showed up as one sent by this; however... I don't remember the date of Gino, but off the top of my head there was quite a lot. But anyway there we did those works, *Il lungo Bungo* and *Motivi cannibalici* which was the second piece, and there was until we printed all the *Stelle*, the chemistry...

**N:** If Cagli dies in '76, you've pretty much done the math.

**L:** Yes, about 10 years. Not even...five to six years. However it was the one that was there for the longest consecutive period. Because the others...

**N:** No, it was Raffaele who was there the most.

**AI:** Raffaele who's called?

**L:** Berardini.

**AI:** Was he coming to study with you?

**L:** Yes he had done the Vasto Institute.

**N:** He was a painter.

**L:** [...]. However, they were almost all laborers, no one put in a comma.

**N:** The only ones who put something of their own into it were the children.

[...]

**AI:** Anyway back to us. We got to Piattelli, Di Bitonto, Esperienza Grafica...then Esperienza Grafica ends as well.

**N:** Yes. Esperienza Grafica ends with *Il Got Mit Uns*. And then the direct report begins. Not with Piattelli, not with Esperienza Grafica. And then there is Borsa, which lasts very short.

**AI:** With Borsa do you do only Fazzini?

**N:** Is just a folder by Fazzini, the *Silfidi nude*. With Borsa Grafica; [...]. However, the relationship with Fazzini continues...

**AI:** Directly with Fazzini...

**N:** And with him we make the two folders, *La maternità* and *I Danzatori*. Which are then sold to Delfino Grafica at a later date.

**AI:** For the edition. This is still Rome.

**N:** Yes, it's Rome. I continue. Now there is the problem of transferring.

**AI:** Does he begin work with Guttuso first, however?

**N:** Yes, but wait.

**AI:** You were already at the Academy.

**N:** Yes, I had already done fairs... at a certain time there is the problem that the children want to come to Castello to get married and to live; and Liana agrees for the relocation, because we already had the house anyway. And so, slowly we came to live there and then we decided to move the workshop to Città di Castello. Then I had previously bought this land, but I don't know why I had bought it [from a friend, ...], at that point there we decided to come to Città di Castello and make the workshop; now to do that first we had to build the shed; so I planned the whole thing. I made an agreement with Emilio Villa - just think who I had found! - first I made an agreement with Guttuso, I did an operation that I had never done in my life; that of being a press agent, anyway I said "here we need a lot of money, the shed costs a lot of money, to invoice it takes a lot of years...so let's find some work that will give us a lot of money for a long time, so we can build the shed...I programmed everything!" "I went to Guttuso and said, "Look Renato, I have to do a certain kind of thing. You're willing to let me do some graphics that I'll pay you personally, we'll agree on the cost, and then I'll give it back to the publisher who will sell it back for his own business. The deal, though, is between you and me; you give me the stuff, I make it for you, you sign it and give it back to me, and I give you the money, we determine how much and how first. Do you agree to such an operation?" he said, "yes yes, Nuvolo, it doesn't cost me anything."

**AI:** So you were a promoter of this. It's not the artist who came to you, like Cagli, like the others; a gallery owner or Esperienza Grafica...

**N:** No, it was me. I premeditated, organized and did this operation. We had agreed with Guttuso on the amount of the stuff and the money. I had done all the math; and it was supposed to come up with a certain amount of boards, and in fact we divided them up a little bit for *Il Dante* and a little bit for *Il Michelangelo*, and together with Guttuso we agreed, we met one night and did the whole plan together. He could use this money and he said, "Don't think I'm doing you a favor. It's perfectly fine with me, because I know that 30 million a month is coming to me from you."

**AI:** And you looked for the publisher after that?

**N:** Yes, and after that I found the publisher. For both *Il Dante* and *Il Michelangelo*.

**AI:** Were they different? Who were they?

**N:** Yes, one is Studio Immagine for *Il Michelangelo* and the other one is..., Paolo knows, I can't remember now. So I was telling you, that I had agreed with Emilio Villa who was to take care of the texts, which then were never done; [...]. So nothing, in agreement with Guttuso we did this operation, which to us made the money to build the shed. Of course we took a mortgage, but we didn't need to, we had to take it on the advice of the accountant because "if you get a complaint and they ask you how you did it at least you have the mortgage." And we finished Guttuso's work here.

**AI:** Has the other, smaller *Dante's* project come up in the meantime?

**N:** No, always together. With Guttuso we did what we had established; then the publisher when we proposed *Il Dante* to him, he said "I'll take it, the conditions are these in the contract... however we would also need to do a book..." Renato said that was fine.

**AI:** Then those boards were not signed by anyone?

**N:** No, because the book was never done, Guttuso in the meantime died-I didn't get there in time. Because they at one point said, "Let's not do the book anymore, let's sign all the plates," so to Renato I said, "Look Renato these of the book they don't care to do it, they say if you feel like signing the plates, you tell them the cost..." he tells me, "All right, how many is it," it was a lot because it's 10 subjects of 300 copies, and he had asked for 150 million [in Lire, ed.]. And they stumbled around, and Guttuso died; so they were left with this unsigned stuff in their hands, which they then sold to a third party who had thought he was buying who knows what, but instead he ended up with stuff that was worthless because it was unsigned. So he came to me and told me that they had ripped him off, and I asked him how much he had paid for it and he had bought it for less than what it had cost them, and I told him that he had made a bargain because he had unsigned but very good quality material, and then he could always state that this material was made at Guttuso's behest and followed by him, but that it lacks a signature because Guttuso left, no one forbids that. And then he calmed down, then I never heard from them again.

**AI:** And here he ended up in Castello.

**N:** Castello ended and Guttuso ended. Where AEIUO started, and then we have a relationship now with these people who make these comics now....

**AI:** Meanwhile, there is Manara...

**N:** Yes, in the meantime there is Manara, there are several. But they're all comics, because there's a publisher that deals with them. Manara had a nice thing. There was another good thing, by someone else but it was hard stuff, pornographic stuff, and then it's not stuff to show up.

**AI:** Manara with whom did you do this? Can you tell me the publisher?

**N:** Yes, it's called Andcore.

**AI:** Andcore Editore, from Roma?

**N:** No, from Perugia.

**AI:** And did you Milo Manara meet him, did he come here...?

**N:** No, no. I never saw it. When they brought it to him he said it was too good, he wouldn't even sign it.

**AI:** So you haven't had relations? I mean, you had relations with everybody but Manara....

**N:** Yes, I had relationships with everybody except these comic book people. Only one had come...Liana do you remember who it was?

**AI:** Liberatore?

**N:** No came the one who did that drawing that you said, "This is on the occasion of the death of..."

**AI:** Eh, Liberatore! That he did it for Paziienza.

**N:** Then Paziienza came here....

**AI:** No, Paziienza is dead.

**N:** Exactly, before he died...

**AI:** But Liberatore did the drawing...

**N:** Yeah. Liana do you remember the one who came here with ....

**L:** With the Andcore? The one who was in Paris, making the little women with the fine fine fine marks?

**N:** That was who?

[they walk away to look for archival copies. ed.]