

arts laboratory
Lab Malamegi Lab

MALAMEGI LAB MILAN'26 - ART PRIZE - CATALOGUE

Edition
Malamegi Lab
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MALAMEGI LAB ART PRIZE



Massimo Toffolo

Massimo is a curator and designer based in Udine, Italy. He's the art director of Malamegi Lab. He's involved, as independent curator, in construction and development of various art projects. In 2009 he co-founded the Aps Moho association, that manages the Malamegi Lab contests since 2014. He has worked for numerous artistic events; as an artist he collaborated with many galleries of contemporary art.



Margherita Jedrzejewska

Margherita is an art historian and curator based between Poland and Italy. In 2009 she founded with Massimo Toffolo the Aps Moho association. She's the main editor of various websites focused on contemporary art.

Malamegi Lab is the creative laboratory of Malamegi company. Through Malamegi Lab it actively supports art and artists.

"MALAMEGI LAB" aims to be a selection of high-quality artworks with a contemporary visual impact. The competition's aim is to promote the enrolled artist, giving them chance to join the international market of contemporary art.

This aim will be pursued by taking advantage of the opportunities that the contest offers:

MALAMEGI'S NEW COLLECTION

Malamegi is raffling the creation of a new works collection through the selection of one artist among 12 finalists of the contest. The collaboration will enable the artist to develop an entire collection of his works which will be advertised and presented to all buyers of the commercial network.

ARTWORK ACQUISITION AWARD

Malamegi Lab will acquire one among 12 final artworks. This artwork will become part of the Malamegi Lab's private collection. The award has a maximum purchase value of € 2000,00. Artworks not for sale or with a price higher than the acquisition prize will not participate in this prize. These artworks will still be able to win one of the other prizes.

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION

12 artists will be selected for the final exhibition of the competition. The exhibition opening will be accompanied by the general catalogue, distributed throughout the exhibition period. Invitations to vernissage will be sent to artists, curators, critics, journalists and media of the hosting city.

CASH PRIZE

At the end of the collective exhibition, to an artist among the 12 selected will be awarded a cash prize of € 1000,00. The award will be given based on the quality and originality of the work on display. The winning work will remain property of the artist. The prize is a contribution to the development of art and artist's aesthetic research.

MONOGRAPHIC CATALOGUE

A monographic book will be dedicated to one of the finalists. The monography will be curated by Malamegi Lab with the support of final exhibition's curators. The book will be edited, developed, printed and distributed at Malamegi Lab expenses. Apart the copies in distribution, another ones will be added for the artist's personal use. The distribution of monographs will be curated by Malamegi on behalf of its best customers and collectors.

CMC - Centro Culturale di Milano



CMC - CENTRO CULTURALE MILANO
Largo Corsia dei Servi, 4, 20122 Milano - Italy
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Tel: +39 02 86455162

The Centro Culturale di Milano (Cultural Center of Milan) was founded in 1981.

A group of students and young scholars of University of Milan took seriously a desire and a proposal of don Luigi Giussani (who followed the Center's work till his last years): "to embrace the world, discovering the beauty and the strain of the human experience in its research of the truth and to live through the passion for man originated by the Christian faith, showing to everyone the pertinence of Faith with Life". At the beginning the Center's name was "San Carlo" and the location was in Corso Matteotti. The Eighties were marked by the meeting with Giovanni Testori and Augusto del Noce. Straight after important artists, men of science, philosophers, writers from Italy and abroad have compared their experience with such cultural novelty. The beginning was also signed by the stream of dissidents from Soviet Union and Eastern Countries through the association Russia Cristiana and by the close relation with Meeting of Rimini "for the friendship among peoples".

At the beginning of Nineties – while Milan stopped under the coups of justicialism – the Center changed both the name in "Centro Culturale di Milano (Cultural Center of Milan) and the location too, moving in Zebedea Street, n° 2, an ancient place in the historical center of Milan, near Milan Cathedral, mentioned by Maggi, where – as to the historical literature's writer Dante Isella – the intellectual circles used to meet at the end of Eighteenth century. The Centro Culturale di Milano enlarges its boundaries: persons, groups from all over the world that recognize one another for their common desire and research of the truth and thanks to internet put themselves in touch passing through Milan. So it begins the study and the attention to life and to Milan restarting; the School of Creative Writing "Flannery O' Connor" starts off with Luca Doninelli and Giorgio Pontiggia and moreover the Home of Poetry, the systematic meeting with the Jewish world, the prophetic knowledge of Islam and the islamic question, the historicity of the Gospels and of the Christian documents, the exhibitions and the Exercise Books of Photography, the dialogue with the Italian and European laymen, the partnership with Milanese institutions, universities, editing houses, theaters, and together with the Italian Cultural Centers Association the coordination with more than 70 Cultural Centers. So it unwinds the original research and meeting, but always remaining ourselves, between the grown-ups "knowing how to speak" and the young people "knowing how to listen to". The Center becomes meeting point of personalities becoming after members of the Center and stage for lectures deeply leaving their mark on our time: from Hans von Balthasar, Emmanuel Levinas, Czeslaw Milosz, John Eccles, Andrej Tarkowskij, Chaim Potok, Antony Burgess, Federico Zeri, Mario Luzi to David Grossman, from Alain Finkielkraut, Jean Clair, Joel Meyerowitz, John Polkinghorne, Ugo Amaldi, Carlo Rubbia, John Barrow, Paul Davies, Laurent Lafforgue, Remi Braque, Joseph Weiler, Aharon Appelfed, Samir Khalil, Riccardo Muti to Rami Bahrami and more than 2500 Italian and international authors, writers, lecturers.

The simple and passionate work of young students and professional men and women devoting free part of their time and life, not only but also the cooperation and the network of associations, magazines and institutions (i.e. Euresis, Admira, Medicine and Person, Foundation for Subsidiarity, Trails of Cinema, Theater "Fontana"): this is the peculiarity and the strength of the Center's life.



CULTURE CAN ONLY BE ORIGINATED BY PASSION FOR LIFE

And passion for life is that cognitive and affective emphasis emerging from a definite idea of existence and from a definite judgement on life value. From this the Centro Culturale di Milano starts again every time in order to know, to meet and to stir up everyone who desires to look at the reality in such a way. It's not only learning's capacity. It's rather the result of a full awareness of the fondness of the experience we are living inside such reality and inside the history. And this is more perceived today, owing to the great uncertainty and confusion we have to notice constantly. It seems that only the category of impossibility – the one that admits only the end and the mere nothing of things, the uselessness of reality – finds citizenship.

The culture, in fact, is a showcase of abstract and evasive ideas and concepts considered as diversions, that hold in no esteem the whole horizon that marks the human heart and that are not up to the hope for which such heart calls. Our presence in the cultural life has a different facet, able of enthusiasm. We have to recognize, on the contrary, that the dominant mentality is hostile to the assertion of a cultural position, when this one expresses itself as a critical and systematic experience of the whole reality; to the catholic culture it's at most conceded a certain benevolence towards spiritualism, till it is hanging in an abstract dimension. But such benevolence can provoke great misunderstandings: we cannot be silent on the fact that, sometimes the catholic culture has, perhaps unconsciously, favored a compromising relation with the secularist culture. The rabbi of Jerusalem, David Rosen, during the Meeting of Rimini has clearly declared that any truthful dialogue is possible only if the conversation partners start from the conscience of the differences of their ideal positions. The careful look to the Christian experience and the awareness of the difference and non-involvement of our place make paradoxically more powerful the meeting and the appreciation of the other, without feeling anybody as an enemy, but in relation with everyone as testified by the numerous relationships, meetings, cooperations happened during the various Center's activities.

SELECTED ARTISTS

- 12 - Alejandra Oliva Oliveros
& Manuel Daniel Lugo Rodríguez - Italy
- 18 - Brigitta Tenkes - Hungary
- 24 - Brigitte Puschmann - Germany
- 30 - Jorgelina Alessandrelli - Italy
- 36 - Kenji Kiyama - Japan
- 42 - Lani Westerman - Australia
- 48 - Manuela Caniato - Belgium
- 54 - Michelle Yasmine Noor Zarro - Italy
- 60 - Nicola Pellizzaro - Italy
- 66 - Nives Roem - France
- 72 - Pietro Giromini - Italy
- 78 - Rainer Fleischer - Germany
- 84 - Shu Chen - Italy
- 90 - Stacy Weddle - United States
- 96 - Wojciech Kwiatkowski - Poland
- 102 - Zixiang Zhang - United Kingdom



Alejandra Oliva Oliveros &
Manuel Daniel Lugo
Rodríguez
Italy

ALEJANDRA OLIVA OLIVEROS &
MANUEL DANIEL LUGO RODRÍGUEZ



L'ISOLA E IL MOLO
Oil on canvas
150x100 cm
2025

ALEJANDRA OLIVA OLIVEROS & MANUEL DANIEL LUGO RODRÍGUEZ

L'ISOLA E IL MOLO

“L'isola e il molo” is a compelling work that explores the complex psychological dimension of diaspora and displacement. Through a meticulous and layered oil painting technique, the artistic duo portrays a symbolic dichotomy between the homeland and the place of arrival. The naked female figure, contracted in a pose that evokes both vulnerability and resistance, becomes the very embodiment of the island: a body-territory that bears the weight of memory and separation.

The narrative heart of the work lies in the dreamlike metamorphosis of the face, which dissolves into a flock of birds in flight. This dynamic element represents the fragmentation of the migrant identity and the chaotic nature of departure, where the desire for freedom clashes with the pain of detachment. The pier is evoked as a liminal and subjective space, marking the boundary between the past and a future yet to be deciphered. By integrating into the theme of vision and subconscious, the work does not describe a physical event, but rather a state of the soul: the perpetual tension of those inhabiting the suspended space between two worlds.



Alejandra Oliva Oliveros & Manuel Daniel Lugo Rodríguez
(Artistic Duo)

Alejandra Oliva Oliveros and Manuel Daniel Lugo Rodríguez (Havana, 1989) are a Cuban artistic duo whose practice blends avant-garde pictorial research with profound technical expertise in the restoration of cultural heritage. Both trained at the prestigious “San Alejandro” National Academy of Fine Arts, graduating in 2008 with gold medals and the title of Valedictorian. Their academic journey continued at the ISA (University of the Arts) in Havana: Alejandra earned a Master’s Degree in Visual Arts (Valedictorian), while Manuel graduated with honors in the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property.

The duo boasts an international profile developed through prominent academic exchanges, including those at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm and the Cardinal Wiseman High School in London. Their artistic synergy combines Alejandra’s experience within the 4ta Pragmática collective (led by René Francisco Rodríguez) with Manuel’s high-level specialization, having previously served as a restorer for the National Museum of Decorative Arts in Cuba.

Winners of the First Prize at the XXV “Leopoldo Romañach” National Landscape Salon and recently awarded a Special Mention at the 2026 Brera Prize in Milan, they have exhibited in significant venues such as the Havana Biennial, Palazzo Ca’ Zenobio in Venice, and ArtFest Miami. Their work has been featured in specialized publications including Cuba Plus Latinos. Through a technical virtuosity that draws from both oil painting and restoration methodologies, the duo explores themes of fragmented memory, fragility, and diaspora. They currently live and work in Italy.

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Brigitta Tenkes
Hungary

BRIGITTA TENKES



ICELAND
Acrylic on stretched canvas-framed
40x60 cm
2024

BRIGITTA TENKES

ICELAND

The painting titled Iceland brings a cool yet emotionally charged world closer to the viewer. Shades of light blue, white, and deep blue, along with greyish tones, evoke the colors of drifting ice floes, capturing the constant movement of ice and water, as if a distant, untouched landscape were breathing across the surface of the canvas.

The aim of the painting is to bring nature—this pure yet fragile world—into the living space. A fragment of Iceland enters everyday life: the sensation of cold air, silence, and an endless horizon. The presence of the artwork invites the viewer to pause for a moment and reconnect with the natural world from which modern life increasingly distances us.

The slowly drifting, fragmented ice floes symbolize the changing world. They allude to extreme weather and the passage of time, but my intention is also to draw attention to the gradual disappearance of old values—balance, silence, and morality—from the world. What once seemed solid and permanent has now become fragile.

This painting is both a warning and an invitation: it reminds us of what we are losing, while offering the possibility to preserve a fragment of nature and make space for it within ourselves.



I'm Brigitta Tenkes. I live in Hungary, Budapest. I paint on stretched canvas with acrylic technique based on my own ideas, but I am also happy to work on individual requests.

I have been fascinated by art and creation since I was a child. I've always been attracted to create something that can cause joy for someone else.

I believe the space around us fundamentally influences our mood and well-being. I feel that when we are surrounded by unique creations that are tailored to our own needs, it builds a warmer, friendlier atmosphere, both at home and at work. This is the effect I strive to achieve with my work.

For me, painting is an exciting discovery in which the image is formed by itself during its creation creating a completely unexpected end result. I chose the abstract technique because in my opinion it shows everyone something completely different. I mostly draw inspiration from nature. In my work, I use the flowing technique, which helps to achieve an effect as close to nature as possible.

Appearances, exhibitions:
Dávid Galéria-Budapest, Brussels
Reborn-Budapest
KreativRaum-Vienna
ArtSpace Innovations-Times Square
Blue Brussels
Boomer Gallery-London-London
Effetto Arte-Washington
Arte Borgo Gallery-Rome
International Prize Milan-Leonardo da Vinci
Itsliquid Group- Venice Art Fair
M.A.D.S. Art Gallery-digital exhibition
Golden Harmony Magazin
S/alon Budapest-2022 apartment trend exhibition
Octogon Deco-Magazine
Elle Decorationa-summer issue
Brighton-Talented Art Fair
Atrsy
The Gallery Steiner-Wienna
Redwood Art -Artexpo- New York-online
Helida Immobilien -Vienna
Spektrum Home-TV
Art & Antique-Budapest
Dr. Rose-Private Hospital
Fine Arts Capital Gallery
Hilton Hotel-Budapest
Pintér Gallery
Pintér Gallery- Auction- Balatonfüred
Vaszary Gallery



Brigitte Puschmann
Germany

BRIGITTE PUSCHMANN



TRANSFORMATION 26-55045

Acrylic, Pigments on Canvas
80x80x3 cm
2026

BRIGITTE PUSCHMANN

TRANSFORMATION 26-55045

The painting Transformation presents a dynamic interplay of sweeping gestures and layered textures, where soft, diffused forms collide with sharper, linear elements. A muted palette of greys, blacks, and earthy tones is punctuated by pale yellow areas that create both tension and spatial openness. The composition feels in constant motion, as if forms are dissolving and reassembling across the surface.

Puschmann's artistic oeuvre is characterized by a strong formal discipline, which she deliberately disrupts. Lines appear to break free, colors communicate across layers, and geometric order enters into the dialogue with amorphous forms. Her work is not concerned with the mere deconstruction of form, but rather with its further development and transformation arising from both material and conceptual depth. The work Transformation possesses an almost architectural clarity, yet this is interrupted by intuitive, seemingly chaotic interventions. It visualizes disruption and movement across multiple pictorial spaces as key elements of transformation. Overall, her practice unfolds within a tension between controlled structure and free artistic gesture, particularly in her engagement with the line. In her current work, lines increasingly dissolve into fields of color while still retaining a trace of their origin, and she plays with the push-pull effect of color and the deliberate placement of forms to create a shared spatial experience with the viewer.



Brigitte Puschmann (b. 1969, Munich, Germany) is a contemporary artist working between Germany and Austria. Her practice explores transformation, layered realities, and the dynamic interplay of color, form, and perception. Before fully dedicating herself to art, Puschmann built a career in business, where she focused extensively on processes of transformation, particularly within large organizations. This experience continues to inform her artistic research, which investigates change as a fundamental principle shaping both human perception and the structures of reality.

Alongside her professional career, she trained also in interior design at Rhodoc International College (UK) and studied painting at the International Summer Academy of Fine Arts Salzburg. Since 2024, she has devoted herself entirely to her artistic practice. Puschmann completed her diploma in Drawing and Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kolbermoor under Prof. Markus Lüpertz, where she continues as a master student to explore painting as a system of relations rather than representation.

Her work ranges from large-scale acrylic paintings to modular wall pieces and sculptural installations, often incorporating interactive or combinatory elements. Her works have been presented in galleries, art associations, and international art fairs, including a solo exhibition at Samuelis Baumgarte Gallery, Bielefeld, and exhibitions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. Her work is part of the Copelouzos Family Art Museum collection in Athens. She received multiple nominations and awards.

Brigitte Puschmann: The art of transformation and complex reality
I develop my paintings through modular, serial structures built on repetition and variation. While these works are grounded in clear systems, they are not about creating fixed order, but about generating a sense of visual instability and movement. By shifting color fields, linear elements, and rhythmic sequences, I create spaces that change depending on light, perspective, and the viewer's position. Perception is not something static in my work — it unfolds over time and through experience. I'm particularly interested in the tension between control and openness. The systems I use are precise, yet their outcomes remain fluid and cannot be fully fixed. Each work responds to its environment and to the presence of the viewer. My practice sits between painting and installation. Series such as Stripes and Infinity are conceived as open systems — they can be extended, rearranged, and reinterpreted, rather than existing as closed, final compositions. At its core, my work explores how visual order is constructed — and how it can be subtly unsettled or redefined.

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Jorgelina Alessandrelli
Italy



THE MANTLE OF THE EARTH

Layering of fabrics hand-sewn and embroidery on wood structure. Wool, brocade, silk thread, cords, and beads.
70x100 cm
2024

JORGELINA ALESSANDRELLI

THE MANTLE OF THE EARTH

A vertical, textile sculpture, inspired by the topographical transformations of the Earth and by its changing structure, which is continuously mutating and regenerating. The continuous and undulating folds, richly filling space with texture, allude to the dynamic stratifications that make up the depths of Earth's mantle. These stratifications behave like a materialized underground river, populated by the precious mineral resources that come from the planet's nucleus. A sort of geological grammar, pulsating with energy and movement.



Jorgelina Alessandrelli is an Argentine-Italian artist who lives and works in Monza. In 1995, she earned a degree in Fine Arts from the Universidad Nacional de Rosario, Argentina. Her installation and thesis, "Tuyo el poder y la Gloria," was selected for the "Arte sin Disciplina" exhibition at the Castagnino Museum in Rosario, Argentina. Her art reflects profoundly on nature—its exuberance, grace, complexity, and chaos—and investigates human existence as part of it, fundamentally exploring concepts of mutation, fragility, and balance.

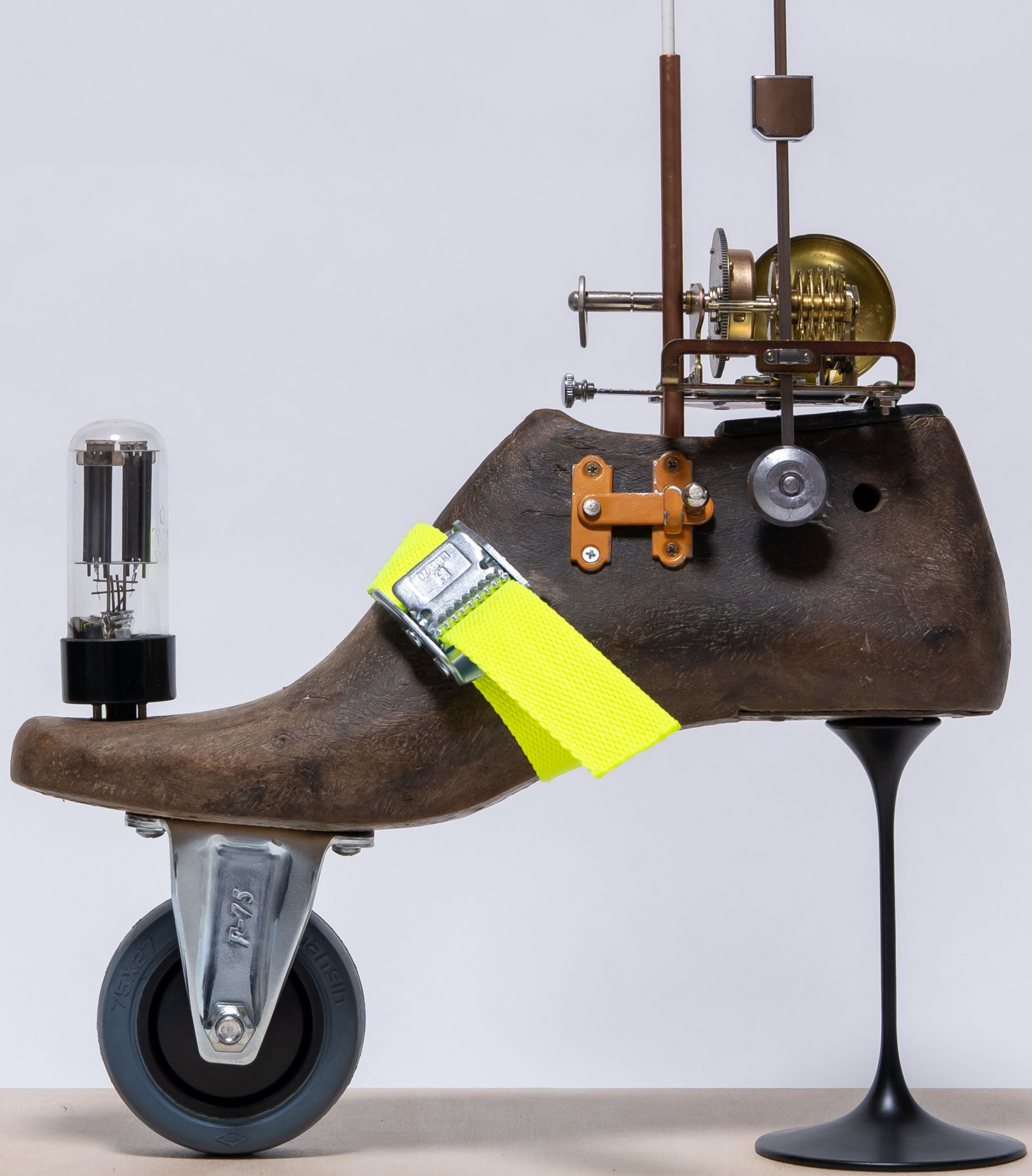
She has participated in numerous exhibitions and art competitions in Argentina, Brazil, the United States, and Italy. Recent participations include the International Glass and Textile Art Salon at the MAPI Museum of Pre-Columbian and Indigenous Art in Uruguay, the International Textile Art Biennial "The Four Elements" (WTA) in Miami, USA, and "Naturales Quaestiones" at CasermArcheologica in Sansepolcro, Italy.

In 2024, the International Biennial of Contemporary Fiber Art "Roots-Metamorphosis-Mixtures" at the Embroidery and Textile Museum in Valtopina, Italy, the international exhibition for The Europe Challenge in Barberino di Mugello, and Miniartextil Como at the Textile Museum in Busto Arsizio. Her works have been exhibited in recent years in various Milanese galleries, including MILANO SCULTURA at the Fabbrica del Vapore in Como, Capestrano (AQ), Todi, Monza, and Bergamo for BG BS Capitale della Cultura in the Salone Italia of the World Textile Art WTA. With XS PROJECT, one of her works was exhibited at the Gina Morandini Contemporary Textile Art Gallery in Maniago, Italy.

In 2022, she participated in the 19th International Fiber Art Competition Trame a Corte in Sala Baganza, where, the previous year, at the 18th edition of the same competition, her work "Ritual" won the Audience Award.

In the same year, she won the Critics' Award at the 1st Biennale d'arte Omaggio al Maestro Scalvini in Desio, Italy.

In 2019, she held the solo exhibition "Lights & Shapes" at Spazio Hus Milano, an event included in Brera Design Week, and another solo exhibition at MIMUMO Micro Museo Monza to present the project "Crepuscolo."



Kenji Kiyama
Japan

KENJI KIYAMA



MY FOOT
Mixed Media / junk parts, glue, tires, wood, etc.
W333 x D242 x H550mm
2026

KENJI KIYAMA

MY FOOT

The exposed junk metronome ticks like irregular footsteps, creating my own feet moving forward step by step.
People sometimes ride on tires, sometimes wear heels, and sometimes wear shackles as they move through life.

Using antique wooden shoe-shaped objects as the main object, I drew inspiration from them to evoke the life of a person.
The combination of the internal components of a broken metronome, junk vacuum tubes, and other things that would never normally come together creates a noisy contrast of memories.
I always cherish the feeling of first understanding an object and encountering it as a form, which I experienced as a child, when creating my works.



Kenji Kiyama was born in Japan in 1973. He discovered art at an international school in Singapore and studied at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. After working as an in-house designer for a record company, he spent 20 years working as an art director, designer, and photographer for CD covers. Since 2020, he has been creating paintings and sculptural objects. His sculptures, which combine junk parts and everyday objects, embody both a playful pop sensibility and a message about contemporary society. He also creates a wide range of works, including painting series featuring comic-style eyes and lighting art using acrylic tubes.

I express my inner self through art, utilizing the expressiveness, compositional skills, and experience I have cultivated over many years in the design industry. I hope that by using interest, fun, discomfort, or impact as a gateway, viewers will be able to feel something deeper that they don't normally feel, or that stirs emotions that they have always pushed to the back of their mind.

2023.11.27(thu)-12.7(sun)@The National Art Center, Tokyo / Gallery 2C
12th Dynamic Contemporary Artists Exhibition
Exhibited works:
LOVE is calling / Mixed Media
I am nobody else but me / Mixed Media
Awarded "Dynamic Contemporary Artists Award" (LOVE is calling)

2024.5.17(fri)-5.19(sun)@Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No.1 2F Space
THE SQUARE VOL.2 Exhibition
Exhibited works:
Square #01~04

2024.7.17(wed)-8.3(sat)@noho M55 Gallery
New York Chelsea "NATURE Exhibition"
Exhibited works:
BONSAI INSIDE USA / Mixed Media

2025.10.31(fri)-11.30(sun)@Domio Gallery "Less or More" Online exhibition
Exhibited works:
computer machine / Mixed Media
Just barely / Mixed Media

2025.11.30(thu)-12.10(sun)@The National Art Center, Tokyo / Gallery 2C&2D
16th Dynamic Contemporary Artists Exhibition
Exhibited works:
SLEEPY EYES WIDE SHUT / Mixed Media
Awarded "Special Award"



Lani Westerman
Australia



QUEEN ELIZABETH ISLAND II

Acrylic on timber board
25x40 cm
2025

LANI WESTERMAN

QUEEN ELIZABETH ISLAND II

The skinny canvas reflects the shape of the tall building to the left known as the Carillon. This building essentially marks time by playing melodies that resonate over the surface of Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra. It's a special building that defines place, time and tradition.

The Carillon building design was inspired by the wonderful Toblerone bar! The three pillars are triangular in floor plan and symbolically pay homage to the triangular geometric planning of Canberra.

The island upon which the Carillon stands was named Queen Elizabeth II island in 2022 to honour the queen's platinum jubilee. Australia remains part of the Commonwealth despite being politically independent on the global stage.



'Lani's early life experience in Canberra, a city planned with respect to the architectural vision of Walter Burley and Marion Griffin, led her to appreciate symmetry, alignment, mapping and the interrelationship between natural and designed elements in the landscape.

Later, Lani trained to become an architect which contributed to a strong creative framework to harness her passion for painting, particularly with regard to balanced composition, attention to detail and the use of historical precedents.

Travel and living aboard has also influenced Lani's ways of experiencing and representing landscape.

Lani looks for beauty and purity of form in the natural and built environment which she translates into her artwork. She is currently focused on the idea that a meandering line is intersected by a rational grid. Lani endeavours to capture the quintessential essence of the landscape in a style that is timeless.'

solo exhibitions:

2025 'Pocket Views', Anthea Polson Art, Qld (April)

group exhibitions:

2015 'Four Women', the Arthouse Hotel Sydney, NSW

selected finalist: awards and prizes:

2023 'Paddington Art Prize' Finalist

2023 Anthea Polson Art Award Winner – Paddington Art Prize

2009 'Noel Chettle Memorial Art Prize for Painting

study:

Master of Architecture, University of Sydney 2011

Bachelor of Design in Architecture (Urban Planning & Allied Arts), University of Sydney 2008

*guest artist

(Author's note)

We present this artist as a guest, as she is not taking part of the "Malamegi Lab Milan 2026" selection.

This artist was one of 12 finalists of the previous "Malamegi Lab Venice 2026" competition, and due to circumstances beyond our control, she was unable to exhibit his work at the previous final exhibition. For this reason, we want to pay homage to her by presenting her work in this current exhibition.



Manuela Caniato
Belgium



THREADBARE BEAUTY

Digital print on two layers, cotton and organza. Embroidery embellished with beads, sequins, metal thread, acrylic paint, organza.

32x32 cm Gilded square frame.

2026

Photo credits - Tessa Delbeke, <https://monokrohm.com/>

MANUELA CANIATO

THREADBARE BEAUTY

Once, during a visit to Nymphenburg Palace in Munich, I wandered into the Gallery of Beauties – thirty-eight portraits of the women King Ludwig II considered the most exquisite of his time. Standing among those long-gone faces, I found myself contemplating the idealisation of beauty.

At home, in front of the mirror, I studied the lines that time had etched into my own face. I looked at my hands, growing bonier by the day, my sunken eyes...

I recalled the women in the gallery: captured at their most radiant moment, immortalised in paint. Figures of a divine perfection that would never fade.

What did the women in Ludwig's palace – growing older just like me – think of their perfect counterparts in Ludwig's gallery? How did they feel as the gap between themselves and their portrait widened with the years?

So, to liberate them from this plight I took up the needle. I used embroidery to break into those ghostly portraits, leaving my mark on them. I stitched in my own language, making them age. Because even in decline, there's a certain beauty – it's part of being human. Stitch by stitch, I made them mortal again.



I started out in the world of academia, where I dove deep into language and fashion, blending the beauty of Italian culture with its stylish history. With a Ph.D. in linguistics and a postdoc in fashion communication, I spent years helping students discover both the elegance of the Italian language and the stories woven into its fashion traditions. Eventually, I traded lecture halls for yarn, fabric, and a whole lot of color. Embroidery, crochet, and surface design became my new playground, and I've been traveling ever since—soaking up textile traditions from Milan's buzzing streets to Leuven's hidden corners. Now, I'm on a mission to explore, create, and share the joy of textiles—one stitch, one story, one adventure at a time.

Prizes & exhibitions

2026, solo exhibition Threadbare Beauty, gallery 20C, Leuven

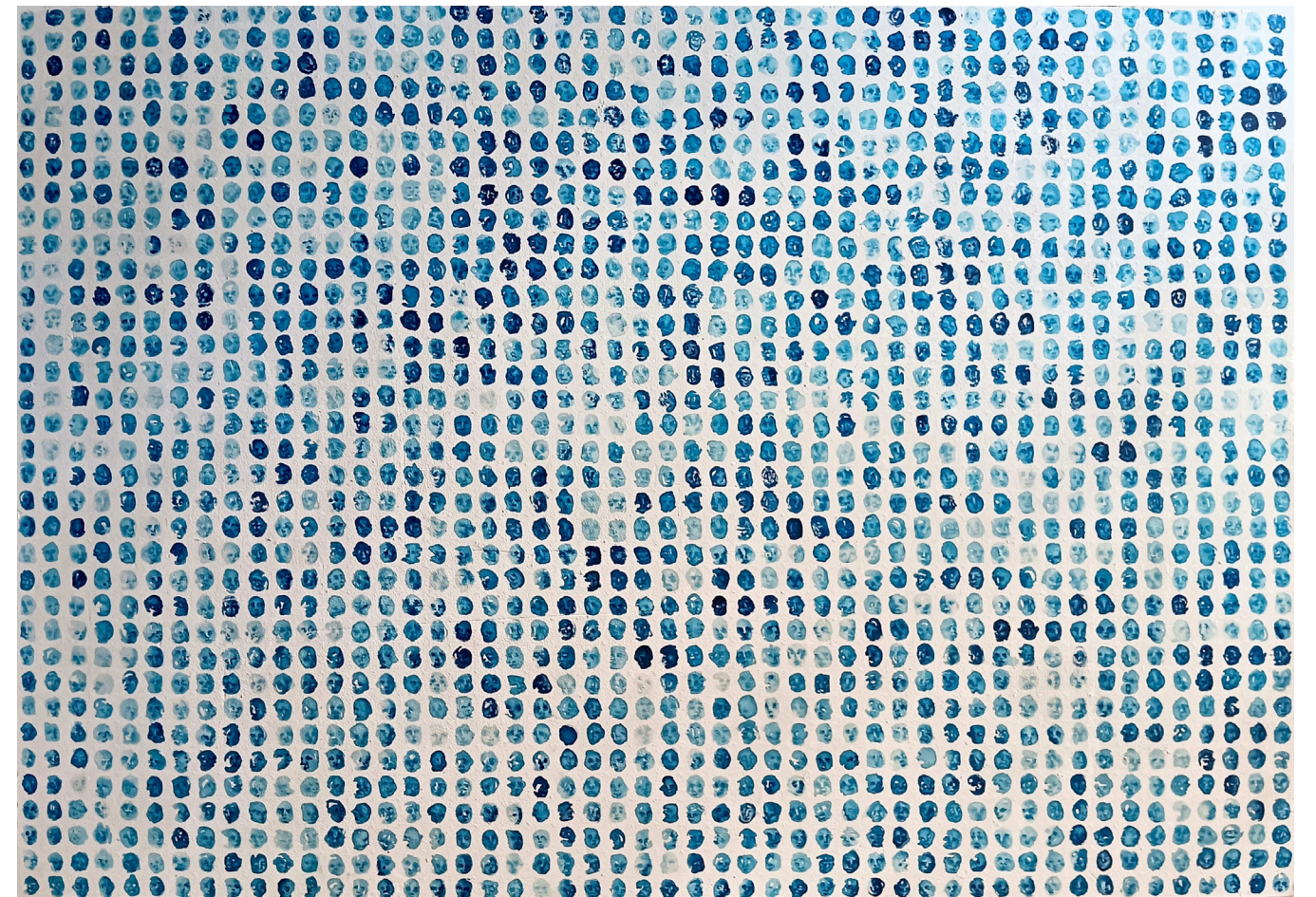
2025 Mr X Stitch Contemporary Needlework Prize, category Mixed Media, 3rd prize

2025 Fiber Reimagined III, juried

2020 The Vlieseline Fine Art Textiles Award, shortlisted



Michelle Yasmine
Noor Zarro
Italy



FAMILY PORTRAIT III

Watercolour on panel
70x100 cm
2025

MICHELLE YASMINE NOOR ZARRO

FAMILY PORTRAIT III

The artist's research has always focused on close-ups of human faces and, over time, has evolved into something increasingly blurred and distilled. At times, the stylized faces possess a defined identity; at other times, they acquire one during the creative process, eventually resembling someone who, in some way, had been present in her mind from the beginning. This specific work shows a mix of both. When she chooses to depict these identities in series, she aims for a result similar to that of a family album, an alternative old album that reveals the forgotten ancestors of a distant era. The stylization is inspired by pareidolia in general and by the idea of the death mask, reinterpreted in a two-dimensional form. Diluted oil and, as in this case, watercolour are the preferred media, as they contribute to the creation of a face that is only hinted at and softly blurred.



Michelle Yasmine Noor Zarro (Benevento, 1999) is an emerging Italian artist. After classical studies, she followed her vocation by enrolling in the Painting course at the Academy of Fine Arts in Frosinone in 2017. After obtaining her bachelor's degree in 2021, she enrolled in the same course at the Brera Academy, which had a strong impact on her search for synthesis and on the development of a stronger artistic identity. In 2023, she obtained her master's degree. During her studies, she attended a workshop in her hometown with oil painting master Mario Ferrante, refining her technique, improving her understanding of anatomy and tonal rendering, while also discovering the value of a freer hand. She currently lives in Milan working as an artist and art teacher.

She favors close up portraits inspired by death masks, with hazy renderings that evoke the immaterial. The core of her research has always been based on the memory of distant, mysterious or deceased people, particularly through pareidolia in stains, produced using diluted traditional media.



Nicola Pellizzaro
Italy

NICOLA PELLIZZARO



LA PALAZZINA
Oil and acrylic on canvas
120x80 cm
2024

NICOLA PELLIZZARO

LA PALAZZINA

What a wonderful state of mind it is that allows us to contemplate almost with joy that which terrifies us individually.

Citation: The Book of Friends
Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874-1929)



Born in Venice in 1971.
Graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice in 1995 "Scenography Section".
Son of an artist.
He continues his artistic research in his city.
He participates in numerous painting competitions, obtaining various awards. Some personal exhibitions and various works in private collections.
The experimentation and the artistic path are aimed at the search for an indefinite dimension and space-time.

They say about his works:

... in Nicola Pellizzaro's painting it is easy to immerse yourself in an infinite dimension, in a place that evokes suspended spaces ...



Nives Roem
France

NIVES ROEM



DOVE L'ORIZZONTE SI APRE SOPRA LA RIVA ROSSA

Mixed Media. Paper Mache, Aluminum, Acrylic.

25x50 cm

2026

NIVES ROEM

DOVE L'ORIZZONTE SI APRE SOPRA LA RIVA ROSSA

This work belongs to my exploration of landscape through collage. I am inspired by decorative magazines filled with images and colors. These ephemeral printed materials become my raw material. By recycling and transforming them, I create a new visual world.

For me, printed images are like a ready-made palette of colors.

In my artistic practice, collage and painting are two separate mediums, but they express the same idea. With collage, I work with printed images and their existing colors. With acrylic painting, I search for a similar emotional language through pigment and gesture. Both approaches explore the same themes of landscape, memory, and atmosphere.

I hope viewers will interact with the work in a personal way. Each landscape can be interpreted through individual memories and emotions, like an intimate inner journey. In this sense, the artwork becomes a tool an invitation for the viewer to travel within their own imagination.



Visual artist, after completing my art studies at the Brera Academy in Milan, where I earned a Master's degree in Scenography, I pursued a career in advertising and theater. After a period away from the art world, I left Italy for love and began a new life in France. Today, I am returning to my first passion: art.

As a contemporary visual artist, my work is driven by emotion and introspection. I draw aesthetic inspiration from the magical landscapes of Constable and Turner, particularly in their treatment of light and atmosphere. At the same time, my practice is deeply influenced by Art Informel—its materiality, gestural freedom, and graphic energy—embracing the unpredictability of matter and process.

My landscapes take the form of solitary, silent, and open refuges—spaces where viewers are invited to project their own memories, sensations, and absences, and to explore inner landscapes shaped by emotion and memory.



Pietro Giromini
Italy



SYNAPSE – INTERFERENCE

Modular wall installation; parametric 3D modeling; eco-concrete, recycled cellulose, natural pigments
Site-specific installation
2026

PIETRO GIROMINI

SYNAPSE – INTERFERENCE

Synapse – Interference is a site-specific modular wall installation composed of 105 elements made of eco-concrete, recycled cellulose, and natural pigments. Each module is digitally modeled and then cast, allowing material resistance to alter the initial geometry and generate surface variation. Organized as a modular field, the work explores repetition and difference within a shared spatial system, where a localized condition of displacement interrupts the regular order and introduces interference into the field.

Conceived as a modular and site-responsive work, the installation can be reconfigured according to different architectural contexts, allowing its scale and number of elements to vary while preserving its relational logic.

Rather than representing a fixed network, the work investigates the threshold between computational control and material unpredictability, where structure persists even as it begins to lose rigidity.



Pietro Giromini is an architect and artist based in Milan. His practice investigates the threshold between computational systems, spatial structures, and physical matter. Starting from sketches and parametric modeling, he develops geometries that are translated into material form using eco-concrete, cellulose-based compounds, and natural pigments. Through this process, digital precision is exposed to resistance, deviation, and imperfection, allowing abstract structures to become tactile and embodied.

His work explores the tension between control and unpredictability, repetition and difference, system and interference.

Awards

2006 – First Prize, Premio Libero Ferretti, Museo della Permanente, Milan

Permanent Installations

2025 – Synapse, Meridian Building, Milan (Covivio), 50 m installation / 500 modular sculptures

Collections

MIM – Museo d'Arte Moderna di Piacenza (2008), acquisition of two works

Works held in private collections in Italy and China.



Rainer Fleischer
Germany

RAINER FLEISCHER



YOUNG FLEMISH MAN

Oil and acrylic on canvas
50x50 cm
2025

RAINER FLEISCHER

YOUNG FLEMISH MAN

A contemporary portrait that merges traditional portraiture with tactile, intimate painting; a study of identity and presence.



Rainer Fleischer is a German painter based in Brno, Czech Republic, where he is currently studying Fine Arts. With an academic training in traditional painting and a contemporary approach to figurative representation, Fleischer combines technical rigor and narrative sensitivity: his practice focuses on oil on canvas, with particular attention to color rendering, brushwork structure, and the construction of light. His work arises from a careful study of anatomy and the history of painting, integrating life-study exercises, commissioned portraiture, and experimental projects that renew the language of the classical portrait for a contemporary audience.

He works primarily in oil on canvas, developing portraits and figures in a classical key: tactile brushstrokes, refined tonal modeling, and a warm palette that evokes academic realism with a contemporary touch. His works explore identity, memory, and the psychological presence of the subject, favoring intimate compositions and soft lighting that enhance expressiveness and anatomical detail.

He participates in student exhibitions and local group shows, accepts commissions, and continues his training through workshops and artist residencies.



Shu Chen
Italy



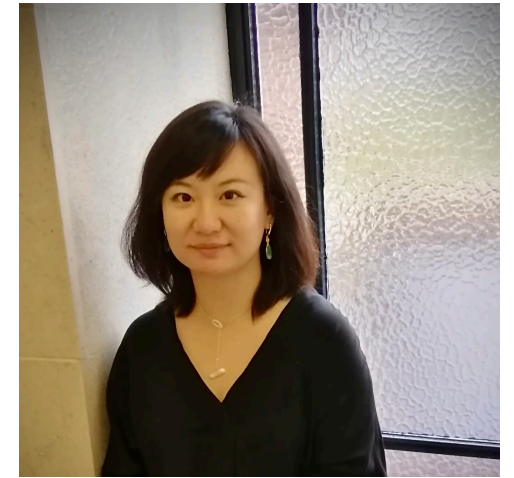
FRUITS OF THE FIG TREE

Oil on canvas
90x70 cm
2026

SHU CHEN

FRUITS OF THE FIG TREE

This work seeks to represent a vitality that transcends rationality — one that is almost absurd, restless, and seductive. The branches twist and turn, appearing to freeze time with multicolored droplets. Together with the fruits, they seem to float weightlessly yet in constant motion, a reminder of the unstoppable transition between life and death.



Chen Shu began her artistic journey at a fine arts high school in her hometown of Qingdao, in northern China. She later went on to study graphic design and illustration at Wuxi University. After graduating, she shifted her focus to oil painting and exhibited her work at the French Cultural Center of Haiyang University in Qingdao. At the same time, she built a career as a designer, also working on interior design projects. Since moving to Italy in 2022, she has found the time and space to return to painting with renewed consistency. In 2025 and 2026, she participated in various competitions and group exhibitions, including Arte Padova 2025, Luci & Ombre in Pavia, and the Expositiva Art Prize in Vigevano, as well as a two-person exhibition in Piove di Sacco. Her paintings seek to develop a contemporary “pictorial language.” Combining elements reminiscent of Surrealism and Abstraction, and drawing on both Eastern and Western cultural influences as well as contemporary artistic currents, her work features what she describes as “formless figures.” In her latest projects, she has developed a style in which figures are fragmented, dissolved, and then recomposed—streams of consciousness engaged in a psychic struggle, in constant motion, evoking fleeting and fragile perceptions that seem to slip through our fingers, yet remain the only things we can truly grasp.



Stacy Weddle
United States

STACY WEDDLE



PURPLE OXIGEN
Mixed media on cotton paper
50x50 cm
2026

STACY WEDDLE

PURPLE OXIGEN

Purple Oxigen is a graphic composition that explores the relationship between color, space, and visual breathing. Dominated by variations of violet and magenta, the work combines translucent layering and crisp graphic marks on cotton paper, creating a balance between atmospheric lightness and defined structure.



Stacy Weddle (born in 1996) is an American artist, graphic designer, and painter whose work blends botanical illustration with contemporary graphic composition. Her pieces combine detailed natural elements with bold color palettes (red/blue contrasts), vintage textures, and circular geometric forms, creating prints that sit between digital collage and screen printing. The result is a poetic, minimalist visual language that explores memory, nature, and visual perception, suitable for both editorial projects and gallery pieces.

She works on canvas and digitally, accepts commissions for brands and publications, and participates in independent exhibitions.



Wojciech Kwiatkowski
Poland



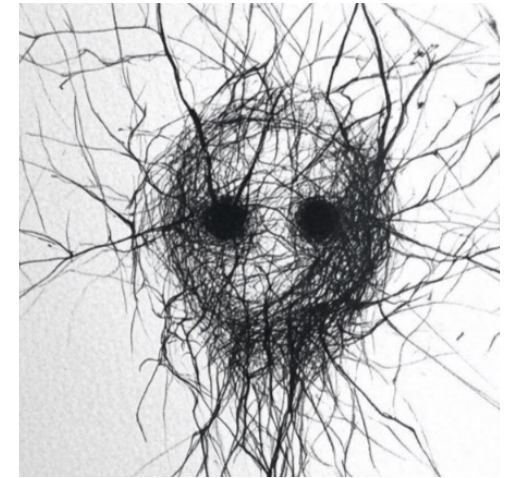
INTRODUCING THE MODERNITY

Mix media on canvas
70x35 cm
2025

WOJCIECH KWIATKOWSKI

INTRODUCING THE MODERNITY

In this work, I aim to capture the ephemeral essence of an equilibrium between nature and culture, between the past and the present. Through precise lines, ink, and pencil, I explore the relationship between tension and tranquility, between our aspirations and the unpredictable currents of life. This pursuit stems from a desire to represent the complexity of human existence, filled with moments of calm and upheaval, and to reflect on the ongoing struggle between the individual and the collective. My artwork manifests as a dialogue between forms and voids, between intricate details and spaces of silence, because only in the balance between these opposing realities lies the true essence of our experience.



Wojciech Kwiatkowski, 45 years old, is a Polish artist specializing in pencil and ink drawing. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with various brands and cultural institutions, showcasing his talent in numerous exhibitions across Europe. His ability to capture intricate details and deep emotions through precise and expressive line work sets him apart in the contemporary art scene.

Group Exhibitions

Participation in collective exhibitions in European museums and galleries

Exhibitions at international art fairs in Italy, Spain, and Austria

Group shows dedicated to contemporary art and illustration, 2018-2022 Monaco DE

Collections

His works are part of private collections of collectors across Europe, particularly in Poland and Germany.



Zixiang Zhang
United Kingdom



SYMBIOSIS
Textile, Straw, and Mycelium
22x36x17 cm
2024

ZIXIANG ZHANG

SYMBIOSIS

Zixiang Zhang's long-standing experience in textile art has made her aware that, due to industrialised production, textile waste is escalating at an alarming rate. The human-centred ecological solution results in vast quantities of discarded textiles being landfilled each year. However, burial is not the end of the life cycle of these textiles. They can build symbiotic relationships with natural life forms, such as fungi and microorganisms, in the soil and continue to exist in other ways. In Zixiang Zhang's work "Symbiosis" (2024), the entire work is composed solely of mycelium, straw, and knitted fabric. She attempted to utilise simple materials to interpret the close relationship between different materials. Moreover, she restored the process of knitted fabrics being buried, decomposed, swallowed, and regenerated, which prompted people to reflect on the impact of human activities on nature and to understand the core idea of removing the binary opposition between humans and nature in BioArt.

Furthermore, in the work "Symbiosis", the aim of choosing mycelium, straw, and textiles as creative media is to reflect the subtle connection between human-made and natural materials, rather than to conduct formal comparisons. The materials used correspond to different material systems. One type is the product of human industrial civilisation, represented by textile waste, from which people can clearly see the shadows of mass production, physical experience, and consumer society. The other type is mycelium and straw, which follow the life logic of decomposition, renewal, and regeneration, they are inseparable parts of nature.

Through the work "Symbiosis", viewers seem to witness the complete life cycle of the material. On the one hand, the mycelium can directly use the textile as a growth substrate, absorbing nutrients from it to sustain its growth, thereby giving the textile new life. On the other hand, the textile is gradually decomposed by the mycelium, eventually degrading into sustainable materials, hence making waste part of the natural cycle. This demonstrates that human waste gradually becomes part of the ecological cycle and becomes environmentally friendly as symbiotic relationships form, inspiring people to re-evaluate waste. Zixiang Zhang's purpose in creating this work is to guide people to redefine and understand "waste" and "resources". "Symbiosis", from its unique perspective, confirms the possibility of harmonious coexistence between waste and nature.



Zixiang Zhang is a London-based BioArt artist whose work focuses on integrating living materials into contemporary artistic practice. Her practice explores the relationship between human-made and natural substances through materials such as textile waste and mycelium. The themes of her work are about collaboration, transformation, and regeneration, which are presented as evolving structures.

By incorporating mycelium, she shifts sculpture from static form to process-based structures. Her approach emphasises the reduced control of the artist, allowing natural processes to shape artworks over time. Her practice contributes to considering the artist's role in creating BioArt artworks and supports dialogue between art, science, and environmental research.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS (2024-2026)

Nature Doesn't Draw Straight Lines, Galeria Municipal Jovem, Póvoa de Santa Iria, Portugal, Jan-Mar 2026
SOFT: Quay Arts Biennial Exhibition, Quay Arts Centre, Isle of Wight, UK, Aug-Oct 2025
Through the Hidden Rift, LooLooLook Gallery, Paris, France, Aug 2025
The By Products of Society and Life, Buy the Kilo Gallery, North Shields, UK, Aug 2025
OOO Object-Oriented Ontology, Alsolike Gallery, London, UK, Jul 2025
Oscillation, Small Gallery, London, UK, Jun 2025
Underground And Passage Exeter Art Week, A Sometimes Project, Exeter, UK, Jun 2025
Continuing Conversations, Haus -A -Rest, Online, Jun 2025
Becoming of Memory, Arts Archive London, The Art Academy Artist's Gallery, London, UK, Jun 2025
Fluid Horizons, Perfetti Gallery, London, UK, May-Jun 2025
AIR, Textile Art Biennial BIEN 2025, Lantieri Palace, Gorizia, Slovenia, May-Aug 2025
The GREAT Leeds Fungi Exhibition 2025, Headrow House, Leeds, UK, Mar 2025
13th Community Art Exhibition, Circular Art Space, Bristol, UK, Mar 2025
Textile Art Exhibition, Open Gallery, Halifax, UK, Feb-Mar 2025
Contract, META SPACE GALLERY, online, Jan-Feb 2025
Paradox and poem-objects, Purist Gallery, London, UK, Jan 2025
Temperature of the Soul, Elitha's Gallery, London, UK, Dec 2024
Glory, Homeland, and the Future: A Christmas Celebration, M P Birla Millennium Gallery, London, UK, Dec 2024
The Apple Paradox: Desire and Decay, The Split Gallery, London, UK, Dec 2024
Loneliness and Poetics – 2024 London Contemporary Art Review Exhibition, Gallery NAT, Online, Nov-Dec 2024
Floating Dream, Kupfer Gallery, London, UK, Nov 2024
ECHOS, Fox Yard Studio Art Gallery, Stowmarket, UK, Nov 2024
Bath Open Art Prize 2024, Fringe Arts Bath, 44AD Artspace, Bath, UK, Oct 2024
Kairos, Indra Gallery, London, UK, Sept 2024
Inside the Cradle, Outside the Cradle, Shangzun Gallery, Beijing, China, Sept 2024

PRESS & PUBLICATIONS (2024-2026)

Artribune, 17 Feb 2026
<https://www.artribune.com/arti-visive/arte-contemporanea/2026/02/zixiang-zhang-scultura/>
People Art, 9 Sept 2025
<http://www.peopleart.net/wap/news/2212.html>
Insights of an Eco Artist, 6 May 2025
<https://www.insightsofayoungecologicalartist.com/features/in-conversation-zixiang-zhang>
Contract, Issue 3, META SPACE GALLERY, pp. 58-63, 21 Jan 2025
Art Daily, 18 Dec 2024
<https://artdaily.com/news/176451/The-Apple-Paradox--Desire-and-Decay>
Artron Net, 9 Sept 2024
<https://m-news.artron.net/20240909/n1144014.html>

AWARDS

SOFT, 2025 Biennial Exhibition: Second prize Winner, 10 Sept 2025
The 10th annual VAO Prize 2025: Finalisted Artists, 28 Aug 2025
The 14th Signature Art Prize 2024/25: Longlisted Artists, 28 Mar 2025
Loneliness and Poetics – 2024 London Contemporary Art Review Exhibition: Excellence Award, 18 Nov 2024

EDUCATION

05/09/2022-31/08/2023
Royal College of Art, MA in Design Products, London, UK

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to all participant artists.

We want to do the right homage to all the artists that have participated in this, and in the previous editions of the contest. All, without exception, have shown not only commitment and quality but also an enthusiasm that only the artists can have. Through their work they wanted to show their point of view, proving that now art is more alive and ferment than ever.

A constant and significant job, each artist injects us his own ideas and his techniques because of personal experiences. It 's a unique and important source not only for us but especially for the culture which is always related to the art. To all of them goes our recognition and our compliments, hoping that to everyone will be given the right space and mode to demonstrate their talent. A wish that we take very seriously and we'll do what is necessary for this to happen.

Malamegi Lab Staff

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