

**Alessandro Teoldi: Looking Back**

**Dates: 2023.05.27 – 07.15**

**Address: Capsule Shanghai, 1st Floor, Building 16, Anfu Lu 275 Nong, Xuhui District, Shanghai, China**

Capsule Shanghai is pleased to present “Looking Back”, Alessandro Teoldi’s (b. 1987 in Milan, Italy) second solo exhibition at the gallery, featuring a series of brand-new works made of ceramic and fabric. In Teoldi’s expressive vocabulary, the dialogue between these two mediums produces astounding plastic, formal, and poetic effects.

The Italian-born artist, who has lived in New York for the last twelve years, mainly works with fabric, so he will also show a large, varied, and powerful selection of textile works in this exhibition. To create collages joined with needle and thread rather than glue, Teoldi cuts simple yet softly contoured geometric shapes out of various industrial and handcrafted fabrics, which, once sewn together, form simplified human figures.

For Teoldi, the materiality of the fabrics is very important, and he chooses each one for its natural color or tactile qualities. He sews these pieces of fabric himself. The process allows him absolute control over the development of the work, but also over himself as he carries out a sort of intimate inner dialogue that turns into an almost meditative exercise.

In their anthropological references, these essential figures—almost brutal in their extreme formal synthesis—recall the shadows reflected on a magical organic screen: the rock wall of Plato’s cave, toward which primitive men looked, adoring, to see the large shadows cast by the firelight behind them.

As a whole and in their details, these works, imbued with delicate nuances, tell a universal tale: the poignant poetry of our moments of joy, tenderness, melancholy, and abandonment experienced on this earth. The Earth itself always appears as if in passing, suggested by important and unexpected portions of landscape. Situated behind human bodies caught in the act of embracing, touching, caressing, or fighting, the landscape is a discrete entrée into the infinite panic of Nature, sometimes devoid of spatial or environmental references, but filled with existential ones.

Standing out against these flat yet dense spaces, the figures intertwine their bodies and almost become signals or signifieds of a modular, rhythmic language that inevitably tends towards abstraction. Teoldi’s visual communication is so powerful because of his superb ability to translate a succession of human bodies into this harmonious and abstract ensemble. In their archaism, they recall the primitives of the Italian Renaissance: Masaccio and Giotto. Much closer to our time, the everyday forms of American Pop Art, excessively replicated and overly simplified, had the same abstracting effect thanks to the repetition and rhythmic alternation of visual elements.

On closer inspection, the bodies that Teoldi stitches and recomposes have a plastic quality; they seem to naturally aspire to the solidity of sculpture. As a result, his decision to embrace the language of ceramic art appears quite natural. The series of terracotta sculptures and high reliefs on view were created in summer 2022 in Albisola. Teoldi chose to engage with this ancient technique and lived for more than a month inside one of Albisola’s historic ceramic factories, Ernan Design Studio. Teoldi did not feel intimidated by his time in a factory that had also made pieces by artists such as Lucio Fontana and Arturo Martini, who have certainly made their mark on modern and contemporary art. On the contrary, it has stirred in him the need for an honest and humble confrontation based on dialogue and the concreteness of a plastic medium. Above all, the work of Martini, who called himself “the Etruscan of the twentieth century,” inspired Teoldi to engage with human figures and bodies. In Teoldi’s work, they stand unknowing and unaware of their destiny, reminiscent of Picasso’s acrobats.

Alessandro Teoldi responds to the metaphysics of the 1930s with the hyper-modernity of our time. Just like in his fabric works, the purity of the terracotta biscuit, without any glaze or color, is the starting point for this body of work that reflects on the relationship between forms, volumes, and essential lines used to define the portrayed bodies. In the reliefs, the profiles are engraved and furrowed with firm cuts. With these pieces, Teoldi has reached a new stage in his visual research: he merges the delicacy of the design with the radical nature of collages made of stitched fabric. The truth hidden in the material finds a direct connection to the truth of the artist’s gesture: the hand that sews the fabric is the same hand that presses, removes, or spreads the clay.

Original text in Italian written by Luca Bochicchio. English translation by Manuela Lietti.

亚历山德罗·泰尔迪：回首

展期：2023.05.27 – 07.15

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胶囊上海荣幸举办亚历山德罗·泰尔迪（1987 年出生于意大利米兰）在画廊的第二次个展“回首”，呈现一系列全新的织物和陶制作品。通过泰尔迪富有表现力的视觉语言，织物和陶土这两种媒介形成对话，营造出令人惊叹的造型、形式和诗意效果。

这位意大利艺术家已在纽约生活十二年，以织物为主要创作媒介。本次展出的织物作品丰富而多变。艺术家用质感各异的工业和手工布料裁剪出轮廓柔和而简洁的图形，以针线代替常规拼贴作品中惯用的胶水来进行缝合，最终构成简约的人物形象。

对泰尔迪来说，每种布料的质感非常重要，他根据布料的自然色彩和独特质感来选用。艺术家亲自动手进行这些布料的裁剪缝制，这样他不仅可以绝对掌控作品的走向，更可以在近乎冥想的创作过程中和自己进行对话，从而逐渐把握自己的心境。

从人类学视角来看这些人物形象，它们极端简约的形式甚至略显朴拙，不禁令人联想到投射在某种梦幻的有机屏幕上的剪影，比如柏拉图的洞穴比喻中的石壁，火光将原始人的身影放大，投射在石壁上，接受影子主人的虔诚注视。

这些作品的整体和局部都有着微妙而丰富的变化，共同讲述了一个普世的寓言，即人世间悲欢离合的忧愁诗意。作品中的“世间”往往体现在背景中影影绰绰、出其不意的风景里，似乎总是飞驰而过，难以捉摸。这些风景落在相拥、触碰、爱抚和缠斗着的人影身后，悄然流露出大自然那令人彷徨的无限，有时看似毫无空间和环境的指涉，但却充满了存在主义的意识。

在这些扁平却厚重的空间里，互相缠绕的形体几乎成了某种色彩和节奏语言的能指和所指，而这种表达不可避免地走向抽象。泰尔迪在视觉传达上的表现力也恰恰体现在他将纷至错落的人物形象编排成和谐而抽象的群像的超凡能力。人体的拟古风貌令人想起意大利文艺复兴前期的艺术家，例如马萨乔（Masaccio）和乔托（Giotto）。同时也令人想起时间上离我们更近的美国波普艺术中被重复和简化到极致的日常形象，重复和有节奏的改动使其具有同样的抽象效果。

在仔细观赏之下，泰尔迪重新组合和缝制的人体具有造型艺术的实质，天然地带有雕塑的立体性。因此，他对于陶艺的青睐也显得顺理成章。展览中的赤陶雕塑和深浮雕系列是泰尔迪于 2022 年夏季在意大利阿尔比索拉创作的，他在当地历史悠久的陶器作坊埃尔南设计工作室（Ernan Design Studio）生活和工作了一个月，探索这一古老的技艺。阿图罗·马提尼（Arturo Martini）和卢西奥·丰塔纳（Lucio Fontana）等名垂青史的现代和当代艺术家都曾在这个作坊里进行创作。这非但没有令泰尔迪感到紧张胆怯，反而启发他以一种谦逊坦诚的态度去直面造型艺术的具体性和相关对话。马提尼对于泰尔迪尤其具有启发性，他自称是“二十世纪的伊特鲁里亚人”，他的作品引导泰尔迪关注人物形象和身体。泰尔迪作品中的人物如毕加索画中的杂技演员一般，对自身的命运茫然不知。

而对于上个世纪三十年代形而上学派的艺术，泰尔迪用当今的极度现代性来回应。他的陶制作品和织物作品类似，赤陶素胚未经上釉或彩绘，保留了陶土的原色，他以材料的纯粹性为出发点，探讨人体的形式、立体性和基本线条之间的关系。在浮雕作品中，艺术家在雕刻形象轮廓时出手坚定果断，在视觉探索上达到了新的境界，在织物拼贴的基础上融入了巧妙的构图。材料的真实性与艺术家手工的真实性之间确立了一种直接的关联：缝制布料的手正是控制、雕刻和抹平黏土的另一双手。

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