

LEONARDO

ZAPPALÀ

Born in 1998 in Rome, Leonardo Zappalà pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Political Sciences at La Sapienza University, followed by a Master's Degree in Visual Arts at "Naba" Nuova Accademia Di Belle Arti in Milan.

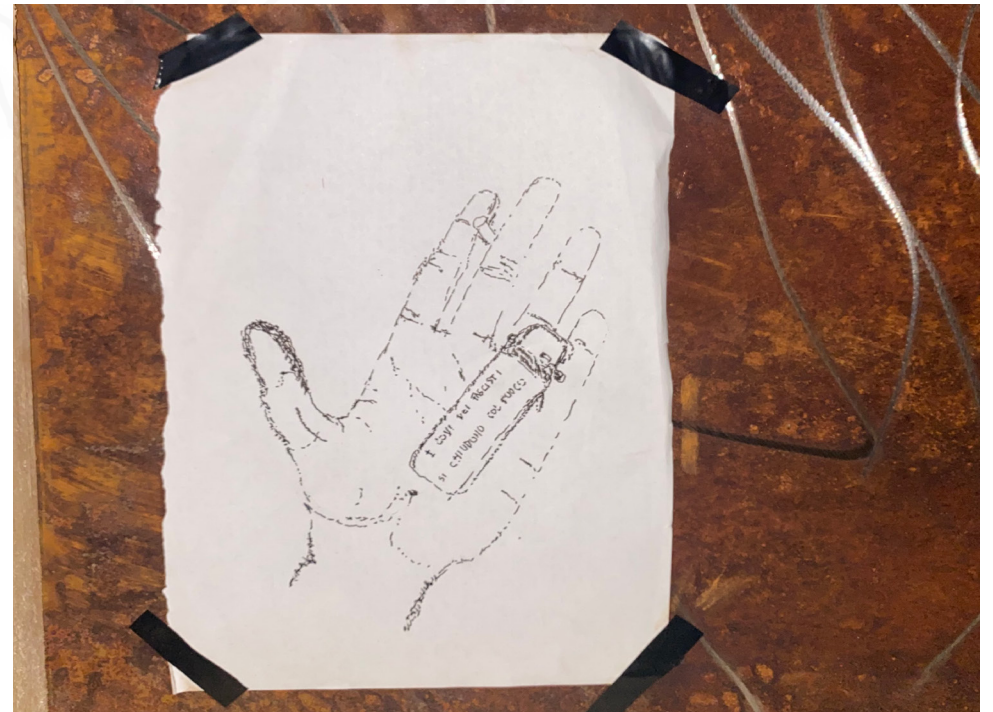
His creative process is deeply rooted in observation and interpretation. "I gather stories from worlds around me: conversations in bars, billboard images, book characters, or news programs, anything is fair game," he explains. These narratives serve as the raw material for his artistic expression, evolving into unfiltered poems that gradually manifest as living images through installations and paintings.

In his sculptural works, he embraces a grunge-like aesthetic, employing raw materials such as found wood, unrefined clay, cement, and bricks. This tactile approach gives to his sculptures a rugged authenticity, echoing the urban landscapes from which they are born. Meanwhile, his paintings reflect a post-vandalism ethos, characterized by the incorporation of materials like duct tape, spray paint, collages, and writings.

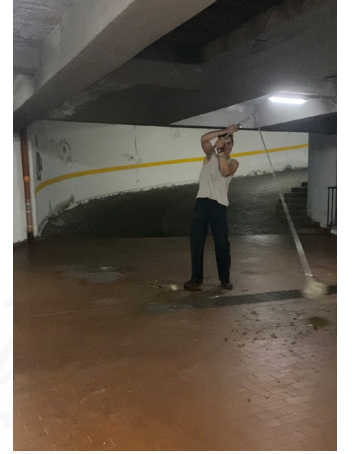
He views his work as an objectification of his perceptions and experiences, intimately connected to the city and his autobiographical dimension.



OTTIMISTA



OTTIMISTA, 2023, 100 H 90 W MIXED MEDIA



TESTA DI SASSO



TESTA DI SASSO, 2023, PERFORMANCE

DIAVOLI



Mask + Lectern,

Art residency project for JI RITI at San Filippo, Calabria.

In the local iconography San Filippo holds the devil chained by his side.

While Apotropaic masks in local culture have the duty to wick away evil and negativity.



From their union “Diavoli” is born.

From the magic principle of Similia Similibus Curantur, something horrid is able to get rid of evil since they are similar .

You need a devil to get rid of another devil.

DIAVOLI, 2023, 35H\ 70 H X 50 W MIXED MEDIA



LOVE IS
A KINKY
DISPLAY



LOVE IS A KINKY DISPLAY, 2023, MIXED MEDIA

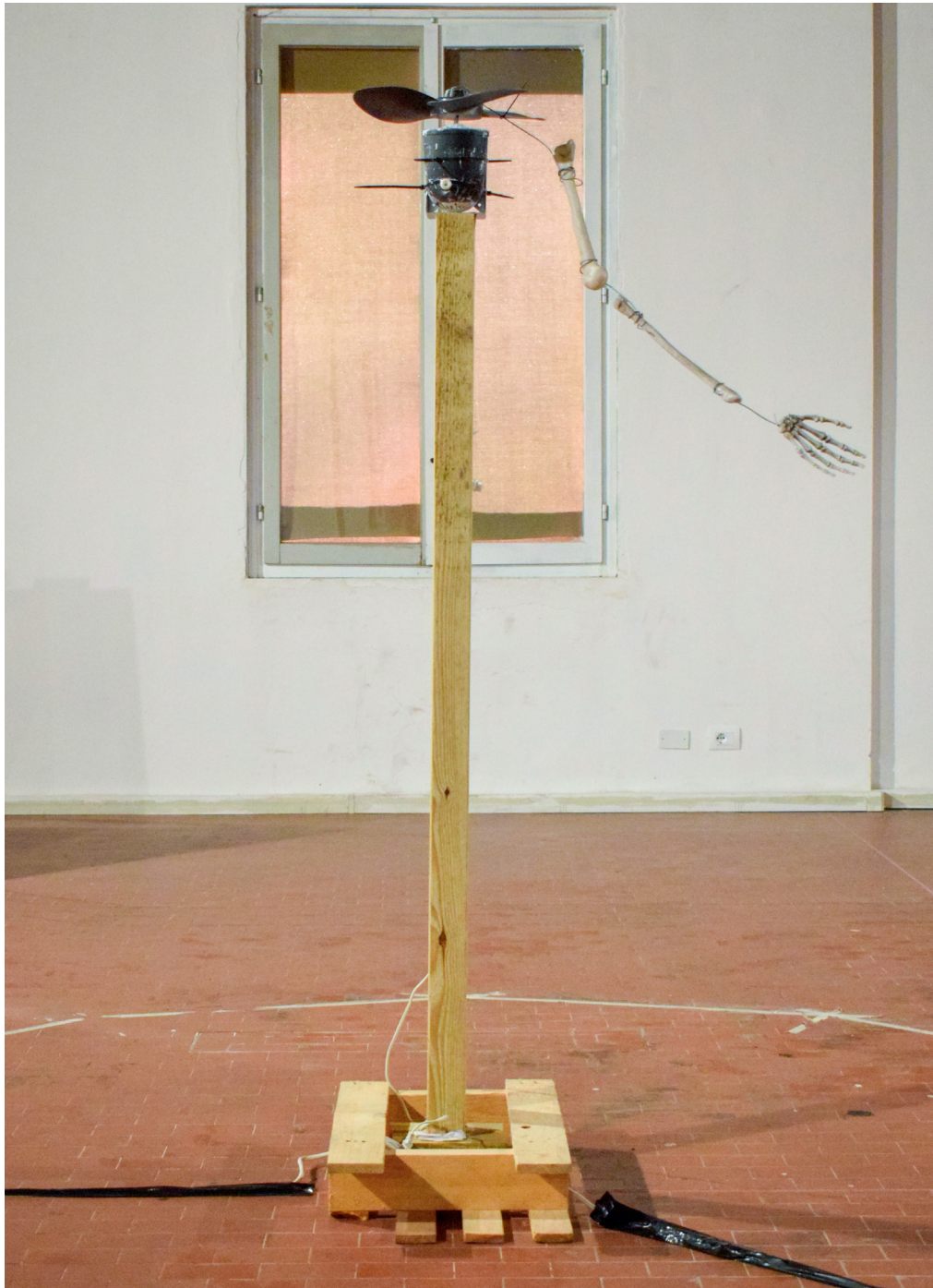


BLOOD AND TEARS

A kid with many dreams, never too attached to reality. He felt like something was always wrong with that pounding pain in the chest he felt for those little animals, he was supposed to eat, the only truly beautiful things he ever saw.

He eventually grew up to anesthetize himself, nobody was again to tell him what to do, for all the times he wanted to cry he realized, too soon, that pain made his brain sharper, deleting everything else. Growing up he got in a lot of fights but he never threw a real punch, he never felt it was quite the right moment or reason.

After all, he always had more blood than tears to share with this planet.



GIVE ME A HAND (END)

There was this boy I knew, wonderfully kind,
incredibly fragile, sort of forgotten on the sides of
the street, like a puppy on a highway before the
summer holidays.

That kind of dog can either die alone on the asphalt
or become the best dog some family could ever
hope to adopt.

Life is like that, talent never comes free.

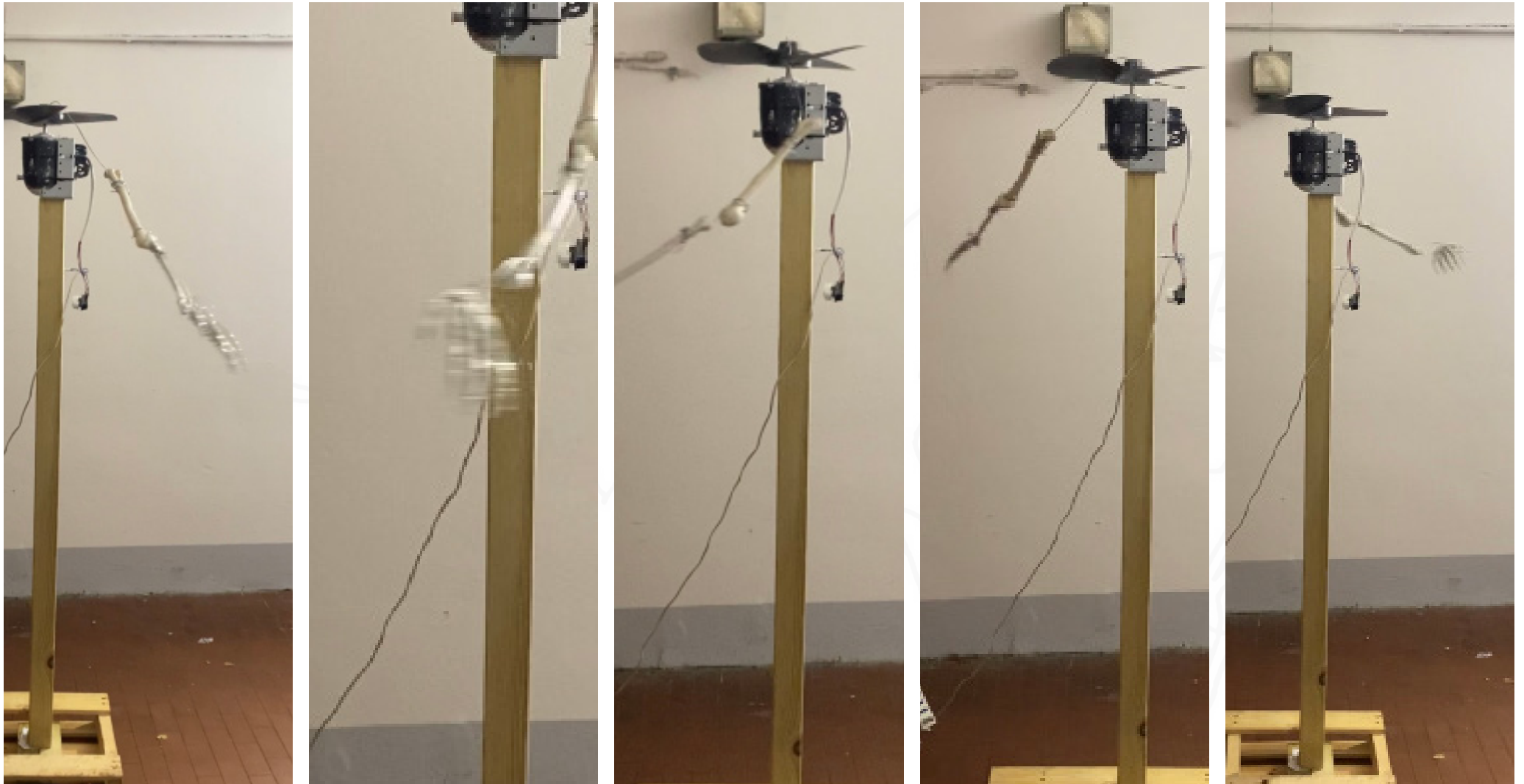
Either you lose all or win everything, most end up
doing both, and some get away in time far away
where God (???) can't find them.

Was my friend fast enough?

He tried his best, realized that he needed help, tried
to reach out, and asked for anybody in power to
give him a hand. That very same hand that reached
out, like a wolf in granny clothes, turned out to
become his end.

Some pills should just make life easier, the voices in
his head shouldn't be so loud.

Now I haven't seen him in a while, not the boy
I used to know, sometimes I believe I still see his
voice,
but I'm never sure. I can never grasp and hold to it.
I wish my hands could do it, help him and myself.



GIVE ME A HAND (END), 2022, H180, BASE 60 X 40 CM , KINETIC SCULPTURE

DO IT



DO IT , 2023, 91H X 104 W MIXED MEDIA, COLLAGE, WOODEN PANEL, INSTALLATION “rethought wall label for “give me a hand (end)”

EROTICA RESISTENZA



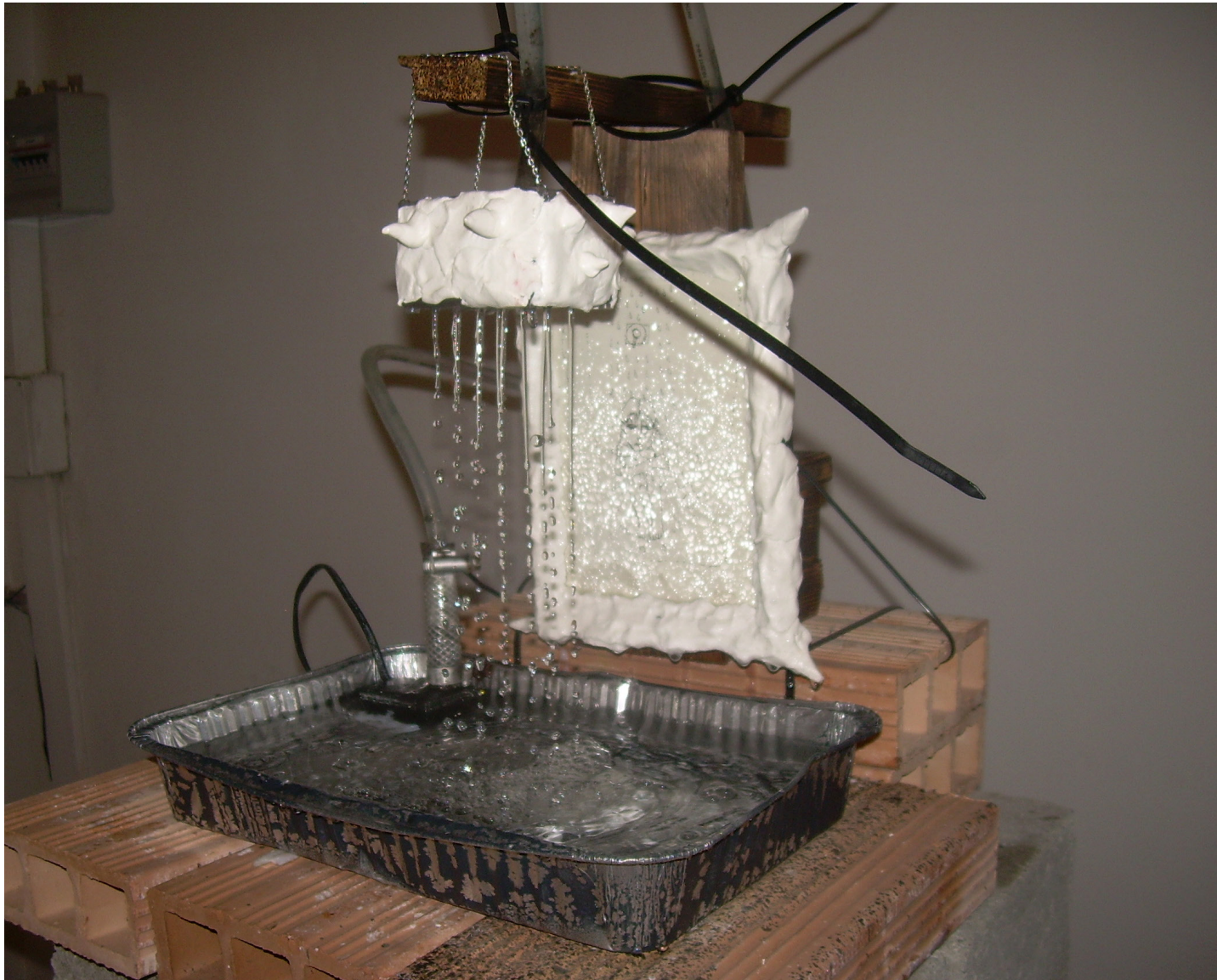
EROTICA RESISTENZA, 2023, 40H X 35 W MIXED MEDIA

INTELLETTUALE POPOLARE



INTELLETTUALE POPOLARE, 2023, 40H X 35 W MIXED MEDIA





The space between words, hallucinations
under a hot shower.
Sad and lost thoughts come back faster
and stronger, they get to us, and trap us.
Everything is being questioned again,
every decision made or every word said.
Everything is blue.
The water and its sounds are hugging
us keeping us trapped between pain and
sugar.
Endlessly, or until we decide to get out.
Why do I keep seeing your face, why the
dearest thought gives me the greatest
pain and joy I ever felt in my bones?

ALLUCINAZIONI



**A sword,
crossed with a hopeless idea
Bloody revenge,
Avenge oneself
Kill my self,
Empty promise
Dull sword,
Bloodless**



BLOOD LESS



MASS DESTRUCTION

MASS DESTRUCTION, 2023, 70 W X 190 H X 3 CM, PAINTING

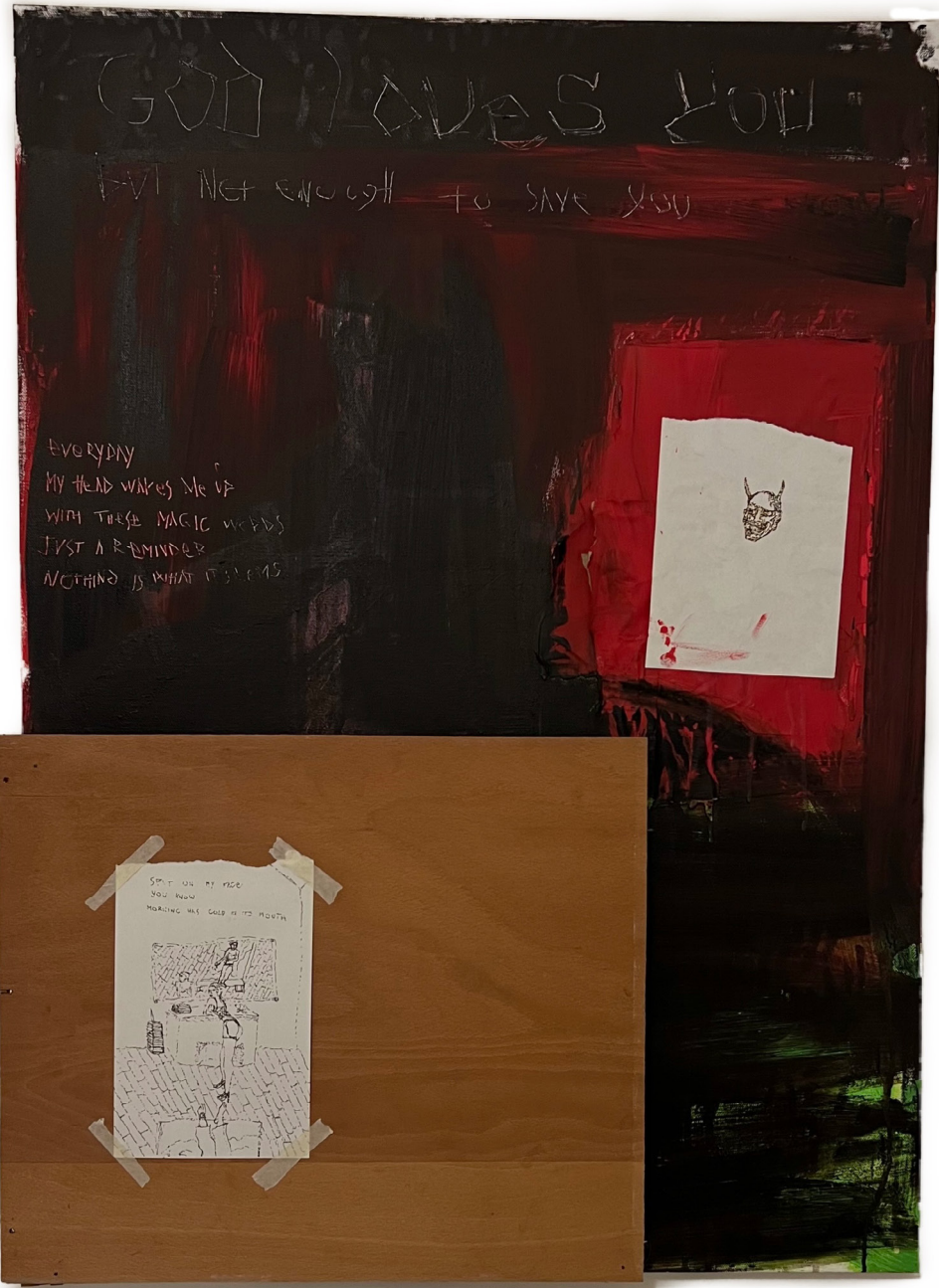


LA MORTE SI
PRENDE UN CAFFE'



Death comes with her scythe
For everybody.
We all know.
In the same way
I wait for you ,
With your own scythe
Carrying a great book Curami
Before she comes to take me I will read you a story
You will pretend to sleep

EASY MORNING



EASY MORNING, 2023, 90H X 65 W MIXED MEDIA

WILL YOU MARRY ME



WILL YOU MARRY ME, 2023, 90H X 65 W MIXED MEDIA



GOODBYE SPACE COWBOY

I met one day a robot coming from a distant past and an
unconceivable future, he told me his tale, one painfully
relatable. He loved my iron horse like I enjoyed his laser
blaster.

He said:

I'm so fucking bored
I can't remember,
the last planet I was happy on
But I do remember,
all my sadness
For the same reason
people stay longer in my head
than they do in my life
I'm almost sure at one point,
I must have been different,
Don't you want to hang out
and waste your life with me?
I hope I'll never see you again
Goodbye Space Cowboy

OTTIMISTA

It is an incredibly hot night in Calabria, almost unbreathable, I sweat and don't even feel like moving, but I've been sleeping in a tent for a week so I don't have much choice, I need to go somewhere to eat or live a little.

The idea is to move to the seaside, usually the sea should bring some sort of wind with a stupid name impossible to remember, so I go there.

Thankfully I was right, there is a nameless wind giving me back hope in life, I even have the energy to roll a cigarette.

My lighter is not in my pocket fuck, Marco didn't give it back, again I don't have a choice.

I stand up from my lonely rock on the lonely beach and start walking towards the bar, I have nothing against bars of course, with the exception that in summer they are full of people, and with people, I do have issues.

But I was about to have an interesting encounter of the third kind.

I saw a girl, a tiny thing from afar looked 15 but coming closer the age became some sort of flux of numbers impossible to decipher and she could be 15 or 30. I don't pick her because she is cute or anything like that, but unfortunately, she is the only one smoking and I quite rather just speak with one person, and that's it.

Tonight is not the night to take any chances with multiple possible nonsmokers.

Why would I even consider the non-smoking ones?

Because this girl was already giving me a headache, super loud laugh, smiling, and surrounded by people pending from her words the risk is to get stuck in some conversation and that is to be avoided at any cost.

After analyzing the situation while slowly approaching

the group I arrive at my conclusion, leftist optimist, so 50% good 50 %not so good.

I approach, hi do you have a lighter, yes bro she answers, why the fuck do people say bro to random people? who knows.

I take the lighter. It's red. On it I read " fascist lairs are closed with fire", I think she sees me reading this and I'm already laughing like an idiot, she smiles at me while I give it back, I could ask her something about it, but I don't want to, what if the lighter is

her brother's or just a joke gift from a friend, I walk away with my lit cigarette, with the intact image of the hardcore leftist optimist that might be 15 or 30, and I will never know if any of this is true, or false, I'm an optimistic paranoid.

EASY MORNING

Even today I woke up.

Every day, my head wakes me up with these magic words: just a reminder nothing is what it seems.

I then usually stand up throw something on and walk my dog.

I remember one time I saw an old lady with a super old tattoo on her chest that said: god loves you but not enough to save you.

And after the voice of my brain and before I walk my dog sometimes I see her in my head.

She looked eighty or ninety, I didn't stop her to ask, but maybe she was younger cause she was walking faster than I possibly could. All the above obviously proves that there is something not properly clicking in me.

Anyway, I wonder why my brain connects the grandma and her tattoo to the words: nothing it's what it seems.

Maybe she was a serial killer and my brain had been preparing me for that day for all my life, so that I could stop her, and I just let her slip away. So now my subconscious self, who is way smarter than I am, is punishing himself for this terrible mistake, drowning in guilt. At the same time, all I think is; that really is a cool tattoo, that must be why I still remember it.

Anyway, today I woke up, I heard the words and I saw the old lady, but my dog was asleep, and looking up I saw you (new data in the equation of my brain) putting on your makeup in front of the mirror, definitely more interesting.

I say Hi, why don't you spit on my face, you know morning has gold in its mouth.

And those are the words I want to hear every day when I wake up from now on,

To keep in mind only what truly matters.

Take notes subconscious self.

You are not so smart after all.

WILL YOU MARRY ME

It is kinda of a funny story.

I met this girl once, I don't even remember where, which is weird because I feel I couldn't have possibly forgotten the first time I ever saw her.

Her name is Senja I only remember the second place I ever met her, and that is where she told me to go, so here I am. She gave me an address and a time nothing else, I feel like I should be worried because I'm about to get jumped for something, anything stupid I did before today.

But she sounded so trustworthy on the phone or maybe it sounded too interesting to me to be paying any caution. I arrive at the place right on time for once, there is red a neon sign saying blue moon, Off for a great start.

Some stairs take me downstairs, I enter and I see nothing for 10 seconds straight the rapid switch from light to darkness blinded me completely, it's 10 am. But I hear something.

"You must be the devil,

In high heels

I hear her coming

Tik Tak

Oh fuck

Tik Tak

Oh fuck

She is the devil

I know

Tik Tak

Here I come"

She says hi, I'm already in love, I remember the first time I met her and I always thought it was a dream, but she was real.

I'm sitting down she brings me a beer while she smokes a cigarette, she feels safe here, a good place to have a first date.

I agree, men are insane the world is collapsing I would love to have a first date with a bodyguard so used to punching in the face horny pigs that he wouldn't even notice if he added one more to the count.

She smiles at me she says she knew I would understand. I say understand? It is my dream to be a stripper.

She is not too sure I'm being serious.

3 years after I'm writing on a napkin:

Will you marry me

We will cry together

We will die together

On one knee I will ask her

What is left to be said or done

I don't care enough to run after it.

It sounds way too close to that System of a Down song,

I hit the right spot, I knew it.

BLOODLESS

There is a legend of a mystical sword, nobody knows its origin, but across history, looking carefully you can uncover her path.

Never look into significant facts since it was never used in wars, only a few kings had the pleasure to receive her gift, but still, it saved many lives.

She would arrive unannounced following the scent of a rotting soul.

Her name is Bloodless, for everyone else, it looked like an ordinary kid toy, in her wooden base or on the side of its owner she would be laughed at everywhere she went. This particular dull sword only looked like the deadliest, sharpest, and heaviest

weapon to her owner. In the eyes of the person she chooses no other knight on the planet possesses a comparable blade.

She picked carefully across time

and space when and where to make herself known, picking the deserving body worth saving.

The body is always rotting on the inside, somebody desperate with a hopeless idea, seeks a bloody revenge for something unforgivable in their mind. They have someone worth avenging and worth killing for.

But this is no sword for heroes, just for souls not ready yet to be harvested since the person who is seeking revenge is always the same one to blame for the unforgivable act. Those are people trying to kill themselves.

The swords teach them they are being too harsh, they can still live on this planet, it's not pretty but is true.

So once the Body gets the idea to use that sharp blade to unalive itself the sword finally looks for a new owner going back to being harmless, gifting a new chance at life.

A broken promise.

Nowadays not many people would be brave and insane enough to use a sword for suicidal thoughts so except for some Japanese culture enthusiasts it has been left discarded somewhere waiting.

So I've been told.

MASS DESTRUCTION

Mass destruction, nothing short of it.

I have a dick I was born with it. I spent most of the first part of my life learning how not to think with it. We all wish more people did it.

Which by the way doesn't mean not thinking about sex, for God's sake, it means not destroying anything around you that is just different or that you just do not understand, it means not telling your own daughter every day when she gets home that she is ugly and useless, so that she doesn't flatter herself. Yes because this summer I got so pissed I contemplated mass murder but again, in the end, I didn't do anything. A father fighting with a young woman, he doesn't understand why she is mad, he only just destroyed everything she studied for so many years, what is a degree: nothing.

While she was playing at college he was working, she couldn't teach him anything.

What could she ever want to teach him anyway? All he said was that she should be cleaning the kitchen while the men talked.

He is sure he didn't do anything wrong that's just a woman's place, doesn't matter if she is hired for her brain and his job is, well nothing really, just watch over some land, but he is a man, he is older, he is smarter also, obviously.

He knows she is teasing him, look at her nipples, why can't he look away, she must be a witch those are magic tits. The asshole really believes everything he says, he is a man, an animal, that's reality, the woman is the prey and she is teasing him what should he do? Look away?. Now all this happened while I was dead in a tent, but I learned about this in the morning and I went to talk with the guy, of course I thought I could make sense of it, somehow understand his brain, so incredibly insane of me. He explained I'm too young so I don't understand yet, the world works like he says, I'm so stupid, why did I even think otherwise.

He gives me life lesson after life lesson, he tells me how he treats his wife and daughter, and his insults can only ground them into the real world and make them tougher.

There is not such a thing as emotional scars or trauma, he doesn't hit them, pains is only real if it bleeds, clearly. While all of this happens he hands me a machete, and all I have, while I keep cutting bamboo, are sweet fantasies of mass destruction.

I believe there are a lot of things that could get cut. I'm not an expert but I've seen some insane toys some purple some shiny and chromed and seemed to me like an upgrade for sure.

EXHIBITIONS

VICTOR EREMITA, 2024 Graduation Solo Show, Archive Sites, Milano

EXPO NABA, 2023 Student Expo, Milano, Naba

JI RITI, 2023 residency + exhibition, San Filippo, Calabria

COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN, 2023 workshop + exhibition, Zagreb, ALU

AL GIORNO, 2022 Group show, Rome, MICRO art gallery

BUCOLICA, 2022 Group show, Paintings, Rome

THE PANOPTIC GARDEN 2022 BIENNALE VENEZIA Introduced personal project and practice in the context of the Uzbekistan pavilion “**WEEKLY**”, 2022 Rai1, Live Painting for “Weekly”, live on national tv

CONVIVENZE, 2022 Group show x Tiba Community, Rome Pantheon

UOMINI, DONNE ED ALTRI ANIMALI 2022 Art experience, Rome Green Hole (Pantheon)

HYPERBOLIC CLUSTER 2021 Solo show in Rome

AUCTION 2021 Rome, Stadio di domiziano, private auction x TIBA community

WWF 2021 Group Show and auction for WWf italy, Rome Green Hole (Pantheon)

PREMIO DOMIZIANO 2021 Stadio Domiziano Rome, art prize, selected for an Art auction with Bertolami fine Art (auction house)

AL SANGUE E ALLA RUGGINE 2021 Group show, rome x Orma collective

NEW BEGINNINGS 2020 Group show, London, x bedroom artist collective

GANDHARA 2020 group show, Rome, collaboration comune di Roma x Gandhara

SALON D'AUTOMNE 2019 group show in Roma, Galleria Barattolo (trastevere)