

## Stefano Vitale, biographical notes.

*The artist who has made the Sicilian winery's labels unique,  
a story of universal values is staged at Villa Necchi in Milan, with  
the exhibition INSEGUENDO DONNAFUGATA (CHASING DONNAFUGATA).*

Stefano Vitale was born in **Padova** in 1958. When he was young he moved to **Los Angeles** to begin his studies in Economic and Social Sciences. After graduating he gave free rein to his most intimate inclination and enrolled at the Art College of Design in **Pasadena**.

During his years in California, Vitale traveled extensively throughout **Mexico** and **Central America** remaining strongly influenced by the folk art of these places. "I have always trusted folk art more than official art – Vitale explains –. It is absolute sincerity, something that goes directly from the soul to the paper, the stone, the wood; folk art is like the art of a child."



He moved to **New York**, and his career as illustrator really got going, in various fields from publishing to advertising, to packaging; after 15 years, Stefano Vitale returned to Italy, and settled in **Venice**; in the lagoon he "fished" floating pieces of wood and gave them new life, using them as boards on which to paint.

In the meantime, it was 1994, **Vitale encountered Gabriella Anca Rallo**, who together with her husband Giacomo had founded the Donnafugata winery: between them a professional collaboration was born that soon became a bond of deep friendship.

"Gabriella was a guest of one of my neighbors – Vitale recounts – she entered my studio to browse and saw my illustrations; we had just met and she suddenly said to me <Would you create a label for me? Why not try.> Gabriella had courage – Vitale continues – not me. She asked me to **carry the colors of Sicily in the communication of the wine**; they are strong, bright colors, making them was easy: the colors of Sicily are my colors."

Over more than 20 years, Stefano Vitale has created the illustrations for **20 labels** of Donnafugata wines, one for oil and others dedicated to the Donnafugata Music & Wine project and CDs. The latest work created by Vitale for Donnafugata represents the *Giardino Pantesco* (Pantelleria Garden) donated to FAI, symbol of the collaboration between the Sicilian winery and the Foundation, that has led to the exhibition "CHASING DONNAFUGATA".

### **CHASING DONNAFUGATA: Illustrations by Stefano Vitale, wine and Sicily.**

Villa Necchi Campiglio, Via Mozart 14 - Milan - from May 16 to July 22, 2018

The exhibition is included in the tour of the Villa: from Wednesday to Sunday (hours 10 - 18); admission 12 euros.