

Art Summit

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Massimiliano Pelletti: The Philosophical Interpretation of Marble

Posted On : October 18, 2022 Published By : Carolina Real



Artist Bio

Massimiliano Pelletti was born on 27 January 1975 in the town of Pietrasanta (Lucca), Italy, where he still lives and works.

As a child, he began learning marble-working techniques from his grandfather Mario, in the family artisan workshop.

After obtaining his diploma from the Stagio Stagi Art School in Pietrasanta, he graduated from the University of Pisa with a degree in Philosophy, a subject that has fascinated and influenced him in the artistic sphere, as well.

He made his artistic debut in 2006, winning the 12th edition of the Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean, followed by a series of other

prestigious exhibitions, both in Italy and abroad, such as the Alexandria Biennale in Egypt and the 54th Venice Biennale as part of the Italian Pavilion, curated by Vittorio Sgarbi.

His early sculptures feature marble – a noble material from the artist's homeland – as the main element in the creation of his works. He subsequently broadened his range of materials to quartz, onyx, limestone and other rocks and stones never before used in sculpture, drawing on every rocky element given to us by nature. Pelletti handles his shapes with meticulous compositional care and innovation, while maintaining his ties to traditional sculpture thanks to a collection of plaster classical models inherited from his grandfather. In 2014, he was among the winners of the Henraux Foundation International Sculpture Award, curated by Philippe Daverio. He has published several articles in magazines devoted to contemporary art and, over the years, has shown his works in several museums and public areas such as the Villa Croce and Sant'Agostino in Genoa, the Abbey of San Zeno in Pisa, the Temple of Hadrian in Rome, Castel Sant'Elmo in Naples, Sapienza University in Rome, the Contemporary Art Museum Luigi Pecci in Prato, the Museo Civico Paolo Giovio in Como, Palazzo RISO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea della Sicilia in Palermo and the Jewish Museum of Bologna.

2017 featured the solo exhibition "Sacra Privata" held at the Galleria Barbara Paci in Pietrasanta.

The exhibition, curated by Flavio Arensi, garnered the artist even more attention and praise from art critics and the main contemporary art magazines.

Throughout his artistic path, Pelletti has participated in important exhibitions such as "Ecce Homo da Marino Marini a Mimmo Paladino – La scultura di figura in Italia" at the Mole Vanvitelliana in Ancona (curated by Flavio Arensi); "L'immagine del suono", an exhibit on

the connection between visual arts and music (curated by Alessandro Romanini); "Forever Never Comes" at the Museum of Archaeology and Art of Maremma (MAAM) and, in 2018, "Il passo sospeso. Esplorazioni del limite" at the Fondazione Ragghianti in Lucca (curated by Alessandro Romanini). Since 2017, he has taken part in several prestigious contemporary art fairs including "SCOPE Miami", "SCOPE New York" and "ART MIAMI" in the United States, the South African art fair "Investec Cape Town Art Fair" and "Wopart" in Lugano, Switzerland.

In 2019, the Italian brand Roberto Cavalli and the Mexican society Peninsula asked him to create a monumental work (almost 5 m high) in Carrara white marble for a new urban project in Acapulco, Mexico. In 2018, he carried out a prestigious public commission by creating a monumental marble sculpture subsequently placed on one of the main traffic circles that give access to the town of Forte dei Marmi, further enriching the invaluable ties the artist strives to maintain with his native Versilia area.

In 2020 he inaugurated his solo exhibition at the MARCA in Catanzaro 'Looking forward to the Past'. In 2021 he inaugurated the exhibition "Gazing of Tranquillity" at the Zhejiang Art Museum in Shanghai. The exhibition will be traveling and will pass through important Chinese museum (Wuhan Art Museum, Guangdong Museum of Art).

In December 2021 he inaugurated the exhibition "Canova. Tra innocenza e peccato" at the MART in Rovereto, from an idea by Vittorio Sgarbi curated by Beatrice Avanzi and Denis Isaia.

Bio source <https://www.massimilianopelletti.com/biography.php>



Massimiliano Pelletti, Portrait. Ph. Nicola Gnesi. Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti.

Interview

Artist: Massimiliano Pelletti

As a child you began learning marble-working techniques from your grandfather Mario. How did this and your environment influence your own creativity?

I do love his technical experience, his ability to manipulate materials, and his study, rich in plaster casts and tools among which and with which I still love

to work. They have always been present. During my childhood, I went down to his studio, and I lived everything as a game and then slowly they became natural extensions of my need for expression that led me to do what I do today.

You hold a degree in Philosophy from the University of Pisa. When was the crucial moment that you decided to switch careers and follow your path as an artist?

To me, art is a necessity, a need. It is translating into material an intimate reflection that includes the self, the nature, and the world. My works are questions even before statements; philosophy is research of the senses to ask subsequent questions. In the neoclassical era, the theory of art with Winckelmann supported a coincidence between the figure of the artist and that of the philosopher, both able to express a harmonious composition of passions. My philosophical studies have enabled me to strengthen my need for expression with a cultural background that academic studies would not have allowed me to acquire.



Mother Earth 2022 Emerald onyx Cm 74 x 27 x 33 ed.1/1 Ph.
Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Barbara
Paci Art Gallery, Pietrasanta



Moon Fossil 2021 Black Fossil marble Cm 100 x 60 x 50 ed. 1 / 1 Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



Menelao 2021 Brown galaxy 8cm 5 x 73 x 61 ed. 1 / 1 Ph.
Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti

How did you choose to specialize in figural sculptures?

I was lucky to inherit a large plaster cast library with more than 130 plaster models of classic subjects. My grandfather has always realized that type of sculpture belongs to my cultural heritage but is also generic. It was natural to approach these types of works. I then introduced something else in my research like African art, blending it with classicism.

Your early works feature marble as the main element in the creation and later you added materials such as quartz, onyx, limestone and other rocks and stones. What are the limitations and the challenges of those materials?

Marble is a compact material; from it you have perfection. At a certain point I had the need to use imperfect materials, not compact with cavities. I am not the only one who imposes itself over the material, but the material also dictates its rules. What comes out is a coauthorial result, between me and the material I use, its history, its geological conformation. All these characteristics become part of the work; not only as a formal part but also as a narrative one. I use, for example, materials that are formed over hundreds of millions of years thanks to a stalactite and a stalagmite that, drop-by-drop, have united and created a block. Sculpting an artwork from that block I sculpt the story of a meeting. That's what fascinates me.



Marte e Venere, 2022 Emerald onyx Cm 64 x 84 x 42 ed. 1 / 1
Ph. Nicola Gnesi. Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and
Barbara Paci Art Gallery



Le tre Grazie 2021 Mexican white onyx and malachite Cm 75 x 70 x 47 ed. 1 / 1 Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



Broken Blue 2017 Bolivian sodalite Cm 56 x 41 x 35 ed. 1 / 1

Ph. Nicola Gnesi Private Collection Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti

Is there any project you are working on right now or any ongoing event or exhibition you would like to share with our readers?

I am realizing a new series for a solo exhibition scheduled in May 2023 at a prominent London gallery. I will formalize the collaboration soon. Plus, I am working on a series of public artworks for an important Italian square.



Dreaming of Olympia 2019 Mexican white onyx Cm 96 x 70 x 47 ed. 1 / 1 Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Bowman Sculpture, London



Earth head 2017 Etruscan red marble Cm 86 x 36 x 44 ed. 1 / 1
Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Barbara
Paci Art Gallery

What is your favorite quote?

“I rise like a marble of passion” ~ Giuseppe Ungaretti.

Editor: Lisa Portscher

<https://www.instagram.com/lisaportscher/>



Fiducia in Dio 2022 Pink onyx Cm 68 x 44 x 50 ed. 1 / 1 Ph.
Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Galerie
Bayart, Paris



Green Hermes, 2022 Green onyx Cm 177 x 26 x 26 ed. 1 / 1
Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



Blue Horizon 2022 Sodalite and Mexican white onyx Cm
64x33x40 (iron base cm 16 included) Ed. 1/1 Ph. Nicola Gnesi
Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti and Bowman Sculpture,
London



Atena 2019 Calcare grotto Cm 81 x 50 x 40 ed. 1 / 1 Ph.
Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



African Giancarlo Piretti 2019 Brown galaxy granito Cm 55 x 41 x 34 ed.
1 / 1 Ph. Nicola Gnesi Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti



Installation at MARCA Museo delle Arti Catanzaro, february-July 2020. Ph. Nicola Gnesi. Courtesy of Massimiliano Pelletti.



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