

VareseNews

Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, living for ar

Pubblicato: Lunedì 24 Maggio 2021

Anyone who enters **Villa Panza in Varese** is surrounded by the works, the art and the spirit of the man who dedicated his entire life, together with his beloved wife, to the search for inspiration and reflection on himself, on the world and on existence.

For over 50 years, Giuseppe Panza, who died on 24 April 2010, found in the works of artists who lived in far away America the profound sense and aesthetic vision he was looking for. **A collection is also a personal story**, which is created little by little, which changes as the person, time and life's encounters change.

Giuseppe Panza di Biumo, wrote, **“The relationships I’ve had with art and artists during my life have been rather unusual and unlikely to be repeated.”** He was born in Milan, to a rich family; he chose to study law, but his first trip to the United States, from New York to Los Angeles in 1954, was to change his life completely and shape his aesthetic taste.



He began collecting art immediately, with an idealistic aesthetic vision and a preference for abstract and minimalist works. He discovered the work of Dan Flavin and became one of his main collectors. He met him personally, invited him to his home in Varese and commissioned the environmental works that today can be admired on the first floor of the villa.

After Flavin, there were other leading artists, such as **James Turrel, Robert Morris, Donald Judd,**

Bruce Nauman, Richard Serra and Joseph Kosuth. As with many of the artists in his collection, Giuseppe Panza met them personally; with them, he discussed, talked and debated, to the point of reaching a deep understanding of the man and the work.

The collection presents three main areas of investigation. The first nucleus ranges from European Informal Art to Pop Art, with works by Franz Kline, Mark Rothko and Robert Rauschenberg, among others. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, he favoured minimal, conceptual and environmental art, and purchased the works of Dan Flavin, Robert Morris and Bruce Nauman. In the last twenty years, however, he devoted himself to organic art, the art of small objects and monochrome art, with works by Martin Puryear, Christiane Loehr and Peter Shelton.

In recent years, **Villa Panza, which was donated to the Italian National Trust** in 1996, has welcomed visitors from all over the world, turning Giuseppe Panza di Biumo's dream of sharing art into reality. On the twentieth anniversary of the donation of the villa and the collection, the Italian National Trust has organised a complete exhibition of the permanent collection, following the museological criteria indicated by the collector. This is a unique opportunity to surround yourself with the poetics and vision of the great collector.

Translated by Andrei Aldea, Elisa Cairone and Elisabetta Ciocca

Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook