



MAX PELLEGRINI (b. 1945)

Gli Amanti che si amano non ci Sono per Nessuno

Signed lower left, "Max Pellegrini and dated lower right, "2012"

oil on canvas

59 1/4 x 78 3/4 x 1 in.

2011-2012

9207

A young man and woman embrace one another, a woman holds a child, a sleeping baby holds a black and red thread, another young woman undresses, and an angel spreads its wings in this collage like composition. Together, these characters create a narrative in which young love, fate, and life are intertwined: the sleeping baby holds a red thread and black thread, reminiscent of the mythological three Fates, who spun life and death on their loom. These threads are physically connected to the young lovers, who embrace each other, wholly unaware of the hold that the infant has on them. A woman holding a child watches over the love of the youthful boy and girl, just as Mary and Jesus watch over and defend mankind. The merging of narratives and symbols is a common element in Pellegrini's oeuvre, and is masterfully expressed here.

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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Max Pellegini















