

RIBOT

VIRGINIA RUSSOLO

A Darkness shining in Brightness which Brightness could not comprehend

curated by Domenico de Chirico

5 March - 12 April 2025

Opening on Wednesday 5th March from 6 pm to 9 pm
The artist will be present.

RIBOT gallery
Via Enrico Nöe 23 – Milan

Opening hours: from Tuesday to Saturday / from 3 pm to 7.30 pm
also by appointment

RIBOT is pleased to present *A Darkness shining in Brightness which Brightness could not comprehend*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Virginia Russolo (Oderzo, 1995, lives and works in Crete).

The project includes a series of previously unseen works that narrate and represent the artist's most recent poetics and research, focused on investigating themes such as the relationship between humans and other species, the intelligence and adaptability of natural materials, transformation and metamorphosis processes, and the origins and methods of ritual practices.

The title, a verse taken from *Ulysses* by James Joyce, could be conceived as the first work on display. Its repeated reading resonates like a magical formula, a spell that leads the viewer into a parallel dimension where a semantic and symbolic reversal takes place. The darkness "shines" in the light and no longer symbolizes a dangerous threat; rather, it becomes a possibility, an invitation to observe the world, nature, and the beings that inhabit it from a different perspective.

This radiant darkness is evoked by the brown and shimmering silk that covers and defines exhibited the sculptures. This emblematic fabric—hand-sewn onto a metal core and treated with a recipe based on organic raw materials—refers to an idea of metamorphosis and becomes the materialization of a passage, a radical and generative transformation that instills vitality into the form.

Overflowing water fountains and Grails, recurring and equally symbolic subjects in the artist's sculptural imagery, alternate in the gallery with a previously unseen plastic intervention, almost an architectural element, that traverses the space from ceiling to floor, ideally connecting the two exhibition levels and infusing a palpable and uncontrollable energy. This entangled sign/gesture is a central presence, appearing as an iridescent "lightning bolt," a ribbon full of loops that recall the indomitable force of matter.

The same knot motif is found in the paintings that serve as a formal counterpoint to the sculptures—abstract compositions created by layering various natural products known for their beneficial properties, such as wax, resin, propolis, and essential oils. The wall works result from additive processes repeated in a ritualistic manner, experimenting with unconventional techniques and, along with the other works, activating multiple perceptual levels.

In the exhibition, even the sense of smell plays a role, as it is stimulated by the particular aroma produced by the substances used, contributing to the construction of a grand "synesthetic" and collective artwork.

For the occasion, Russolo has created a *Special Project* in a limited number of unique pieces, which revisits the concept of the *Entanglements* and develops it on a smaller yet equally powerful scale.

Virginia Russolo (Oderzo, 1995, lives and works in Crete, GR) studied at The Slade School of Art, University College of London (2014), The Ruskin School of Art at University of Oxford (2017) and University of Oxford (2023). Her works have been shown in solo and group shows at: Una Boccata d'Arte, Sedilo (2024); Sharon Zarinbal, Berlin (2024); 20c gallery, Beijing (2024); Ortigia Contemporanea, Ortigia (2024); Basel Liste, Basel (2023); CLC Gallery, Beijing (2023); Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Institute for Cultural and Creative Industry, Shanghai (2023); Biennale des Jeunes Créateurs de l'Europe at de la Méditerranée, Proclida (2022); Podium Gallery, Oslo (2021); Baltic Triennale, Vilnius (2021); 7th Thessaloniki Biennale, Thessaloniki (2019); Museo di Casa Gaia, Portobuffolè (2019); Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'Arte, Turin (2019); The Cello Factory, London (2018); ; The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford (2017, 2016); Tate Modern, London (2016). Prizes and residencies include: ICCI Art Valley Program, Shanghai Jiao Tong's Institute for Cultural and Creative Industry, Shanghai, 2023; Rupert Alternative Education Program, Rupert, Vilnius, 2021; Diari tra Diari, Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'Arte, GAM Torino, 2019.