

From "Ruins to the Future" | Italian Ceramic Artist: Marta Palmieri

从遗迹到未来 | 意大利陶艺家：玛塔·帕尔米耶里 (Marta Palmieri)

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"International Grand Prize for Ceramic Art"



Italian ceramic artist Marta Palmieri was awarded second place at the third edition of the "Blanc de Chine" International Ceramic Art Competition. Her work "Life Cliff 2" explores themes such as "clay, urbanization, and environmental protection," bridging the ancient with the futuristic. By reinterpreting discarded materials, Marta highlights the fragmentation of cities. By fusing ceramics and glass, she urges reflection on urban and global environmental preservation.

Introduction to the Artist

Marta Palmieri was born in 1973 in Ancona, a city on Italy's Adriatic coast. In 1997, she graduated in sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Urbino, winning the prestigious first prize in sculpture, the Edgardo Mannucci Award. She currently lives and works in Ancona and has frequently participated in the International Ceramics Competition in Faenza, Italy. Since 2017, her works have been exhibited and recognized with awards in Italy, China, Spain, Portugal, Germany, France, and Lithuania, and they are part of the permanent collections of various Italian and international museums.



Italian Ceramicist | Marta Palmieri



“La Mossa,” 2017
Courtesy Hostler Burrows

Artistic Approach

Marta Palmieri's creations combine painting and clay modeling into container-like forms. Her works pay homage to earth, one of the planet's oldest materials, through earthy tones and primitive textures. The containers, often likened to the human body, evoke both natural and celestial imagery. For example, her “Crater” and “Phobos” series embody cosmic imaginations, reflecting on the universe and humanity's connection to it.



Palmieri with her artwork
by Francesca Tilio



Palmieri in the process of making



Palmieri in the process of making

“Crater” Series

The “Crater” series is created using primitive techniques like the coil-building method. These works feature full and harmonious shapes, decorated with earthy tones of ochre and brown, often marked by visible sanding traces. The surfaces, punctuated by holes or rough textures, are complemented by abstract and ethereal paintings, evoking a sense of antiquity and mystery. These vessels resonate with the idea of a primordial force of nature, transporting viewers beyond the mundane to ponder the vastness and depth of the cosmos.





"Crater" series



Residence in Japan 2024, Palmieri at work



Residence in Japan 2024, "Phobos" Series

The "Phobos" series simulates the natural forces of the universe. Using marbled clay techniques, Palmieri creates effects reminiscent of rock veins, evoking images of Mars and its moon Phobos. The forms, slightly elliptical and irregular, trace paths of moving orbits or galaxies. Some pieces feature surfaces that appear to flow with black fragments simulating cracks or meteorite impact marks. These details invite the viewer to imagine the distant surfaces of celestial bodies, emphasizing the immensity and inevitability of natural forces.



“Phobos” series

Reflection on Humanity

Faced with the enormity of the universe, Marta Palmieri reflects on humanity's insignificance and the urgent need to respect the planet's resources. This awareness underpins her "Cliff" (Falesia) and "Froth" series, which shift the focus back to Earth and our relationship with it.



Palmieri's sketch

In the "Falesia" series, forms become sharper and more geometric, resembling jagged cliff edges. The rock-like surfaces evoke a petrified "ark," potentially a Noah's Ark of the future. With these works, Marta warns of the need to harmonize natural and human forces, underscoring the dangers of disconnection from nature.





"Falesia" series.

The “Froth” series moves away from traditional container shapes to simulate rocks, minerals, and industrial relics. The rough, irregular surfaces seem to carry traces of time, evoking geological formations, fossils, and archaeological remains. Cracks and fractures in the pieces symbolize shifts in the Earth’s crust, reflecting the tensions and conflicts shaping our planet. These abstract forms encourage a vision of the future where nature and humanity must find balance.







The Froth series.



Life Cliff 2
《生命的峭壁 2》
115 cm × 45 cm × 40 cm
陶瓷、玻璃片、铜
2021年

This work, part of the “Froth” series, combines recycled glass and mineral clay to create fragments reminiscent of modern city ruins. The vertical, fractured shapes rise from the ground like "urban relics," breathing new life into industrial waste. The piece invites reflection on the relationship between natural and artificial forces, emphasizing the need for a more sustainable interaction with our environment.

Quote:

Art historian Guido Tonelli states, "Marta Palmieri's works place the viewer in a dilemma: they could be prehistoric artifacts, buried for centuries, or objects of a future society far more advanced than ours."



Conclusion:

Clay, as an artistic medium, is not only a tool for creating objects but also a means of imagining the universe and reflecting on ourselves. Through her art, Marta Palmieri invites us to view the world and our place in it with renewed perspective.



Written by Wang June
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Third edition, Blanc de Chine International Ceramic Art Grand Prix