



From musical star to portrait Oscar

Multi-talent Massimiliano Pironti nominated

London. Massimiliano Pironti (36) from the Stuttgart area is one of two artists living in Germany among the 48 finalists of the "BP PORTRAIT AWARD 2018". Artists from 88 countries submitted 2,667 paintings making it the most important competition of its kind. Therefore it is also referred to as the "Oscar of portrait painting". Starting in June, the works of the finalists are going to be published in the *National Portrait Gallery, London* (NPG). The best participants can look forward to cash prizes of 66,000 pounds.

"*A throne in the West*" is the title of Pironti's hyperrealistic painting in oil on aluminium. It illustrates Bathoni Puplampu, a dancer the artist met at a joint musical commitment. She lives in London for the sake of dancing while her parents went back to Ghana. "I wanted to capture her inner conflict with this melancholic portrait", Pironti says. This year's BP Portrait Award is the 39th edition of the event. The exhibition in the NPG will be open to the public from 14th of June until 23rd of September. Afterwards, the special exhibition will go on tour until June 2019. With around 3,000 visitors per day, the NPG is among the 20 most-visited museums worldwide.

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Celebrated musical star

To a broad audience Pironti is well-known as a musical star. He held the role of "Terk", the best friend of TARZAN, in the Disney-musical of the same name. In this role he was the darling of the audience in Stuttgart and Oberhausen. Other musicals where Pironti was on stage as protagonist or co-protagonist are PETER PAN, CATS, FLASHDANCE, SISTER ACT (with Goldberg as co-producer) and SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER. For his performances in the 2008-09 theatre season he was awarded Italy's "Sandro Massimini" price for best performance in a starring role by the International Operetta Association.

Early love for painting

Despite his intensive dedication on and behind the stage as an actor, instructor, choreographer and producer of his own modern dance production "Collezione Privata" painting has always been his secret passion. "I began drawing when I was three years old. But my love of painting and the Italian masters – especially *Botticelli* and *Leonardo* at first, and later *Michelangelo* and *Raphael* later on – I discovered in my first year at primary school, when I browsed through my first-grade religion book, which was illustrated with Renaissance paintings", remembers Pironti. From this moment on he began to copy the most famous works of Renaissance as accurate as possible. By imitating the masters the autodidact taught himself the oil painting techniques.

In demand as a painter at a young age

When he was 21 Pironti received his first major commissioned work: a self-designed, life-sized Supper at Emmaus for the *San Rocco* parish church in *Gavignano*, a small medieval town close to Rome. More orders by the church followed, such as the pilgrimage banner of the pilgrimage church *Santa Maria delle Grazie, Gavignano* and – as a very important order – the official portrait of *Carlos Azpiroz Costa, O.P.*, the master of the Dominican Order from 2001 to 2010. The work is part of the permanent collection at the museum of the *Basilika Santa Sabina* in Rome, where it is exhibited in the *Gallery of the Successors of the Holy Dominicus*. (More information can be found in the art history anthology *Il convento di Santa Sabina all'Aventino e il suo patrimonio storico-artistico e architettonico*, Rome, 2017. Publisher: *Campisano*). In addition, he accepted many private commissions and further developed in the style of hyperrealism.

You can download **pictures and a CV** here:

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Further questions:

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