



Art

Elegantly Sculpted Busts by Massimiliano Pelletti Interpret Art History Through Imperfection

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GRACE EBERT



Detail of "Venus de Medici" (2020), pink onyx, 67 x 34 x 45 centimeters. Photo by Nicola Gnesi, courtesy of Massimiliano

Pelletti

Italian artist **Massimiliano Pelletti** (previously) gravitates toward imperfection, and his practice revolves around transforming presumed defects like impurities, cracks, or chips into elegantly carved figures. Pink marble sliced to reveal the stone's pillowy, crystalline insides bisects the artist's interpretation of Venus de Medici, while in "Blue Venus," marbled sodalite and Mexican white onyx are spliced together into a fully formed bust. Contrasting smooth segments with the rough texture of unpolished stone, Pelletti evokes art history and ancient sculpture traditions through the lens of flaw and fallibility.

This focus on the material determines much of the artist's work—his studio is conveniently located in Pietrasanta near caves filled with the precious stones he utilizes—in addition to the way green onyx or black marble, for example, interacts with light. Understanding absorption, reflection, and illumination has grounded his practice and is a skill he's developed for decades. He explains:

When I was a child, I used to go downstairs to my grandfather's studio, and I could find him working marble, always next to the same window; from there, during certain hours, a magical light entered that could make the sculpture almost alive, with a

soul. When I pointed it out to him, he answered me: “My dear, the light is so important. There are some works that should be sold with the window that lights them up”.

Pelletti is currently working toward a solo show slated for May 2023 in London, in addition to a series of sculptures set for display in a public square in Italy. Until then, follow his practice on [Instagram](#).



"Blue Horizon" (2022), sodalite and Mexican white onyx, 64 x 33 x 40 centimeters, 16-centimeter iron base. Photo by Nicola Gnesi, courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Bowman

Sculpture, London



"White Venus" (2022), Mexican white onyx, 173 x 31 x 43 centimeters. Photo by Nicola Gnesi, courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Galerie Bayart, Paris



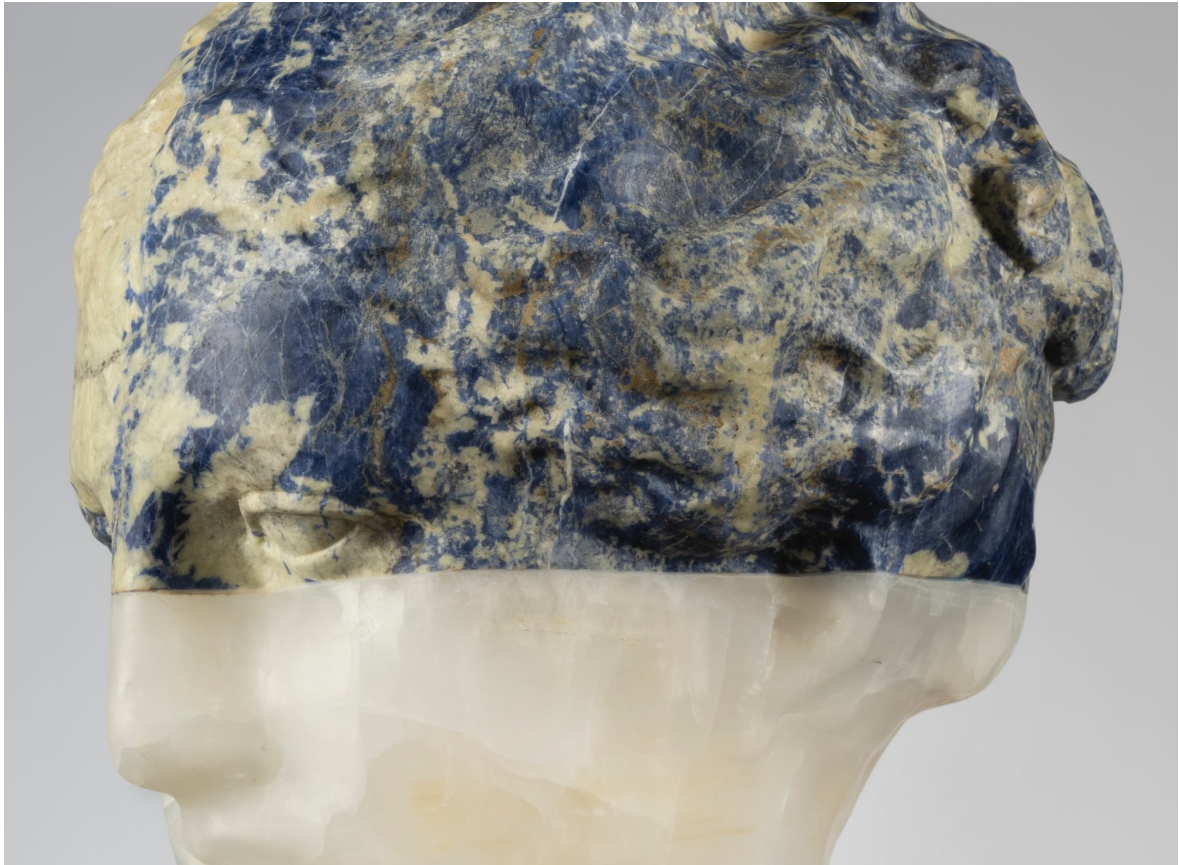
"Green Hermes" (2022), green onyx, 177 x 26 x 26 centimeters.
Photo by Nicola Gnesi, courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



"Le due Grazie" (2019), Mexican white onyx, 65 x 65 x 48 centimeters. Photo by Nicola Gnesi, courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



“Venus de Medici” (2020), pink onyx, 67 x 34 x 45 centimeters.
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