



**MAX PELLEGRINI (b. 1945)**

**La Regina della Notte e della Luna**

oil on canvas

63 1/4 x 79 in.

160.66 x 200.66 cm

2004-2005

9206

The Queen of the Night drinks water from the clasped hands of faith, while two shepherds embrace each other, unaware of Jesus' birth. Angels, portrayed almost translucently on the canvas, spray holy water and bring about the giving of gifts. A precious jewel is depicted in the right corner, while a humble basket of turkeys sits on the cape of the Madonna. Nearby rests a basket with a goldfinch, an ancient symbol, which is a harbinger of good luck for newborn babies. The baby Jesus, just as the clasped hands that the Queen drinks out of, represents faith – the angels have sprinkled with holy water and he will soon make himself known to the world.

“For me the faith in religion becomes faith in painting and will defeat the giants.” – Max Pellegrini, July 2015, in conversation with Curator Chip Tom

Max Pellegrini's paintings are a flashback in classic and pop culture — a trip in time with poignant narratives embedded in symbolic references. For the better part of 50 years, the Turin-based artist has used photography and painting — and a visual vocabulary of trippy landscapes, beautiful people, and meaningful symbols — to compose his stories. Pellegrini's work embodies the culture of the 20th century, drawing on the ideas of the Masters and giving them new context and relevance. His psychedelic works often reference music, literature, fashion, and iconography. With his dynamic style of layering and superimposing image fragments over the background, narrative clues surface and then seem to disappear. The artist has said his way of painting springs from an earthly attempt to attain something transcendental.

Born in 1945, Pellegrini attended the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti and was professor of urban sociology at the Polytechnic University of Turin. He mounted his first solo exhibition in 1966 at Il Punto gallery in Turin, where his paintings depicted urban landscapes, cars, and the city. A year later, beautiful young women populated his canvases, reflecting the experimental counterculture but ever mindful of literature and art history, particularly 18th century painting and the early work of Caravaggio. Pellegrini is an independent, exerting a distinctive style of figuration that is almost surreal performance art in its execution. Ultimately, his paintings assert a conceptual way of thinking—assembling relevant elements as one might in Adobe Photoshop, and composing images that might be personal in conception but almost universal in experience and meaning.

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La regina della <sup>luna</sup> notte: l'alba e il giorno, la <sup>(nella pittura)</sup> fede sempre <sup>per</sup> i giganti.  
2006-2005 Max Pellegrini <sup>(partorì)</sup> l'arrivo degli  
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