

ATTACHED PRESS RELEASE I&B "LA PASSIONE DELL'ARBITRO"

SHORT BIOGRAPHY: RAFFAELE COLLINA



A Self-Portrait | Raffaele Collina (Faenza 1899 – Campo Ligure 1968)

Ink on paper (23 x 26 cm) | 1936

Innova et Bella Collection

Raffaele Collina was an Italian painter of the 20th century, an artist with an adventurous life (an officer in two world wars, five years as a prisoner in India), and a great football enthusiast.

Known as "the Romagnolo of Vado", Raffaele Collina was born in Faenza in 1899. He spent his childhood in Ravenna and graduated from the Aldini Industrial Institute of Bologna in 1916. He immediately moved to Vado Ligure to enroll at the Ligustic Academy in Genoa, but due to the First World War, where he served as an officer in the 35th Infantry Regiment of Bologna, he had to wait until 1921.

Raffaele Collina, an artist connected to the figurative painting of the 20th century, favored landscapes and interiors with figures. His landscapes exhibit a pronounced chromatic tone, enhancing the realism of the depicted image. In his best works figurative realism initially manifests in suspended atmospheres, later delving into dynamic processes.

Collina became a renowned landscape painter due to his simplistic, penetrating, and energetic style, characterized by harmonious detail. He also successfully ventured into art of ceramics, collaborating with the Mazzotti Factory in Albissola Mare (1920-1930). A key moment in his artistic and personal growth was his encounter with sculptor Arturo Martini, who was active in Vado Ligure as well.

He is remembered for his historic sports-themed works, including *La Passione dell'Arbitro*, the first painting in art history to celebrate the figure of the referee, the painting *Atleti al Traguado*, awarded by the C.O.N.I. at the Second National Fascist Exhibition in Naples in 1937, and the ceramic art work *Calciatori*.

In 1940, Raffaele Collina was called to war and sent to Africa as an infantry captain, where he was captured by the British and transferred to India, spending five years in a detention camp near Bhopal.

After World War II, he returned to Italy, founded the "Goletta Group" together with several other artists, including painters Agostani, De Salvo, Gambetta, and Peluzzi.

Around the mid-1950s, he created numerous ceramic furnishings, including fourteen white monochrome panels representing the Stations of the Cross for the Sacro Cuore Church in Savona. In the same municipality, he completed an important series of frescoes in the City Council Hall and the Marriage Hall, depicting the history of the city. This work complemented the cycle of frescoes by E. Peluzzi in the Council Chamber.

In the field of painting, Collina was a regular participant in both national and international exhibitions. He took part in the XIX, XXII, and XXIV Venice Biennales. He exhibited at the II–VII Rome Quadriennales, as well as in art exhibitions organized by the Venice Biennale in various foreign cities. He also participated in the 1963 Ligure Painting Exhibition in Albissola and the First Ligure Painting Exhibition of the Municipality of Savona in 1964, with frequent appearances at the Promotrice of Genoa. In 1949, he was appointed Academic of Merit at the Ligustica of Genoa.

A keen sportsman, with a background as a sprinter and football referee, he unexpectedly passed away during a football match in Campo Ligure, where he had traveled to support his team, Vado FC 1913, the historic team that won the first edition of the Coppa Italia in 1922.

His works are exhibited at the GAM - Gallerie di Arte Moderna in Genoa, Savona, and Faenza, the Civic Collections of Vado Ligure, Florence, and Trieste, along with numerous public and private collections.

Sources:

Raffaele Collina (1899-1968), monograph edited by Carla Bracco, Magda Tassinari, and Donatella Ventura, pp. 128, Sagep Editori, Genoa, 2022.

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