

## TARCISIO MERATI

Tarcisio Merati was born on May 27th 1934, in Bonate Sopra, near Bergamo in a very poor family. After elementary school, he attends a professional training school where he excels in technical drawing. In 1959 he is hospitalized for the first time into Bergamo psychiatric hospital with diagnosis of "dissociative identity disorder, schizophrenia"; then he goes back and forth from the asylum where he has been committed till 1984. Merati does not accept his reality of economic and cultural misery, violence, ignorance; he reacts to it choosing a new social role: sometimes he becomes a novelist, some other times a musician, or an important politician or a primary school teacher. The psychiatric hospital is an escape for him, where he discovers painting. He attends the design studio all day long producing a great amount of work, often repeating the same subject on and on. In 1984 his sister decides to take him back home and every time I was going to visit him he keeps asking me: "When can I go back to the castelletto/small castle?". With the introduction of 180 law it is not possible for him to go back in the psychiatric hospital. In 1990 we find the solution to take him in a retirement home near the psychiatric hospital. In this way he can go back and attend the design studio. But his painting activity is going to be slower and slower and with less colours. We became friends. Often I was taking him out and anytime I have been surprised by his refinement and kind attitude towards anybody. Tarcisio dies on October 22nd, 1995 by lung cancer.

by Silvia Pesce Mazzoleni