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Day & Night

The week in arts & entertainment



'Straniero'



'Carta Aggiunta'



'Uomo Biondo'

It's all in the cards

An esoteric tarot card exhibition aims to stimulate the senses

Elena Sorokina
Special to The Moscow News

'Tarot. Alchemy of Damanhur'
Through to Feb. 12
Elena Vrublevskaia Gallery,
19 Rozhdestvensky Bulvar,
621 3586, m. Stretensky Bulvar
Free admission

In the heart of bustling Moscow there's an island of peace and harmony at the Elena Vrublevskaia Gallery, which is hosting an exhibition called "Tarot. Alchemy of Damanhur". The name refers to the Damanhur Federation, an eco-friendly com-

munity located in northern Italy with almost a thousand members living in its Damanhur village, as well as some more followers around the world. It is described as an organisation striving for harmony, sustainable development, equality and respect for all the people.

With a stated mission to promote peaceful community living, the founders and ideologists of Damanhur visited hectic Moscow in November. Their main mission, however, was not winning new followers, but teaching about the unique art and culture of Damanhur. Knowing that the main message of Damanhur is eco-friendliness, peace and equi-

table development through volunteering, respect for the nature, social and political engagements, it's not surprising that the main mood of the exhibition is optimistic and bright yet calm and peaceful.

The exhibition features paintings depicting Damanhur tarot cards – one painting for each card. A regular stack of tarot card has 78 cards, but the Damanhur deck has one more – the "All" card, which symbolises totality, balance, the loneliness of an objective reality and the circle of absolute knowledge. Other cards have regular tarot names such as "Judge", "Tower", "Sun" and "Power".

There are 23 cards shown in the exhibition, organised in such a way that by following the cards from zero to 22, you can trace the life of a human being and then meet "All".

The paintings, designed especially for display in Moscow, were made by Damanhur ideologist Oberto Airaudi, also called "Falco",

The paintings change colours and even mood depending on the lighting

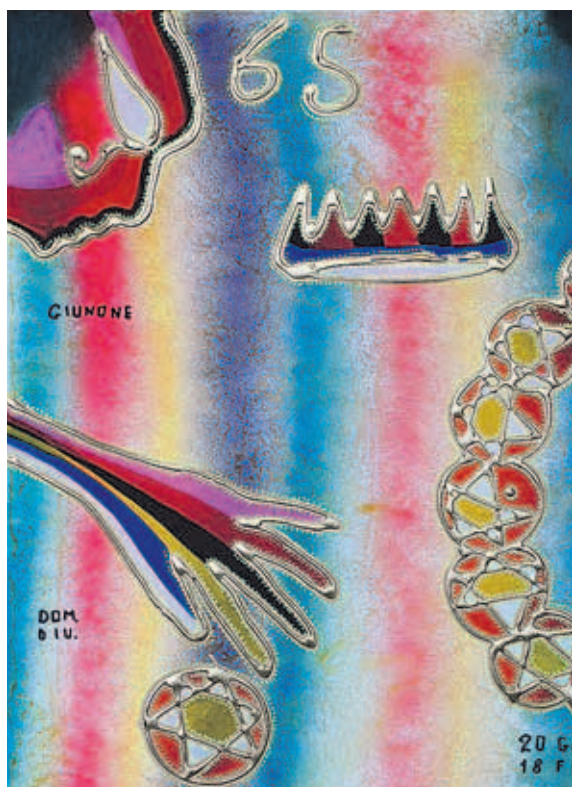
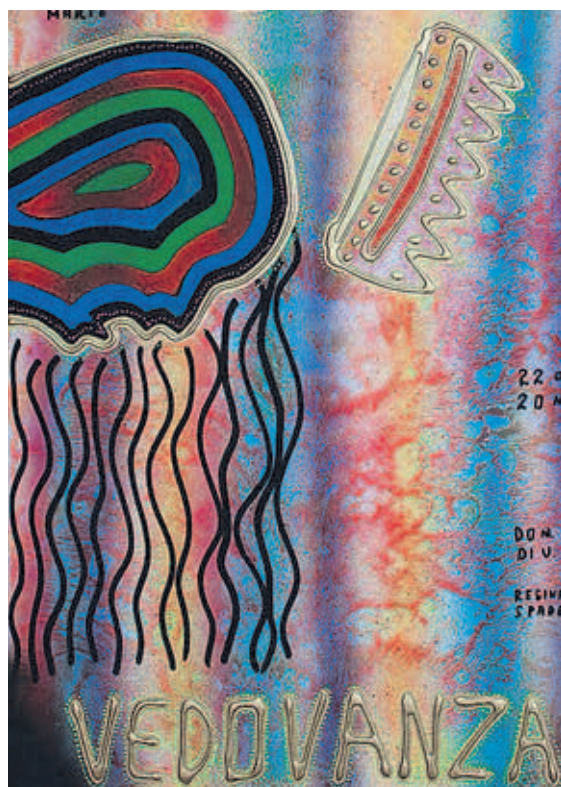
based on the tradition of Damanhurian citizens to adopt animal names. The original technique of painting is called Selfica. The method is based on using such materials as ink, metal, minerals and chemicals. Traces of Selfica can be found in Ancient Greek, Etruscan and Celtic art and it is supposed – as stated by the organisers – to apply to "energy lines, piercing a human body". And the alchemy behind the paintings is quite successful as they change colours and even mood depending on the lighting in the room.

Traditional fuddy-duddies be warned – the paintings aim to stimulate the senses and bring new ideas and dreams to your spiritual life. ■

'Vedovanza' (left), and 'Donna Bruna'



'Il Carro'



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