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BRIDPORT TIMES

A MONTHLY CELEBRATION OF PEOPLE, PLACE AND PURVEYOR

WEAVING TALES

with Malcolm Seal





Image: Katharine Davies

MARZIA COLONNA

Anna Powell, Director, Sladers Yard Gallery and Café

This autumn the immense pleasure of exhibiting Marzia Colonna's collages, drawings and sculpture lies ahead of us here at Sladers Yard.

At heart and at root, Marzia is a sculptor who works in three-dimensional bronze and also in two-dimensional paper. The remarkable bronzes in this show relate to the emerging young woman, unfolding like a butterfly in *Chrysalis* and rising from the sea in *Young Venus*. These two tender and sensitive pieces combine powerfully with the more strongly grounded, equally evocative pierced form entitled *Mother Earth*. Memory, experience and a deep sense of empathy all play a part in these emotive sculptures.

Italian by birth, Marzia has lived for many years in Portesham, just down the coast from West Bay, and the subject matter for her collages varies from the beaches, hills and skies that we know and love so dearly here in West Dorset to the flowers she picks in her garden and the tools, natural objects and pieces of sculpture that catch her eye in her studio. Add to this two collages set in Bermuda and one of the countryside where she grew

up entitled *Snow near Fiesole* and we have a wonderful, varied collection.

The way Marzia presents this subject matter makes her collages stand out. Her fresh and joyful colours combine bold hues, whether yellow, blue, green, orange or red, with subtle, neutral and earthy tones. She has an ability to see the world in pattern and texture which works very well in collage but also plays a powerful part in sculptures such as *Chrysalis* where the young woman's smooth, sensuous skin contrasts to the rigid patterning of the chrysalis itself.

Marzia uses a disciplined technique for her collages. She says she looks intently for a long time at her subject matter then paints the abstract colours and patterns she will need. What follows, as she builds up a more or less figurative collage by cutting, ripping and sticking the paper she has painted beforehand is high-speed and intense. 'When I work with collage I feel I am sculpting with paper and painting at the same time. It is fast and furious work; holding on to and trying to replicate the memory of the landscape that I have



experienced, not only visually in its form and colour but also in the impact created in my mind by the wind, sun, rain, smells and sounds.'

The results have an exceptional sense of light and space. Marzia's landscapes evoke place and time. As a gardener I am particularly drawn to her flowers which are beautifully observed and really give the sense of fresh flowers. 'I try to become a part of my subjects, animate and inanimate, to get to the essence of what they are,' she says.

Born in Pisa in 1951, Marzia started art school when she was 12 and continued to study in Florence at the Accademia di Belle Arti. She met and married Robert

Montagu when she was 19 and came to England, eventually returning to Dorset where his family play a prominent part. While entertaining a wide circle of friends and running a large family of strong characters, she has always continued to work seriously as an artist. She had her first solo show in London in 1979 and has exhibited regularly since then. Her work is in numerous private and corporate collections in Europe, the US and Australasia. In Britain, her sculptures have been commissioned for the Jerwood Foundation, Newby Hall, Salisbury Cathedral, Sherborne Abbey, the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy and >



Two Ink Pens



Chrysalis



Walking at West Bay



Fallen Tree



Shining Through

Winchester City, as well as by private individuals.

The journalist and eminent art biographer, Roger Berthoud, put it most eloquently, 'Her sculpture is based on the human form, which she uses to express what we all share as human beings. It fascinates her that wherever we come from, whatever our race or religion, we feel the same basic needs and desires. She sees the body as the vessel of human emotion, touching in its combination of fragility and strength. Many of her bronzes, and indeed of her paper sculptures, reveal the tenderness with which

she views her fellow human beings.' Do look at the work online and come to see it. ●

sladersyard.co.uk

Saturday 14th September - Sunday 10th November

**Marzia Colonna: Recent Collages,
Drawings and Sculpture**

Sladers Yard Gallery, West Bay
