

Paola Tassetti

The consciousness of the eye was called two hearts

Curated by Alex Urso

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Immersing oneself in Paola Tassetti's artistic practice requires accepting a certain amount of impenetrability inherent in her work. Imagining being able to understand every bit of her highly personal universe is an exercise in futility from the outset. And that's all right: there's no room, in her studio, for those who want to attribute a name and a definition to every single thing. There are no linear narratives. Contemporary thought – which expects things to be ever more technical, systematic, and specialized – falls by the wayside as soon as one crosses the threshold of the artist's Utero.

Utero (meaning “uterus”) is the name the artist uses for her workshop in Civitanova Marche: a sort of "wunderkammer" where opposites coexist, and the boundaries among different disciplines fade away, allowing the sciences to interact and permeate one another. Biology, botany, taxonomy, anatomy, archaeology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and architecture: all of these disciplines play an important role in Tassetti's holistic vision. She has chosen art as a vehicle for exploring and reconstructing the age-old connection between microcosm and macrocosm, between man and nature. The works included in the exhibition are the result of this versatility.

NATURE, ANATOMY AND SYMBOLISM

Presented as site-specific works, some of which have never before been displayed, pieces include collages, diary pages, sketches, paintings on paper, drawings, silkscreen, taxonomy, and sculptures with a classical feel. The thread that brings all of these elements (works, signs, words, and amulets) together is the artist's desire to explore her own deeper dimension, looking at a more intimate component in relation to the outside world and our surroundings, *“I am interested in looking for what can't be understood, seeing within the unseen. In my everyday life, I am like an argonaut, a daring navigator, or a kind of mountaineer traveling through archaeological finds, landscapes, and tales from the past and present.”* The body, in this unresolved and never-ending dialogue between *inside* and *outside*, between the inner world and reality, becomes a means of transport, a vehicle for experimentation and a terrain for exchange: *“The body is a garden; the circulatory and nervous systems are living water, the bronchi defenders of trees,”* says the artist, pointing out the analogy between anatomy and botany that runs through all of her visual works.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF PAOLA TASSETTI

In the great philosophical, spiritual sea where Paola Tassetti's research flows, the human body is the most frequently used and most decisive element. Branches and tree-like structures sprout from the body, lengthening limbs, transforming organs, and ultimately distorting the figure. Mutilated and dissected, the body, in the artist's works, becomes a framework made up of plant structures that stretch upward, seeking light: stems, leaves and flowers liberate man from his earthly dimension, pushing him toward a newfound cosmic harmony that goes beyond matter. *“I follow my internal flow, studying anatomy and botany in manuals, medical tables, herbariums, old archives, and plant collections. This allows me to understand my internal anatomical 'structure'. This aspect of research drives my imagination to draw and understand human anatomy, dissecting parts that I then twist and tangle with botanical elements, looking for pieces that relate with each other as they take shape.”* In this way, a femur becomes the stem of a tulip, while a beautiful camellia (a flower beloved in Japanese culture, which is no surprise, given the artist's repeat experiences in Japan) sprouts from an eye. With her “scalpels,” which are scissors and brushes, Tassetti vivisects the human body, seeking the soul and grafting organs as one does a plant in the hopes that it will bear fruit.

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