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Gianfranco Asveri And His Little Animals

Exhibition Dates 15 March – 27 April, 2019
Opening Reception Friday, 15 March 2019, 6–8:00 pm

ZZHK Gallery
3 Wa Lane
Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
(between 227-229 Hollywood Road)



Gianfranco Asveri, *Favole in viaggio*, 2019
mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

ZZHK Gallery is pleased to present ***Gianfranco Asveri: And His Little Animals***, an exhibition of new work by Italian artist Gianfranco Asveri. Over the past four decades, Asveri has created a body of work which has formed a unique style of his own. This exhibition, the artist's first solo exhibition in Hong Kong, is comprised of 15 new paintings created specially for the show, in which he presents his beloved subject of little animals.

Asveri creates paintings that on first glance appear like primitive drawings by children - drawing a person with a circle for the head and simple stick lines for the arms and legs, objects are out of proportion to each other, the raw edge of colour like random scribbles of a child. However, in the witty references to children's art, one can find on closer inspection his paintings reveal a sophisticated handling of paint and colour, imbued with a great sense of lightness and playfulness.

Dogs, birds, chickens, cats, goats, suchlike animals and mythical creatures have constantly featured in Asveri's works. Living with his dogs in a village in the hills of Piacenza in Italy, Asveri feels a strong connection to the surrounded nature and animals. The daily objects and people are the source of inspiration for his paintings. As the artist says, "I paint what I see when I open the window of my house." His love and compassion to animals have led him to help abandoned animals, some of which have become longtime companions to him. In some of his paintings, Asveri applied a small rectangle of (white) colour with line drawing of figures and animals, like a little family photo hanging on one's wall at home, suggesting a treasured memory with family and friends. That is what the animals especially the dogs are to Asveri.

Asveri reduces figures and objects to simple and childlike forms, focusing on transmitting the emotional essence rather than the appearance. His spontaneous drawing into the surface layer with the wrong end of the brush reveals the underneath (background) is coated in a thick layer of paint

mixture, leading to an intense solidity and richness of colour in his painting. In the work *Favole in viaggio* (Figure 2.), Asveri used palette knife to apply flat sweeps of multiple colours for the girl figure in dress, then scratched into the layered paint to outline the figure, where her funky electric hair corresponding to a grinning face, bringing a hilarious and amusing mood to the painting. Asveri's child-like paintings are simply not a reflection of reality, his works present a unique perspective towards the world - through the eyes of a child, which reminds us a way of seeing the world we all once had when we were children, simple, honest and imaginative.

The exhibition is presented in collaboration with CASATI Arte Contemporanea in Milan.

About Gianfranco Asveri

Gianfranco Asveri was born in Fiorenzuola d'Arda, Italy in 1948. He lives and works surrounded by the hills of Piacenza with the company of his beloved dogs. After a difficult childhood he started painting in 1969, and thereafter art became his life's main purpose. In his initial period, Asveri painted in a more traditional figurative way, since the 1980s, his paintings became instinctive and personal as he explored the newly adopted genre where colors and textures became more prominent and resonant, similar to the Art Brut movement. His instinctive approach to painting produces work that is direct, powerful and expressive. He continually finds inspiration in his daily life, as he describes: "I paint what I see when I open the window of my house". His paintings can be found in many public and private collections throughout the world.

About ZZHK Gallery

The gallery was first established in 1978 in Hampstead, London. Over forty years experience of working in the art field, the gallery specializes in 20th Century and contemporary art, fine prints and rare works on paper by modern and contemporary masters such as Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Joan Miro, Henry Moore, David Hockney. It offers consulting and advisory services for collectors worldwide and has helped build important private and public collections. In 2012 the gallery opens its new space in Sheung Wan, Hong Kong, attentively introduces works of artists from emerging to established.

zzhkgallery.com

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Figure 1.



Gianfranco Asveri
Favole in viaggio, 2019
Mixed media on canvas
60 x 90 cm

Figure 2.



Gianfranco Asveri
Favole in viaggio, 2019
Mixed media on canvas
100 x 100 cm

Figure 3.



Gianfranco Asveri
Favole in viaggio, 2019
Mixed media on canvas
100 x 100 cm