

Davide Pan / SELECTED WORKS
LUI E LEI IN VICENZA







The artist's statements are developed from the text of an interview with Davide Pan, held on 31st May 1988, with Camille Brietman and Barry Cogswell.

Going back to Italy added to the work. I was still doing my usual things. The influence of classical art and architecture was always present, but the best thing was the great garbage, which I used to make my pieces.

When I was going to school in Venice I was staying in Vicenza, about fifty miles to the northwest, and every day I would walk for fifteen minutes from the station to the Accademia. In Venice they pile up the garbage in Campos—little piazzas or squares—and a big boat goes by picking up the garbage, the furniture, the fridges, everything that is thrown away, in fact, like a floating garbage truck. On the way to the Accademia I passed through five campos.

If you look at the sculpture of *Lui E Lei* you can tell what the parts are. The hair is done with fruit crates, and *Lei*'s little broom is from the garbage. *Lui*'s shoes are my dad's shoes from our apartment in Vicenza and so is the tie. The boards at the back, the steel legs and most of the other stuff came from the garbage.

Lui E Lei is now in the lobby of the Hotel Castello in Vicenza. The hotel owner came to the Accademia and bought them. I had planned to do a video with them going from the school to Vicenza taking the route that I took each day, walking through the campos, crossing the bridges, taking the train, but being unable to do that I took a series of photos, some of which are shown here.

The director of the school did not appreciate the type of work I was doing. Education there was quite academic, and he didn't appreciate my walking into the Accademia carrying garbage. The other students picked up on the idea very quickly, so that eventually lots of students were carrying garbage to school. I had signed up for sculpture, but the professor insisted that before doing any three-dimensional work we had to spend months drawing, and before doing our own projects that did not entail working from a model, we had to present a project outline, have complete drawings and a cost breakdown, and have him make corrections before we could start. That is not the way I work; many of my pieces take less than an hour to make. I tried to explain to him that, if I did a drawing first, I would put all the energy into that, and would then not want to make the piece. I work very spontaneously. I sometimes sketch a piece out, but I don't use that long drawn-out planning process; it doesn't work for me.

Interestingly, in the first term there, I came across information regarding a forthcoming major juried art exhibition, which I decided to enter, and this was only two days before the deadline. So using my usual process and some old ski boots of my Grandfather's, I put a piece together, entered it and was not only accepted, but had the piece purchased for the gallery collection. There were fifteen hundred applicants, less than three hundred selected, and twenty or thirty chosen for purchase and a second exhibition in Verona. Neither the Director of the Accademia nor the sculpture instructor ever spoke of it to me. Some of the students were not pleased either, since some of them had been trying for that exhibition for three or four years. The exhibitions were the "70 Mosta Bevilacqua La Masa," Venezia, and the "Linea diretta" in Verona.

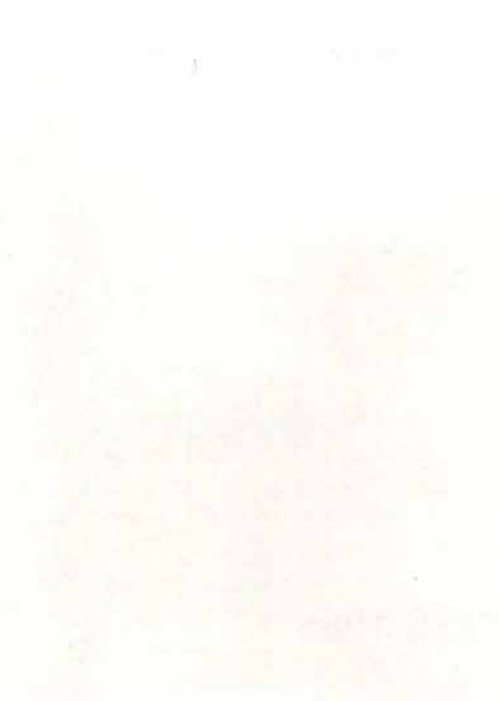
I saw good recent art in Italy, but at the Accademia the good things were hidden away. People seemed to find it difficult to be free, just to let go. We had the galleries of the Accademia just upstairs with the works of Veronese, Tintoretto, Tiziano and all those guys. It's one of the major galleries of classical art in Venice. I loved it and would go up there every chance I had. The influence has been coming out in my work since that time, particularly in the use of composition and colour.

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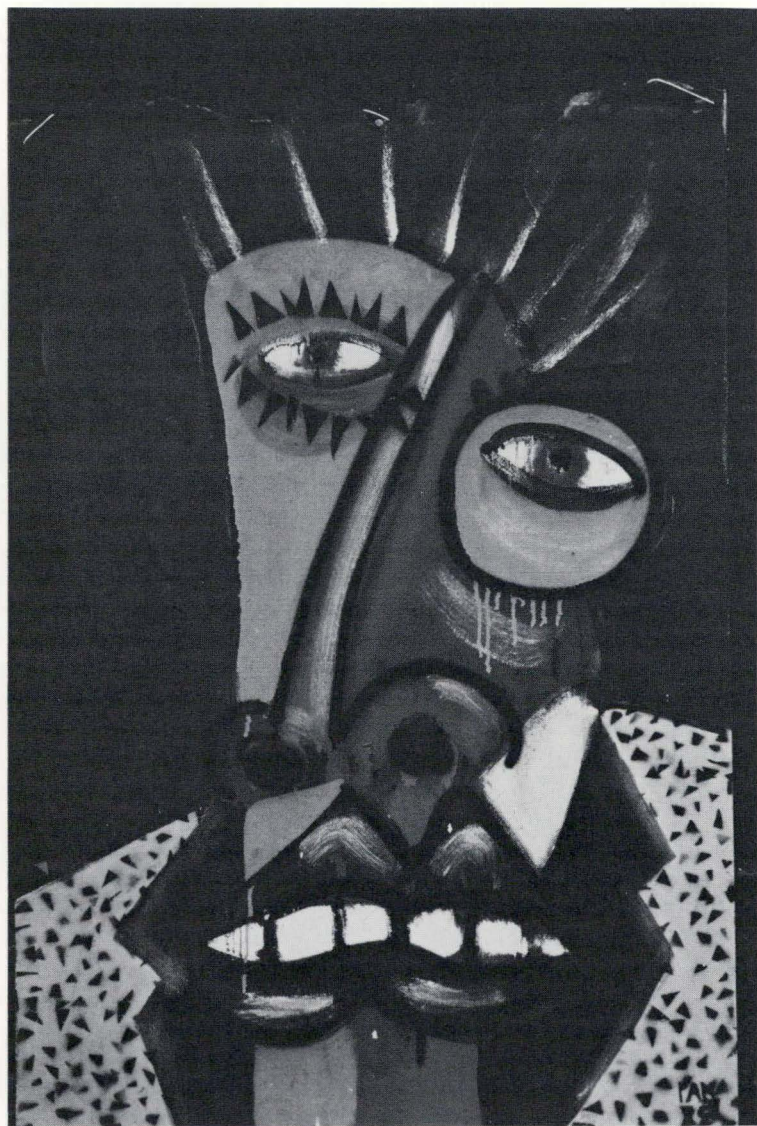


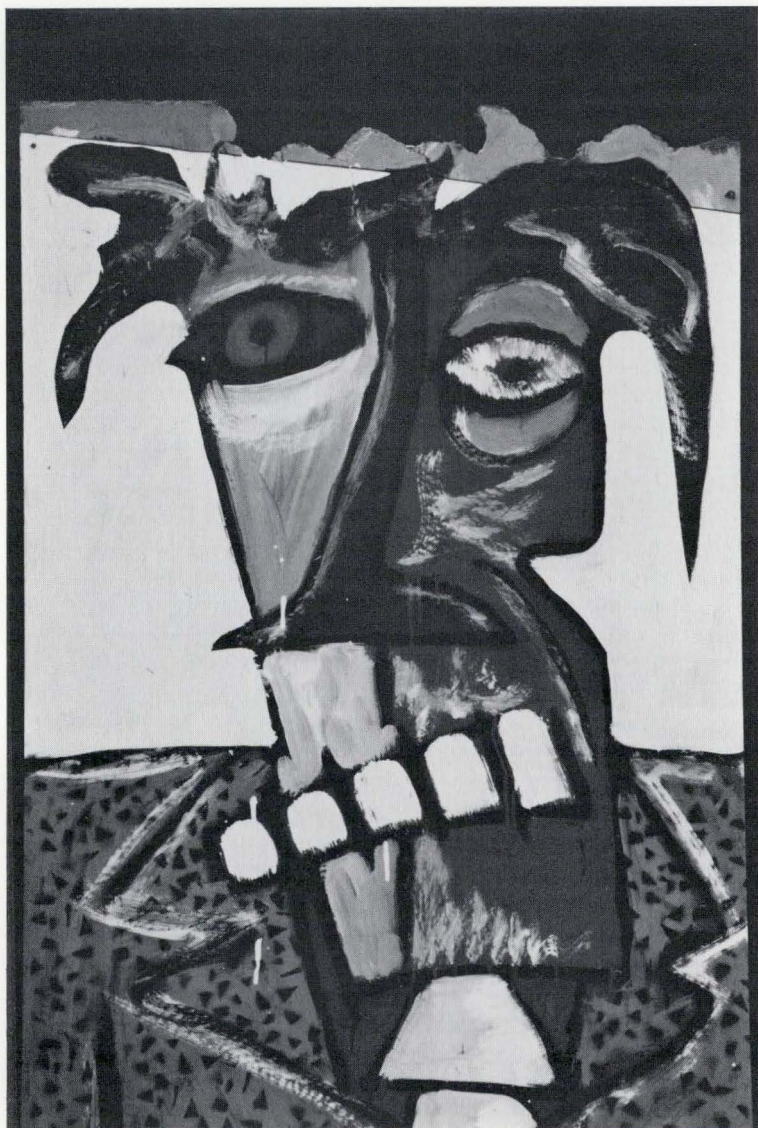
The image, *In the Accademia*, that is used on the cover shows a head in the Accademia courtyard, and comes from another head that was on the ground. It was a beautiful marble head, and every day that I was there the head would have a rag on it. The janitors would put their rags on the head to dry. I took slides of it each day, and it was this that gave me the idea to treat these sculptures in a different way. I gave this piece to a friend as a wedding gift. I had taken care to wrap it in an old sheet with the nails sticking out. When I spoke to the woman some time later, I found that she was displaying it wrapped in the sheet. She thought that was the piece.

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PAINTINGS 1985

The portraits are not really of individuals. I think a great deal about the political system, the misuse of power, and corruption. The people portrayed are not average people. One, for instance, was called *The President With a Blender and a Wife*. Mostly they are concerned with freedom or the physical or psychological violence done to people, for economic or other reasons, but they are not intended as illustrations of situations. I like to use the richness and succulence of the colours to counterbalance the roughness of the images. I find that the colours attract whilst the grins and images repel, keeping the viewer off balance. The apparent violence in the paintings does reflect an anger in me. I have been told many times that I seem so different from my work, and I would say that, if anything, putting these images on canvas or paper is a way of relieving the potential for anger that could develop from the frustrations of our society. People often ask me about the teeth, since they appear in nearly all my pieces, and I can only reflect that people show their teeth either when they are angry or when they are smiling or laughing.

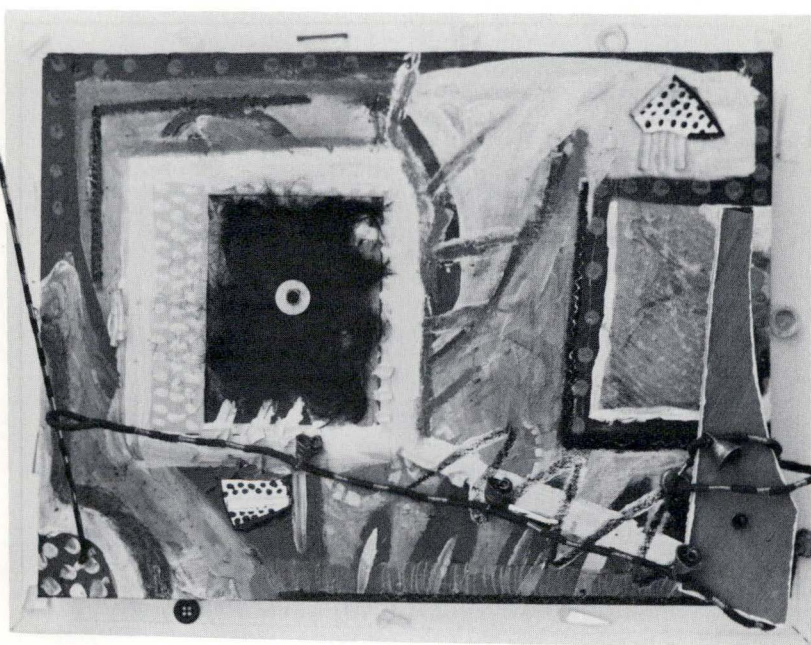


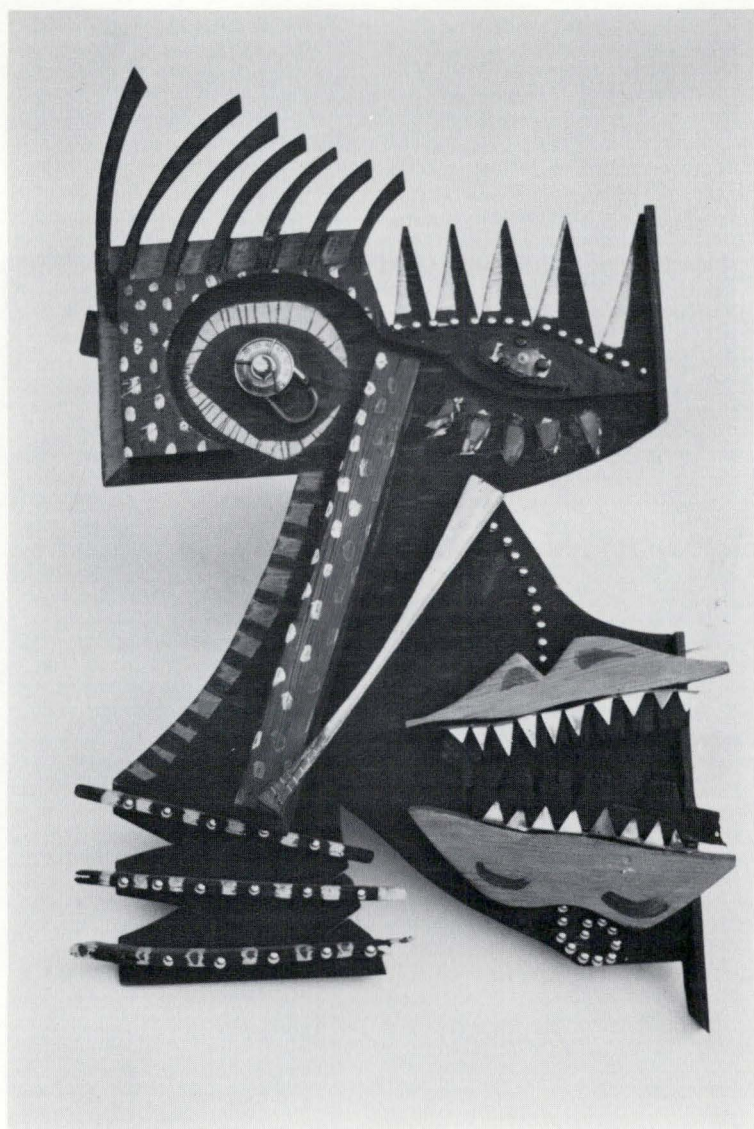




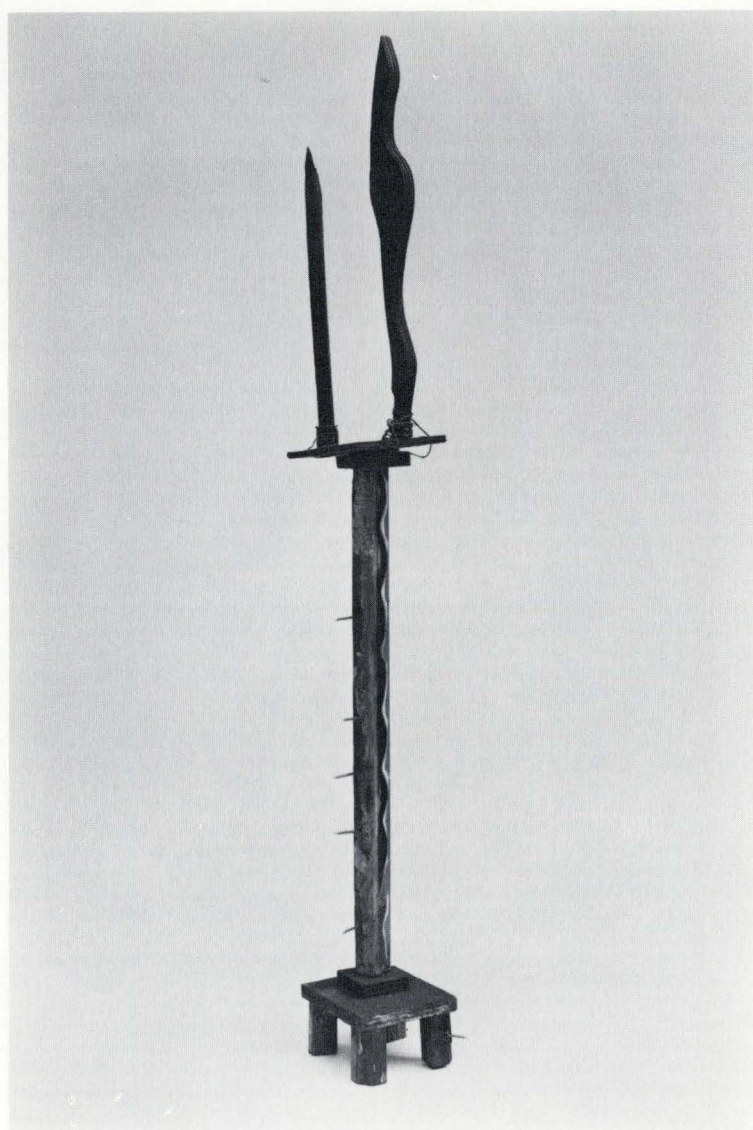


















IMAGES

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16-18 *Lui e Lei in Vicenza*, 1986, mixed media, height 5'.

21-25 *Selected Paintings*, 1986, mixed media on burlap, oilcloth, plastic, wood, and old curtains, sizes from 4' to 7'.

27 *Toy Painting*, 1988, acrylic and enamel on canvas board, bells, and Davide's hair, 18" x 14" x 6".

28 *Biting Chief*, 1987, wood construction, 29" x 20" x 5".

29 *A Voice From Somewhere*, 1987, acrylic and enamel on wood, 30" x 25".

30 *Forca*, 1988, burnt wood and nails, 53" x 9" x 5".

31 *Ambassador*, 1988, burnt wood, 44" x 11" x 9".

32 *One More Cross*, 1988, wood and enamel, 33" x 10" x 9".

33 *To Heather*, 1988, mixed media on burnt wood construction, 28" x 9" x 4".