

Press release

The whisper of the peacock becomes a snake

ALESSANDRO ROMA

September 12 – October 22, 2022

On Monday, September 12, 2022, at 7:00 pm, Quartz Studio is pleased to present *The whisper of the peacock becomes a snake*, the first solo show in Turin by **Alessandro Roma** (Milan, Italy, 1977) with a critical text by **Irina Zucca Alessandrelli**.

I remember my childhood names for grasses and secret flowers. I remember where a toad may live and what times the birds awaken in the summer – and what trees and seasons smelled like.

John Steinbeck, *East of Eden* (1952)

Alessandro Roma's solo show invites us to get lost to find ourselves again, an ode to reverie in lush, alive nature. The plant world is in deep symbiosis with the animal world, appearing as if one, welcoming visitors and guiding them with a peacock feather towards a floral imaginary. The entire show consists of two large canvases, one ceramic piece, and a woodcut print, focusing on forms that mutate from amphibians to birds and back again.

The frameless canvases offer up a kind of ouroboros, a snake that transforms and engulfs a peacock, the symbol of eternal life, which is recreated in a beguiling cosmogony of purple and green hues.

The two canvases are hung like Renaissance tapestries, seeming to be part of a single world, only temporarily split in two.

The print is a woodcut from three plates engraved on linoleum, and the ceramic piece (which it would be reductive to call a vase) are completely consistent with the pictorial scene from which they seem to emerge. The print, in which lemon yellow and dark purple dominate, framed on wood and colored ceramic, suggests the aesthetics of German avant-garde movements of the early 20th century but in a softer version with delicate curved features. The ceramic is a powerful sculpture with the same color foundations as the other works but in softened, more muted tones. Like a trunk wrapped by large leaves and flowers, this sculpture rises on a circular base. Jagged indigo bushes emerge from inside that invite touch with their smooth, glittering outside rainbow shell. Subtle elegance and harmony of the sense reigns, bringing to the mind the scent of fresh flowering woods, gently rippled by the wind.

This synesthetic composition evokes a world of fully expressed artistic values, including the love for artisan techniques and manual *savoir faire* that understands the grain of the paper, the effect of tempera on rough canvas, and that of glaze on milky ceramic. Roma uses techniques that echo forgotten, much-coveted skills that recreate for the eye to the viewers the pleasure of the hand that shapes, paints, and engraves.

Looking at these works, we can sense the rustle of the peacock moving between the branches and glimpse the reflections of light between the boughs, perceiving the spiritual unity of creation of which the artist grasps the essence.

Alessandro Roma (Milan, Italy, 1977) lives and works in Faenza and London. He graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera in Milan. His work is shaped by a predominantly pictorial approach that comes out of his academic training and his early work. Roma has recently explored a variety of techniques, including casting, printing on fabric, ceramics, and collage. This has led to a completely new repertoire of interior landscapes, the fruit of both real-life experiences and literary sources, rendering his imagination accessible and tangible to the viewers. Selected solo exhibitions include: Keiko Yamamoto Rochaix Gallery, London, UK (2020); Foundation Thalie, Brussels, Belgium (2019); MIC International Museum of Ceramics, Faenza, Italy (2018); Casa Museo Jorn, Albissola, Italy (2018); Zzo Sara Zanin, Rome, Italy (2018); Yamamoto Keiko Rochaix, London, UK (2017); Museum Villa Croce, Genoa, Italy (2016); MAC Museum of Contemporary Art, Lissone, Italy (2014); Paradise Row Gallery, London, UK (2013); Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy (2012); MART Contemporary Art Museum, Rovereto, Italy (2011); Galerie Alexandra Saheb, Berlin, Germany (2011); Scaramouche Gallery, New York, US (2011). Selected group shows include: Fittile, Triennale Milano, Italy (2021); Dentro/Fuori, Carlo Zauli Museum, Faenza, Italy (2021); Chang-4, Casa Testori, Novate Milanese, Italy (2020), Archaeological Museum Salinas, Palermo (2019); Biennale internationale de céramique contemporaine, Vallauris, France (2019); Drawing Room, London, UK (2015), Corvi Mora, Greengrassi, London, UK (2014), Artists Space, New York (2014), Marianne Boesky, New York, US (2012); Lorcan O'Neill, Rome, Italy (2012); Prague Biennial, Prague, Czech Republic (2009); Museo de Belles Artes de Castellon, Spain (2007). The artist is represented by Keiko Yamamoto Rochaix Gallery, London, UK.

Irina Zucca Alessandrelli is an art historian and curator of Collezione Ramo of 20th- and 21st-century Italian drawing in Milan. She is the author of *Italian Drawing of the 20th century*, Milan (2018) and of the Drawing section for Artissima 2022.

Quartz Studio would like to thank the artist and curator. A special thanks to La Vecchia Stamperia in Faenza. The exhibition will be open from September 12 to October 22, 2022, by appointment.

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