

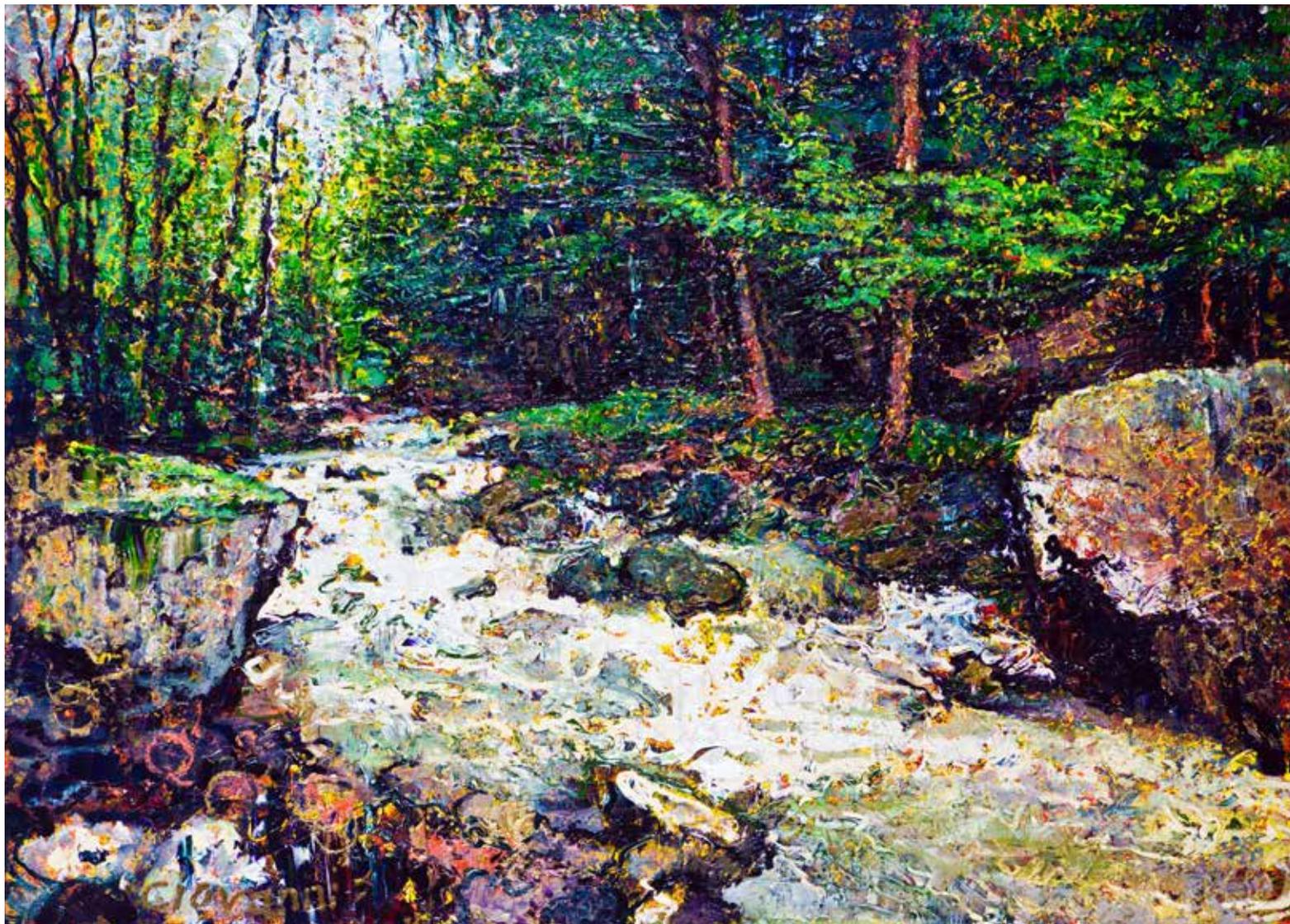


GIOVANNI DECUNTO

GLOBAL EXPRESSIONISM

Boston artist Giovanni DeCunto, a former beneficiary of the Fellowship for Renaissance Study at Padua, Italy, is best known for his stunning portrait of late 90's icons such as Gianni Versace, Robert DeNiro, JFK Jr, and others. On 2nd November during NBAA, and as a run-up to his Art Basel-Miami exhibit, in December, DeCunto will display his broad mastery of drawing and painting on canvas. The live in-situ performance will take place during Altitudes' First Epicurean Rendez-vous in Orlando, at the Ember Lounge venue.

By Sylvie Péron

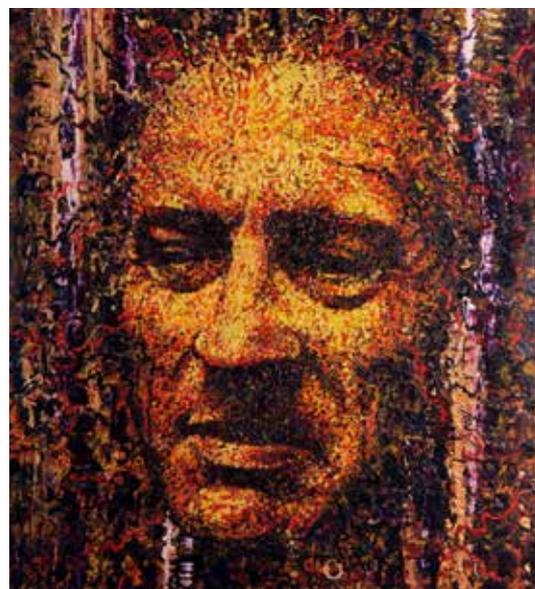


“**M**y paintings are my palette for chaos and order to collide,” explains DeCunto. “I take the high art and the low art, which is commonplace, and let them battle it out on the canvas. The contemporary issues confronted in the work provoke a response, both emotional and intellectual, and symbolize the struggle towards birth that our society now faces.”

Painting, to me, is the great equalizer. I paint for humanity. I call to arms; the eternal spirit of man, the builder, the organizer and the evolutionary spirit that creates civilizations. I am speaking of that common, human thread that the great thinkers of the past continue to teach us; the common link which triumphs over adversity, poverty and injustice.”



Robert DeNiro
Acrylic on canvas
74x60
\$60,000





GRIT AND DETERMINATION

Driven to paint, Giovanni DeCunto knew at the young age of seven that he would be an artist of such strength and talent that the world would know him.

A turbulent childhood, set in the tough streets of Lawrence, Massachusetts, did not interfere with his ambitions. Living on his own in an abandoned building during his teen years, attending school, and working full-time, Giovanni's grit and determination enabled him to graduate from high school and pursue his dream of attending art school. Upon graduating, he received two art scholarships, the first was to study commercial art at the Vesper George School of Art, and the second was to study fine arts at the Art Institute of Boston.

After a year, the young artist left the Institute and set up his own studio on Boylston Street, marketing his paintings and fine-tuning his techniques. In 1984, he was offered a full four-year scholarship to Boston University's School of Fine and Applied Arts. After completing BU and turning down Ox-

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↑
Clockwise from top left:
Bohemian Muse (2013)
40 x 40
Acrylic on canvas
\$12,000

Chaos in Irak (Sold)

A new meeting place:
YouTube 108 x 96
\$42,000

ford, he accepted an International Fellowship for Renaissance Study at the University of Padua in Italy, a mecca for the Classic masters. He began to receive significant recognition during this time.

‘SPIRIT OF AMERICA’

By the early 90's, DeCunto's robust mode of expression attempted to redefine classical genre by merging impressionism, expressionism and other significant movements. When commissioned by the GOP in 1992 to create a centerpiece entitled

'The Spirit of America' for the Republican National Convention, he had already established a relationship with Rex Scouten, Curator of the White House, who introduced him to Very Special Arts in Washington, DC. DeCunto was among six artists chosen for the two-year world tour: 'An American Collection.' This tour brought his paintings into permanent collections such as The University of Kentucky, The Reusch Collection in Zurich, Switzerland, and The Monarch Club. In 1997, he exhibited at the EUNO Royal Museum in Japan commensurate with a retrospective of Jackson Pollock and Robert Mapplethorpe.

POP ICONS

A keen observer of the current culture, DeCunto began painting icons in the late 90's such as Gianni Versace, Michael Jordan, Robert DeNiro, Frank Sinatra, JFK Jr. and others. Prominent collectors continue to procure his work and establish his reputation: Reebok World Headquarters, Children's Hospital Boston, Scutter, Clark and Stevens, and Ropes and Grey are among this discerning group. DeCunto's work was featured on a two-hour, prime time 'Survivor' CBS special, with the cameras rolling in to capture the artist in his studio where he created the painting 'Sweet Victory,' an inspirational piece of the Boston Red Sox winning the World Series. The piece was bought by one of the stars of the show and presented to her fiancée in front of millions of viewers. A few years ago, *Altitudes* featured an article in which Hervé Chandès, Director of the Cartier Foundation in Paris, elegantly articulated his impression of the artist: "His work is stunning, both in its critical dimension towards contemporary society as well as in the aesthetics he develops."

THREE STAGE APPROACH

DeCunto's work features hints of classical, cubist, and pop techniques all imbued with a strong sense of catharsis. His paint is applied not by using a brush as a tool, but rather directly from the tubes in thick, textured layers and bold, dynamic colors. The result is the artist's unique expressionist style. He executes this style with a novel, three-stage approach: visualization, integration, and expression.

During visualization, DeCunto forms a solid, monochromatic design consisting of a classical, abstract, figurative, or human subject. Like a composite memory, this stage utilizes sensory perceptions, interpretations, and personal experience to build an image. This stage is sometimes, but not always, combined with direct visual perception of the subject matter. Integration, the second stage,



Abstract Saphire
(2014)
Acrylic on canvas
48 x 48
\$12,000

brings the addition of a second layer of paint. This layer both interferes with and enhances the preexisting composition. Often, the paint added during the integration stage is an alternative interpretation (in color, form, or design) of the themes or images already rendered. This layer is heavily influenced by DeCunto's own subconscious perceptions of the subject matter.

In the expression phase, DeCunto injects an emotional charge into the work by embellishing certain elements of color or texture. The intent is to capture the audience's attention, force it to penetrate the painting and invite it to participate in the emotional experience as well as the visual one. The work is finished when it no longer yields to change, thereby alienating the viewer.

PRESTIGIOUS ART COLLECTIONS

Giovanni DeCunto's paintings have been included in some of the most prestigious art collections in the United States, Europe and Japan. Over the course of his life, this classically trained artist has developed his own incarnation of pop expressionism, exploring the faces and events of modern, global culture. The physical and emotional reaction to DeCunto's work is as powerful as the work itself - vibrant, intense and in all cases, compelling. ■

Boston Red Sox player David Ortiz and DeCunto will sign an original first edition of 34 prints available for purchase at a private event organized by Celebrity Marketing in Boston on 3rd November 2016