



ENAMELS BY PAOLO DE POLI

PROFESSOR CAMILLO SEMENZATO,  
OF THE PADUA UNIVERSITY, SAYS:

*De Poli's cups are like magic mirrors, held by the hands of a Fairy.*

*In his cups there run thick mellow waters, swaying in the gentle breathing of the sea, revealing the mysteries of ocean bottoms, and unknown corners in the darkness of the night.*

*They bear the gentle fading of a rainbow, spreading away in the blue of the sky . . . dancing clouds, and mounting shadows; crests of flowers . . . and quivering wings; the serenity of the sky in the country . . . a taste of straw, the pink of Spring . . . a rustic world — happy and peaceful.*

*De Poli is like a sorcerer stealing the secrets of the fire: sunbeams and gleaming Autumn leaves . . . gold-lace embroideries of colours and lights running on the sand, crawling through the rocks in the dazzling vastness of the skies.*

*Goldfish wriggle and frisk in De Poli's plates and flashing stars fall from Heaven; then . . . the steaming darkness of Hell, and bottomless wells opening out into blue glooms. . . . The perfection of a sealed silence.*

*His works are precious and simple, endlessly rich and yet so generous, like the things of the earth, the sea, the sky, the sun . . . the yielding richness of a sunny day, of a shining morning.*

*Camillo Semenzato*

PAOLO DE POLI

Paolo De Poli lives in Padua, where he was born in 1905. In this same city he studied drawing at the School of Applied Art, and learned the technique of metal embossing and chiseling under the guide of Master Ghiretti.

From 1925 to 1928 he was in Verona, studying drawing and painting with Master Guido Trentini.

Between 1925 and 1933 he participated in numerous painting exhibitions such as: the XV International Exhibition of Modern Art in Venice; the 1925, 1927 and 1929 editions of the Venetian Art Exhibit (Esposizione d'Arte Triveneta), and many others in Milan, Venice, Verona, Turin, Vicenza, Rovigo.

In 1931, while continuing to draw, he resumed his embossing activity and took part in the International Exhibition of Liturgical Art in Padua. The following year he participated in the Biennial Exhibition of Venetian Art and in other exhibits in Venice, Verona and Vicenza.

1934 marks a turning point in De Poli's artistic life. In a relentless search for some more powerful means of expression and animated by a true spirit of innovation, he resolutely engages himself in the difficult art of metal enamelling.

At first he applies his craftsmanship to small objects such as bowls, vases, cups, etc. Then, having acquired a perfect mastership of the difficult process, he enlarges his field of activity to embossed bas-reliefs and panels for furniture. Particularly noteworthy are his wall decorations for both their impressive size and the chromatic perfection of the enamelling.

The originality of his technique sets De Poli as a true innovator in the difficult field of artistic enamelling.

The artist has taken part in the following exhibitions:

INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL ART EXHIBITION in Venice: XIX (1934), XXIII-XXIV-XXV-XXVI-XXVII-XXVIII-XXIX-XXX-XXXI-XXXII and XXXIII (1966);

INTERNATIONAL TRIENNIAL ART EXHIBIT in Milan: VI (1936), VII-VIII-IX-X-XI (with a personal exhibit), XII and XIII (1964).

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITS in New York, Paris and Brussels;

OTHER EXHIBITS in Italy and abroad: Stockholm, Goteborg, Helsinki, Oslo, Berlin, Stuttgart, Munich, London, Liverpool, Nantes, Geneva, Vienna, Sao Paulo, United States, Teheran, Tokyo, Beirut and Cairo.

The artist has held one-man exhibits in the following cities:

Venice, Milan, Novara, Mantua, Padua, Trieste, Merano, Berlin, Paris and Zurich.

On these occasions, not only has he been awarded with high prizes and medals, but he also raised much praise among art critics and members of the press in general.

Speaking of De Poli, Architect Gio' Ponti says: *"If Italy can boast of an art of the enamelling, this is due to De Poli, to his unshakable constancy of purpose, to the example he set with his technique, to the praise and consideration he has been able to raise for himself and his works"*.

De Poli's contribution to the field of technical training is also outstanding. After years and years of hard work, having acquired a perfect mastership of his technique, he set up a school where he patiently instructs some fifty students in the difficult art of metal enamelling. Many of the artists he has thus formed have now followed his example, setting up workshops of their own.

Nor is De Poli less important for the valid contribution he has given to Italian exports. His panels, bowls, vases, etc. are now spread all over the world, from North to South America, from England to Sweden, Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Japan, Lebanon, etc.

De Poli's works also travel by sea, adding to the beauty and refinement of such ships as

"Conte Grande", "Julius Caesar", "Conte Biancamano", "Andrea Doria", "Cristoforo Colombo", "Leonardo da Vinci", "Raffaello", "Michelangelo", and many others.

De Poli has also devoted his activity to the field of liturgical art and his works are now to be found in numerous churches of renown.

Among De Poli's activities we recall:

Since 1944 he has been an active member in many artistic bodies and organizations;

He is on the Advisory Committee of the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade for the promotion and exportation of Italian handicrafts and small industries, and he has taken part in the Meetings of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Trade for the protection of artistic handicraft exports;

He is on the Board of Directors of the Milan Triennial Exhibition, having been appointed directly by the Ministry of Labour to represent the interests of Italian craftsmen;

He was the Italian Delegate at the foundation of the World Crafts Council in New York in 1964;

He took part in the Montreux World Crafts Council (Switzerland) in 1966;

He was the Italian Delegate to the Working Group "Artistic Crafts" at the General Meeting of the International Federation of Handicrafts in Brussels;

He is a founding member of the Italian Center for Artistic Production, an outstanding organization gathering modern artists of undoubted renown;

Since 1956 he has been a member of "Lions" for the district of Padua as a representative of Italian craftsmen;

He is an administrator of the Padua Medican Insurance Commission;

He represents ENAPI at the Provincial Board for Crafts;

He is chairman of the Provincial Union of Craftsmen.



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