The Gift of Hospitality: Tina Loiodice's Mural Celebrates Father Annibale and His Children

In the courtyard of the Institute of the Daughters of Divine Zeal in Rome, one can admire Tina Loiodice's mural, a Roman artist particularly sensitive to social issues. The mural depicts Saint Annibale Maria di Francia, who welcomes and protects children of various ethnicities, abandoned or orphaned, under his large wing.

Father Annibale serves as a beacon for all who know his story, his commitment, and his tenacity in wanting to provide assistance to the youngest and ensure them an education—the same mission that the religious community of the Daughters of Divine Zeal of the Heart of Jesus, founded by him, carries forward with the intention of promoting initiatives for the poorest children, taking care of their professional preparation and integration into society.

The idea for this work arose almost by chance, or at least, it was not planned. During a site visit to the Institute for another project she was called to participate in, Tina was struck by the large wall of the outer courtyard, too white and too beautiful not to be painted. From this came the idea, shared with Sister Vincy, who was then the superior of the Community, to create a large mural dedicated to the founder of the Institute Sant'Annibale M. Di Francia. Following her, Mother Michelia, the current superior, also embraced the project enthusiastically, endorsing its realization and starting the work. During that first meeting, Tina thought of her work as a guiding thread that could connect the outside to the inside; indeed, various images of the Saint are kept in the building's various

spaces, depicting him opening his arms and welcoming under his mantle the less fortunate children; this is the iconography she envisioned and wants to reproduce on the outside.

The sketch comes to life, and the work is realized thanks to the contribution of the Tstreet Foundation.

Terese Clark is the principal of Tstreet which curates Global Art projects in Urban communities .

As with the "Be Love" initiative at the Minor Ready Reception Center promoted by Caritas, Tina and Terese again join together to bring joy and peace to a place where children and young people need acceptance and affection the most .

Ms Clark’s Foundation creates artworks that transform spaces to increase social awareness and community connection.

Tina, for her part, is no stranger to social initiatives aimed at safeguarding the defenseless and protecting human rights; we can say that thanks to both, Father Annibale has found a new way of communication to renew his ideals and his sacrifice.

During the process, the artist had the opportunity to interact with the Institute's guests during recreation hours, arousing the curiosity and comments of the older ones, who sent their observations through the teachers; she also wanted to share some moments of daily life inside the school, having lunch with the sisters, living part of the day with them, breathing the serenity of the place and the strong sense of community

that pervades every individual in the name of mutual and unconditional love.

As a special observer, Tina was able to create a serene and participatory atmosphere, although she had to forgo greater involvement, due to reasons related to the school calendar, as she had initially hypothesized.

Today, Father Annibale shines with his mercy under the warm spring sun that is coming. Tstreet will be planting a tree in the garden as symbol of refuge and protection for the children; in the schoolyard, there is one more reason to come together and remember a man who made love for others his only reason for living; and then there are the children, the many children and young people in the world who need a shelter, a hug, a caress, and a word to help them grow serene.

Simona Albani