

Anna Carina Sinocchi

The work of Anna Carina Sinocchi, an Italian-American artist trained in New Jersey, hearkens back to classical times, if often in an abstract, rather than transparently figurative, manner. Her work, regularly a mixture of paint and photographic imagery applied to linen, makes use of the arch on a regular basis. Close to architectural tableaux, Sinocchi's art makes present her sense--and ours--that the past is no longer the past, remaining alive in our imagination both as building details and as components of an imagination that balances very nicely between historical awareness and the desire to be new. The works on paper I have seen are framed, while the larger muslin efforts are not. In both cases, Sinocchi plays with both visual structure and its embellishment, sometimes to the point of decoration--in the sense that clay vessels might be decorated in archaic Italy. This does not mean that her art is scholarly or only addressing the past; instead, it is a part of previous efforts in ways that make clear even the arches and viaducts of classical culture were grounded in a physical beauty that matched the practical necessity that they filled. It is unusual for a contemporary artist to work off of this insight, but it is something that Sinocchi does unusually well.

As a writer interested in working with the past, I gravitate toward art that begins behind us and moves into the present and even into the future. This can be seen in the way the artist works. Sinocchi is singularly gifted in a process that is technically complex, involving painting over photos printed on linen, washing the muslin to produce folds that add to the texture of her pieces, and so on. The technique is unusual and belongs in a deep sense to her alone. At the same time, of course, Sinocchi maintains a conversation with current art efforts--she hardly hides her head in the sand! Some of the work's beauty has to do with simple shapes repeated in a way that looks to minimalist repetition of form without owing overly much to that insight. Additionally, the artist cares about creating something we can call *deliberately beautiful*--a point of view that is distinctly in the minority now that so much new art is devoted to social commentary and assertion. But Sinocchi's sense of the past, as well as her love of something permanent, both in a historical and visual sense, has made her an art notable--and contemporary--in a time when most everything we see seems transient and oriented toward the surface. She can be congratulated for both her process and its consequential results.

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