

Many years ago, towards the end of the fifties, Gio Ponti would go to his empty studio at seven in the morning and write letters to friends, colleagues, clients and fans, saying hi from America, from New York.

He would then give them to his secretary, who would mail them in envelopes from Italy with a small note saying, 'Gio Ponti from America'.

At the time flying to America on a Constellation, a former World War II bomber with four propeller engines, was a feat; if you flew to America you were 'the one who had been to America'.

I received one of those letters. There was a greeting by Gio Ponti with a quick pen sketch. That drawing was very special: it was neither a description nor a representation and not even a message; it was a sort of pictogram, one of those drawings that preceded the alphabet, but that before and beyond the word's ambiguity, like in a sudden flash, would put you in contact with the emotion of existence 'without referring to any spoken linguistic form'.

Those drawings spoke without words about friendship between men and women, men and men; they talked about company, nostalgia, trust, hope, truth or falsehood, and serenity or turbulence. Lisa, Gio Ponti's beloved daughter, fulfilled her father's legacy; not the technical legacy as much as the basic one, the more internal one, in other words, the overall courageous behavior towards existence, which is able to scrape the crusts of nonsense off everyday life, and to always restore clear and perplexed eyes.

Lisa's drawings as well appear to me more as pictograms than – as they say – messages; I see them more as appearances and epiphanies, than actual declarations.

Lisa has added some titles to her drawings, I do not know whether it is to help herself or to help others or to show other epiphanies within the pictograms. Anything is possible.

It is always exciting, and heartening to meet someone who is still capable of keeping clear and perplexed eyes during the course of life.

Ettore Sottsass, 2005

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