



MIMMO LAGANÀ AND THE MUSEUM

The Piedmontese sculptor along with Teatro Regio has given shape to the “Follia” space

Here we step inside a collector's house. This collector actually managed to heighten his passion, turning it into a real obsession, through somewhat morbid innocence. All the items in this space, have something in common with cars: fittings, furnishings, paintings, wall decorations. The doors of the kitchen cupboards are made with car doors, the dishwasher is embedded in the rear side of a Fiat 500, a whole dining room is made with spare car parts and the bed is a Volkswagen Beetle tailgate.

The host of this “special” house thinks about little else. Cars are not only considered as vehicles but as fetish items, empowered with magic. They actually became cult worshipped objects, even cuddled and treated like human beings. Is that insane? Maybe. But this is a creative, extravagant, funny and creative delusion. The famous poet Gabriele D'Annunzio stated that the “*Car is female!*”, and in the mind of the Italians that “dream” has been “*feminized*”, penetrating the collective imagination as a real object of desire, able to ignite free imagination and inspire the will of possession.

This is the brainchild of **Mimmo Laganà**, a sculptor and a painter from Piedmont, who cooperated with the **Teatro Regio** and was supported by Claudio Zingaro's **ZIRA car wracking** company for the materials. The Regio theatre helped to create the living space designed by Laganà: a half rusty plate loft-garage, whose furniture has been made by using the transformed objects that he found in the heaps of car accessories, such as rims, wheels, dashboards, and the impressive shaft taken from the body of a Cinquecento car. For the Teatro Regio, this was a really exciting challenge, linked to the idea of creating a newly conceived contemporary exhibition design, as well as being an extremely stimulating task providing for a new museum conception.

Interviewed about his artistic performance, Mimmo Laganà explained «*I feel tired but happy: happy as I really enjoyed myself and also because, these installations let me rescue cars and parts of cars that would definitely be abandoned, endowing them with a new identity and a bright future inside Torino's revived Automobile Museum*».

Mimmo Laganà, an artist who became popular for his metal sculptures made with recycled parts of cars. He works in his “Factory of Dreams”, a former XVIII historical paper factory which he transformed into a workshop, an open space for many artists. This project was born to allow rising talent to express themselves through their own work, creativity and ideas.

Laganà was born in 1943 in the province of Reggio Calabria and when he was seven, he did an apprenticeship in a studio of movie billboards and theatre animated settings. When he was twelve he worked at a workshop of moving sculptures (automobiles) and when he was eighteen he felt the need to go to the capital city of car manufacturers: Torino. In the artistic fervour of the 60s, Laganà dived into that world by displaying his works at group exhibitions, meeting both popular painters and artists at their debut. In the meantime he opened a laboratory for the restoration of old cars and it was here that he started this creative activity, which he still performs today. Giovanni Agnelli explains how «*Laganà has generated a rich and varied gallery of peculiar characters, the fruit of a combination of a lively imagination and a confident plastic sensitivity. His work suggests an ironical revisiting of products which, produced by a mechanic workshop with a specific function, turn into different uses within a strange context though not hostile*».