



UNIVERSITY OF  
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Academy of Art and Design

# METALMORPHOSIS

## A Journey in the Transition.

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Final Report

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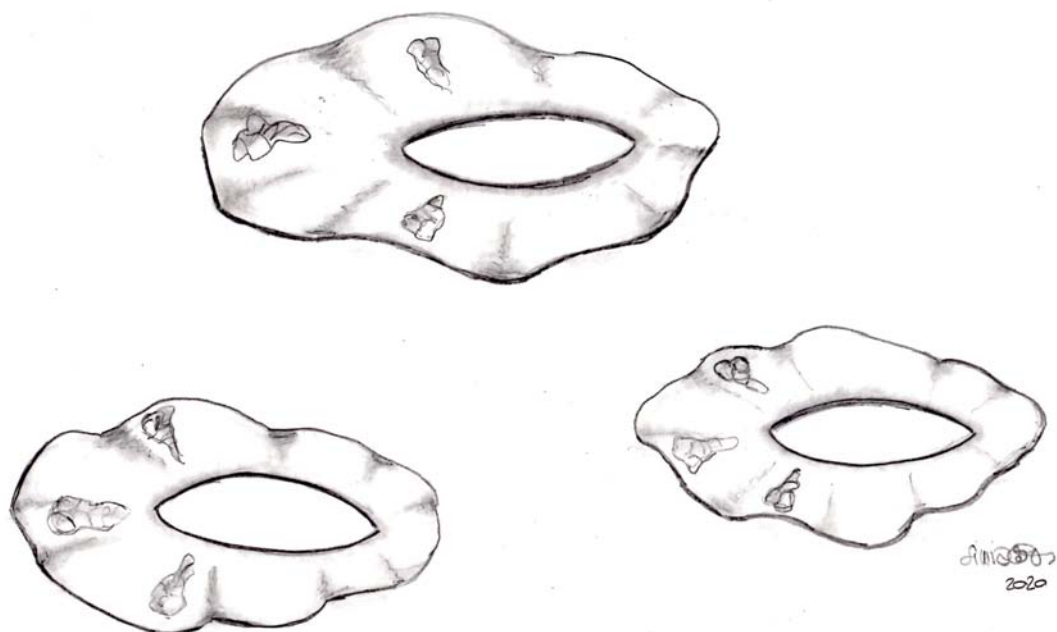
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## ABSTRACT

This essay takes the cue in the reflection on the bond which rises between aesthetic and ethic in the art, specifically in connection within the value that this necessarily adds to personal expression. Along the way, this insight articulates through the narrative of practical and theoretical developments in artistic practice. In this context, considerations upon the temporality, transformation and transitoriness overlap, thus generating a constant flux of consciousness and materiality. Metamorphosis with its intrinsic mutation becomes, hence, the representation of the creative process and life.

The exploration of oneself, and the awareness of the constant changing which everyone experiences, brings to light some queries, concerning the relation established in the art, among universal and personal insights. The role that they play, in the construction of storytelling, able to actively engage the viewer, lastly the possibility to express the vital flux in the sculpture staticity.

In this regard, patinas, emphasizing the transition of the metal state, become, simultaneously, the central aspect and the starting point on which develops the entire project, which finds its most accomplished expression in the realization of installations.



## KEYWORDS

- Abstract
- Change
- Circle
- Colours
- Composition
- Consciousness
- Dialogue
- Encounter
- Flow
- Form
- Growth
- Installation
- Organic
- Matter
- Patinas
- Personal
- Symbolism
- Experimentation
- Spiritual aesthetic
- Transformation
- Universal

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I dedicate this work to all the people that like me,  
love be surprised by the life and the infinite beauty  
that at it connects, leaving their soul be feed by this  
amazement.

## INTRODUCTION

What I wish most is to bring through these pages, the readers with me on a journey of discovery and deepening of art, and human behaviours that with it connects. In my view, aesthetic is imperatively related to the ethical aspects of life. Any expression deprived of this connection is inevitably condemned to show its emptiness, and consequently, be overstep.

Probably, it is for this reason I had progressively increased the presence of a certain spirituality in my everyday life as well in my work, thus dedicating to aspects that before I considered marginal. I guess it was during this period that something started to progressively change. The more the awareness of ethical purposes was growing inside me, the more I was looking for aesthetical expressions able to carry these messages.

So began a search that is still in progress and continues through my artwork, leading me in territories that were before totally unknown. Far away dimensionalities, now are founding a common ground of development and harmony, so allowing me to disclose the complexity of the realities around us.

This is why I intend to conduct the readers through my path until the point in which the doors of the passage will be open, and we will be able to glimpse the beauty of this discover. Possibilities, justice and love lay just beside us, but we need to realize it.

For this reason, I hope my artwork will be supporting people in the evolution and research of the very meaning of life.

## BACKGROUND

In the last three years of study, my sensibility progressively arose, around the bond between aesthetic and spirituality in art. A fusion that creates a unicum, able to reveal its constituents to the careful eyes of the viewer. But why am I so interested in this matter? I guess the soul always tends to search for some kind of comfort or reassurance in the splendour, be it natural or artistic, pursuing a link with a universal value.

In this regard, often the concept of beauty is connected with an ontological meaning. As the philosopher, Vito Mancuso claims, the experience of real beauty can restore vital energy in the human being (Mancuso, 2018, p.12), since this encounter abates each nihilistic form and rescues from the disorientation of the spirit (Mancuso, 2018, p.110). Thus it seems that running into beauty makes us feel active parts of an entire, leaving us to intuit the general sense of life.

In my experience, this is exactly what happens each time we get amazed by watching a sunset or by a blossoming flower. The rendezvous between the consciousness flow and the matter flux generates the experience of life, as we know it. Perceptions and emotions collaborate, thus, in defining our reality and the degree of awareness we own on ourselves.

Moreover, if we engage actively with the matter through the making, we activate, what the anthropologist Tim Ingold defines as a process of growth (Ingold, 2013, p. 21). Specifically, he claims: "To know things you have to grow into them, and let them grow in you, so that they become a part of who you are" (Ingold, 2013, p. 1). Thus seems, that for Ingold, the knowledge implies an interconnection that determines changes into the involved parts, and making, in this sense, is certainly a way to know things.

Curiously enough, also if in a different historical and geographical context, the philosopher Andrea Emo (1901-1983) has been supporting a similar gnoseological theory. In fact, in his essays, he claimed that self-knowledge occurs through the identification with the other, and providing a pleasant example he had added that also the sun needs the darkness to know its light (Emo, 2019, p. 147). Besides, Emo has always been considering art and architecture as a continuing metamorphosis of the presence in time (Emo, 2019, p. 141); an alteration that involves everyone, since we all live it (Emo, 2019, p. 5). This sense of transformation is expressed, in his texts, not only through the words but with a specific writing style, characterized by the overlapping of different thoughts during the years. The reading of his opus immerses the reader in constant flux, in an ongoing process. Therefore it appears to be clear that, also in Emo's statements, changing and interconnection with what it is outside of us, is the foundation of the cognitive experience.

Indeed, everyone, in his everyday life, experiences the state of transition in which we find ourselves. The rocks change shapes, the trees grow, the animals get older and we, as human beings, continuously evolve physically

and emotionally. Everything on earth is in transformation. The entire cosmos goes forward in a certain direction, and this is something we can not directly control. Life has its flow.

Many artists, in different times and ways, have acknowledged and celebrated this sense of transformation. Andy Goldsworthy, for instance, has been dedicating his entire working as landscape sculptor, creating ephemeral art pieces embodying a strong feeling of temporality, growth, change and decay (Goldsworthy, 2015, p. 5). Mostly using elements available in place, he designs in active collaboration with the surrounding. Several, for example, are the works he created with the downed elm trees found in the forest (Figure 1 and 2), emphasizing the sharp cracks occurred in the falling, through the application of coloured leaves. Colours have great importance in Goldsworthy's art pieces. As he has declared, their degree of intensity is strictly connected with the weather condition and the seasonality (Leaning into the wind, 2017). Circumstances not directly controllable by the artist, that thus discloses a deep acceptance of unpredictability aspects, as an active part of his art.



Fig.1. Andy Goldsworthy's work with this elm tree shows all the fragility of the persistency of the being. Untitled, by Andy Goldsworthy, 2011.



Fig.2. An additional example, whereby Goldsworthy combines fallen elm trees and coloured leaves, thus to show the intrinsic transformation in nature. Untitled, by Andy Goldsworthy, 2002.

Therefore, immersed in this constant flux, and devoid of any authority on it, it seems that the only thing that we can do, is trying to understand the meaning and the direction of this tendency, so to adhere to it. Joining this flow is to overpass our boundaries and come together with something infinitely bigger. It is like overhear the universal language of the cosmos, sensing the intrinsic ethicity of life. As also Vito Mancuso claims, artistic inspiration is firstly a transcendence experience (Mancuso, 2018, p. 75-76).

An intuition that the well-known performer Marina Abramović doesn't overlook in her artworks, especially with the series of three videos, of which it is composed *The Kitchen*, *Homage to Saint Therese* (Figure 3). The



piece, set in the actual cookery of an abandoned Carthusian nuns convent combines Marina's fascination for mystic episodes happened to Sant Therese of Ávila and personal childhood experiences (Abramović, 2016, p. 305-306). According to the artist, only when the body has been tired, it is possible to establish an intense contact with the universal consciousness and pure intuition (Gervasoni, 2019, p. 31).



Fig.3. With the last video of the series *The Kitchen*, Marina decides to recreate a transcendent experience emphasising the otherworldly aura that the body can achieve in some circumstances. *The Kitchen: Levitation*, by Marina Abramović, 2009.

Partly I disagree since, in my ecstatic experiences, I didn't find fundamental to fatigue the body till the extreme level, to reach this kind of contact. Premised this, I recognize till now I never have been actively looking for this encounter, rather I accepted it passively. Here lays one of the reasons I decided to work, during my exam period, with an installation. More accurately, the idea is to create an elevated number of pieces so to challenge me from the physical and emotional point of view, generating an empirical experience of Marina's words, and verifying the comprehension of this method.

Incidentally, passive acceptance in opposition to active research is just one of the infinite antinomies that life puts us before. According to Vito Mancuso, the artistic duty is to document, through the chosen medium, the emotion that life arouses. Enter in contact with an artwork, means to feel the pulsating existence and the contradicting sentiments connected with it (Mancuso, 2018, p. 127). But which one is the stronger feeling generated by life, and consequently by art? My answer agrees with Mancuso's one: the sublime, intended in the philosophical sense of what is attractive and repellent at the same time. From this point of view, this sentiment is an integral perception of life truthness, since embodied the existential antinomy of the being. Human life meaning is expressible in the self-

overcoming. Hence, every truly esthetical experience is also an ecstatic episode (Mancuso, 2018, p. 128-130).

This dissertation well introduces one of the dichotomies that has been influencing my artistic process. Namely, the relationship between personal and universal in art. More precisely, how can any artistic work embody personal attributes and universal values at the same time? Especially since we all realize that the concept of beauty can not relay only to the personal taste, but shall acknowledge a certain objective degree.

The renowned painter, Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), in this regard, claims that the inner necessity which leads every artist, in the inventive process, is attributable to three causes. Precisely: the willingness of the creator to express his personality, his epoch, and the pure artistry. Only that, the first two elements are relating to time and space, while the third is external at these circumstances. Art, therefore, is a progressive expression of eternal objectivity on the temporal subjectivity; it is the form of constant challenge between these two visions (Kandinsky, 1989, p. 55-57).

Therefore, it appears to me that more I deep in this matter, more the dynamic opposition able to generate a magnetic encounter of forces, is resulted in an essential part of the subject. Mancuso, in this regard, states that the being is formed by the unstable harmony created by the meeting between opposite, but at the same time complementary energies: namely, logos and chaos (Mancuso, 2018, p. 104).

At this stage, we should wonder: if the existence itself is a matter of unstable balance, set to be modified at any time, can the truth be represented, as nowadays we tend to do, in the form of accuracy? I believe the idea of truthfulness discloses an intrinsic dynamicity. It is not something we own, rather it is an ongoing process. In his debating on aesthetic, Mancuso analyzes the Latin terminology *veritas* (truth), displaying the ancient connection with the word *ver* (spring). Therefore, the author attests how originally, the term referred to the natural dynamism of life, more than an idea of correctness. To reinforce his thesis, Mancuso provides examples of how in John's Gospel, Jesus spoke about truth as a making, thus adding to the concept an innate sense of dynamicity and operativity, extremely heartfelt by the culture of the time (Mancuso, 2018, p. 119-120).

These considerations led me to feel the necessity to include a constant sensation of dynamism in my art as well. I guess it was in this light, that I started to question my medium wondering how such a static material, as the metal, can represent the eternal flux of life. Thus, while attempting answers at this query, I realized that changing the features of the matter might have helped me accomplish something in this direction. So, for this very reason, I have been spending the previous and the current semester exploring the patinas field (Figure 4).



Fig. 4. An example of my work with patinas. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Therefore, during that time, I tried to deepen my knowledge and expand my understanding even upon the results reached by other metalworkers, in the aforementioned study area. Esther Barr, for instance, with her production of very colourful raised panels (Figure 5), progressively raised my interest in her techniques. To realize her artworks, she usually engaged quite exclusively with copper plates, where she carves figurative or abstract images through the usage of an etching press. The vividly colourations are applied via different methods, such as patinas, torch fused enamel or colour oxides (Barr, n.d.). The characteristic that more affects the viewer, I deem, is the presence of strong motion feeling, in response to an almost imperceptible three-dimensionality. In my opinion, colour shading and textures operate in strict combination to generate this sensation of movement in the audience.

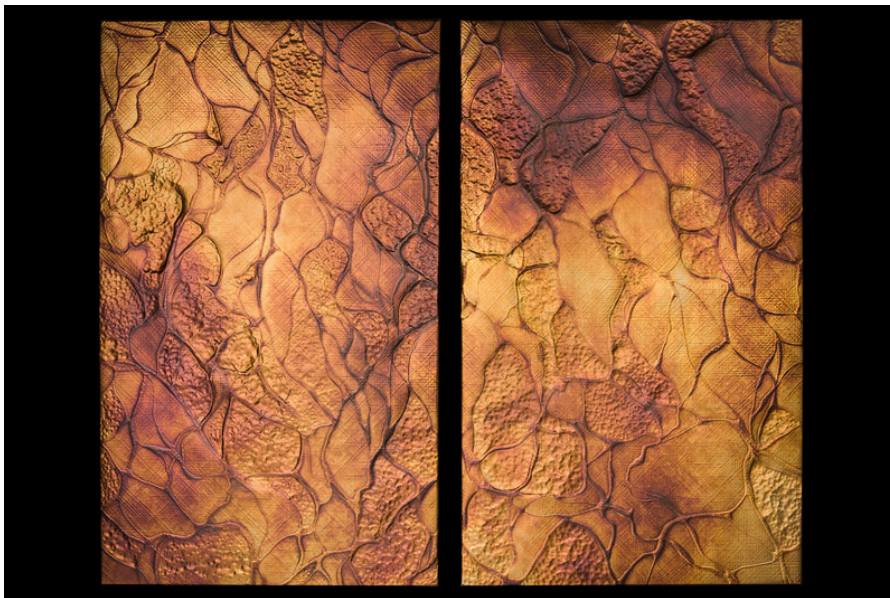


Fig. 5. In this panel, Barr shows an extreme dynamicity through the use of colours and textures. Wavefront, by Esther Barr, n.d.

Despite my great interest in the patinas field, I was even feeling the need to look for some more indirect ways or possibilities to express the matter-

consciousness flow, in association with my primary stake. It was during this searching that progressively enhanced my interest in compositions. They benefit extremely fascinating qualities, especially if applied in sculpturing. Namely, they allow the sculptor to keep open the process, thus evaluating it in each step till the very end. Moreover, they generate a dialogue in between the constituents parts, able to create a binary communicative exchange with the surroundings and the audience as well. Kandinsky, in this regard, suggests that artistic composition is based on two fundamental elements, which are: colour and shape. Both have the merit to undirectly speak with the soul. He believes any of them has a specific scent, that the spirit can distinctly perceive. The inevitable relationship between these two elements enables us to perceive the effect of colours on the shape and vice-versa (Kandinsky, 1989, p. 47-48). In this context, I think, is possible to claim, that the combination of colour and shape in compositions can lead to the declination of a unique language. Hence, these aspects are like the words of storytelling, utilizes by the sculptor to communicate with the viewers.

A very interesting practical example of this, in my estimation, is represented by Andrea Marini's artworks (Figure 6, 7). The unifying point of the artist entire opus relates to the systematic utilization of the composition, applied to reinforce in the viewer the sensation of a constant and progressive changing in the being (Dehò, 2018, p. 53). Fundamental to this aim is the interconnection between the visible and invisible elements of the art pieces. Incidentally, the enigmatic aspects emphasized by the overlapping of the observable and unseeable traces are an essential part of Marini's expression. This generates an allure of mystery that encircle the entire work. Thus, the mystique becomes the central part of his art, and going beyond the matter itself, settles down in a sort of atemporal place, where the contemplation seems to be the only possible action for the audience (Dehò, 2018, p. 113).

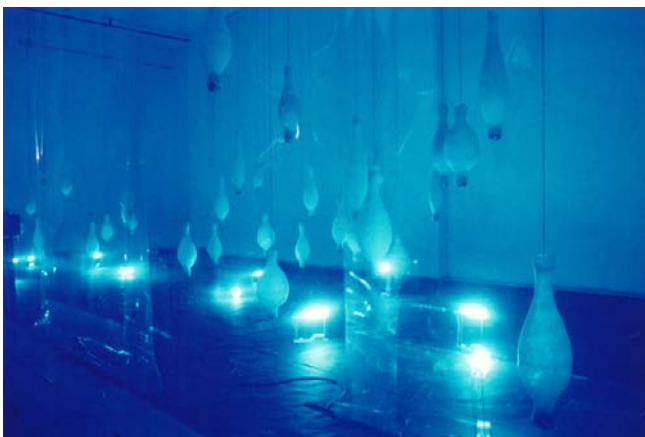


Fig. 6. This art piece weel represent the implicit transformation of life. Effettoserra, by Andrea Marini, 2002.

Fig. 7. An example of how composition can enhance the idea of transition. Creature, by Andrea Marini, 2003.

Speaking about traces, my mind directly connects with another theme extremely important in my artwork: namely, the bodily gesture involved in the artistic process. In this regard, Ingold claims that active action of

making is in itself an operation of thinking, rather than a projection of thought on the matter. This is due to the fact the producer converts the kinetic quality of the gesture on the material flux (Ingold, 2013, p. 128), so generating, what the renowned architect Juhani Pallasmaa defines as a proactive correspondence. This co-operation, between the artist and his work, inevitably leads him in a journey through unknown places, never visited before, where additional knowledge arises (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 111-112). These considerations tend to bring me back to Mancuso's concept of truth, previously expressed. If truthfulness is making and making is a thinking process, that connects matter flow to consciousness flux, conducting the creator at the discovery of always new horizons, might be that art is one of the main ways to pursue the truth? I think so. As long as we keep ourselves open to overcoming predefined conventions whenever we achieve new awareness.

That means to maintain the creative process and the mental state associated with it, sensible to a certain degree of uncertainty. Pallasmaa states that is this sense of hesitation to stimulate curiosity in the artist, thus becoming the driving force of the entire inventive action. In his opinion, the design is always the research of something unknown in advance, and it is exactly the ability of the creator, to tolerate vagueness and the absence of a definition, that allows the matter to suggest directions and new territory (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 110-111). I should admit, I can't agree more. All my process has been based on the tangible experience of these words. More often than anyone can imagine, it was my medium to take me by hand, leading me and let me increase my understanding upon the things.

It appears to be clear now, that active actions have strategic importance in the artistic process, that increases as soon as they become systematically repeated. Repetition brings often to rhythmicity, and the rhythm of the bodily gesture, with its kinetic and acoustic facets, open a gate toward contact with the universal; as Marina Abramović well shows in the performance *Stromboli I* (Figure 8), realized on the namesake island. The artist, laying on the shore of a beach close to the steep slope begotten by the volcanic lava rotates her head following the delicate sound and the direction of the waves (Rumma, 2012, p. 8). Thus, through the movement, she merges with the surrounding, being at the same time part of the cosmos and vibrant expression of its entire melodic flow.





Fig. 8. An image Marina's performance, *Stromboli I*, in which she establishes thought her body a deep contact with the surrounding. *Stromboli I*, by Marina Abramović, 2002.

I understand if in someone is arising a certain sense of perplexity; especially, since what I just stated seems to be obvious considering that everyone is part of the cosmic flux. But is exactly this ability of art to point out the most evident things, that I find extremely interesting. As human beings, we get so easily used to the constant impulses, that we often tend to forget their fundamental lining relevance, or at least, I can say this is what happened to me. I was so absorbed in the frustrating daily life, that for so long I have deprived myself of the possibility to sight the exciting beauty around me. The first time I realized this, it was like open my eyes again. To be precise, I was doing the same things of the day before: I was crossing the same street, drinking the same coffee and driving the same car, but suddenly I was sensing things I never noticed before. For the very first time, I was observing with endless curiosity the world and its flow.

Finally, I was aware that something was constantly changing in me and around me: the sensation to be stationary was only an illusion, and the more I was delving into the artistic process, the more this idea strengthened. Hence the hunch to call the entire project *Metalmorphosis*. As anyone can observe, the decoy with the word *metamorphosis*, literally change of shape, is very clear (*Metamorphosis*, 2020). Curiously, the term *metal* contains the lexical root *meta*, which in ancient Greek means precisely transformation; this brings me to think that originally the concept had to connect to some kind transformative qualities, which are reflected, in my opinion, in the fact that metal has a solid form as long as doesn't reach the melting point, changing its shape. These considerations, in combination with a pronunciation misunderstanding of the word *metamorphosis*, happened during a conversation with a fellow student, led me to deem that this title enclosed the very central point of all my creative searching. Moreover, change features of my medium is my aim and my fun.

The aesthetical fulcrum of this process will be the shape: namely, a circle empathized by an uncentred circle hole (Figure 9). This form represents to me the openness of an imaginary eye, ables to conducts through an inner journey of rediscovery and self-transformation. Far from any figurative featuring, I would like to convey with it, a type of haptic vision which core on the blurry colour, rather than on mere optical interest for the outlines; an intuition that probably lies in my inability to see defined contours without the help of my glasses, as a result of strong myopia I suffer of. Despite the high diffusion of eyesight problems, as Pallasmaa claims, the vision is in our culture regarded as the noblest in between all the senses (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 18). This supremacy of sight, summarized in the images constant flux to which we are subjected, provokes the loss of any plasticity, isolating us from the wisdom of the body and thus depriving the people of a real experience of matter ageing process (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 33-35). I would say, so emphasizing an essential point, as we are partly composed by materiality too. Here lies one of the reasons why I wish with my work to highlight the natural transition of the matter-consciousness flow in time as well.



Fig. 9. This is the shape I am speaking about. Silvia Corti, 2019.

## PURPOSE

My purpose is, via experimental inquiry of patina application upon metallic surfaces such as copper and aluminium, to explore compositions field, thus creating the assumptions to work with installations. The sculptures setup and the connected feeling generated by the power of the ensemble will enable a direct manifestation of artistic storytelling, thereby involving the viewer in a narrative susceptible to free interpretation but at the same time led by a shade of universality. As we all know the artistry itself originates by the implacable artist desire to recount the feelings generated by the encounter between his intimacy and the surrounding (Mancuso, 2018, p.42). In this context, the faculty of the imagination becomes a central core, inasmuch, as stated by the writer Italo Calvino (1923-1985), enables the beholder to deepen in the self-knowledge (Calvino, 2019, p.37) since art raises images and emotions equivalent to the ones generated by actual life (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 132)

## GOAL

My goal is to create patinated metallic sculptures in different sizes, that enables me to work generating in first instance compositions and then installations (Figure 10). While I will be looking into these aspects, I will also concentrate on other facets of my artistic research, such as texture and shaping. The general aim of this project, I can easily state, is to find a materic expressive way, able to communicate through sensorial experience with the audience, thus building storytelling which raises an emotional record.



Fig. 10. An example of composition. Silvia Corti, 2019.

## QUESTION FORMULATION

Against this background, the queries that will lead me during the development of this search will be:

- How can my art create a story-telling that is personal and universal at the same time?
- How can the flow of matter and consciousness be represented in the metal stasis?
- How can I involve the viewer in the transformative process of art?

## APPROACH



The method employing, to engage with my artistic medium, is principally based on the deployment of two connected facets; namely, one pragmatical and one cognitive. The former relies upon my desire to establish a strong connection with my agency; thus involving the sensorial experience in its complexity, and subsequently, the intuitions that this encounter unveils. As Pallasmaa states, the body acknowledges space through the multi-sensory practice, so reinforcing the perception of the being and definition of the self. Even the sight needs to collaborate with all the other senses to create any idea of distance, outness and profundity. In this regard, he considers all senses as an extension and an improvement of haptic recognition, able to rule the exchange between the interiority of the body and the exteriority of the surrounding (Pallasmaa, 2012, p. 45).

Insofar, it appears clear, that engage the body in the artistic practice is the essential starting point to trace an evolutionary path which, as Ingold claims, might be followed by others in the future. Since in the telling of the creative performance, bodily movements, and materials generate stories able to offer guidance for other people through previously unknown itineraries, even without providing accurate specifications about every single step (Ingold, 2013, p. 110). Hence, the storyline of the development process of a hand-made piece remains indelibly impressed in the matter (Figure 11): thus disclosing all the connections with its creator and generating a unique expressiveness direction, because each one of us has particular physical and emotional declinations.



Fig. 11. The evolutionary timeline of my pieces during the processing describes unique storytelling for each artwork. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Therefore, once acknowledge this, the reader might better understand the importance that texture (Figure 12) has in my work as a way to define the unbreakable bond between me and my medium, precisely generating a vibrational, perceptual and intuitively exchange. Moreover, the repetition of each singular hammer blow raises a mystical value in the action that lead beyond the very act itself, so creating a meeting point with what I would like to call universal consciousness. Hence, hammering transforms into a sort of meditative activity that supports the encounter with something infinitely bigger.

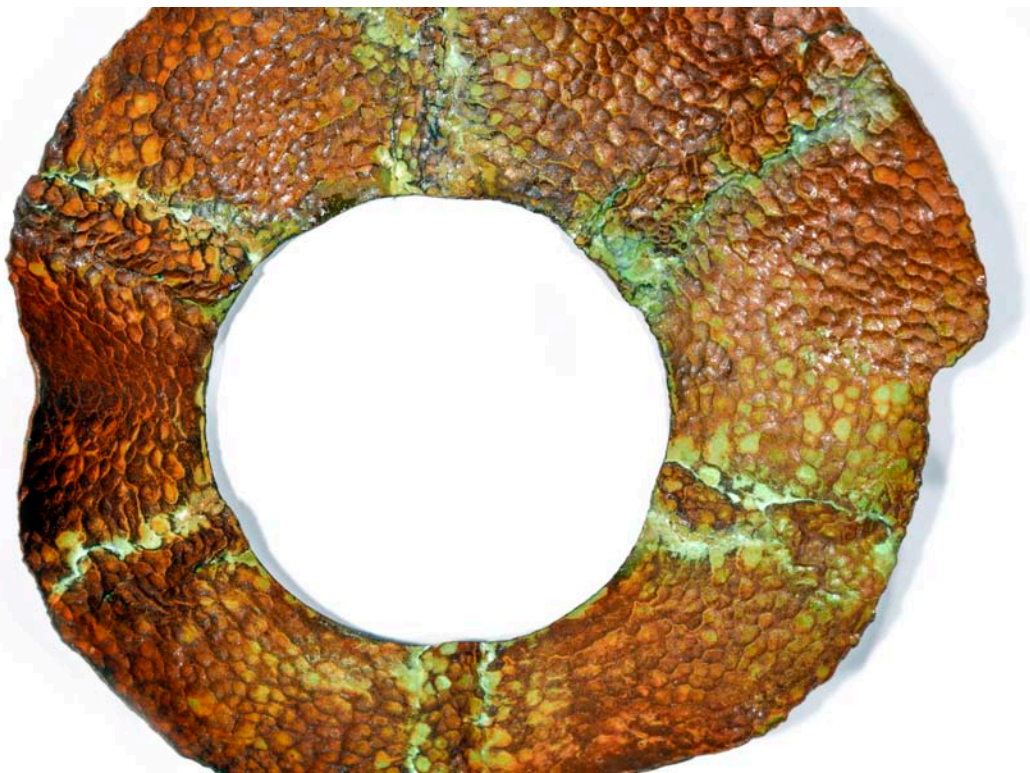


Fig. 12. The singular details of this handmade textured piece, reveal the deep interconnection between the maker and the outcome. Silvia Corti, 2019.

During these episodes, something hardly verbalizing happens: it is like being simultaneously in and out yourself. Inexplicably the personal needs just disappear, and you begin to feel fully integrated into a flux of limitless wisdom, in a clear overcoming of the self. For this reason, I would describe it as a moment of total fulfilment and complacency. But like everything else also this condition is transitory, because of that, you need to record all you can before to forget the received cue.

Thus, the fundamental aspects which frame how I relate to my medium are defined, as a mystical and empirical approach. An insight, that is emphasized even more, by the kind of relation I engaged with my artworks via patination. Indeed, quite soon in the process, I decided to abandon any general rules, leaving me instead be lead by pure intuition. It is in this light that, I began to create different mixtures to be directly tested on metal, so

stimulating my curiosity for the discovery of new material interactions (Figure 13 a, b, c).

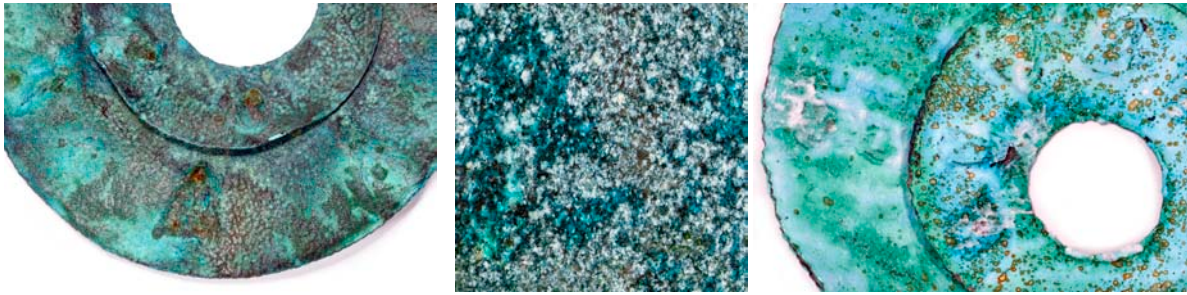


Fig. 13 a, b, c. Some examples of patinated surfaces. Silvia Corti, 2019-2020.

## RESULT OF PROCESS

Starting from these premises, I would like to consider my process as a continuous evolution of the relationship between me and my medium (Figure 14), able to carry new awareness through time. It is for this very reason that, I'm going to share with the readers the development of each aspect that composed my creative performance, verbally and visually at the following link [https://youtu.be/\\_DLyzKHkSRc](https://youtu.be/_DLyzKHkSRc) (Corti, 2020).



Fig. 14. This picture well represents the constant bodily connection between me and my medium. Silvia Corti, 2019.

But let's start gradually. As I have already mentioned, at the beginning of the previous semester my interest for the patina field progressively increased. Attracted by the colour shade achievable on metallic surfaces, I initiated my investigation in this area following two parallel paths. More precisely, one was involving the use of chemistries while the other was implying the utilization of food residues, such as tomato sauce, lemon juice



or fruit peels. In this regard, I should admit that, despite my initial intimidation toward chemicals, I realized quite soon my natural propensity to work with them.

Therefore, I developed a very personal methodology. In fact, after deepening general theoretical knowledge about these substances and their basic interactions, I launched an investigation mostly founded on empirical experimentation, lead by intuitional discernment, which has proved to be fundamental to the creation of samples like the ones shown at the following link <https://youtu.be/3cVmH51Kbfl> (Corti, 2020). Thus I began to create different mixtures. It was while mixing heterogeneous and inorganic ingredients that I started to feel a sort of familiar emotion. Since I was a child, I always had a strong passion for cooking. Still, I can vividly remember all the times in which I have waited for being alone in the house, ready to start a new play in the kitchen, shuffling flour, sugar, butter or oil, in an attempt to create something comestible. I guess that was for me the starting point of an endless discovery journey in the world of substances.

At that time the best cooker in the family was certainly my grandmother. For this very reason, I spent a lot of time looking at all her movement in the cookery, and after a while, I realized she never used a weighing machine to prepare any food. She didn't need it. The right proportion of the ingredients were well known by her through the experience. An approach I fully comprehended recently, creating chemical mixtures. Different percentages generate diverse density, viscosity and colouration tune in the compost itself (Figure 15). For instance, one of my favourite blends has the characteristic to appear like the pesto sauce diluted in two spoons of pasta cooking water, whenever is ready to be applied on metal.



Fig. 15. Some chemical mixtures. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Not less important is the link established between each chemical mix and exposure time on metallic materials, since, as intuited, different applying timing might originate a variety of outcomes (Figure 16). Occasionally, even the timeframe left to the blend's components to amalgamate might lead to varied effects. Fundamental is, in this regard, underline that these considerations don't have a general value in absolute terms. Rather, according to my experience, they directly relate to certain specific mixtures. Thereby, it is clear that field practice is an indispensable element when working with patination.



Fig. 16. Some copper samples treated with the same mixture but exposed respectively: one hour, one day and one week. Silvia Corti, 2020.

The renowned art historian James Elkins, in one of his publications, states: "Painting is alchemy. Its materials are worked without knowledge of the properties, by blind experiment, by the feel of the paint" (Elkins, 1999, p. 9). Thus, he defines the alchemical approach as the art to know how to generate a mixture that no formula can perfectly describe; in this sense, it is the practical struggling of each one with materiality, deprived by the full awareness of what is happening (Elkins, 1999, p. 19). Therefore, I would like to claim: patination is a form of alchemy. According to Elkins, the old painter workshops and the alchemic laboratories were get used to store and operate with a lot of substances which I find in my everyday work, such as ammonium chloride, metallic sulfates, borax, sodium carbonate, ammonia and so on (Elkins, 1999, p. 31-35). To me, this highlights the lively connection between art and human behaviour related to the cognitive attitude. In daily life, indeed, each one of us engages with materials following an empirical overture, independently from the fact that the outcome has different declinations.

Hence, for instance, I prefer to create chemical compositions that have the consistency of a paste, instead of a liquid, and this directly relates to the metallic shape and object dimensions I'm working with. Furthermore, I deem this allows to limit the production of waste; a reflection that need be seriously taken into consideration while operating in such a kind of context.

From here, I developed the decision to scrupulously collect all the remains and reuse them over new sculptures. In this perspective is inserted the choice to patinate hundred forty-four elements upon a hundred sixty-eight, of an installation I'm going to present in the final exam, with the mixture wastages, collected through the semester. Therefore, I could say that in a certain way, my aim is trying to nullify the chemical waste, to avoid environmental repercussions.

But, as the reader can image, my concerns were involved in human health as well. For this reason, in the past months, I arranged a detailed chemical analysis, operated by a professional company, to be sure of harmful elements absence in my sculptures; mainly in the aluminium ones (Figure 17), that was showing a sort of growth and progressive change in the colouration tune. What has emerged was a great surprise also for me. The report has determined with reliability the presence of algal proliferation on the aluminium surface, from which I believe depends on the transitional colour aspect.



Fig. 17. An aluminium sculpture. Silvia Corti, 2019.

The certification of an alive form presence has formalized in any way something I had unconsciously perceived since I started working with it. In this regard, I remember with relevance all the time spent observing with extreme interest the hue change along with the development of the ageing process in the sculptures realized with that medium (Figure 18 a, b, c). I

guess this is one of the reasons that determined my willingness, during the entire academic year, to pursue that experimental framework. Even if from the very beginning, I realized the significant differences that elapse between aluminium and copper. I got extremely fascinated by both materials, properly due to their specific peculiarities, occurring each time they interact with chemical elements or heat.



Fig. 18 a, b, c. These images display the progressive transformations that occur, within the timeframe of seven months, in the aluminium pieces' chromatic nuance, as we said previously, treated with a particular mixture which generates the algal proliferation. Silvia Corti, 2019-2020.

According to my experience, aluminium shows unstable features whenever treated with patinas; while copper, in the same condition, seems to be much more steady, providing extremely enjoyable and colourful accomplishments. The same can be said of the welding process: whilst, aluminium moves and melts very fast in an unpredictable way generating however harmonic and pleasant outcomes, copper results much more controllable and static, appearing quite dull. But in shaping it turns out extremely elastic and flexible compares to the white metal, that is generally much more susceptible to breaks and cracks. It was carefully considering the characteristics of each material that I decided to work with both, although this means to elaborate on different strategies and approaches to achieve a similar form.

In this light, I developed various procedures, most of which were suggested by the experience with matter itself. Thus, I soon realized that, if each metal can be easily cut with the plasma cutter, not all can be modelled following the same standards. But as everyone knows, there is a common ground to all metalworkers, be they blacksmiths or goldsmiths: heat the medium. Therefore, in looking for the right approach to treat copper and aluminium, my previous experience as jewellery maker was fundamental; in fact, the forging techniques resulted very soon inappropriate since they couldn't prevent the cracks in the material, especially with the aluminium samples. In this specific context, work with hot metal was counterproductive. So I began to evolve a method closer to the one before learned, and I understood that the best way to achieve good flexibility of the matter was to warm up these elements with the propane torch and let them cool-down before manually shaping them with a rubber mallet (Figure 19).





Fig. 19. This image shows part of the aluminium modelling process. Silvia Corti, 2020.

This technique has demonstrated its utility also in texturisation of the pieces, mainly in response to the increasing measures of the objects; about it, often the constant planishing hammer banging generates a movement in the matter, due to force, direction and motion I'm applying in that specific moment. Therefore, warm up the sample which I'm working with and try to restore its original flatness is a good way to continue the texturing of the entire surface, since otherwise, it will tend to twitch upon itself. However, I have to admit that despite this expedient, texture defines and directs, in a certain way, the subsequent shaping of the whole artwork since determines an encounter of different activities that remain well trackable on metal (Figure 20 a, b, c).





Fig. 20 a, b, c. In this copper sample, the texture integrates and defines the movement of the art piece. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Speaking about Claude Monet's paintings, Elkins analyses the gesture of the artist in the creative process detecting how the marks left on the canvas doesn't correspond to any namable shape since they were determined by a mix of perfect control in preparation and total abdication of it in the execution (Elkins, 1999, p. 15-17). In my opinion, this definition perfectly describes the handmade texturisation of metal. Each hammer blow is a fusion of action mastery and openness to the intrinsic absence of total predictability of the act itself. Moreover, reviewing the signs impressed in the medium is very difficult to observe evenness in their form, profundity and direction, due to the overlapping of the traces and the uniqueness of each singular gesture.

At this point, the reader can well intuit the importance that texture has in my creative process, assuming how the choice of the metal thickness I'm working with is strictly connected to this aspect as well. So, in the specific context which I'm developing my pieces, the gauge of 1,5 millimetres has turned out to be the right compromise: indeed, the mentioned measure allows me to operate on both sides creating different texturing wherein one is the negative of the other. Hence, to better explain, I elaborate the back part of the object before to texturizing the front part since the contact between the anvil and the material necessarily generates a sort of compression in the matter itself, whenever stimulated by the energetic hammer pressure, thus conferring a lunar appearance to the posterior area (Figure 21).



Fig. 21. This picture shows the texture on the backside of the sculpture.  
Silvia Corti, 2020.

As I had already mentioned, the decision to work with a specific shape (a circle characterized by an uncentred round hole), relates indissolubly to the meaning which this form assumes for me during meditations. It represents an imaginary eye that functions as a passage among different dimensionalities and brings through a journey of self-discovery. In this sense, its significance is not so far from the one's of Shinto gates, that professor Thomas P. Kasulis defines as: "a tangible gateway to an intimacy with the world, one's people, and one's self" (Kasulis, 2004, p. 18). According to the expert of Japanese culture, when people get lost in their everyday life, it might happen that they also disconnect from their capacity for awe, thus feeling homeless since they are aware of misplaying their path. The Torii, in these cases, shows the way home, and physically crossing it is a manner to be empowered re-establishing contact with the self (Kasulis, 2004, p. 18).

In some sense, an experience not so different from the one described by the renowned poet Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), in the *Divine Comedy*. Which, as all know, begins with the author's life right direction loss (Dante, 2019, p. 31) and ends up, after passing through different dimensionalities, in the encounter he had with the divine; represented in the Canto XXXIII as a circular light in which he can see himself reflexed (Dante, 2019, p. 647). A description that tends to remind the sensation that we all warn when watching in the mirror, we notice our visage refracted in the eye pupil. Therefore, is legitimate wonder if was Dante implying a connection between the self and the divine? And if there is a link of which nature is it? I do not have final evidence about it, but I consider that generally many cultures developed a solid idea of the conjunction of these elements. It is enough to think about how Christians describe the figure of Jesus: divine and human at the same time.

Certain is that in artistic expression, the geometrical figure of the circle has, during the centuries, developed a precise symbolic meaning which echoes to sacredness and infinity. More precisely, according to designer Manuel Lima, the circularity evokes perfection, completeness, inclusion and movement (Lima, 2017, p. 32-46). But which significance has for me the form I'm producing? And why is so important to have an uncentred round hole in the circle? I think the answer to these queries hides in the folds of an unbalance shape that struggles to find a certain balance, so embodying all the precarity of life flux. A sensation even reinforced, in the aluminium sculptures, by the algal proliferation which unequivocally underlines the constant existential mutation underwent by everyone.

In this context, the overlapping of abstract and organic elements becomes essential to my artistic expression. Consequently, the welding loses all functionality and transforms into an accessory that contributes to a feeling of growth, raising the material thickness in some specific areas. Likewise, the patina choosing is not exclusively related to the colour outcomes, but it is connected to a general expressive search. Therefore, I like to think that

all the aspects I'm developing are collaborating in this direction. From this viewpoint, working with installations is a way to generate a synthesis of all these different insights within one artwork. But it is also something more. In fact, according to the well-known artist Bruce Munro, this expressiveness modality amplifies the viewer experience of art, involving the multiplicity of senses. In this regard, C-Scales (Figure 22) represents an engrossing model of how installations can provide a totalizing atmosphere for the audience (Munro, 2020).



Fig. 22. A picture of the mentioned Munro's artwork. For a better understanding of my words, I invite the reader to look at the video of this installation. C-Scales, by Bruce Munro, 2019.

It is exactly in the attempt to maximize the feelings of the spectator, trying to recreate a confrontation ambience with the self, that I decided to dedicate my endeavours to the elaboration of three installations: Metalmorphosis Chiara (Figure 23 a, b), Metalmorphosis Rameica and Metalmorphosis Ramata. The first setup is composed of a hundred sixty-eight aluminium pieces, divided into twelve central elements (58 cm x 58 cm x 9 cm), over which are posed, the same amount of items with reduced dimension (35 cm x 35 cm x 5 cm), lastly surrounded by other twelve components (15 cm x 15 cm x 3 cm).



Fig. 23 a, b. The first picture displays a particularized detail of one of the four aluminium sculptures clusters that are composing the installation, Metalmorphosis Chiara, while the second shows some notes concerning the expected work timeline. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Despite my initial lack of full awareness about it, the number twelve seems to play here an essential role. Indeed, in all honesty, when I first decided to work on Metalmorphosis Chiara, I felt like guided by the inner need to

relate to this specific quantity. But only later, I comprehended better the meaning of this choice: in fact, it directly connects with the months' number of the solar year. Moreover, if we divide this unity by three (amount of the layers forming each main element) is attained the numeral of the seasons, namely four. Therefore, this installation, emphasizing the natural life flow, visually unfurls in small clusters, which evoke a sense of transience. And this occurs, principally thanks to the various colour tonality of its bigger constituents, thus symbolising the ageing process through the representation of youthfulness or start, maturity or midpoint and oldness or end (Figure 24 a, b, c). Within this changing flux, a general sense of harmony is, however, revealed by the pieces that are encircling the leading figures: all patinated with the same mixture (Figure 24 d), notwithstanding the others twenty-four, have been treated with different ingredient proportions, of the identical blend.



Fig. 24 a, b, c, d. These images are framing some details of *Metalmorphosis Chiara*. Silvia Corti, 2020.

But let's make a short digression on this topic, thus well clarifying my standpoint to the reader. Most of the time, when we modify the percentages of the elements which are composing a chemical mix, simultaneously we alter the result that this admixture has on metal. So, if we directly change the proportion between the ingredients of a mixture, for instance, including ammonia and copper sulfate, according to my practical experience, we will change the patina outcome on copper or aluminium, at least in terms of hue colours. A circumstance that applies, in some specific case, even to the blend exposition times, which based on various timeline



might generate diverse results. For this very reason, I deem it possible to state that beginning from a common ground, through small chancing, we can achieve various results.

Such consideration remains valid, although in this specific case, we know that the aluminium pieces of which it is composed, *Metalmorphosis Chiara*, have the characteristic to gradually change their colour over time, thus attaining a blue pale shade and progressively uniforming themselves in the ageing process. Transition is here an integral part of the artwork. Important phenomenon amply analyzed also by the architect Gertrud Olsson, in her research on tangible as well as intangible effects of colours in time and space, specifically in her review on *Stellwerk Vorbahnhof* (Figure 25). A building erected during 1999 in Zurich, designed by the duo Annette Gigon and Mike Guyer, in closer collaboration with the colour artist Harald F. Müller, which has the characteristic to have facades made of a concrete and iron oxide mix, that are chromatically transmuting in an ongoing evolution. Moreover, the seasons, with their natural shift from cold to warm climate influences the cladding nuance in an alternation that goes from dark patchy rust to luminous orange, thus complementing the natural unfolding of the chemical process (Olsson, 2009, p. 175-181).



Fig. 25. The picture of the railway switching station shows the colour connection between the facades and the rusty of the tracks. *Stellwerk Vorbahnhof*, by Annette Gigon and Mike Guyer, 1999.

As already mentioned, Emo claims, that art is always a metamorphosis in time and space, inasmuch becoming of the presence. The meaning of any artwork is, from his perspective, in constant mutation since it is always something different from the previous it-self and embodies simultaneously interrogative and response (Emo, 2019, p. 136-141). Therefore, willing to explore *Metalmorphosis Chiara* (Figure 26) from this starting point, we can notice how life becoming is integral to the art piece not only in an implicit way but also in a very direct modality.



Fig. 26. An overview of *Metalmorphosis Chiara*, set up in an open quarry. Silvia Corti, 2020.

But how the viewer, in his intimacy, can rise a reflexive thought, leading to a better understanding of the self, through the encounter with art? First of all, I believe via sensorial experience in all its complexity. Although, in this specific context, vision and hearing play an essential role; if only because as senses, respectively active and passive they complement each other. Hence, the background sound, an indistinct aqueous tone, becomes essential to the installation, as much as the physical parts, of which it is composed thus, defining together the entire artwork. Secondly, through the emotional response of each one of us to the empiric stimuli, induced by the ambience. In this regard, the philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952) stated, that the interaction between human beings and the surrounding environment represents the emblematic circumstance under which emotions and ideas emerge (Dewey, 2005, p. 36).

Visually very different from the previous installation appears, instead, *Metalmorphosis Rameica* (Figure 27 a, b). A structure composed of a central copper sculpture (99 cm x 99 cm x 20 cm), over which lay two metallic layers, differing in dimensions. The bigger surface is underneath (58 cm x 58 cm x 9 cm), while the smaller is in the top position (45 cm x 45 cm x 5 cm). In this contest, the principal figure is surrounded by twenty-four aluminium pieces, so arranged: twelve (25 cm x 25 cm x 3 cm) are framing the composition. Whereas, the other dozen (15 cm x 15 cm x 3 cm) is placed over them. The two different metals have been treated, in this instance, with diverse chemical mixtures. Even though the aluminium components have



been subjected to the same processing, the utilization of different proportions in the chemically blend ingredients has enabled to achieve two variety of nuances.



METALMORPHOSIS RAMEICA

Patination timing  
↓

- COPPER		
Pieces	Expositional	Neutral situation
3 (1/1/5)	2 weeks	1 week
- ALUMINIUM		
Pieces	Exposition	Neutral situation
6 (5/5/1)	2 days	2 days
6 (5/7/3)	2 days	2 days

Execution timing  
↓

4 weeks

Fig. 27 a, b. The first image entirely depicts Metalmorphosis Rameica, while the second displays some notes relating to the execution timeframes. Silvia Corti, 2020.

A very important aspect, during the execution of this artwork, has been the accurate search of compatible colours. In this regard, I soon realized that as long as, I was working with the same chemical mix, the chromatic shade changed whenever modifying the blend ingredients' proportions. On the other hand, nevertheless, it was maintaining general compatibility in all

samples, regard the hue outcome. Conversely, using distinct blends the sensation is to lose control over this facet. At this point, it becomes crucial to elaborate mixtures that can create consistent effects, in term of coldness or warmness of the pigmentation. Thus, for instance, in this composition, the central figure (Figure 28 a) has a cold colour that slightly tents to warm, introducing a veiling of yellow. While the remaining pieces (Figure 28 b, c) have a cold nuance that in most of the surfaces tend to become violet, and only sometimes is interrupted by slightly warmer patches.



Fig. 28 a, b, c. In detail the constituent parts of *Metalmorphosis Ramerica*. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Before to conclude this chapter, I would like briefly to mention another work I realized during this semester: namely, *Metalmorphosis Ramata* (Figura 29). A copper installation that is composed of six circular figures (58 cm x 58 cm x 9 cm), over which are leaning two metallic layers, that differ in dimensions, so that the smaller (25 cm x 25 cm x 3 cm) lays over the bigger (35 cm x 35 cm x 3 cm). The original intention was to display it



in the patio in front of the main entrance of Nya Magasinet's showroom; site in which I was planning to exhibit *Metalmorphosis Chiara*. The aim was, in that context, to establish a connection between the outdoor and the indoor space. For this very reason, the composition has been designed in a way to be arranged symmetrically and split into two clusters, thus emphasizing the way in and inviting the viewers to immerse in the scenery.



METALMORPHOSIS RAMATA

Patination timing



Pieces	Exposition	Neutralization
6 (18/22/7)	2 weeks	30 minutes
6 (18/22/7)	2 weeks	30 minutes
6 (18/22/7)	2 weeks	30 minutes

Execution timing



3 weeks

Fig. 29 a, b. The first image pictures an overall view of *Metalmorphosis Ramata*, while the notes concern to the execution timeframes. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Despite I was used to picturing the installations, realized during this semester, like not directly related to a specific site, I have always acknowledged the importance of preventive and attentive oversight, of the exhibition hall wherein, is intended to operate. In this regard, construction materials, opening such as doors or windows, artificial light sources and general space disposition, surely influence the final decisions on the whole arrangement of the show. But the change of course, that has taken place due to the sanitary emergency, generated by the spread-out pandemic disease Covid-19, necessary lead me to re-think the entire system within I was working. Indeed, the pragmatic needs, and the simultaneous desire to object to certain political decisions, recently assumed by my country, brought me to pursue new expressive methods.

I guess most of the readers don't know the exact situation in which each European country is at this moment. But I know precisely what is happening in Italy, thanks to friends and online sharing groups. In one of the last ordinances, has been introduced new practices of territory check, or better say additional ways to control the movements of the citizens. Thus the government began to use cell phone triangulation to locate anyone moving, and to employ drones to identify people that decide to come out from their houses, without what they consider a good reason: namely grocery shopping once a week.

For this reason, I decided to try to change this paradigm displaying how technology might be involved in better aims, than just military control over land. Hence, arises the concept to realize, with the support of a drone, a short video of *Metalmorphosis Chiara*. The installation, placed in the middle of an abandoned open quarry (Figure 30 a, b, c, d), is framed by the top view, showing all the alienation and solitude of our times.





The first time I stepped in that quarry, I had immediately felt that was the perfect landscape for my installation: a place on the edge reality, between the desert and Martian territory. The location seemed abandoned, only an old excavator was in there. On the ground, there were no signs of machinery movement. The scenery was so fascinating in its complexity; the soil layers were overlapping stratifying in different colours. The light was so strong and particular.

The second day I went there, I realized the hillside of the excavated mountain was lighted either in the morning and in the afternoon. Honestly, I didn't expect such illumination, since entering in the quarry is like to get into a huge corridor, given that on the opposite side of the hill was some extracted material arranged in big mounds.

Standing alone in the middle of that place, I realized that it was alive. From time to time I could hear falling stones, that in their turn were provoking the downfall of other rocks. The sound was echoing in between the two opposite walls of sand, and was quite intimidating. But intrigued by the noises, I decided to interact actively with space. Hence I watered the soil with the content of my water-bottle. It was like heard some far voices coming from the ground and reverberated in the space, before slowly disappeared.

At that moment I realized: it was the perfect place for my installation.

Fig. 30 a, b, c, d. The first three images depict the soil materials present in the quarry in comparison with the pieces' chromatic hue. While the last one shows some personal note pinned after visiting that abandoned place. Silvia Corti, 2020.

But as we all know, each situation, even the worst, is an opportunity to learn something about ourselves. From this perspective, I deem that we might have a huge chance to reconsider our priorities as human beings. Therefore, my wish is that society will rediscover the importance of human contact, solidarity, freedom and love for ourselves and consequently for the surrounding. Indeed, these considerations might lead us to the creation of a more wise political management of the public interest. For this very reason I believe that, in this particular historical context, art should play an essential role in the development of a social acknowledgement of the need to rebuilt from the foundation, our life paradigm.

## DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

At this point, it is relevant to analyze how and if, the questions which led the searching process, found replies through the pragmatism of the development of the artwork. Hence, desiring to share some reflection, I would like, primarily, to remind briefly the reader of the inquiries. The first one concerned the possibility of universal and personal aspects co-existence, in artistic storytelling. According to Mancuso, each time we experience a spiritual moment, we become aware of a bigger dimension subsistence of the self in ourselves. Something that it is individual, but simultaneously doesn't coincide with us (Mancuso, 2018, p. 152). In this regard, Kandinsky claims that art is an essential component of spirituality, inasmuch it is the engine of the knowledge and the promoter of a social aim (Kandinsky, 1989, p. 20-21). As widely stated in the previous pages, the connection between aesthetic and ethic provides the possibility to generate an artistic

expression which can directly influence the concept of self and surrounding. It is in the self-overcoming that, I deem, art can engender a type of storytelling that goes beyond the individuality and embrace the universality of life.

The writer Italo Calvino argues that as soon as an object becomes an integral part of the narration, is overlaid by a magical allure. It transforms into the tangible symbol of an invisible net of possibilities and relations (Calvino, 2019, p. 37), thus unfolding the bond between being and the still unexpressed potentialities, which underlies the constant challenge between personal and universal expression. For this very reason, Pallasmaa states: art is unique, since in its expressiveness, the general human existential experience lais and raise from this uniqueness. This is why he suggests the idea of artworks as microcosms, able to evoke the deepest sense of life (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 132-138), in an insight that empathizes the co-existence of individual and cosmic aspect within the artistic storytelling.

In this regard, *Metalmorphosis Chiara* (Figure 31), embodying the real-life performance of the algal proliferation from the starting rise till the end of the natural vital development, displays, despite any aesthetic peculiarities, the all-embracing existential impulse, common to all the existing. It encloses, even with more force than the other presented installations, namely *Metalmorphosis Rameica* and *Metalmorphosis Ramata*, all the elements necessary to be defined as a mirroring representation of the macrocosm. Therefore, I deem this artwork encompasses in itself the general sense of life; meaning whit it the being transition attributable to the constant transformation process.



Fig. 31. This picture shows an overall view of *Metalmorphosis Chiara*.  
Silvia Corti, 2020.

Nevertheless, this statement does not decrease, in any way, the value of the other two setups; that clearly enclose in themselves all the traces of the mutation that affected them. But simply, it emphasizes the different temporal placement of the viewer concerning the colour transition of the artwork, pointing out the still actual ongoing process of *Metalmorphosis Chiara*.

The second inquiry concerned the transfiguration of the life flow in the metal stasis of the sculptural outcome: for this purpose, it is important to account the ramification of the entire project as a constant practical exploration in this direction. Indeed, patination procedures, intrinsically endowed of transformative features on metal (Figure 32), accurately reflect the permanent changing we all witness in daily life. In some cases, like in *Metalmorphosis Chiara*, the chemical treatment can even originate sculptures in which the performative process, goes literally beyond the interaction between artist and medium, thus unveiling an independently unfolding of the art piece through time. Since, the algal proliferation that directly results from this execution mode evolves autonomously, at most affected by the environmental light and humidity. Moreover, the choice to disclose via installation these insights highlights, in my opinion, the persistent condition of dynamicity and openness to ever-changing of the execution procedures.



Fig. 32. This picture displays a patinated aluminium sculpture. Silvia Corti, 2020.

The last question, meanwhile, related to the viewer involvement in artistry transformative process. In this regard, Pallasmaa states that generally art raises in the audience the possibility of identification, or projection of the self on the experienced object. Thus generating a primordial embodiment, in which the polarization of subject and object, is temporally lost. It is in this encounter that the beholder's perceptions and thoughts emancipate, strengthening the existential experience (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 132-138). Likewise the artist, also the viewer runs into a self-overcoming which, presumably, leads to a reconsideration of the existing. At that moment, a scintilla lights up in the soul, so letting glimpse the possibility to delve in new horizons of understanding.

Therefore, confronting with *Metamorphosis Chiara* (Figure 33 a, b, c), the audience is embodied in the life flow represented by the sculptures, a living mirror of our existential condition, thus reinforcing the awareness of the very meaning of life: the transitoriness of the being. In this context, the communion of destinies raises a momentary loss of the self boundaries, allowing the viewer to feel fully immersed in the general cosmic flux of transformation, renewal and evolution, so realizing that the seed of future development lays and grows in the metamorphosis of today.



Fig. 33 a, b, c. These pictures display in detail some patinated aluminium sculptures that constituting *Metamorphosis Chiara*. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Willing to generally reflect on the mentioned topics, I deem that, the theoretical and practical efforts to respond at these queries intrinsically oriented the entire project development. About that, the choice to work with patinas, and the decision to employ installations as the main way to communicate with the audience, collaborated to build a narrative, which could involve the viewer's self-conscious thinking. Unfortunately, in this experience of the artistic outcomes, the record of spatiality and scale might have been partly compromised by the virtual mediation. Anyway, I would like to add a comment: I never regarded the previous replies as definitive answers, rather like open responses susceptible to improvements, directly derived by the maturation of additional empirical awareness. For this very reason, to date, I consider my process still ongoing.

The searching fields I'm pursuing are so vast to make me feel only at the starting point, respect to a huge explorative horizon. Thus, the graceful results I accomplished in this period, mainly with *Metamorphosis Chiara* and the connected algal proliferation, are not enough to fulfil my curiosity within those enquiry areas. Therefore, even if I consider the existential



experience embodied by this artwork, a fundamental expression of the sculptural life flow performance, I would like to deepen more these topics.

As previously anticipated, most of the decisions, I caught, concerning the artworks display during my final exam, are sort of compromises since they directly result from the new social interrelationship modality dictated by the sanitary emergency. Nevertheless, even if the digital evolution might be a vivid complement of the art show, I still consider the physical interaction with the artwork fundamental. Thus, for instance, being in proximity of Milan Dome, ones experience the outside and the inside space of the building, with the own body, generating different emotional records compere to the ones engendering by the cathedral videos or pictures. Equal consideration applies to art: stand in front of Caravaggio's Medusa portrait is a totalizing experiencing, very different by the ones mediated by virtuality. For this very reason, I believe that despite, the presentation of captivating images, they still aren't able to offer a complete overlook of the whole artworks: generally enabled by the spatial and temporal placement of the audience's experience.

Thus, critically reflecting on the showing modality, even if some specif patination process details have been emphasised by photos, installations lost their overall energy. Pictures can't elicit emotions, like the ones raised by the encounter with the art pieces, creating a gap, especially, when the intention has always been to offer a direct experience to the viewers. Probably, my considerations would be different if the primary intention had been to work exclusively with digital support, but materiality is an essential aspect of my process. Thereby, whenever I'm looking to Metalmorphosis Chiara video, viewable to the reader at the following link <https://youtu.be/NIUAa63Dojo> (Corti, 2020), I notice how clips, cuts and frames, define the contours within which the audience interacts. This lead to a preventive perspective selection: a meditation between beholders and artistic objects, that should be taken seriously into consideration as often as working within this framework.

Still speaking about the mentioned video, I would like to add a brief digression about the background sound. Originally intended to be an active part of the installation, audibles through speakers, switchable by the interaction between viewers and motion sensors, it became an integral part of the recorded shots, thus emphasizing the sense of bewilderment of the entire quarry scene. This indistinct voices sounding, that perfectly complements the quite Martian landscape, is the result of a modification in the reproduction timing of prerecorded river flow noise. Moreover, I believe, this reinforces the idea of the vital presence on the aluminium surfaces. But why was I so fascinated by the idea to work with this aspect as well? I deem, it underlies the connection that in real life is established between the dynamic actions and the passive facet of the associated outcomes. Texturing my pieces was, in this sense, a warning: each gesture has an acoustic implication. Hence the insight to engage with this topic.

Considering the overall slideshow decisions, from a widened perspective, is intuitable why I chose to present Metamorphosis Rameica (Figure 34) and

Metalmorphosis Ramata (Figure 35) in a more neutral context. This is specifically ascribable, to my desire to emphasize Metalmorphosis Chiara. Since, as I have already stated, I deem this is the most accomplish outcome, at least in terms of biological and material transformative performance of the sculpture.



Fig. 34. This picture depicts an overall view of Metalmorphosis Rameica. Silvia Corti, 2020.



Fig. 35. This image offers a widens viewing of Metalmorphosis Ramata. Silvia Corti, 2020.

Reflecting on the remarks cue, during the exam debate, by the opponents, Emille de Blanche and Sebastian Schildt is possible to assert that such comments have been generally instrumental to reinforce some conceptual aspects underlying the entire project. In this respect, Emille initiated an attentive discussion, underling the strong connection she could trace,



between the presented works and my background as a jewellery maker. This observation promptly led to the analysis of the relationship that the body typically establishes with the artworks, be they wearable jewel pieces, or installations. In this regard, I deem the setups, necessarily create an independent structure from the human physicality. But of course, its presence activates the intrinsic potential of the sculptures, revealing the essence of art: namely, the communication of a world vision.

Another important aspect Emille debated, concerns the shape, which with rhythmical repetition, I have been using to compose all the installations. This choice, as previously stated, directly relate to my meditative experience, but, to be fair, the confrontation with the artist supported the elaboration and the conceptualization of the value assumed by the uncentred hole in the form. Especially, as soon as she has visually referred to the sculptural opus of Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975): sculptress that spent most of her artistic experience working with circles, spheres and ovals, placing the focus on the centre of the chosen form (Tate, 2020). This insight allowed me to reflect on the idea of emptiness and the associations linked with it. From this perspective, the absence of materiality within my sculptures represents, in my opinion, the only condition from which we can start a process of self-discovery, thus symbolising the lacking of conditioning.

Instead, Sebastian's considerations were more focusing on the possible audience response concerning the presented work. As emphasised during the discussion, I think the beholder' s confrontation with the setups necessarily personalizes the experience of art, adding insights, directly deriving from the individual background, and enriching with new perspectives and meanings the art pieces. This originates an intriguing evolution of the artwork, not only from a physical point of view, since any material has a natural decay time but also from the intellectual and social outlook.

In this context, Sebastian's observations of how sculpture names can influence the viewer' s perception of the artwork assumes great importance. Honestly, I was careful in that sense. But I realize that the implication on materiality suggested by the names of the installations might not be evident at first glance. So, could be that an English speaker might not understand that in the title *Metalmorphosis Chiara*, the latest word refers to a certain colour tune assumed by the medium in time. On the other hand, we all know that words are often limiting our thinking, therefore, I hope that despite headlines and written elucidations the viewer could generally engage a more perceptual experience of art, so to raise an own understanding of the felt sensations and emotions.

Like intuitable, also by the reader, these insights inevitably bring with them a lot of implications, that necessarily need to be unfolded within the artistic practice. For this very reason, I will strengthen these considerations even more in my future works, and I will support this development, encouraging the debate on these topics.

## CONCLUSION AND RESULT

In conclusion, the entire project, with its intrinsic dynamicity, well reflect the conceptual considerations on which is founded. In this sense, I deem is possible to state that, can be seen coincidence between initial intentions and the presented outcomes. Insofar, I intend to continue the exploration of the matter carries out till here. Particularly by focusing on empirical and intuitively attitude, since this relation method with materiality, enables the unfolding of constant new searching stimuli.

In the developing of my artistic experience, the metal will most likely remain the main medium. Principally because of my amazement for the interaction established by this material with other inorganic and organic substance. In this regard, I will surely develop new experimentation in the patinas field (Figure 34 a, b), as well I will continue to work with installations as primary expressive modes. During this researching time, I would like, indeed, to enhance alternative methods of vital flow transfiguration on sculptures and to do this I will look for new ways to install growth of life forms on metallic superficies, thus proceeding in the direction inaugurated by *Metalmorphosis Chiara*.



Fig. 36 a, b. These pictures display some experimental patinated copper samples, recently realized. Silvia Corti, 2020.

For this purpose, I will probably confront with the combination of biological and inorganic agents. In this contest, which procedures I will be exactly employing to achieve that, is still premature to know. But I believe the practical experience, generates by making, and the intuitional aspect with it connected will lead the process. Thus hopefully, we will be soon speaking about new artistic results.

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Is always nice thanking all the people that believed and supported you, but this time I wish to express my gratefulness also to all the ones who have been thinking, that I wasn't enough: not enough craftsman, not enough artist, not enough theoretical. Unintentionally, they help me to overcome my limits. They pushed me against the boundaries that my mind, in the lifetime, set up for myself. Feeling oppressed, the only choice I had was to accept the challenge and break down the walls of my restrictions.

When I was young my grandmother, a woman extremely resolute was often telling me: what is not killing is making you stronger. I don't know if right now I can describe myself forceful, but surely I know that I had expanded the territory of my knowledge and the awareness of myself.

Define me or others through restrictive categories is no longer an option since I understood the infinite potentiality of each human being. Therefore, thank again to all the people that during these three years, engaged a constructive dialogue with me.

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