

Dedicate to the memory of my father  
献给我的父亲

*Son of the Secret Wind*, 2013  
pencil, watercolor on paper  
29.5×21 cm

# ENCHANTED NATURE REVISITED

MICHELE  
CIACCIOFERA

Published on the occasion of the exhibition  
*Enchanted, Nature, Revisited*  
CAFA Art Museum, Beijing  
26 july – 11 september 2016

Exhibition curated by Wang Chunchen

Supported by Matteo Crovetto

Publication  
Editors: Christine Macel, Wang Chunchen, Hans Ulrich Obrist

Editorial coordination  
Gao Gao, Derek Dai

Chinese translation  
Zhang Dikang, Zhang Yili

Graphic design  
Walter Silvestrini

Digital imaging and printing  
Beijing Yui He Ming Yang Printing Company

Photo credits  
Marc Domage Copyright © 2016  
Hu Zhiheng

Printed in July 2016

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Diego Bernardi, Andrea Blanco, Claudia Ciacciofera, Su Hsia,  
Chen, Angelo Crespi, Matteo Crovetto, Derek Dai,  
Christine Macel, Davide Micciulla, Hans Ulrich Obrist,  
Hu Zhiheng, Chen Wen

# Contents

## 目录

- 8**     **The visual poetics of Nature: art of Michele Ciacciofera / Wang Chun-chen**  
视觉的自然诗学 —— 关于Michele Ciacciofera的艺术 / 王春辰
  
- 16**    **Ciacciofera: multifaceted works of art / Christine Macel**  
乔尔乔费拉: 多面的艺术 / 克里斯汀·马萨尔
  
- 24**    **A dialogue with Hans Ulrich Obrist**  
与汉斯·乌尔里希·奥布里斯特的对话
  
- 43**    **Catalogue**  
作品
  
- 141**   **Biography**  
艺术家简介



**The visual poetics of Nature:  
art of Michele Ciacciofera**

Wang Chun-chen

**视觉的自然诗学**

**——关于 Michele Ciacciofera 的艺术**

王春辰

# The visual poetics of Nature: art of Michele Ciacciofera

Wang Chun-chen

Michele Ciacciofera's creations embody the poetics of Nature, an eloquent lyricism full of meaning. Many things may appear to be simple and easily understood because we believe in the action of seeing. We judge and come to quick conclusions because we glance over things hastily. For instance, travel writings and reviews of fine art are usually based on what the writer or reviewer sees, making what the eyes see the essence of art. This is the fundamental definition of visual art. Thus the mind is in a considerably enfeebled state.

However, it has become increasingly clear in our modern age that art cannot be justified by seeing alone. The action of seeing itself cannot define what is artistic. Seeing alone can become dangerous. Furthermore, seeing isn't the decisive element of history. We find ourselves in an awkward situation when confronted by contemporary art. Even though we are used to seeing unfamiliar art, we still feel that a passage of seeing is blocked.

This is what we feel when we view the works of Michele Ciacciofera, which include drawings, paintings, ceramics, objects and installations. At first glance, the works do not tell their origin or story when assembled together. Your past viewing experiences don't prepare you. You don't understand these works immediately. Their forms are simple but do not make reference to modernism. In other words, it's impossible to interpret them with Duchampian, ready-made concepts. The paintings and objects do have stories. The question is whether they remain unknown to us.

In truth, our understanding or interpretation is the product not only of the various standards and values of contemporary art, but also of the way we perceive art and the artist. It takes time to look at Ciacciofera's art, and it takes time to overcome barriers that seem familiar yet strange to us. These pieces seem familiar because every element is found in the domain of art. The works never shock, provoke or exaggerate, but they seem strange and incomprehensible because they prevent you from understanding and making judgments. We can say that this way of viewing is more than seeing, that the visual appreciation is not the same as perception and interpretation.

Ciacciofera refers to his work as "enchanted of the revisited Nature," with an emphasis on the "enchanted." The enchanted exists in his work, pointing out its signification, which is also the signification of this world. It is a way of creating and understanding art, a way of circumventing the rigid system of modernism and contemporary art. Rediscovering the significance is not just the sense of art, but also the sense of the world as well.

With Ciacciofera, his art is a reflection of his life. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to revisit the enchanted of Nature, or to acquire perceptions of everything. In an interview, Ciacciofera talked about his place of birth, Sardinia, Sicily, and his family. His reflections demonstrate his deep interest in the country of his origin and family roots and how this impacted his work.

In such context, we reconsider his work, where small sized painting, pottery clay or collected objects become testimonies of an archaeology of life, an affirmation not of art, but of memory. They do not affirm an aesthetic problematic, but the value of the politics of living. In larger circumstances, his work is a gift of Nature, coming with each mystical discovery. Whatever it is, trilobites or fragments, an instant of a human body or something else, they indicate absolute allegories and specimens of the transcendental world. Ciacciofera is an adventurer who reflects on ultimate problematics with objects, not a mannerist of imagery.

He invites us to read rather than look. So let's read the titles of his work: Confession of a Limestone, Everybody was One or the Other, At Times There was Sun, and Then Shadow Again, From Confusion to Particularity, A Knowledge of the Existence of Something We Cannot Penetrate, No More Delays, A Cloud Turn to Words, A Critical Difference, The Translucent Skin of the Present, An Illusion that Would Be Known by All Those Observing it, Something Seemed Different This Time Around, From the Eternity of Life, Rock Containing a Language, The Phylogenetic Investigation, The Dark Side of the Leaf, It Can Easily Seem Bizarre to Say That This is Just the Conception of a Mind, Unbroken Silence, Can't you See I'm the Queen, A Tale from Sicily, The Temporary Sense of Being No Longer Just Yourself, He Loves Fairy Tales and Nature Walks, Give Me Truth, Sublimity of a Human Aim,

I am to Speak, Step into a Life of Maybe, A Point of View in Daily Life, I Want to Sing Like Birds Sing, Something That Had Landed Up There, The Bee's Empathy, The Bee's Book, Ancient Astronaut Theory, Infinite Link, I've Been Around the World Several Times, Vanishing Voices, Chance and Magic... A series of titles that express the broadness and profoundness of the artist's reflections.

The titles do not differ from the content of the writings, but reveal the implication behind the visual within the material form. This is also the responsibility of today's artist: title and work compose the same verse, a duo that is intimately interconnected. Ciacciofera's titles show us that our world is filled with enigma and spirit, and that the artist's mission is to explore the depths under the surface. All things are given by Nature, that's why the enchanted is sacred and inviolable. It is true that Michele Ciacciofera develops a study of the poetics of Nature, to thoroughly investigate things with an aspiration for the sublime.

Returning to Nature and its poetics, far beyond the aesthetic concepts, means that the verifiable aesthetics reside in the humanist poetics of Nature. We shall testify with history and earn shelter and grace from the poetics of Nature.

One of the values of art is the enhancement of the poetics and the comprehension of the *raison-d'être*. Revisiting of Nature with Michele Ciacciofera is walking towards the spiritual out from under the visual.

# 视觉的自然诗学

## ——关于Michele Ciacciofera的艺术

王春辰

Michele创造的作品是一个关于世界的自然诗学，它们富有内涵而意味深长。也许这个世界有很多东西，看起来好像很简单，好像我们都可以看懂。这是因为我们相信“看”这个行为，便开始对很多事物轻下结论，以走马观花的姿态来对世界发出判断的声音。譬如，世界上那些游记、那些观感，特别是在艺术领域，常常是以观看为第一原则，常常以眼睛为艺术的根本。这也是所谓视觉艺术的命名基础。在此，心（Mind）的作用被大为降低和削弱。

但是在现代以来，艺术作为命名，越来越不是观看所能决定的，“看”的行为本身再也不能决定一件艺术的事情。

“看”本身越来越变得脆弱和危险，而且被历史所决定的也不是“看”本身。这是当今的艺术或作品出现在我们面前时所遭遇的境况，也是艺术命名遭遇到挑战的境况，尽管我们已经储备了那么多的艺术经验，但是遇到陌生的“艺术作品”时仍然感受到视觉观看的通道被阻隔了。

这就是当我们遇到Michele的作品的时候所感受到的，它们有绘画、有陶艺、有物件、有装置，但是它们聚到一起，并没有从第一眼的视觉上告诉你这些东西的原委和故事，甚至也是你固有的艺术观看经验所不能发挥效力的。因为Michele的作品并不是那种直接看到即明白的作品。它们看似构形单纯简单，不是在为现代主义做注解；或者他的那些物品，不能用杜尚一样的现成品概念去解读它们。这些绘画的或物品的作品是都有故事的，问题是我们不了解这些背后的故事。

其实，这涉及到当代艺术的多种形式的价值观，涉及到我们如何认识艺术的概念和作为艺术家的行为。看Michele的作品需要时间，需要克服看似熟悉但又陌生的障碍。看似熟悉，是因为它们的每个环节、每个笔触、每个形态都在艺术的范围内；它们不惊天不动地，也不夸张。看似陌生，是

因为它们阻隔了你去理解它们的通道，让你不能瞬间判断它们为何物。或者说，这种看到不等于看见，其视觉观看距离作品的理解阅读还很遥远。Michele将自己的作品称作“重游自然之魂”，重点在于“魂”（enchanted）。这个“魂”存在于他的作品中，决定了他的作品的意义所在。这也是今天创作艺术、理解艺术的必要途径，是超越那种僵化的现代主义与当代艺术模式的一种方式。重新寻找意义不仅是艺术的意义所在，也是这个世界的意义所在。作为生活的Michele是与作为艺术家的Michele合为一体的，否则他不会重游自然之魂，他也不会从自己的人生经历中获得世界的感知。他在对话中讲述了他的出生地Sardinia，讲到了他成长的西西里，讲到了他的家庭故事，讲到了他的阅读思考，特别是那些有关历史的记忆，都化作了他去寻找故地、寻找历史痕迹的见证。

有了这样的艺术家上下文，再次面对了这些作品，无论小幅的绘画，还是烧制的陶器，亦或收集到的物件，都成为生命考古的物证。它们所证明的不是艺术，而是生命的记忆，它们肯定的价值不是美学先导的问题，而是生命政治的价值。在更大的场域里，它们是大自然的馈赠，是艺术家Michele发现的每一个神秘存在，不论它们是什么，是三叶虫，还是碎片，或是人的身体的一瞬间，或是其他，都是这个最神秘的世界的终极隐喻和代表。Michele是用物品思考终极问题的探险家，不是视觉的美化者，他带给我们的，不是去看，是去用心读。我们来读一读他的作品的题目：“石灰石的忏悔”、“每个人都是自己或他人”、“曾经有太阳，然后阴影又来了”、“从混乱到特殊”、“我们无法穿透某些存在的知识”、“一朵乌云变成词语”、“时间的问题”、“统一的变量”、“批评的差异”、“当下的透明皮肤”、“幻觉将被所有观察它的人所认识”、“此刻看起来存有差异的东西”、“来自生命的永恒”、“蕴含了语言的石头”、“种类史调研”、“树叶的黑暗一面”、“说这就是头脑的观念肯定是非常奇

怪的”、“没有打破的沉默”、“难道你没有看见我就是女王吗”、“绝非一般含义”、“重游自然之魂”、“西西里的故事”、“不再仅仅是你自己的暂时感觉”、“他喜欢童话故事和乡野漫步”、“告诉我真相”、“人类目标的崇高感”、“我要说话”、“迈入可能性的生活”、“日常生活的视点”、“我想像鸟儿一样歌唱”、“已经上升到那里的东西”、“蜜蜂的移情”、“蜜蜂之书”、“古代宇航员理论”、“无限的链接”、“我已经环绕世界好几次了”、“逐渐消失的声音”、“机会与魔法”等等，它们已经足够地写出艺术家对世界的思考之广和之深。这些题目的命名并非脱离开作品，而是以作品的物质形式来揭示视觉背后的意义。这也是今天的艺术家要不惮于命名的责任，作品题目与作品是密切相连的共同体互文，而不是各自分离。这些题目显示出这个世界充满着神秘，又遍布了圣神的那一面，艺术家要探寻的是超越于表象的那一种深刻和那一种崇敬。所有的一切都是大自然所馈赠的，所以自然之魂是神圣的、不可侵犯的。可以说，Michele是以自然诗学来审视万物，以神圣的崇高为本源追求。

回到自然及其诗学，远远高于美学概念，而真正的美学则是人本的自然诗学。故此，我们今天必当以历史作证，向自然诗学获得庇护和恩典；艺术其价值之一便是在自然诗学中升华，获得其存在的理由。Michele的重游自然即是走向超越视觉之外的魂魄之在。

2016年7月10日于北京中央美术学院

Following page:  
*Flowing alone into the blue space*, 2016  
Acrylic and gold pigment on canvas,  
150x200 cm



**Ciacciofera:  
multifaceted works of art**

Christine Macel

**乔尔乔费拉：多面的艺术**

克里斯汀·马萨尔

# Ciacciofera: multifaceted works of art

Christine Macel

Just like the insects that he observes, collects and sometimes evokes in his drawings, Ciacciofera seems to scrutinize the world through multifaceted eyes, which explore reality in all its vastness. This penetrating, all-encompassing gaze, prevents him from lingering on any single aspect of this reality, as if for him every element of thought or matter were part of a seamless whole. His way of working cannot be circumscribed within a single outline or model. It develops organically, just like the flow of life itself, sometimes producing surprising turnarounds and new starting points. His work, if we want to continue with this comparison, could be described as resembling those mirror balls that cannot be confined within a given limit, since they are able to reflect, through their movement, the light that reaches them and to project it into multiple small squares all around them. This liquid nature of Ciacciofera's work is also made up of contrasts and paradoxes. Delicate and subtle, it sometimes evokes a violence and a dark profundity. Sophisticated and fragile, it also possesses all the strength of the earth and the solidness of antique stones. As the artist himself declares, this strength could come from the sum of multiple fragilities<sup>1</sup> in a process of transforming vulnerability into affirmative power.

The work does not proceed in terms of series, but rather ensembles or, more precisely, multitudes, eventually linking with one another. Ciacciofera unfurls such multitudes, he lets them rest, then resumes them, moves away and re-approaches them, with no notion of temporality or logical progression. The faces, or rather the masks, which for years have constituted a seamless ensemble of otherness, the bodies of prisoners or victims of torture, the bodies in which male and female are merged, the fragments of bodies that sometimes seem to be falling, the circles and oval forms that often appear two by two, the crows, the marine animals or the insects, which are often indistinctly combined with each other: according to the artist, all these multitudes appear and reappear in his work as if he were resuming an interrupted

book, without worrying about its reading order. Likewise in his artistic practice, the time of a work comprises both what goes before and what comes afterwards, within a continuum in which the outcome is nothing more than the embodiment of a moment of experience. In a certain sense his body of works should not be described as timeless, which would mean confining it to a line of works that look to the 'universal' or what remains of that utopia, but as an example of non-time, as if time itself did not exist. As if the foraged mushroom, coated in clay, with its ancient appearance, flanked the fossilized crustacean and the quick graphite sketch on paper produced yesterday. The infinitely old and the present, the living and the inert come together in a single dimension, in an anarchist relationship to time. Anarchy is actually a term then lends itself well to the work of Ciacciofera, who prefers to refer in his work to emotional states, refusing to withdraw into his vast and insightful cultural background or in his past and present environmental and political commitments. "I am not a fan of barriers between conceptualization and emotion,"<sup>2</sup> he states, using all mediums equally, without limits, reaching out to cooking as a natural continuation of sculpture or pottery. Every matter he tackles is therefore transformed through the filter of his sensibility, which associates, transforms and renews. Earth therefore receives gold dust, while rice receives saffron or strawberry juice.<sup>3</sup>

This sensibility could be described as epidermal, both because of its reactive quality, but also as regards the tactile dimension of his works, particularly his works on paper, which he treats like a skin. Ciacciofera uses paper sourced from different countries, from Sicily to Tibet. This research forms part of his personal anthropological studies, it is inscribed in his Mediterranean dna, as a man born in Sardinia and raised in Sicily, among the nuraghi, the Greek temples and the fragments of antique pots that sometimes still emerge from the beaches. From the prehistoric caves of Somalia to the houses in the city of

---

<sup>1</sup> Ageless works bound to live in the future too. Cf. interview by Christine Macel with the artist 'Scrutare il mondo, colpire con l'arte', exhibition catalogue I Hate The Indifferent, Summerhall, Edinburgh, December 2014–March 2015.

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. op.cit.

<sup>3</sup> op.cit: in the above mentioned interview the artist evokes the way he made a strawberry risotto.

Sana'a in Yemen, described by Pierpaolo Pasolini as the most beautiful city in the world, Ciacciofera explored the world, its seas and deserts, with a passion for silent places. He has always cultivated a natural relationship with local cultures and with the anthropological dimension of these cultures, which have induced him to defend some of their traditional and environmental claims. On the contrary, in his extensive travels through deserts, from Algeria to Iran and the United States, he was searching for an experience in which the absolute and the spiritual put themselves forward as a need. All these experiences garnered by the artist now seem to be accumulated and layered in his work.

Effectively speaking, Ciacciofera involves the viewer through an intimate relationship with the matter, which seems to receive all the real and mnemonic impressions of these temporal strata. His studio is currently presided over by a 450-million-year-old crustacean, which seems to have been there forever, anticipation and contemporary to the paintings, drawings and sculptures all crammed closely together, rather like in a cabinet of curiosities, as if the artist could not help but recreate the anarchy he loves so much.

Ageless works bound to live in the future too.

# 乔尔乔费拉：多面的艺术

克里斯汀·马萨尔

正如同他观察、收集的那些有时作为他绘画灵感来源的昆虫，乔尔乔费拉似乎能用多面体的眼睛来观察这个世界，探索浩瀚的现实。这种渗透式、全方位的视觉防止他被现实的单层面所迷惑和徘徊，似乎对他来说，每一个思想或事件都是构成一个无缝的整体的一部分。他的工作方式不能被一种轮廓或模式所限制。它有机地发展，正如生命的流动，有时还会产生一些惊人的转变和新的起点。如果我们继续这种比喻，他的作品就如同多面的镜面球，不能被限定在既定的界限内，通过自身的运动，它能够反射出接触到它的光线，并在它们身旁投射成无数小方块。然而这种流动性的作品特质也是由其中的反差和悖论构成的。它精美又微妙，有时却能唤起暴力和黑暗的深度。它复杂又脆弱，但又拥有地球上所有的力量和远古岩石的坚固。艺术家自己宣称，这种力量来自于弱点转化为坚定的力量这一过程中多种脆弱性的总和<sup>1</sup>。

乔尔乔费拉的作品不以系列进行，而是一个集体，或者更精确地说，是一个多元性的集体，最终彼此联结。他展示这种多元性，安置它们，再重新整理，把它们移开又靠近，全然没有时间或逻辑性发展的概念。那些面孔，或者说是面具，经过多年已经构成了一种紧密结合的另类/他者的集合，囚犯或酷刑受害者的身体，男性和女性融合的身体，那些摇摇欲坠的身体碎片，时常两两出现的圆形和椭圆图形，还有乌鸦、海洋生物或昆虫，它们暧昧不明地组合在一起；如艺术家所言，这些多样的元素不断重复出现，就好像他在恢复一本被中断的书，而不必担心它的阅读顺序。同样，在他的艺术实践中，作品的时间是包含过去和将来的，这种时间连续性的结果无非就是瞬间经验的具体化呈现。在一定的意义上，他的作品不能被形容为永恒的，那样将把

他的作品限定为关于“宇宙的”或是所谓乌托邦的作品。他的作品可看作为一种“无时间”的例子，就像时间本身是不存在的。比如，他将找到的蘑菇涂上泥土，蘑菇古老的外表，以及它两侧的甲壳动物化石和纸上的石墨速写共同创造了昨天。在无政府主义者的对于时间的关系中，过去与现在、充满生机的与死气沉沉的在同一维度中走在了一起。无政府状态，正是一个很适合形容乔尔乔费拉作品的词，他更喜欢将他的作品归诸于情绪的状态，拒绝回归到他那巨大和深刻的文化背景或是他过去和现在关于环境和政治的任务中。他曾说“我并不着迷于概念化和情绪性之间的隔阂”。<sup>2</sup>他毫无限制地、平等地使用所有媒介，将烹饪视作雕塑或陶艺的自然延续。他处理的每一件事物因此通过他的感性的过滤，而连结、变形和更新。因此，泥土混合着金粉，大米混合着藏红花和草莓汁<sup>3</sup>。

这种感性可以被形容为是表皮的，既是因为它的反应性特质，也是因为他作品在触觉方面的维度，特别是他的纸上作品，他将它们视作皮肤。乔尔乔费拉使用来自不同国家的纸，包括从西西里到西藏的纸。这些研究也形成了他个人的人类学研究的一部分，作为一个出生在撒丁岛、在西西里岛长大的男人，这些铭刻在他地中海出生的DNA中，在那些塔状建筑物（nuraghi）、希腊神庙和出现在海滩上的古董花瓶的碎片中。从索马里的史前洞穴到也门的萨那城，这些被皮埃尔·保罗·帕索里尼描述为世界上最美丽的城市，乔尔乔费拉以他对沉默之地的热情，探索世界，探索它们的海洋和沙漠。他一只注重培养与当地文化和这些文化在人类学的维度上的自然的关系，这激起了他捍卫这些传统和环境的需求。另一方面，在他广泛的旅行中，从阿尔及利

<sup>1</sup> 来自克里斯汀·马萨尔与艺术家的访谈，展览画册《我恨冷漠》，夏宫，爱丁堡，2014.12-2015.03。

<sup>2</sup> 参见前引

<sup>3</sup> 参见前引，在上述的采访中艺术家提起他制作一种草莓意大利炖饭。

亚到伊朗再到美国,他一直寻找一种经验,在其中,绝对和精神将自身上升为一种必需。所有这些经验,由艺术家收集而来,正在他的作品中不断累积和分层。

准确来讲,乔尔乔费拉通过与物质的亲密关系使观众牵涉其中,这种关系似乎包含所有对于世间万物的真实的和记忆中的印象。他的工作室目前正由一件450亿年的甲壳动物所占据,它似乎一直存在于那里,对于那些紧密排列在一起的绘画与雕塑作品,它先于它们,又与它们同属当代,就好像处于一屋子的好奇心之中,好像艺术家忍不住重新创造了他最爱的无政府主义状态。

永恒的作品注定生活在未来。

Following page:  
*The floating brain*, 2016  
acrylic, charcoal and spray paint on canvas,  
140x180 cm



**A dialogue with  
Hans Ulrich Obrist**

**与汉斯·乌尔里希·奥布  
里斯特的对话**

# A dialogue with Hans Ulrich Obrist

## **HANS ULRICH OBRIST: SO, ARE YOU PREPARING FOR A NEW EXHIBITION IN ITALY?**

MICHELE CIACCIOFERA: Yes, an exhibition that will be held in the new Primus Capital art space in Milan. I think of it as being like a preview for a much bigger show I will be holding at the CAFA Museum in Beijing in July. I have been working on the subject of memory for several years and I recently developed a new collection of works on the ancestral and contemporary relationship between humans and a kind of mysterious past, inscribed in our memory, which we often fail to recognize but which is part of us and has always governed the cosmic order.

## **YOU PAINT, DRAW AND SCULPT, AND YOU ALSO COLLECT POTTERY AND FOSSILS. HOW DID IT ALL START? HOW DID YOU COME TO ART? HOW DID ART COME TO YOU?**

I began when I was 4 years old. It was still something vague in my head, but I drew all the time. My family origins are twofold. My father's family is Sicilian and my mother's family is Sardinian. Art and culture are part of the family DNA on my mother's side. One of my mother's great aunts was a very well-known writer from Sardinia, Grazia Deledda.

## **OF COURSE, I'VE HEARD OF HER! SHE WON THE NOBEL PRIZE IN 1926. SO YOU GREW UP IN A LITERARY ENVIRONMENT.**

My great uncle was Salvatore Cambosu, another famous writer. I dedicated a work to him, some honeycombs turned into imaginary books, which I see as depositories for an ideal nature. Salvatore Cambosu inspired the work of another Sardinian artist whose work I really love, Maria Lai, who died a few years ago. I consider *Miele amaro* by Cambosu to be a real masterpiece: shortly after reading it I began to reflect and developed a great fascination with the incessant activity of bees. I think they're practically perfect creatures, emblematic of a higher order. Look at the structures created by bees. They're surprising and they are part of my vision of the order of the world and the universe. These objects recently inspired me to bring different organic materials together to make some books.

## **YOU ALSO PRODUCE SCULPTURES, POTTERY, INSTALLATIONS.**

Yes, I also produce pottery sculptures. For example, I recently made some ceramic pieces that in a certain way recall trilobites, a type of three-lobed fossil. I have some trilobites in my collection, but they primarily feature in my imagination. Collecting them is a kind of mania—they are beings/objects with what I believe to be a perfect shape, but science is not yet able to tell us everything about them, making them mysterious and fascinating. They led me to the philosophy of the scientist and Nobel prize winner for physics, Wolfgang Pauli, one of the fathers of quantum physics. Pauli discussed the question of the past with Carl Gustav Jung, saying that science develops ideas and theories that, at a certain point, cannot be explained further. This led his vision of things to draw closer to that of the Swiss psychiatrist, especially with regard to the theory of mankind's ancestral memory. I'm certain they were right. I have recently produced an abstract piece of pottery, which resembles a tree trunk with slender, wire-like branches. When doing some research on the internet, I came across a practically identical shape in a 450-million-year-old fossil.

## **IT IS AT THIS POINT THAT YOUR COLLECTIONS BECOME PART OF YOUR WORK. YOU COLLECT FOSSILS, AND ALSO INSECTS, IN PARTICULAR BUTTERFLIES.**

Yes, the work *From the Eternity of Life* features a fossil with a butterfly and an insect placed on top of it.

## **SO YOU COMBINE YOUR WORKS AND YOUR COLLECTIONS.**

Exactly. In *White Folk of the Earth*, you can see some terracotta beads secured to a wooden panel I found and then engraved with symbols, which I use extensively in my work. In *The Politics of World-Building* I used wax to join some honeycombs together. I like the relationship between materials, and what I really like is to put them back into play. Wax comes from nature, but then becomes a commercial product. I wanted to undo this shift from nature to industry. *Rock Containing a Language* contains a fossil with two leaves alongside elements I created by pulverizing some limestone.

**FOSSILS COULD BE DESCRIBED AS READYMADES. THEY'RE PART OF COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES, BUT THEY ALSO PROVIDE STARTING POINTS FOR YOUR ARTWORKS.**

Yes, they are both of these things. They act as an archive because they encompass memory, while on the other hand these fossils inspired me to start reconstructing forms that are also the result of the psychological processing of reality. In *Dream of a Sheidan Child*, I have pulverized some limestone and then reconstructed it with a bonding agent, adding some ink and acrylic paint. In fact, another thing that really interests me is the possibility to destroy and recreate something else to achieve a sort of order, which is naturally a mental order. For *Single-Hearted Endeavour* I used cement and sand to create a number of shapes, which I then engraved.

**IT'S MAGNIFICENT. HOW DOES IT WORK?**

I create a form that is normally quite typical, such as earthenware resembling a plate or a bowl. I recreate this form with cement mixed with pigments and dusts, including gold dust, but make some morphological changes, just as would occur in an alchemical process, and then I use a nail to engrave it with symbols. In my personal vision this is linked to language and the earth, as well as to the universe.

**THEY'RE COSMIC OBJECTS IN A CERTAIN SENSE.**

Certainly.

**HOW DO YOU DISPLAY THEM? THEY ARE OFTEN TRACES, COMBINATIONS OF FOSSIL ELEMENTS AND FRAGILE OBJECTS. DO YOU USE CABINETS?**

The smallest are normally in display cabinets. Otherwise I create white bases or opt for tables where I combine some of my works with fossilized sea urchins or trilobites, or stones found in the natural environment. Then I put them together. Meanwhile, my drawings on paper offer a parallel reading of this process.

Indeed. You never stop painting and drawing. This is a drawing that went on to inspire a kind of bas-relief, a piece created in limestone that was ground down and then reassembled, which I then inscribed with symbols, *Saturn's interiority* It was as if I was continuing the drawing process. I also created some movements when casting the material to create a surface that is never completely even. It's a bit like life, where irregularity is an ideal. I searched for natural elements, which I then treated with clay to turn them into something new. Obviously, these also feature in my drawings.

**YOUR SOURCES OF INSPIRATION INCLUDE CAMBOSU, LITERATURE, AND MANY OTHERS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE STRONG LINKS WITH LOCAL CONTEXTS. EDOUARD GLISSANT WRITES IN LA COHÉE DU LAMENTIN THAT WE CANNOT HELP BUT THINK ON A GLOBAL OR WORLD SCALE FROM A VIEWPOINT THAT IS PROBABLY EXTREMELY LOCAL. GLISSANT SPOKE OF A ROCK, WHICH WAS THE COHÉE DU LAMENTIN IN MARTINIQUE, AND FOR YOU IS SARDINIA. CAN YOU TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT IT?**

It's both Sardinia and Sicily.

**SO YOU HAVE A DUAL SOURCE OF INSPIRATION.**

Yes. I am often asked whether I'm Italian. Effectively speaking I was born in Italy, but I am rather son of two parts of Italy that do not resemble the other regions of the country at all. These two islands are poles apart. One of them, Sardinia, has a very important ancestral history with its *nuraghi* and the Shardana people, people of the sea who are still a mystery today. I spoke about them in Scotland during an exhibition, with Richard Demarco. Today Sardinia is deemed to be a very closed region. However, in ancient times the Sardinians, the Shardana people, used to travel everywhere: North Africa, France, England, Scotland, Ireland..., this is also part of my way of life. I have spent all my life travelling, going to different places, carrying out research. However, wherever I go, I continue to see things from a local point of view. My background in Political Sciences, specializing in sociology and anthropology, continues to be fundamental to my research. Since the age of 18 or 19 I have felt a stronger link with writers and anthropologists than with those working in my field, that is to say other young artists. I am very well acquainted with the circle of writers around Leonardo Sciascia and the anthropologist Nino Buttitta. When I lived in Sardinia, I often went out looking for inscriptions on stones, ancient symbolic writings. I have always tried to bring these symbols back up to date. I have memorised this sort of abstract graffiti, which has only been partially deciphered, in order to find its meaning. I associate it with everyday things. One day, walking in the countryside around one hundred kilometres outside Paris, I found some stones on the ground. They had a very special shape, which recalled the Great Mothers in my mind. These stones enabled me to establish a reconnection with my context and my origins.

**YESTERDAY I SAW BERNARD LASSUS, THE GREAT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT WHO TURNS 86 TODAY. HE SPOKE TO ME ABOUT HIS IDEA THAT WE ANALYSE IN ORDER TO INVENT. THEREFORE, TO QUOTE MARCEL BROODTHAERS, WE TAUTOLOGISE, PRESERVE, SOCIOLOGIZE, WITH FOUND OBJECTS—TRACES, INSECTS, COLLECTIONS, ETC. WE USE ALL THIS AS A BASIS FOR INVENTION. IS THIS THE CASE FOR YOU TOO?**

Exactly. I memorised the engravings on the stones so as to reinvent them or bring them up to date. I use the expression 'bring up to date', because my vision is closely linked to the contemporary world. For me, memory is a mosaic that allows us to manipulate time, going beyond the limits of mankind. Man's greatest limit is death and so I seek to go beyond this.

Invention entails reusing materials that have nothing to do with the past, in order to construct something that communicates with these objects I collect, or others that I simply look at. The creation of a dialogue that does not seek to find answers. I don't look for answers, but instead prefer questions to be triggered by my work.

**LET'S LOOK AT THE PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS.**

I create the large paintings with lots of layers of material, which often contain an element that resembles certain animals or things. A good example is *I've Been Around the World Several Times*, that canvas with the bubbles, in which I feel myself to be incorporated. These bubbles evoke the human condition, in which glimpses of drawing can be seen. My work is always based on drawing.

**WHERE DOES THE LINK WITH POTTERY COME FROM? I KNOW THAT IN ITALY THE ALBISSOLA POTTERY WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE AVANTGARDES OF SITUATIONIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE COBRA GROUP WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN LIGURIA. ASGER JORN WAS THE ONE WHO DID THE MOST WORK WITH POTTERY. DO YOU LOOK BACK TO THIS CONTEXT, OR DOES THE INSPIRATION FOR YOUR POTTERY COME FROM YOUR ISLANDS?**

It actually comes from my islands, particularly Sicily. Just think of Caltagirone, Sciacca, and all the pottery production during the Greek period... Sicily is fundamental, a real open book when it comes to the history of pottery. I have always handled clay in the countryside, so it was a natural process. I was always fascinated by potters and this is another reason why I started collecting antique pottery. The emotions they trigger in me have enabled me to create something new. This Mediterranean context also inspired my use of gold in my works on paper.

**DOES THE INSPIRATION TO USE GOLD COME FROM SICILY OR SARDINIA?**

From Sicily. The difference between Sardinia and Sicily lies predominantly in the fact that Sicily is an open and rich island, while Sardinia is a very reserved, closed island, with rules that need to be deciphered. Sicily places everything on the table. In my drawings I use different kinds of paper with very little colour, but there are often traces of gold dust to be found. On my canvases, which I lay out on the floor, I instead apply hundreds of layers of water, which leave limescale behind as they dry.

**AS REGARDS THESE GLAZES, LAYERS OR MULTIPLE STRATA IN YOUR WORK, THE PREHISTORIC CONTEXT AND THE ALMOST ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS, I THINK THERE IS A LINK BETWEEN THE GREAT ACCELERATION OF TODAY'S WORLD AND THE LONG TERM. I GET THE IMPRESSION YOU'RE STRONGLY INTERESTED IN THESE LONG DURATIONS.**

I'm interested in time in general, and therefore also in long durations. In fact, the layers in my work are like fragments of stories, hence the relationship with time that I have always wanted to be able to manipulate. It is their conceptual link with time that, according to my way of thinking, transforms them into deposits of memory, magical talismans of a sometimes parallel world on which I seek to mark out a human message that forms part of the history of the cosmos and is targeted at the future. My interest in memory is born out of several considerations, but first and foremost out of the awareness that our identity is the history of the generations that preceded us, written and told in and by the system of tangible and imaginary symbols that represent it. To this I want to add, by way of an example, something that I believe to be strongly linked to what I said before: ever since the unification of Italy in 1860, ongoing attempts have been made to wipe out dialects. There are twenty regions and therefore twenty or more different languages and cultures. For example, in Sardinia, the real Sardinia is deemed to be the central part of the island where I was born, Barbagia. The rest of the island is a bit different. So, in both Sardinia and Sicily, several islands exist alongside one another within the islands themselves. There are different languages, different symbols, and all of this is very fragile. By this I don't mean it is all disappearing, but I think that today the language of art can seek to recover linguistic values. Deep down, languages are symbols, pillars of identity, which are threatened with extinction, but which can be relaunched as part of a harmonious temporal vision, in keeping with art.

**DEFINITELY. THE SPECTRE OF EXTINCTION IS VERY PRESENT, NOT ONLY FOR DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, BUT ALSO FOR HUMAN BEINGS. LET'S TAKE BEES AS AN EXAMPLE, AS THEY FACE THE RISK OF EXTINCTION. AS THE ARTIST GUSTAV METZGER SAID, WE ARE EXPERIENCING A SORT OF POTENTIAL MASS EXTINCTION. AN EXTINCTION NOT ONLY AS END OF OUR EXISTENCE, OF OUR PERSONAL LIFE, BUT POTENTIALLY THE EXTINCTION OF OUR SPECIES. IT IS AN EXTINCTION OF MICROORGANISMS SUCH AS BEES, BUT ALSO A CULTURAL EXTINCTION. AS SUSAN HILLER DEMONSTRATES IN HER MAGNIFICENT FILM ON LANGUAGES<sup>1</sup>, LANGUAGES DISAPPEAR EVERY DAY.**

It's true. Going back to bees, their construction processes are the result of agglomeration. Bees' nests are the result of these incessant processes. This continuity is comparable to the history of humanity. As regards history, I think it necessary to seek to frame it within a process, a continuity that has to consider the past in order to be able to bring things up to date and, as I said before, to be able to look to the future. Here is a piece of 13th-century Sicilian pottery from my collection (fig. 6). Drawing helps me explore it and, although my drawings and this piece are in relation to one another, the production of the former is independent from the latter. I see something in pottery, which subsequently becomes integrated with and comes back to my memory and my story. This is how my creative process starts.

**THE IDEA IS THAT THE FUTURE CAN BE INVENTED WITH FRAGMENTS OF THE PAST.**

Exactly. I am not looking for perfect objects. I am looking for things that are testimonies of life, things that are depositories of the past, depositories of a story. That which I call memory is, effectively speaking, the direct line that helps me look to the future.

**WHERE ARE YOUR COLLECTIONS?**

The pottery is in my studio in Sicily, although I would like to bring it to Paris. The trilobites are in France, because I often need them. It's not a physical need, but a mental requirement.

**THIS IDEA OF LONG DURATION OR OF LONG TERM IN AN INCREASINGLY FAST-PACED WORLD ALSO TAKES US BACK TO THE SUBJECT OF SLOW FOOD. I READ THAT YOU WERE A SLOW FOOD PARTNER.**

I've always been interested in food and I love cooking. Many years ago, a left-wing movement developed in Italy called *Arcigola*—originally affiliated with *Arci*, a cultural association with close ties to the country's

biggest progressive party. There were very few of us to start with, just a few hundred people. I was very interested in the question of cultural research into food and wine, the produce of the land, and, above all, small-scale local production, which was totally opposed to the large-scale production chains. Sicily and Sardinia both boast a very important gastronomic culture and therefore this theme really gripped me. The movement went on to become global and I have never lost interest in it. Unfortunately the slow food philosophy is not very well-established in France. When in Sicily I always seek out small-scale producers and purchase their products in order to contribute to what was the original spirit of slow food.

**IT IS YOUR MOVEMENT TOO.**

(Laughs) I create a personal movement.

I also wanted to show you this pot from Caltagirone, dating to around the 16th century, which forms part of my collection. The Arabs arrived in Sicily before the 10th century and their presence was felt on the island for long, despite the arrival of the Normans. Then the Sicilians forgot Arabic writing and its characters. The decoration on this pot is called *Siculo-Arabic*; the potter had tried to create designs that recalled kufic characters, but without giving the object a complete meaning typical of writing. We spoke before about the disappearance of languages and here is an example, which is linked to visual memory through symbols and writing. This is why I am very attached to the book as an object too.

**WE ARE HOLDING AN INTERVIEW THAT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN A BOOK AND I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER THERE ARE ALREADY BOOKS ON YOUR WORK.**

There are several. One of them regards my visual interpretation of Goethe's journey to Sicily around three centuries ago, which was a twofold experience for me. The first was Goethe's journey and then his book, the other was the series of personal reflections that it aroused. I was struck by the meteorological description of Goethe's two-month journey around Sicily. In relation to climate change, about which we talk so much today, I wanted to assess the possibility of comparing the weather from the two eras, that of Goethe and the present day, in the same area and at the same time of year. I followed in his footsteps on the same dates to discover that there are not significant meteorological differences between then and now. Back then too there were major changes in weather conditions from one day to the next.

**GOETHE KNEW A LOT ABOUT ECONOMICS. I HAVE STUDIED ECOLOGY AND ECONOMICS AND I KNOW HE WAS IMPLICATED IN THE SAME**

**MATTERS VERY EARLY ON, WHEN HE WAS MINISTER FOR THE ECONOMY.**

It's true.

Two years ago I exhibited in the recently restored Palazzo Montalto, a 14th-century building in Siracusa. I placed four old tables with objects and drawings in a large room. These objects were pieces of pottery and found objects. For example, I had salvaged some bricks from a house being demolished and I put Indian ink and other materials on them. This was how I created the *Sicilian Footsteps* (fig. 8) series, building a story and giving a new life to these objects that had emerged from destruction. For another exhibition held in New York last year, at 20th Street Studio Pro-jects, I combined my own pottery with 16th-century Chinese pottery, grouping it together in cubic containers open at the front and hanging from the wall.

**WHEN YOU CREATE INSTALLATIONS BY COMBINING YOUR POTTERY WITH ANTIQUE POTTERY, DOES THE CHOSEN POTTERY BECOME PART OF AN ARTWORK OR DOES IT THEN GO BACK TO YOUR COLLECTION?**

It is part of the artwork.

**LIKE AI WEIWEI, WHO USED POTTERY SHARDS TO CREATE NEW PIECES. YOU PRODUCE NEW WORKS USING OLD PIECES. AS A RESULT YOUR COLLECTION DOESN'T GROW, BUT COULD ACTUALLY GET SMALLER.**

In effect the collection grows smaller (laughs). What's more, they're fragile objects, so there is also a chance they might break. The collection is never static, but is continuously in evolution. This is why I never stop looking for new objects and things in order to revive it within a dialogue with my works.

**WHAT ROLE DOES MEMORY PLAY IN ALL OF THIS? THESE FOOTSTEPS ARE EVIDENTLY SYMBOLS OF MEMORY. WE LIVE IN AN AGE IN WHICH WE HAVE MORE AND MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, BUT THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN MORE MEMORY. PERHAPS THIS IS WHY ART FOCUSES ON MEMORY.**

I find that the hyper-production of information in modern society tends to lower our level of perception and, above all, our grasp upon memory. More information in no way entails better information quality. Through memory, we naturally select everything that continues to have a meaning in our life. Everything irrelevant can be forgotten. Our head helps us to make this selection. The bombardment from the information society poses a risk that this

ability to be selective may decrease and our memory may become a space in which information is forcibly inserted; if we exceed the capacity limit we risk to lose also interesting information.

**WHAT AMAZED ME WHEN I WORKED IN MILAN WAS THAT THE ENTIRE CULTURAL CONTEXT, EVERYTHING EXTRAORDINARY THAT HAPPENED IN ART AND DESIGN IN THE 1960S, WAS CLOSELY CONNECTED TO CERTAIN MILANESE COMMUNIST BOOKSHOPS. THIS LINK WITH COMMUNISM SEEMS TO PLAY A ROLE IN YOUR WORK TOO.**

I was an activist when I was in high school. Italy was going through a very particular period in the 1970s, marked by great social tension, with all the power firmly in the grip of the Christian Democracy and the other central parties. The so-called *conventio ad excludendum*—an agreement to exclude the Communist party from the government—was something absurd. At the time I was fascinated by Enrico Berlinguer, who had attempted to break this circle of exclusion to restore the progressive ideas of the left to the heart of the country's decisions, by seeking political agreement and dialogue with the other dominant powers. At that time, I was also studying another person, who was also Sardinian like Berlinguer: Antonio Gramsci. Naturally I never met him in person, but his thinking strongly inspired my work. My admiration for these men has always led me to react against power.

In Italy, as you have rightly said, there were organizations that published books in Milan, and elsewhere too. This was the result of post-revolutionary dissatisfaction, if that is how to describe 1968, with subversive organizations such as the Red Brigades, which used violence and terror to try to change the state of things in their own way. All this failed to achieve anything, except for very bad memories of that period. However, I feel there was something positive in all of this, given that Italian young people played the biggest part in this political battle and were very active at the time. It was a very particular situation, as was also the case in other European countries, such as France and Germany which had activists and organizations with similar aims, although the Italian situation was far more explosive.

I have kept my ideas, although I have moved away from political activism.

**YOU HAVE LIVED THROUGH A PERSONAL DRAMA THAT BROUGHT YOU FACE TO FACE WITH A POLITICAL INTRIGUE. YOUR BROTHER ANTONIO WAS ASSASSINATED IN CUBA TWENTY YEARS AGO AND IT IS INCREDIBLE**

**THAT WHAT HAS JUST HAPPENED TO THE YOUNG GIULIO REGENI IN EGYPT IS ALMOST THE SAME SITUATION.**

I find the fact that the story is identical to be very disturbing. Even the fact that when the police told us about my brother's death they said it was a car accident. We only learned afterwards that he'd been tortured.

**IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME STORY. DID YOUR BROTHER GO TO CUBA FOR POLITICAL REASONS?**

No, my brother was a great traveller. He was a year younger than me and had been following a similar path. We never used violence, but we were heavily involved both intellectually and socially. We accepted the car crash story initially. It was only afterwards that we learned he had been tortured and his organs had been illegally explanted.

**WAS THIS DURING THE TIME OF FIDEL CASTRO?**

Yes. The judiciary opened an inquiry. Given the case, it was covered by the international press. Numerous questions for the Prime Minister were raised in the Italian parliament, but no conclusive answers were received and our family friend Leoluca Orlando, mayor of Palermo, wrote to Fidel Castro. Castro had sent out his ministers and officials several times to provide proof of the traffic accident. On each occasion, Interpol and the competent magistrate discarded as fakes these elements of proof, which included photomontages of the accident, video montages of the autopsy, false medical records, etc. It was a state affair and we were informed indirectly that it was a crime that had nothing to do with the accident. At that point Cuba decided not to provide any more assistance in establishing the truth and so the magistrate had to dismiss the inquiry. Cuba and its president imposed a silence that remains in place today.

**DID YOU NEVER FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED?**

No. We know he was tortured and his organs were illegally removed. We were only able to identify my brother through an X-ray of his teeth.

**THIS SEEMS ABSURD. HE DIDN'T GO TO CUBA AGAINST THAT GOVERNMENT.**

Absolutely not. As I have already said, we never considered using violence as a form of protest. Ideas and words are sufficient. In this case he was on holiday.

**IT WAS EVIDENTLY A DECISIVE EXPERIENCE IN YOUR LIFE.**

It had a great impact on my artistic production. After the death of my brother, of whom I was very fond, I

had a problem with myself and the rest of mankind. I emerged from this by producing a series of figurative portraits, which I worked on in secret for many years.

**YOU CHANNELLED YOUR GRIEF, IF THAT'S THE RIGHT WAY OF PUTTING IT.**

I produced the *Silence!* series. It was a paradoxical reflection on torture as an absolutely normal and acceptable part of human behaviour. I did all this with heads I produced. I used modern materials such as plastic and earth to obsessively create heads that looked around.

**VERY INTENSE. IN WHAT YEAR?**

Starting from 1998, that is to say four years after my brother's death. I needed a few years to process everything. I was so focused on this issue that one day I picked up a copy of the *International Herald Tribune*, which featured a photo on the front page of an American prisoner who had been tortured in Iraq. I looked at the photo, which was really beautiful, albeit dramatic, and I had the immediate impression that it was a false. That took me back to the photomontages produced by the Cubans.

**IT TOOK YOU BACK TO THOSE FALSE ONES.**

So I painted over the newspaper photo with red watercolour and exhibited it in New York in an exhibition at the Italian Cultural Institute. In this series of watercolours on newspaper pages, I re-established a connection between human suffering and the drama of torture. Just four or five years ago, an American soldier revealed that a planned series of photomontages was produced, to be shown to the world as a whole via the media, and they included this photo. I'd felt it immediately, at first glance.

**THE TRAUMA OF YOUR BROTHER'S DEATH LEAD YOU TO FIGURATION.**

Yes, it led me to figuration. I spent a certain number of years looking back at the pictures of my brother's autopsy and everything written in the police reports on the presumed accident. I created some images in my head on the basis of these documents. It was through this figurative process, linked to my work as an artist, that I managed to get through the most dramatic aspect of my life. I have to thank art, because it is thanks to it that I was able to get over Antonio's death and do not nurture hatred in my heart.

**SO, BY PROCESSING YOUR GRIEF YOU WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME IT.**

However, it was also a work at various levels.

**THIS IS WHAT MARLENE DUMAS SAYS TOO. SHE TALKS A LOT ABOUT HER STATE OF MIND WHEN**

### **SHE SPEAKS OF TORTURE, VIOLENCE...**

These memories continue to live on in my head, albeit in a slightly romanticized manner. The story of my brother's torture and death is linked to a more general story, to everything that happens in the world, to war in general, to the ongoing violations of mankind. All that continues to live inside me today, but eventually got over it. Art was a means for me, or even a real requirement, in order to be able to handle this experience. I didn't realize at the time, but drawing a given situation, writing, painting, taking photographs, and so on, had become almost an obsession. I did a fair bit of photography at the time, but I moved away from it after my brother's death and because of it. I had seen all the photographic documentation on his death and at that point photography became unacceptable for me.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY LIED TO YOU IN A CERTAIN WAY. PHOTOGRAPHY WAS USED AS A LIE. IS THERE ANYTHING WE HAVEN'T DISCUSSED? DO YOU DO PUBLIC COMMISSIONS? DO YOU HAVE ANY UTOPIAN PROJECTS, OR ANY PROJECTS THAT ARE TOO BIG TO MAKE? DO YOU HAVE ANY DREAMS, ANY PROJECTS THAT HAVE PROVED TOO EXPENSIVE... AS YOU MAY KNOW, A RECURRING QUESTION IN MY INTERVIEWS REGARDS PROJECTS THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN DEVELOPED.**

A few years ago I started working on the subject of migrations, but linking it to a utopia. Have you ever heard of *Atlantropa*?

### **NO, I KNOW OF ATLANTIS, THE PROJECT OF THE GALLERIST HANS-JÜRGEN MÜLLER IN GERMANY, WHO WANTED TO CREATE A SORT OF UTOPIA BEFORE HIS DEATH, BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD OF ATLANTROPA.**

It was the project of the German architect Hermann Sörgel. His wife was a gallery owner and she provided the financial backing for her husband's re-search into developing his utopia, namely *Atlantropa*. It was presented to the whole world in 1929 via the international press, and it featured a dyke to be built in the Straits of Gibraltar, and weirs in all the large rivers running into the Mediterranean, in order to cause the land in the basin to re-emerge through evaporation. On the one hand, the project wanted to reclaim land for agriculture, while on the other it aimed to create links between Europe and Africa in order to establish a single continent. Sörgel also foresaw the consequences of the climate changes that would derive from this large-scale evaporation and which would, in his opinion, succeed in reversing the processes of desertification. The massive public works needed to build the dykes and the connections

with Africa, in accordance with Sörgel's plan, would have taken the world economy out of the widespread crisis, resolving the employment problem which was particularly dramatic back then too, as well as the problem of energy production. In fact, the dykes were intended to be used as enormous hydroelectric plants. Perhaps, through the development of this utopia, the world would have been able to aspire to balances that are very different from those in place today.

### **HANS-JÜRGEN MÜLLER'S PROJECT, ATLANTIS, IS FROM THE 1980S AND I THINK IT MUST HAVE BEEN A REVIVAL OF ATLANTROPA.**

I think so too. *Atlantropa* was in 1929. Consider that one of Sörgel's assistants, picked to design the new cities, was Le Corbusier. The project involved a very interesting group of thinkers. However, Hitler had plans for Africa too, albeit plans of military conquest, and he therefore ordered the production of a film, which won an award at the Venice Film Festival, not for its quality I would imagine. Through his film, Hitler aimed to put a stop to the growing enthusiasm for *Atlantropa*. Sörgel continued to publish his books, so he was arrested by the Nazis. At the end of the war he carried on looking for financial backers in order to attempt the creation of this utopia. Unfortunately, while cycling to a conference in Berlin, he was hit by a car which drove off without stopping.

### **PERHAPS IT WAS MURDER.**

I'm sure it was an assassination. I was fascinated by *Atlantropa* as a large utopia, designed for the old Mediterranean, now at the centre of a huge crisis. I painted a watercolour for the *Atlantropa* installation, which would have been created with jute sacks, a large gilded ceramic olive, flags on the walls, also made from jute, and some honeycombs placed on small shelves.

### **SO, THIS WAS YOUR UTOPIAN PROJECT.**

Yes. Jute sacks are still used to transport goods between Africa and Europe. The flags are those of a country that does not exist, which does not need symbols or borders, just like the olive tree, represented through the gilded ceramic, which has been a plant of peace throughout the Mediterranean since antiquity. But, above all, it is the sublimation of the idea of the journey and this idea of utopia, embodied by the perfect product of the activity of bees, which represents my greatest dream: a peaceful world, without borders, in which the work of man and nature can live alongside one another in harmony. This dream was also interpreted in a major exhibition called 'Nel Mezzo del Mezzo' ('In the Middle of the Middle'), organized by three curators

(Christine Macel, Marco Bazzini and Bartomeu Mari),  
who developed my idea, inviting eighty artists to the  
Museo Riso and other places in Palermo last year.  
This is a utopia that has been achieved!



Artist's atelier in Beijing's CAFA

Previous page:  
*The floating brain*, 2016  
Acrylic, charcoal and spray paint on canvas,  
160x200 cm

# 与汉斯·乌尔里希·奥布里斯特的对话

**汉斯·乌尔里希·奥布里斯特(以下简称汉斯): 你目前正在筹备意大利的新画展吗?**

米凯勒·乔亚乔费拉(以下简称米凯勒): 是的,我们会在米兰新的博智资本艺术空间举办画展。我把这次画展当做今年七月在北京中央美术学院美术馆举办更大规模画展的一次预演。我已经在“回忆”这个主题上创作多年,最近又制作了一些这一系列新的作品。这些作品都是探讨人类与神秘过去之间存在的远古与现代的关系。这种关系深藏在我们的记忆中,尽管我们经常会忽略它们,但它们是我们生命的一部分并且一直支配着宇宙的秩序。

**汉斯: 你精通油画、水彩和雕塑,还收集陶器和化石。这一切是如何开始的?你是如何开始走上艺术道路的?艺术又是如何与你结缘的呢?**

米凯勒: 我从四岁开始接触艺术。从有记忆开始,我就一直在绘画。我的家族起源来自两部分,父亲家是西西里人,母亲家是撒丁人。艺术和文化是我母亲家族基因的一部分,我母亲的一位远房祖母就是来自撒丁岛的知名作家格拉奇娅·黛莱达(Grazia Deledda)。

**汉斯: 当然,我听说过她!黛莱达女士是1926年诺贝尔奖的获得者,这样看来你生长在一个文学氛围浓厚的家庭。**

米凯勒: 我的叔公也是一位有名的作家,叫萨尔瓦多·坎波索(Salvatore Cambosu)。我曾经将一部作品献给他,把一些蜂巢变成富有想象力的书籍,把大自然完美的保存起来。萨尔瓦多·坎波索启蒙过我钟爱的另一名撒丁岛艺术家玛利亚·莱(Maria Lai),她几年前已经去世。我认为坎波索的作品《亲爱的》(Mieleamaro)堪称一部真正的经典之作。最开始欣赏这部作品时,我的脑海里就浮现出蜜蜂辛

勤劳作的画面。我认为它们堪称完美的生物,是更高级秩序的象征。看看那些令人感到惊奇的蜂巢就能了解这一点。我心中的世界秩序有一部分就如同蜂巢一样。最近我还受它们的启发,将一些不同的有机材料集合起来做成书籍。

**汉斯: 你还创作雕塑、陶器和装置艺术。**

米凯勒: 是的,我还做一些陶器雕塑。比方说,我最近创作的一些陶瓷作品从某种程度上让人想起三叶虫,一种有三条肢体的动物化石。在我的收藏中有一些三叶虫化石,但它们主要还是存在于我的想象之中。收集三叶虫化石只是一种爱好——在我看来它们有一种近乎完美的形状,但是目前科学还不能告诉我们关于三叶虫的一切情况,这使得它们充满神秘感和想象。它们引导我接触到了量子物理学的创始人、科学家和诺贝尔奖得主沃尔夫冈·鲍利(Wolfgang Pauli)的哲学理念。鲍利和瑞士精神病专家卡尔·古斯塔夫·荣格(Carl Gustav Jung)讨论过关于“过去”的问题,他们主张科学发展和理论在某种程度上无法进一步解释历史。这就使鲍利对客观事物的看法接近瑞士心理学家荣格的主张,特别是关于人类先祖记忆的理论。我认为他们是正确的。我最近创作了一个陶制的抽象作品,一个类似有着纤细电线状枝杈的树干。在网上做研究时,我发现了一块4亿5千万年前的化石图片与我的作品形状极其相似。

**汉斯: 正因为如此你的收藏变成了作品的一部分。你收藏化石、昆虫,尤其是蝴蝶对吗?**

米凯勒: 是的。我的作品《来自生命的永恒》(From the Eternity of Life)中就有一块蝴蝶和昆虫的化石。

**汉斯: 所以你将你的作品和收藏完美的融合在一起。**

米凯勒: 的确如此。在《地球的白色族群》(White Folk of the Earth)中, 你可以看到赤陶土做的小圆珠被固定在木质方框中, 再刻上具有象征意义的符号。我在我的作品中多次使用这种方法。在《世界构建的政治学》(The Politics of World-Building)中, 我用蜡将一些蜂巢粘合在一起。我喜欢不同材料之间的关系, 但我真正喜欢的是再将它们整合在一起的过程。蜡来自于自然中, 但随后变成了商品, 我想要反转这个从自然到工业的过程。《包含语言的岩石》(Rock Containing a Language)就是我将石灰岩粉碎之后做成一个造型, 再与带着两片叶子的化石结合在一起的作品。

**汉斯: 化石可以被看作现成品, 它们是收藏和档案的一部分, 但它们也能为你的艺术作品提供一个起点。**

米凯勒: 是的, 化石的确具备这两个特点。它们当中包含历史, 因此具备作为档案资料的作用, 另一方面这些化石也激励我开始重塑化石的外形。对外形的重塑也是人们对现实世界的心理认知结果。在《施尔登孩子的梦》(Dream of a Sherden Child)这个作品中, 我粉碎了一些石灰石并用一些粘合剂重新塑型, 并且使用了一些墨水和丙烯颜料。实际上, 另一样引起我兴趣的是毁灭之后再创造其他新东西, 从而达到重建一种秩序的可能性。那是一种自然而然的心理秩序。在《诚挚的努力》(Single-Hearted Endeavour)这个作品中, 我使用了水泥和沙子来创造多个形状之后再行雕刻。

**汉斯: 真的很了不起! 那这个作品又是如何完成的呢?**

米凯勒: 首先我制作一个很普通的造型, 类似一个盘子或碗状的陶器。之后再用混合颜料和金粉的水泥重新进行塑型, 这和炼金过程有点类似, 但在形态上有所改变, 最后用钉子在上面刻上符号。在我看来, 经过这个创作的过程这个作品就与语言和泥土有了联系, 也就与宇宙联系在一起了。

**汉斯: 从某种程度上他们也是宇宙中的一部分。**

米凯勒: 当然是的。

**汉斯: 那你是如何来展示这些作品的? 它们通常都只有很小的体量, 与化石元素和易碎物品结合在一起。在展示的时候, 您会使用展示柜吗?**

米凯勒: 最小的一些作品通常都会单独放在小展示柜中。其他的我一般会做一个白色的基座或者选择桌子。在桌子上我会将我的作品和一些海胆或者三叶虫的化石, 或是在大自然中找到的石头放在一起。同时, 我将我的绘画挂在墙上, 也对这个过程做一些平行的解读。

**汉斯: 实际上, 你从未停止过创作油画和水彩画。**

米凯勒: 绘画可以发展成为一种浅浮雕。这种浮雕在石灰石上创作, 首先要全部碾碎再进行重新塑型, 最后在雕刻上符号, 如《土星的内部》(Saturn's interiority)这个作品。这就好像我在绘画的过程中, 用材料铸造一个不是水平的表面时, 我也会进行一些创新。这有点像生活, 不同寻常才是完美的。我到处搜寻自然的元素, 再用粘土处理, 把它们变成新的东西。很显然, 这些都是我绘画作品的特点。

**汉斯: 你的灵感来源包括坎波索、文学和其他因素, 这些来源都与一种当地文化有很深的关联。爱德华德·格里森特 (Edouard Glissant) 在“La Cohéedu Lamentin”中写过: 我们都难逃用一个极端地域性的视角看待和思考世界。格里森特谈到岩石, 就是马提尼克的Cohéedu Lamentin。对你来说可能就是撒丁岛, 能和我谈谈它吗?**

米凯勒: 既是撒丁岛也是西西里。

**汉斯: 所以你有双重的灵感来源。**

米凯勒: 是的。我经常被问及自己究竟是不是意大利人。确切的说, 我出生在意大利, 但我是受同一个国家中两个完全不同地区文化影响的孩子。这两个岛的文化完全不同。撒丁岛有关于努拉吉人和夏达纳人很重要的古代历史。这两种人都靠海而生, 至今仍然存在许多谜题。我在苏格兰的一次画展上曾经和理查德·迪马克 (Richard Demarco) 提到过他们。如今, 撒丁岛被认作是一个非常封闭的地区。然而在古代, 撒丁岛人早已习惯了到处旅行, 他们的足迹遍及北非、法国、英格兰、苏格兰和爱尔兰等地。这也成为我

生活方式的一部分，我的全部生活基本都在旅行，游历不同的地方进行研究。但是，不论我去到哪里，我始终还是用具有地域性的视角来看待事物。我的教育背景是政治科学，重点是社会学和人类学，这是我的研究的根本。自从十八九岁起，我感觉自己与作家和人类学家之间有强烈的联系，这种联系感远远强于在我这个领域的其他艺术家。我和作家莱奥纳多·西西亚 (Leonardo Sciascia) 的作家圈子以及人类学家尼诺·布梯塔 (Nino Buttitta) 的朋友圈都很熟悉。

我在撒丁岛居住时，我经常外出寻找刻在石头上的铭文和用古代象征符号写的文字。我一直在努力将这些符号带回到现在。我已经能记住这类抽象的涂鸦，并且部分内容已经被解密从而探知其中的意思。我将它们与日常事务关联在一起。有一次，我走在距离巴黎一百多公里的郊外时在地上发现一些石头，它们都有非常奇怪的形状，这使我想起了《伟大的母亲》(Great Mothers) 这个作品。这些石头让我重新建立起我与我的成长环境的联系。

**汉斯：昨天我看见了本纳德·来萨斯 (Bernard Lassus)，已经86岁高龄的景观建筑学家。他跟我讲起他的观点：我们分析是为了创新。因此，引用马塞尔·布达埃尔 (Marcel Broodthaers) 的话来说，我们用发现的这些物品 (痕迹、昆虫和收藏的物品等) 反复强调、保留并将其社会化。我们用这些作为创新的基础。你也这么认为吗？**

米凯勒：完全正确。我记录下这些刻在石头上的符号是为了重新创造它们或者将它们带回到现代。我使用了“带回到现代”这样的字眼，因为我的视角更接近当代世界。对我来说，回忆是马赛克，允许我们操纵时间，突破人类的极限。人最大的限制是死亡，所以我要在这一点上寻求突破。创新使得我们用与过去完全无关的材料来创造出能与我收集和发现的物品相互交流的作品。但创造这样的对话并不是为了寻找答案。我从不寻找答案，反而会更关注我的作品引发的问题。

**汉斯：让我们看一下这些画作。**

米凯勒：我用很多层原料作画，这些材料通常会包含一种类似某种动物或物体的元素。很典型的例子是《我已经来

到这世界很多次》(I've Been Around the World Several Times) 这个作品。这幅作品被泡泡覆盖着。我感觉自己和作品融为一体了。这些泡泡唤醒了人们的感受，作画的过程也能依稀可见。我总是在绘画的基础上再进行作品创作。

**汉斯：与陶器的联系又是从何而来呢？我知道在意大利，当情境主义画家和眼镜蛇小组 (Cobra group) 这些先锋艺术家到达利古里亚时，他们和阿比索拉陶器产生了一些关联。阿斯格尔·乔恩 (Asger Jorn) 是制作陶器作品最多的艺术家。你是否也考虑过这些背景因素，还是说你的灵感也来自您的家乡？**

米凯勒：它的确是来自我家乡的岛屿，特别是西西里岛。单想想卡尔塔吉龙镇 (Caltagirone)、夏卡镇 (Sciaccia) 和希腊时期的那些陶器作品，谈到陶器的历史时，西西里是源头，它是一本真正开放的书。我经常在乡村与粘土打交道，这已经变成了一个自然的过程。我总是被陶匠吸引，这也是我为什么开始收藏古代陶器的原因。这些陶器在我内心引发的情感激发我不断创新，这种地中海的文化氛围也激发我在纸质作品上使用金粉。

**汉斯：在作品中使用金粉这一创新也是来源于西西里或者撒丁岛吗？**

米凯勒：来源于西西里。西西里和撒丁岛之间最重要的不同点在于西西里是开放而且富有的岛屿，而撒丁岛却非常的保守和封闭，有很多有待解读的规矩。西西里人把什么都会摆在明面上。在我的画作里，我用不同的纸张和很少的色彩，但总是能找到金粉的痕迹。我把油画帆布铺在地上，再撒上很多层水，这样水干了之后就会留下水垢。

**汉斯：至于你作品中这些釉面和层次的处理以及史前文化和考古学发现，可从中探寻飞速发展的当今世界和悠远历史之间的联系。我感觉你对这些悠久的历史有着浓厚的兴趣。**

米凯勒：总体来说我对时间比较感兴趣。因此，对悠久的历史也是如此。实际上，我作品中的层次就像一个一个的故事片段。所以我总是希望掌控与时间的关系。在我看来，就是这种与时间的概念性联系将他们转变成成为记忆的

一部分、抑或是平行世界的一个具有神奇力量的护身符。我试图在那个平行的世界里标记人类的信息，这些人类的信息会成为宇宙的部分历史，对未来也有意义。

我之所以对回忆很感兴趣是基于很多考虑，但首要的原因是我意识到我们的身份认同主要来自祖祖辈辈的书面或口头相传，有形的或想象中的能够代表他们的符号。对于这点我还想通过一个例子补充一下，这个例子与我之前所说的密切相关：从1860年意大利统一开始，试图清除方言的努力从未停止。意大利内有二十个地区，二十种甚至更多的不同语言和文化。举例来说，在撒丁岛，真正的撒丁岛只是岛屿中心的巴尔巴贾山地区，我就出生在那里。撒丁岛的其他地方情况则有所不同。所以，在撒丁岛和西西里，虽然岛屿和岛屿之间紧挨着，却有不同的语言和符号，但它们都很脆弱。我并不是说这些语言和文化正在消失，我认为今天通过艺术的语言可以复原这些语言的价值。更进一步的说，语言是符号、是身份认同的支柱，它现在正面临灭绝的危险，但可以通过与艺术联系在一起从而焕发新生。

可以肯定的是，文化多样性灭绝的危险近在咫尺，不只语言的多样性正面临这样的危险，人类也同样面临这样的威胁。我们以蜜蜂为例，它们正面临灭绝的危险。正如艺术家古斯塔夫·麦策格 (Gustav Metzger) 所说，我们正在经历一次潜在的大灭绝。不仅我们的存在和个人生活会灭绝，我们的这个物种也潜在有被灭绝的危险。这不仅是如蜜蜂这样的微生物的灭绝，也是文化的消亡。正如苏珊·席勒 (Susan Hiller) 在关于语言的电影里展示的那样，语言每天在消失，这是事实。回到蜜蜂的话题上来，蜂巢的建造过程是个逐渐结块的结果，蜜蜂的巢穴就是结不停进行的结果。这个持续不断的过程可以和人类的历史进行横向比较。对于历史来说，我认为有必要在一个过程中规定它的范畴，这个持续的过程需要考虑过去以便能够使其与现在连接在一起。同时，如我之前提到的，这个过程还要能够让人们展望未来。这是我收藏的一个13世纪西西里的陶器。绘画帮助我对其进行学术探索。尽管我的绘画作品和这件陶器之间有联系，但我的绘画还是独立于这些陶器的。我在这些陶器中发现的东西可以与我的记忆和故事有机结合在一起。我的创作过程就是这样开始的。

**汉斯：你认为过去的一些片段能够创造未来。**

米凯勒：的确如此。我并不是在寻找完美的物品，我一直在寻找可以佐证生命的东西，那些可以存储过去和故事的媒介。这就是我对回忆的定义，更准确的说，这些是我展望未来起点。

**汉斯：你的收藏都在哪里？**

米凯勒：陶器在我西西里岛的工作室里，虽然我很想把他们都带到巴黎来。三叶虫化石都在法国，因为我经常需要用到它们。这不是因为有什么具体需要，但它们是我创作时的灵感来源。

**汉斯：在越来越快节奏的世界里，这些悠久的历史能够将我们带到一个关于慢食的主题。我知道你是一个慢食主义者。**

米凯勒：我一直都很喜欢美食和烹饪。很多年前，意大利开展过一次叫做Arcigola的左翼运动。它最初是和Archi联系在一起的。而Archi是一个与意大利最大激进党派有紧密联系的文化组织。运动刚开始只有几百人的规模。我对食物、酒、农作物等的文化研究问题非常感兴趣，我指的是小规模在当地生产而不是大规模的量产。西西里和撒丁岛都非常推崇美食文化，因此美食的主题一直吸引着我。慢食运动逐渐全球化，我也从未对此失去兴趣。很不幸的是，慢食文化在法国并没有很好的发展起来。在西西里的时候，我总是去找小规模的生产者，并且从他们那里购买产品以此来为慢食文化做点贡献。

**汉斯：这也是你推崇的一场运动。**

米凯勒：(笑)我开创了一场个人运动。我还想给你展示一下这个从卡尔塔吉内罗 (Caltagirone) 带来的罐子。这个罐子的历史可以追溯到16世纪，这个罐子也是我收藏的一部分。阿拉伯人在10世纪前到达西西里，并且在西西里岛居住了很久，即使有诺曼人到来也没受到影响。之后西西里人忘记了阿拉伯的文字。这个罐子上的装饰被称作西库洛阿拉伯语 (Siculo-Arabic)。铸陶罐的人试图创造叫做古阿拉伯字母，但是没有给这个陶罐一个完整的文字意义。我们之前说过语言的消失，这里就是个例子。这个例子通

过符号和文字便有了视觉记忆的联系。这就是我为什么对书的兴趣和物件一样感兴趣。

**汉斯：我们的采访将会出版成书，我想知道是否已经有关于你作品的书籍了呢？**

米凯勒：已经有一些书了。其中一本是关于我对三个世纪前歌德游历西西里的视觉解读，这对我来说是一种双重经历。第一个是歌德的旅程和书籍，另一个是游历带来的一系列个人感受。歌德在西西里游历两个月期间对气象情况的描述令我震撼。对于气候变化，我们今天已经讨论很多了。我想对歌德时期和现在这两个时代的气候进行比较，相同的地区和一年中同样的时间。于是我在相同的日期遵循他的足迹进行考察，并没有发现两个时代在气候方面有很大的不同，但那时每天的天气变化较大。

**汉斯：歌德懂得很多经济学知识。我学过生态学和经济史。我知道他早在当经济部长的时候就熟悉这些事情。**

米凯勒：你说的没错。两年前，我在最近重建的蒙塔尔托宫（Palazzo Montalto）（一座位于锡拉库萨的14世纪的建筑）举办过一次画展。我在一个大房间里将展品和绘画作品放在四张老旧的桌子上。这些展品是一些陶器和淘来的物品，比方我捡回的一些即将毁掉的建筑中的砖块，再用印度墨水和其他材料在上面进行装饰。我也就是这样创作出《西西里脚步》（Sicilian Footsteps）系列作品的，通过一个故事赋予这些快要消亡的物件新的生命。去年在纽约20大街艺术工作室举办的另一个展览中，我将自己的陶器和16世纪的中国陶器结合在一起，将他们分组装进方形的容器内，将容器前部打开，再悬挂在墙上。

**汉斯：当你将自己的陶器和古董级的陶器结合在一起时，是这个被选中的陶器变成了艺术作品的一部分，还是它会融入到你的收藏之中？**

米凯勒：它是艺术作品的一部分。

**汉斯：就像艾未未那样用碎陶片做成新的作品。你用旧的作品来创作新的作品，结果你的收藏并没有增加反而变少了。**

米凯勒：的确，我的收藏越来越少（笑）。更有甚者，因为它们都是易碎的物品，很容易就会被打碎。收藏永远都不是静态的，它是一个持续不断的演变。这就是为什么我从来都不会停止寻找新的物品，让它们在和我的作品的对话中获得新生。

**汉斯：那么记忆在这一切中扮演了什么角色呢？这些足迹显然是记忆的符号。我们活在一个能接触到越来越多信息的时代，但这并不意味着我们会有更多的回忆。可能这就是为什么艺术会持续关注记忆这个主题的原因。**

米凯勒：我发现现代社会信息的大量出现只会降低我们的洞察力和对记忆的把握，更多的信息绝不意味着更高的信息质量。通过记忆，我们很自然的会选择那些对我们生命有意义的东西，其他不相关的则会被遗忘，我们的头脑帮助我们做出选择。信息社会的大爆炸使这种选择的能力有被降低的风险，我们的回忆有可能变成被迫存储信息的空间；如果信息量超过了极限，我们还会失去很多有趣的信息。

**汉斯：我在米兰工作时让我感到惊奇的是那里整体的文化氛围，所有发生在20世纪60年代艺术和设计面杰出的作品几乎都和米兰共产主义书店有关。这个与共产主义的联系似乎也在你的作品里有所体现。**

米凯勒：我上高中时是一个激进主义份子。20世纪70年代的意大利正经历一个特别的时期，社会压力极大，所有的权力都被基督教民主党和其他的中间党派掌握。所谓的“conventio ad excludendum”协议将共产党排除在政府之外，这很不合理。那时我被恩里克·贝林格（Enrico Berlinguer）深深吸引，他曾经试图打破这种孤立，重新将左派的进步主张体现在国家的决策中。他一直寻求和其他执政党达成协议或进行对话。那时我还研究过另外一个人，他也是和贝林格一样是撒丁岛人，这个人就是安东尼奥·葛兰姆西（Antonio Gramsci）。我当然没机会和他见面，但是他的思想对我的作品影响很大。我对这些人物的欣赏总是引导我对抗权力。

在意大利，如你所说，会有一些组织在米兰或是其他地方出版书籍，这是对后革命不满意的结果。如果这样可以形

容1968年的状况,有一些像红色旅(Red Brigades)这样的颠覆性组织使用暴力和恐怖手段试图改变当时的社会。这些都没有成功,除了给那个年代留下不好的回忆之外。但是,我也从中发现了一些积极的地方,意大利的年轻人在那个年代参与政治的积极性非常高,并且非常活跃。那是一个很特别的情景,欧洲其他国家也是如此,例如法国和德国,也有相似目标的社会活动家和组织,但意大利的情况要更极端一些。尽管我远离这些政治活动,但我还是坚持自己的想法。

**汉斯: 你曾经亲身经历过富有戏剧性的政治阴谋, 你的兄弟安东尼奥就是二十年前在古巴被刺杀的, 这与前不久发生的乔里奥·加拉尼(Giulio Regeni)在埃及被杀害几乎是同样的情况。**

米凯勒: 他们的故事几乎如出一辙, 让人非常揪心, 警察告诉我们我弟弟的死是一场交通事故, 我们在事后才得知他被严刑拷打过。

**汉斯: 历史总是重演, 你的弟弟是因为政治原因前往古巴的吗?**

米凯勒: 不是, 我弟弟是一个伟大的旅行者。他比我小一岁, 也走了和我相似的道路。我们从不使用暴力, 但我们参与学术和社会活动的程度都很高。我们起初接受了交通事故的说法, 只是后来才知道他被严刑拷打过, 他的器官被非法移除了。

**汉斯: 那个时期是菲德尔·卡斯特罗执政时期吗?**

米凯勒: 是的, 古巴司法部进行了调查, 这个案子被国际舆论给掩盖了。在意大利国会我们对首相提出了很多问题, 但是没有得到结论性的答案。我们的朋友, 巴勒莫的市长莱奥卢卡·奥兰多(Leoluca Orlando)还给菲德尔·卡斯特罗致函。卡斯特罗多次敦促他的部长和官员提供车祸的证据, 每一次国际刑警和地方法官都认定这些证据是假的, 包括事故的相片、尸检的视频和伪造的医疗记录等。这个案子已经上升为国家事务, 我们被间接通知这是一个刑事案件, 与车祸无关。那时古巴决定不再提供更多帮助去探究真相, 所以地方法官决定撤销调查, 古巴及其领导人

一直保持沉默至今。

**汉斯: 那你始终没能探寻到事实的真相?**

米凯勒: 没有, 我们只知道他被拷打过, 他的器官也被非法移除了, 我们只能通过牙齿的X光片来辨认我的弟弟。

**汉斯: 这个很荒谬, 他并没有去古巴从事反政府的活动。**

米凯勒: 当然没有。正如我已经说得那样, 我们从没打算用暴力作为抗议的手段, 思想和语言就足够了, 事实上他只是去度假。

**汉斯: 很显然这个经历对你的生活有决定性的影响。**

米凯勒: 这个经历对我的艺术创作有很大的影响。我最喜爱的弟弟去世后, 我对如何看待自己和其他人都遇到了严重的问题。之后很多年我才在创作一系列的人物肖像画中慢慢从失去弟弟的阴影下走出来。

**汉斯: 如果那是正确的方法, 那么你慢慢疏导了自己的悲伤。**

米凯勒: 我创作了《沉默》(Silence!)系列作品。那是一个对折磨具有矛盾性的反映, 但绝对是正常人类可以接受的部分。这一作品由我制作的头像组成, 我使用塑料、土等现代材料来创作被迫到处看的头像。

**汉斯: 它们很震撼。那是哪一年呢?**

米凯勒: 从1998年起, 就是我弟弟去世后四年。我需要几年时间来处理各种事情。我如此关注这件事情以至于有一天我看见《国际先驱导报》(International Herald Tribune)在头版刊登了一张美国俘虏在伊拉克被虐待的照片, 下意识的认为那张照片是假的, 尽管照片拍的非常真实和震撼, 但它让我想起了古巴提供给我们的照片。

**汉斯: 那张照片令你想到了假照片。**

米凯勒: 所以我用红色的水彩在这张报纸上作画, 并在意大利驻纽约的文化艺术机构的一次展览中展示了这幅作

品。通过这个系列的水彩画，我重建起人类的受难和虐待之间的联系。就在四五年前，一个美国士兵揭露曾经有一批照片是被刻意拍摄出来的，再通过媒体展现给全世界，其中就包括这张照片，而我第一眼就看出来这张照片是刻意拍摄的。

**汉斯：你弟弟的死带给您的创伤推动你的艺术走向具象。**

米凯勒：是的，它推动我完成了艺术的具象化。我花了好几年时间反复审视我弟弟的验尸照片和警方的事故报告。依据这些文件，我在脑海中形成了一些形象。就是通过这个逐渐具象的过程，并与我作为艺术家的工作结合，我终于走出了我生命中最严重的事件。我得感谢艺术，因为艺术我才会慢慢走出安东尼奥去世的影响，并且在我心里没有留下仇恨的阴影。

**汉斯：所以，通过慢慢化解悲伤你才能克服它带给你的影响。**

米凯勒：其实这也是很多方面的工作。

**汉斯：这正如马琳·杜马斯 (Marlene Dumas) 所说的那样，谈及虐待和暴力时，她会提到很多关于精神状态的问题。**

米凯勒：这些记忆一直活在我的脑海里，即使以一种很飘渺的浪漫化的方式存在。我弟弟受虐和死亡的故事与更普通的故事联系在一起，与世界上发生的所有事情联系在一起，与战争联系在一起，与人类仍在继续的暴力联系在一起。直至今日，所有这些仍然活在我的内心深处，但我最终会迈过这道坎。艺术对我来说是一种手段，或者说是一种真正的要求，就是为了能够处理好这些经历。曾经我没有意识到这一点，只是为一个特定的情景绘画、写作和拍照，几乎变成了一种强迫行为。我曾经拍摄大量的照片，但我弟弟死后我就将它们都收起来了。我看过关于他死的全部照片文件，从那时起，我就无法再接受照片了。

**汉斯：从某种程度上讲，照片欺骗了你，照片曾作为撒谎的工具被使用。还有什么我们没讨论的吗？您会从事一些公共社会工作吗？是否有一些乌托邦计划，或者一些很难实现的远大理想？您是否有过梦想、或是因为太奢侈而**

**无法实现的计划？如您所知，我的采访中有个问题就是您有没有从来没有实现过的计划？**

米凯勒：几年前我开始关注移民的话题，但是我将它与乌托邦联系在一起。你是否听说过“阿特兰特罗帕构想” (Atlantropa)？

**汉斯：没有，我知道“亚特兰蒂斯计划” (Atlantis)，德国人尤根·穆勒 (Jürgen Müller) 提出的构想，想要在他死之前创造一个乌托邦世界。但我没有听说过“阿特兰特罗帕构想”。**

米凯勒：那是德国建筑学家赫尔曼·索尔格 (Hermann Sörgel) 提出的构想。他的妻子开了一家画廊，并为她丈夫的研究和实施提供资金支持。索尔格的构想被称作“阿特兰特罗帕构想”。这个构想是1929年通过国际媒体向全世界公布的，其主要内容是在直布罗陀海峡建一个大坝，阻止所有的大河流入地中海，让地中海盆地的土地经过水分蒸发从而重新露出地面。一方面可重新获取农业用地，另一方面想通过这个计划建立欧洲和非洲的联系，从而形成一个完整的大陆。索尔格还设想大规模的水分蒸发会引发气候的变化从而在逆转荒漠化方面取得成功，建造大坝需要大量的公共工程同时还需要加强与非洲的联系。按照索尔格的设想，这样可以迅速将世界带出普遍的经济危机，解决当时非常棘手的就业和能源供给的问题。实际上，大坝将会被用来当做巨型的水电站。通过这个乌托邦计划的实施，世界可能会与现在完全不同。

**汉斯：20世纪80年代穆勒提出“亚特兰蒂斯计划”，我觉得它可以是“阿特兰特罗帕构想”的复兴。**

米凯勒：我也这么认为。“阿特兰特罗帕计划”是1929年提出的，当时索尔格的助手之一就是柯布西耶，他提出设计建立新的城市，这个计划引发很多思想家浓厚的兴趣。但是，希特勒有自己对非洲的计划，即军事占领，他因此命令拍摄一部电影，还在威尼斯电影节上获奖，我无法想象电影的质量会是什么水平。通过这部电影，希特勒希望能阻止人们对“阿特兰特罗帕计划”的热情。索尔格坚持出版他的书籍，所以被纳粹逮捕。战争结束时他仍然坚持寻找银行家来支持创建自己的乌托邦计划。不幸的是，当他辗

转于柏林的各种会议时，被一辆飞驰的汽车撞死了。

**汉斯：也许这是一场谋杀。**

米凯勒：我敢肯定这是一场暗杀。“阿特兰特罗帕计划”作为一个为地中海设计的乌托邦非常吸引我，虽然地中海地区现在是一场巨大危机的中心。我为“阿特兰特罗帕计划”的模型创做了水彩画，可能会用到黄麻袋、镀金的陶瓷橄榄、黄麻做的旗子、还有放在架子上的蜂巢。

**汉斯：所以这是你的乌托邦计划。**

米凯勒：是的。黄麻袋现在仍然被用来在非洲和欧洲运输商品；旗子用来代表不存在的国家，它不需要符号和边界；橄榄树通过镀金的陶瓷来代表，橄榄树作为和平的象征是从古代就有的。但最重要的是它是这个乌托邦理想的升华，通过蜜蜂辛勤建造的蜂巢来体现，同时也代表了我最大的理想：一个充满和平、没有边界的世界，在这个世界里人与自然可以和谐相处。这个梦想在一个名叫“中心的中心”（Nel Mezzodel Mezzo）的大型艺术展上展现出来。这个展览由三位指导过我的导师组织，邀请八十位艺术家到巴勒莫的米索博物馆及其他地方，这是一个已经实现了的乌托邦。



**Biography**

**艺术家简介**

1969, Nuoro (Italy)  
Lives and works in Paris

### Upcoming

2016 - Award and residency session of self directed studio and work time at Civitella Ranieri Foundation (New York), [www.civitella.org](http://www.civitella.org)

### Selected solo exhibitions

2016

*Enchanted Nature, Revisited*, CAFA Museum, Beijing (curated by Wang Chunchen)

*Enchanted Nature, Revisited*, Primus Capital Art, Milan (catalogue published by Johan&Levi with texts from Christine Macel, Hans Ulrich Obrist and Angelo Crespi)

2015

Carta Bianca Fine Arts, Catania  
20th Street Studio Projects, New York

2014

*I hate the indifferent*, Summerhall, Edinburgh

Musée en Herbe, Paris (showing with Malachi Farrell)

*Odio gli indifferenti*, Palazzo Montalto, Siracusa  
Artycon, Offenbach

2013

*Tell me a story*, Magazzini dell'arte contemporanea, Trapani  
Onishy Project gallery, New York

2011

*Mining memories*, Light of Creativity, Miami Beach

*No man's land*, Museo Civico, Noto  
Fondazione Sambuca, Palermo

*The triumph of death*, Epicentro Contemporary, Berlin

2010

*No man's land*, Galleria André, Rome  
*ARTI-FICI: argonauta*, Galleria Civica d'arte contemporanea Montevergini, Siracusa

2009

*Silence!*, Italian Cultural Institute, New York (curated by Renato Miracco, catalogue published by Charta, texts by Miracco and Lance M. Fung)

*Silence! – drawings*, Palazzo At Borgia del Casale, Siracusa (curated by Carmelo Strano – catalogue published by Erreproduzioni)

2007

*Viaggio nell'immagine sulle tracce di Goethe*, St. John's College, Santa Fé (New Mexico USA).

*Prigionieri e deserti*, Palazzo del Governo, Siracusa (curated by Ornella Fazzina, catalogue published by Erreproduzioni), Siracusa

2005

Galerie Vlierhove, Blaricum (Netherlands)

*Dentro il paesaggio*, Complesso dello Spasimo, Palermo (curated by Aurelio Pes, catalogue published by Edizioni La Rocca).

### Selected group exhibitions

2015

*Nel mezzo del mezzo*, Museo Riso, Palermo (curated by Christine Macel, Marco Bazzini, Bartomeu Mari)

*What we call love*, IMMA Museum, Dublin (curated by Christine Macel, co-curator Rachael Thomas)  
Art Bridge Center, Beijing

2012

*Endless summer*, White Box, New York

2011

*Barocco austero*, ex Monastero dei Benedettini, Catania

*Carta delle circostanze – frontiere liquide*, Teatro Verga Ortigia, Siracusa  
54 Biennale di Venezia – Padiglione Italia, Corderie dell'Arsenale, Venezia

*Sicilia sopra tutti*, Galleria Civica d'arte contemporanea Montevergini, Siracusa

2010

*Suite 13*, Centro d'arte contemporanea Nostra Signora, Palermo

*Icona Magnifica*, Palazzo della Cultura, Catania

*Libres D'artista INTRAMURS*, Refectorio de Real Monasterio de S.ta Maria de la Valldigna, Valencia

*Neoiconoduli-figurazione internazionale complessa*, Museo Bellomo, Siracusa

*Terzo Rinascimento – linguaggi della sensibilità ibrida*, Castello Normanno  
Galleria Civica d'arte contemporanea, Acicastello

2009

*Salvados por el arte, el viaje artistico de unos libros condenados a morir*, Istituto Cervantes, Palermo

*Porta della Bellezza*, Librino/  
Fondazione Fiumara d'Arte, Catania

2008

*Trinacria: Gambadoro, Ciacciofera, Roccasalvo*, Le Ciminiere, Catania

2007

*Contemporanea*, Palazzo del Governo, Siracusa

2006

*Ratio Naturalis*, Biviere, Lentini  
*Pluralità segniche: Ciacciofera – Pasini – Roccasalvo*, Church of S. Salvatore, Caltavuturo

*Migrazioni*, Palazzo del Governo, Siracusa

*La visione negata*, Church of S. Nicolò dei Cordari- Parco Archeologico, Siracusa

### Grants and awards

2016

Fellow for visual arts (2015-2016), Civitella Ranieri Foundation, New York

2011

Green Vision Prize, Teatro Ambra Jovinelli, Roma

2010

Winner (in a work-group with architects and engineers) of both competitions held by the Port Authorities of Palermo for an 'artistic-architectural project to reuse two loading cranes in the harbour of Palermo as a symbolic place for the future of harbour-city interaction'

2007

Public competition for artists held by Italian Ministry of Public Works, Rome  
Trinacria, contemporary art prize for 50th anniversary of European Union, Università di Catania

2005

Public competition for artists held by the Italian Ministry of Justice, Rome

米凯勒·乔亚乔费拉, 1969年出生于意大利努奥罗, 现工作生活于巴黎。

## 未来工作与生活

自2016年开始, 受奇维特拉基金会的奖励资助, 在位于纽约的工作室驻留工作。

## 部分个展

2016

“重游自然之魂”, 中央美术学院美术馆, 北京 (策展人: 王春辰)。

“重游自然之魂”, 博智资本艺术空间, 米兰 (展览画册由Johan & Levi出版, 包括克里斯汀·马萨尔、汉斯·乌布里希·奥布里斯特和安吉洛·克里斯皮的文章)。

2015

白皮书艺术中心, 卡塔尼亚。  
二十大街工作室项目空间, 纽约。

2014

“我憎恨冷漠”, 夏宫, 爱丁堡, 埃贝博物馆, 巴黎 (双人展: 与玛拉基·法雷尔共同展出)。  
“我憎恨冷漠”, 蒙塔尔托宫殿, 锡拉库扎。  
Artycon画廊, 奥芬巴赫, 德国。

2013

“给我讲个故事”, 当代艺术仓库, 特拉帕尼。  
大西项目画廊, 纽约。

2011

“挖掘记忆”, 创作之光, 迈阿密海滩。  
“无人的土地”, 民间艺术博物馆, 诺托桑布卡基金会, 巴勒莫。  
“死亡的胜利”, Epicentro当代艺术中心, 柏林。

2010

“无人的土地”, 安德鲁画廊, 罗马。  
“计谋: 淘金者”, Montevergini当代艺术画廊, 锡拉库扎。

2009

“沉默!”, 意大利文化机构, 纽约 (策展人: 雷纳多·米拉科, 展览画册由Charta出版, 包括米拉科Lance M. Fung的文章)。

“沉默! 一画作”, 波吉亚德尔卡萨莱宫殿, 锡拉库扎 (策展人: 卡麦罗·斯坦诺, 展览画册由Erreproduzioni出版)。

2007

“穿行在带有歌德痕迹的图片中”, 圣约翰学院, 斯塔菲, 美国新墨西哥州。

“囚犯和沙漠”, 市政厅, 锡拉库扎 (策展人: 奥奈拉·法兹那, 展览画册由Erreproduzioni出版)。

2005

Vlierhove画廊, 布拉里科姆, 荷兰 “在风景之中”, Complesso dello Spasimo, 巴勒莫 (策展人: 奥莱里奥·派斯, 展览画册由Edizioni La Rocca出版)。

## 部分群展

2015

“女中音中的女中音”, 里索博物馆, 巴勒莫 (策展人: 克里斯汀·马萨尔, 马可·巴齐尼, 巴托梅乌·马里)。

“我们所称的爱—从超现实主义至今”, 伊玛博物馆, 都柏林 (策展人: 克里斯汀·马萨尔和瑞秋·托马斯)。  
天桥艺术中心, 北京。

2012

“无尽的夏日”, 白盒子画廊, 纽约 (策展人: Jee Won Kim)。

2011

“严峻的巴洛克”, 前本笃会修道院, 卡塔尼亚  
“契约的情节—金钱的边界”, Verga Ortigia剧院, 锡拉库扎。  
第54届威尼斯双年展—意大利馆, Corderie dell' Arsenale, 威尼斯。

“西西里的所有”, Montevergini当代艺术画廊, 锡拉库扎。

2010

“套件13”, 圣母当代艺术中心, 巴勒莫。  
“华丽的图标”, 文化中心, 卡塔尼亚。  
“因特拉穆罗斯, 书籍的艺术”, 圣玛丽亚皇家修道院, 瓦伦西亚。  
“新型复杂国际”, 贝洛莫博物馆, 锡拉库扎。  
“第三次复兴, 混合敏感度的语言”, 诺曼城

堡当代艺术画廊, 阿奇卡斯泰洛。

2009

“通过艺术, 一些书籍的艺术之旅被判处死刑”, 塞万提斯机构, 巴勒莫。  
“门之美”, Librino基金会, 卡塔尼亚。

2008

“Trinacria艺术奖展览”, 烟囱艺术中心, 卡塔尼亚。

2007

“当代”, 市政厅, 锡拉库扎。

2006

“自然的比率”, Biviere, 伦蒂尼。  
“记号的多元性”, 萨尔瓦多教堂, 卡尔塔武图罗。  
“移民”, 市政厅, 锡拉库扎。  
“视觉否认”, 圣尼古拉斯教堂, Cordari考古遗址公园, 锡拉库扎。

## 获奖情况

2016

意大利奇维特拉基金会基金会视觉艺术类奖学金, 纽约。

2011

罗马安布拉·霍维纳利剧院绿色视觉奖。

2010

在巴勒莫港务局举办的“艺术与建筑项目”竞赛中将巴勒莫港口的两个塔吊重新设计利用, 作为未来港口城市的标志性建筑。与建筑学家和工程学家共同赢得主办方颁发的奖项。

2007

于意大利公共事务部举办的艺术作品评比中获奖。  
于卡塔尼亚大学纪念欧盟成立50周年的当代艺术评比中获奖。

2005

于意大利司法部举办的艺术评比中获奖。

