

Lilla Tabasso: fragile melanconia

Villa Necchi Campiglio, Milano
FAI - Fondo Ambiente Italiano

The project has been possible thanks
to the contribution of Andrea Zegna

curated by:
Caterina Tognon

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10am - 6 pm

Villa Necchi Campiglio,
Via Mozart 12, 20122 Milano



Dull, drooping and shriveled thistles and turgid and exuberant rosehip buds, eager to display all their fragrant and luxuriant freshness; floppy and burnished tulips and flourishing peonies; explosive oranges and faded greens; decadence and radiance, autumn and summer, shadow and light, life and death. In Lilla Tabasso's hyper-realistic floral compositions, the contradictions, imperfections and fears of the human being are embodied in the most delicate and ephemeral creations on earth, taking shape in glass, symbol of fragility.

Alongside the spring flowers in their riot of colors, vigor and luster, the Vanitas flourish, enhancing the sense of impurity and weakness of nature.

Even in the crumpled leaf, in the twisted branch, in the flower that bends the corolla and abandons itself to its demise, there is poetry, love, art.

Raised in a family of antique dealers and surrounded by classic stylistic artefacts which inevitably influenced her, Lilla Tabasso decided to devote herself to glass art, teaching herself the ancient and noble art of the "Lume" or "lamp-working". The hot flame melts the Murano glass rods, which are then mixed in order to obtain the perfect color to give them life.



In the course of her research, she came across the creations of Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka, famous 19th century glassmakers, and was struck by the extraordinary execution of their work.

The exquisite workmanship with its incredible realism became a goal to which to aspire, though not the ultimate objective. Having assimilated the techniques that allow her to approach the Bohemian masters, Tabasso then departs from it. The scientific rigor of the Blaschkas – who were commissioned to faithfully reproduce examples of terrestrial and marine flora and fauna, on behalf of one of the most prestigious American universities - is absent in her work. Tabasso is not interested in “photographing” nature as it appears. She does not feel the obligation to reproduce an exact likeness - her flowers are not intended for academic study. The focus is in the way in which they burst with life and vigor at first bloom until eventually the passage of time inevitably takes its toll. What Mother Nature puts before her eyes is reinterpreted according to the mood and emotions of the moment, as if it were the flower itself that hints at a certain frame of mind. In her work there is always life, even when it's suffering, while the contrasts inherent in human nature take shape in the unusual combinations of the compositions; transparent and deliberately neutral vases that enhance the richness of the cut flowers, cold concrete blocks from which they emerge, stubborn and resilient tufts of anemones, or clods of earth, primordial and maternal...

The works, each one unique, are created without preparatory drawings and in a precise emotional moment, each one having a life of its own. It can take shape in the artist's mind before she even heats the “torch” of the flame, or grow and transform during the creative process itself. Only when Lilla Tabasso feels the awareness of having achieved harmony and balance can it be said to be complete. More so than the shape or form, it is the choice of color, together with a warm and natural shade, which is a priority, as this gives the flower its transparent melancholy, a permanent condition of her every creation.