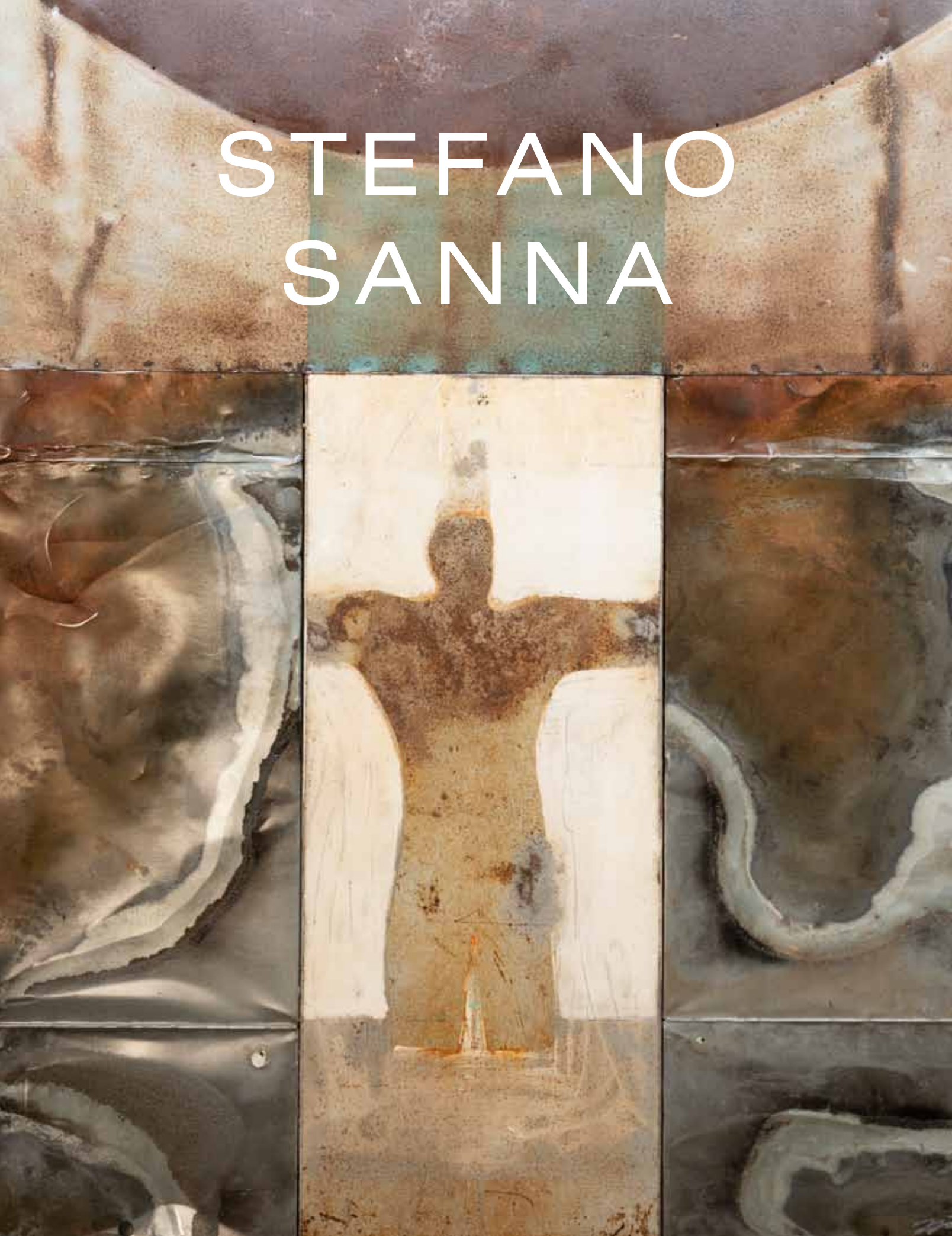


STEFANO SANNA





COVER:
Stefano Sanna, *Icaro*, 2018, mixed
media on metal, 39" x 47."

Stefano Sanna, *EN Z*, 2018, mixed media on metal, 41" x 61."



Stefano Sanna, *Walk the Line*, 2018, mixed media on metal, 39" x 39."

THE ART OF METACYCLING

BY RAISA CLAVIJO

During Miami Art Week, South Florida will be the site of five exhibitions by the artist Stefano Sanna. Born in Nigeria in 1975 to a Sardinian father and Swiss mother, Sanna began a career in the graphic arts and design in Milan in 1994. Subsequently, he worked as an illustrator and comic book artist. In 2004, he relocated to Costa Smeralda, Sardinia, and it is precisely this new environment that has radically influenced his artistic production.

Sardinia is an island with a significant historical and cultural legacy dating back to the Paleolithic period. Throughout the cen-

turies, peoples of different origins have coexisted and commixed there: Italic, Iberian, Phoenician, Punic, Greek, Roman, as well as those from North Africa. Sardinians are very proud of this melting pot that constitutes their cultural heritage and manifest this both in their daily lives and traditions. At the same time, the island still boasts almost-untouched areas and great expanses of sparsely populated land. Sardinia, its nature and its people are central to Sanna's current work. The artist is inspired by living in close proximity to nature, by the energy of the islanders, its sea and its distinctive light. In the last few years, Sardinia has also



Stefano Sanna, *Paesaggi in allerta meteo B 406*, 2018, mixed media on wood and metal, 16" x 16."

provided him with the chance to experiment with unconventional discarded materials, which have contributed significant formal and conceptual value to his work.

Sanna utilizes objects found on the coasts and remote areas of the island, such as parts of vessels and pieces of metal and wood that have succumbed to the corrosive power of nature and man and on which the passage of time has left its mark. The artist gathers, selects and repurposes them, incorporating them into his work and bringing them back to life in the form of works of art. This process, which he calls "metacycling," transcends the mere act of recycling; it consists of giving a

new opportunity to an object whose existence as an item of consumption has come to an end, rescuing it by attributing to it a new spiritual and aesthetic value.

To utilize an object is, by necessity, to interpret it. The Duchampian gesture of starting with an object made by others and originally conceived for another use displaces the difficulties of the creative process by placing the emphasis on the regard of the artist toward the object in question. In this way, the mere act of selecting would be enough to establish the artistic operation, which is as valid as executing other traditional techniques like painting or sculpting. Assigning new meaning to an object



Stefano Sanna, *Paesaggi in allerta meteo No. 2*, 2018, mixed media on wood and metal, 16" x 16."

is already a production. The act of inserting it into a new scenario, treating it like a character in a new story, is also creating.

The essence of the act of metacycling lies in constructing a new discourse that starts with and whose essence is inspired by the very act of repurposing, recycling and resignifying. The artist begins with an idea that is then materialized upon selecting the pieces to intervene and upon taking advantage of the effects of acts of nature, the corrosion, the humidity, the sun, the wind on the wood, copper, steel and other materials. He has within reach an ample repertoire of textures and forms that he knows how to combine suitably in order to cre-

ate abstract and figurative works that crystallize a profound spiritual, humanist and ecological message.

This message is evident in pieces like *Icaro* (Icarus), created on metal panels. *Icaro* features an anthropomorphic figure that occupies the entire central panel, whose arms turn into great wings occupying the two side panels. The work is reminiscent of the character in the Greek saga who wished to fly. His wish was granted, but when he flew too close to the sun, his wings melted and he perished. Sanna was also inspired by the asteroid of the same name, which was first documented in 1949.

For its part, *Argini* alludes to the importance of water on an



Stefano Sanna, *Trinidad*, 2018, mixed media on boat wood, canvas, metal fiberglass and plastic, three panels, 35" x 47", each.



BACKCOVER: Stefano Sanna, *Burning Man series - Rabbit Mask*, 2018, mixed media on paper and stainless steel, 39" x 51."

island like Sardinia, where the humid and dry seasons are very extreme. Dams and reservoirs are essential for the preservation of potable water. Sanna invites us to reflect on the harmful effects of man on the ecology of these natural environments.

Walk the Line is a painting created on a corroded panel of metal that was part of an abandoned truck, which the artist found in a remote area of northern Sardinia. As Sanna is also a musician, this work, like numerous others of his, alludes to his experience and interest in that world. The piece was inspired by the movie of the same name directed by James Mangold in 2005. Written by Mangold and Gill Dennis, the movie is based on autobiographies of singer and composer Johnny Cash.

A particularly interesting series of pieces is *Pagine Sepolte* (Buried Pages). These are beautiful abstract compositions, which Sanna obtains by combining carbon paper and natural pigments in a plastic bag. The artist then buries these bags

for a period of 10 to 18 months. The result is these marvelous pieces of paper, which look like fragments of time and memories, inviting us to reflect on the passage of time and the fleeting nature of human existence.

Sanna's oeuvre has inherited qualities from Duchamp, Jasper Johns, the artists of the Arte Povera movement, Abstract Expressionism, Matisse; it is reminiscent of Rauschenberg's stay in Capiva during the final years of his life, a period during which he created numerous works using materials found on the shores of the island. Sanna is inspired by the legacy of previous artistic movements and his knowledge of the history of art; nevertheless, the complex metamorphoses suffered by his pieces carry an exclusive hallmark and a unique message based on the creator's own life experience. With the collection of works the South Florida public will be able to see in December, this extraordinary and multifaceted artist demonstrates his undeniable talent in analyzing reality,

delving into the essence of things and immortalizing his impression of the world through visual metaphors. ■

A selection of works by Stefano Sanna is on view along with photographs by Hector Adalid.

Exhibitions schedule:

- William Braemer Fine Art Gallery. 2121 NW 2nd Ave. Wynwood Art District. Miami. Opening reception: November 10th, 2018, 7:00 pm. Special reception: December 8th, 2018, 7:00 pm. On view from November 1st through December 31st, 2018.
- ICFF International Contemporary Furniture Fair. Fort Lauderdale Convention Center. 1950 Eisen-

hower Blvd., Fort Lauderdale. Opening reception: December 4th, 2018, 5:00 pm. On view through December 6th, 2018.

- Red Dot Art Fair. Mana Wynwood Exhibition Hall. 2217 NW 5th Ave @ 22nd Street. Wynwood Art District, Miami. Opening reception: December 5th, 2018, 5:00 pm. On view through December 9th, 2018.
- Art Fusion Gallery. 2085 NW 2nd Ave. Wynwood Art District, Miami. Ongoing exhibition. October 8th, 2018 through December 2019.

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