

FASHink PEOPLE

by the Fashink Group

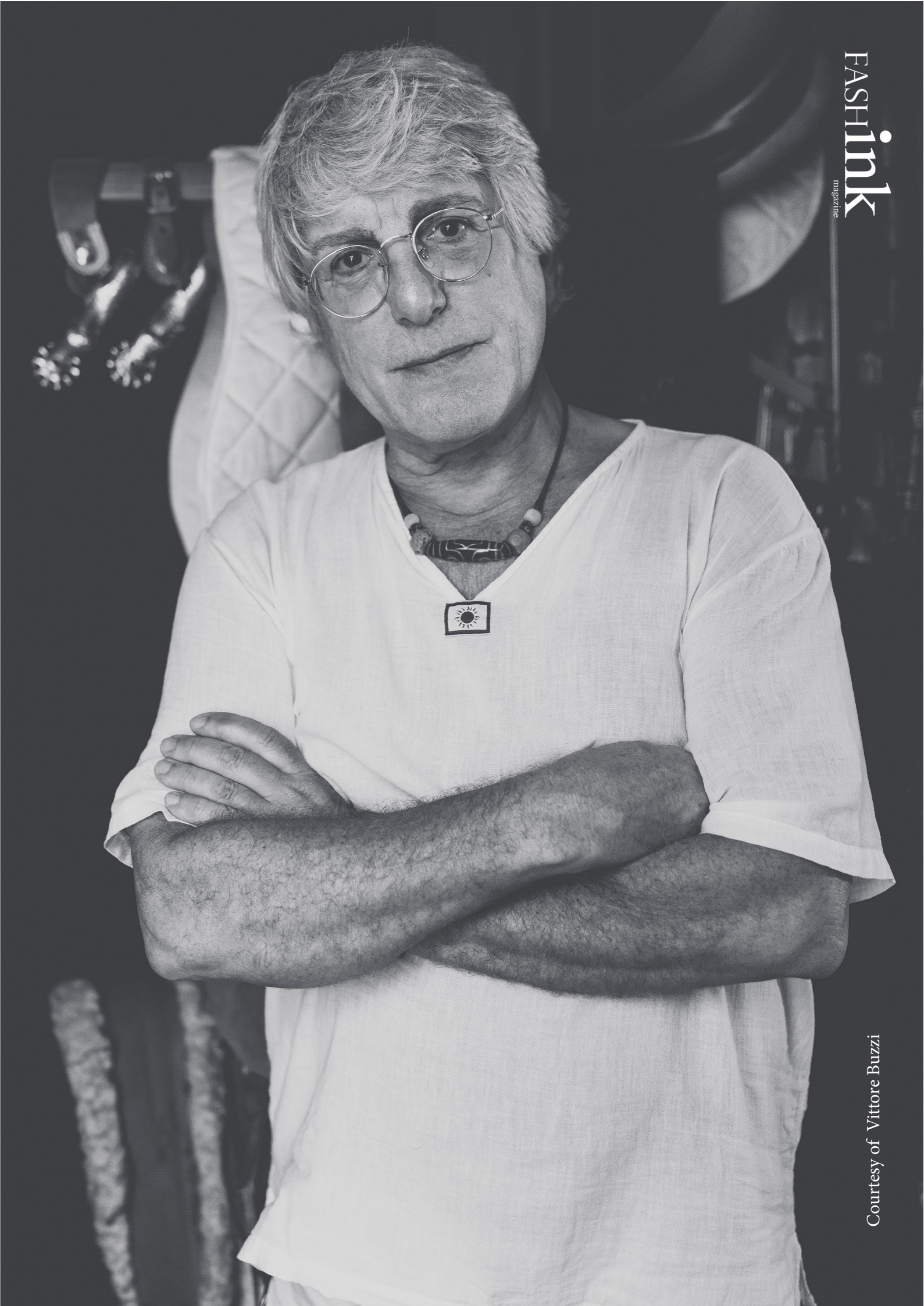
GUIDO DANIELE

Guido Daniele was born in Soverato (CZ - Italy) in 1950 and now lives and works in Milan.

From 1964 to 1968 he attended Brera artistic High School. He graduated from Brera School of Arts (major in sculpturing) in 1972.

He lived in India since 1972 to 1974 where he attended the Tankas school in Dharamsala.

Since 1968 he has been painting and participating to personal and group art exhibitions.



According to me, everyone has a story they have been assigned to and in which they participate and which they steer in different directions. I do not know if reincarnation des exist, but I found myself at the age of five or little more, when I started going to school, already being the best one at drawing in the whole school. I found out about it when they asked me to draw something for the headmaster saying: "You're the best one in the school". And I said: "That's strange! I didn't know that.". And from there on this was a conviction, a set course: everyone would ask me to paint, everyone would ask me to draw caricatures. And this went on until I went to the artistic high school, then the academy and so on. And I always found myself with the right skills to do anything: from



architectural design to sculptures, to paintings, big or small, with any technique. And I would notice that among my classmates there was who was only good at crayon, but if they had to make a technical design he would not be as good. This is why I think there are some attitudes in everyone that can lean towards music, photography, writing, cooking, classical arts. I found out I was good at classical arts, to which I devoted and am still devoting my whole life.

At the academy, I studied sculpture and I bought my first motorcycle with a sculpture I have made. But living of sculptures was very hard, moving forward was difficult. I moved out of my parents home at the age of eighteen, so I needed to be autonomous: find a place to make sculptures and move them, and I had no car nor driving license. So I was forced, facing the reality, to head toward painting, and especially towards commercial painting, which was much easier to manage. Indeed, when I ended high school in 1968, there was the birth of advertising market in Italy, together with all of the cultural movements of the period. Many companies were coming up, looking for new talented people, and they asked me to make an advertising campaign for a pharmaceutical company. I came from classical studies, so I suggested to revisit the great masters

such as Michelangelo and then Leonardo. I wanted to paint them on canvas and not on cardboard, not with spot color, but with many shades and so on. I wanted to make a picture that would represent a situation, and I wanted it to be beautiful. My first thought was that commercial art had always existed: the pyramids, the roman triumphal arches, the great frescoes, the Sistine chapel. These were all funded by some client to advertise some concept, philosophy or theory. After Napoleon triumph they would picture him tall, beautiful on his horse while he was small and rather ugly. Art has always been used as an instrument for some kind of utilitarian purpose. According to me, art has always been commercial, from when clients started to exist. Of course, in the Paleolithic, the man who would decorate his own cave, would do it just for himself. However, the one who was good at painting or at decorating the body would be used to make paintings for events, to decorate people's body, to decorate the hut in which everyone would meet. This is why, switching to the great works realized during our history, in architecture, sculpture and painting, there has always been free art, but above all commercial art. This is why I was never ashamed of working for the commercial art in all of its shapes: illustrations for books, for Playboy, covers for thrillers by Mondadori publishing, real commercials, big or small, in any direction and technique. Working in the advertising I have met an agent that was representing the best photographers of

the time, and that would also represent some illustrators, among which there was me and some realists. I therefore got in touch with the greatest photographers of the time that would work in advertising: Oliviero Toscani, Fabrizio Ferri, Mario Zappalà, Helmut Newton. Newton would make some beautiful artistic pictures, and he called me to help him furnishing a set design with a pictorial effect for one of his commercials. From this came my bivalence of dedicating my activity to both a "pure" art (making my own paintings, the ones that were on my mind and that I felt like creating) and the commercial art (making very difficult and beautiful images that are sold and used). My intention was to bring art in commercial works: making images that would be so

beautiful that people would look at them and say: "this is beautiful". I wanted them to forget what they were advertising, what the product was. I wanted to use commercial to convey art. And this is what I am still doing today: making images that are so beautiful that live in their beauty; and I think that I reached the goal in many cases. Indeed, many people tell me: "I remember your campaign of many years ago, that was this and that". Because it was beautiful, it decorated the town for months or years, on advertising boards, in the undergrounds, in the airports. You see advertisements everywhere and they can be beautiful or sometime not: they can only claim "buy this product!", or they can say "see how beautiful this picture is, dream with this picture!". There was a period of time in my life, when I started working with photographers, in which I would make scenography for them. These were most often landscapes, because photographers had to shoot for example in a studio in winter and there was no time or money to go, let's say, in South Africa and wait for the right day in which the clouds were good and the weather was not too windy, nor too cold. So we would create everything in the studio in a hyper realistic way, with beautiful skies and pristine landscapes. This was very fortunate, because during that time no one had ever made them so beautiful. I



got interviews on tv, magazines and articles about me and my work was often published. They would call me "Nuvolari" and in many other ways to say I was the one that would paint clouds. I would, go to Sardinia, take pictures of the clouds and of the nicest sunsets, I would study all of the movements and would then make skies full of clouds for years. Even the scenography of San Remo music festival in the 1997 was all made by me and it was a clouded sky. I later experienced the mechanism of major companies management, and this led me to the decision of leaving the field of the great scenography. I started dedicating myself to paintings, to illustrations and to my scenarios. In 2000 I created my last scenography. Indeed, I never made one again. I cut the ties with that world and a new one opened up for me, by magic, by destiny or by chance. Once I was making a scenography for a commercial in Holland, in a project for a German motoring newspaper. I was in a studio with an classic Jaguar and a model, and it came to my mind to use the inside, instead of the outside silhouette of the car, because I thought it was more beautiful. I mean the dashboard briar, the steering wheel, the Jaguar symbol at its center. I also asked to the photographer to use his daughter as a model, since the model they had paid was already gone for the day. In the evening, the pretty girl, with her hands painted as a jaguar. This was the first time I made painted, animal themed hands. Then, after one year, a director of an advertising agency from Milan wanted to

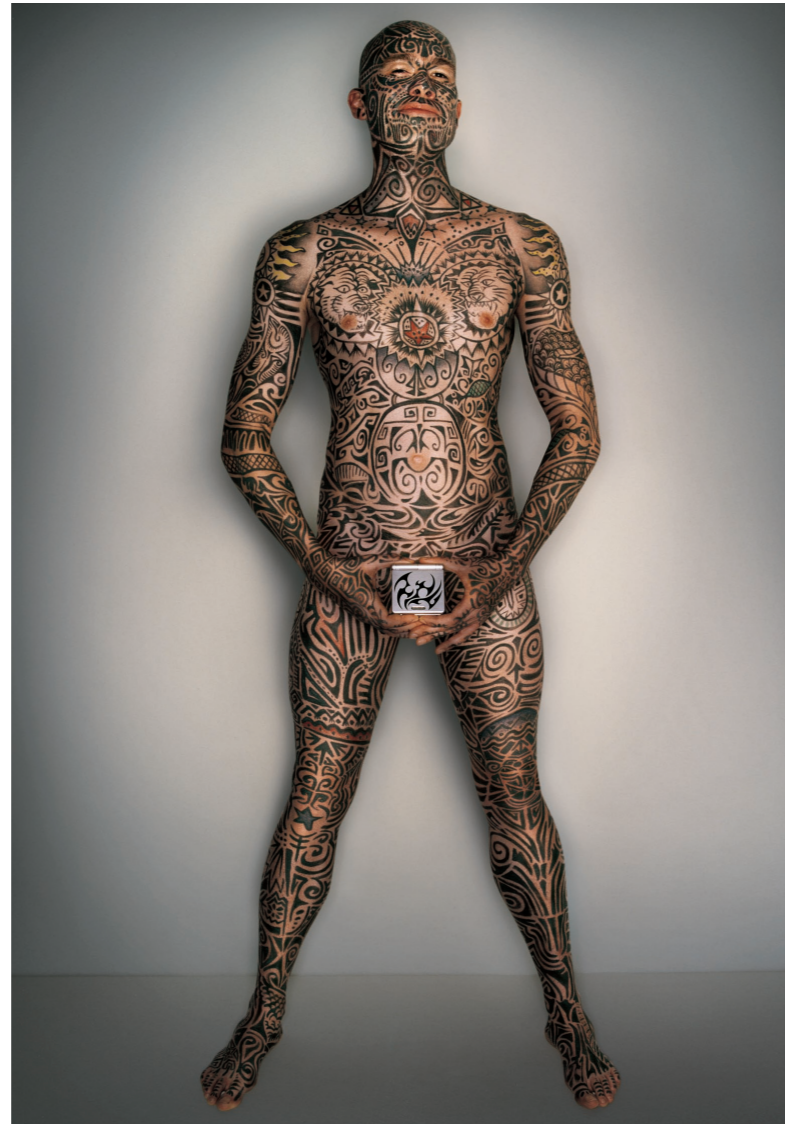


make a campaign with hands that would represent animals' heads, without using Photoshop to create them. He therefore reached me thanks to some works I had already done using body painting and asked me: "Would you be able to paint a hand in a way it looks like an animal head?". I answered: "Well, I guess yes. I have just done I and I can do it again with the theme we will choose". Heads of animals painted on hands' morphology in various positions. And I was to first to be stunned by how beautiful and realistic they were. The client was impressed as well, since they found the product ready in a few hours. Those pictures started running on the internet, being sent back and forward in every angle of the planet, and after a few years they suddenly called me from Washington to create the first spot with animal painted hands. Three newspapers called me the same day from London: the Daily Mail, the Daily Mirror and the Sunday Mirror to have interviews. The next day the Sipa Press called me from Paris to be my press agent. Now I travel the world making exhibitions and advertising campaigns from America to China, with the theme of animal hands or of body painting. Indeed, I had started ten years before, in the nineties, to make the first body paintings. The absolute first one I made was for the cover of "Amica", asked me from the photo editor of "Amica" at that time: Giovanna Calvenzi. She had the idea of painting a model as if she was a statue to present some jewels of Pomellato for the cover. I made this work in 1990, ten years before starting the animal hands. I was surprised by the beauty and the ease of painting on a body, this is why I grow fond of this art that I did not know that much. I had made it sometimes, in an instinctive way, at some party with friends; I would paint some girl, my girlfriend of the time, but I did not think it could be used for mass communication or artistic image, because these are very beautiful and artistic images. At the end of a day, I suggested something to the photographers with which I worked, for which I made scenography or backgrounds. I said: "You have many beautiful models here, why do not we ask them to make an artistic body painting? Would you like that?". It looked like these girls were just waiting to do something funnier than representing bras in sexy poses. So I brought some backgrounds painted with clouds from my home and I made the first images, later called "nude painted", of girls that would emerge from painted skies with the same type of clouds and colours. These were artistic images that the girls were very happy to make. When the agency came to know that one of these girls, who was a very

important Spanish top model, had made an artistic nude at the end of the day without telling them, they yelled at her. She left the agency and went to a new one. She had a very positive reaction to this project. The models, are normal intelligent girls, they understand that this is an artistic representation of the body and it is not something to be ashamed of. On the contrary, this is a way to emphasize a body's proportions, the attitudes every woman or model, professional or not, has when posing with femininity and seductiveness. Everything is enriched by a painting.

After this experience, since 1990, I kept on making artistic or commercial body paintings. In 1980s they called me to make an illustration of a race car made with pixels because at that time, making a pixel image was so expensive that it was cheaper to have it handmade. The office where digital work was made looked like a laboratory for nuclear research: everyone wore white shirts; computers were as big as refrigerators and it would take hours of work on a computer to turn a picture into pixels; something that takes now half a second with Photoshop. I made this illustration, paid hourly with the equivalent of today €1000/2000. It took me two days to turn a simple image into little squares. This is to say how technology has change in the recent years. I have always tried to do what you can't do with a machine, or what is not convenient to do in a digital way, this is why I dedicate myself to body painting and hand painting especially. Talking about body painting, you could transfer an image on a picture of a nude body. It is a difficult work that is sometimes longer and more expensive than the handmade one, but it is a choice. However, in hand painting it is much more difficult to take the skin's grain without insulting it with digital transposition, overlapping it with a different, but still credible, image. Especially if you have an image that blurs, with a close up in focus of a hand with a specific texture on it, you can notice if it is made with Photoshop. This is why I keep practicing this art until the technology will be so advanced to be able to over perform everything which is handmade (and it will be soon). At that point, luckily, I will be old enough to stop painting and to entirely dedicate myself to my own pictures, without thinking about it anymore. This will unluckily be the future. Now, however, we still have a margin to create handmade things and I keep following my path. Few days ago I was judging a body painting contest of a makeup and body painting academy here in Milan and I saw what young people do. Sadly, everyone

in body painting tends to do what I do not like: something excessive, full of special effects, wigs and superstructure for the body. I am attached to the classical tradition, the Italian one of 1400 and 1500, but also the one of the primitives, the aborigines from Australia and New Guinea, the native Indians, the Amazon clans that have always decorated themselves with great fantasy without using tricks or trivial false as they do now. There are also very beautiful constructions made with artificial elements like feathers, leaves or so; what the jungle aborigines do today. For example, the Omo tribe from South Ethiopia that make great things using vegetables, dry straw, animal bones and so on. That is a very interesting body preparation, linked to a situation in which there is a lot of vegetation. There are also other traditions of primitive clans in Amazonia, who live in the jungle and dedicate themselves to painting the body, with many particular signs. That is the tattoo for New Zealand's Maori. It was a tradition born in a particular region of the planet and developed with a type of symbols without using too many artificial decorations. What young people do nowadays, and that I observe with great attention and interest, is sometimes very interesting and some others very foregone, but everyone has to find their own path. I can only wish all the best to those who will come after. We will see. I continue my research and I try to do something good with my own abilities and times. My timelines are very tight since body painting has to be done in one day, eight hours since you then need to shoot and the models are exhausted (they have to stay still why you paint on them). The challenge is to be able to do, in eight hours, something very beautiful and very difficult. I am trying to do my best. Clearly, there will be people that will make more beautiful things, and with more fantasy: everyone finds and follows their path in any kind of art.



Now with the photographer Stefano Padovani, who has a particular love for tattoos, we decided together to make a series, a trilogy of bodies painted with tattoos in a very artistic and elegant form: not foregone tattoos, not vulgar ones, not stupid ones; Inspired by some of the best tattoo artists in the world. Despite this new project, personally I would never get a tattoo. It is too definitive as a choice. But this is my personal choice. I still find the tattoo very beautiful; in the same way I find that street graffiti are sometimes very invasive, but I can say when they are just as beautiful. Tattoos, when they are well made, when they have their own culture and research, are incredible. This is why me and Stefano have chosen to make three kinds of ethnicities: the white, the oriental and the black. Ethnicities are all mixed and, by the way, mixes of ethnicities often give better results. Indeed, the chocolate skinned girl that I have painted, along side with my daughter Ginevra, who made the makeup and hair for (she is very good at this) and Stefano has shoot, is a mix of ethnicities: this is where this amazing colour came from. We then work with a Russian girl with a very delicate, angelic white skin. She has some very strong tattoos in contrast with her beauty. Last we have painted an oriental girl, also very beautiful. She is from Korea and she was decorated as if she was a Chinese Ming jar, a white and blue ceramic. We accomplished a great result and we will exhibit our work in Milano at the beginning of September.

Photos courtesy of Guido Daniele archive

