

ILARIA CUCCAGNA

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Italy

Ilaria Cuccagna was born in Cesena, in 1981. She lives and works between Como and Milan. She studied sculpture and photography at the Urbino Academy of Fine Arts and at the Facultad de Bellas Artes de San Carlos, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia. On completing her studies, she continued to develop her technical competences, working in art foundries both in Italy and abroad. These experiences were of fundamental importance for her research and for developing sensitivity to her materials. Over the years she has worked as a university lecturer for the Department of Art History at the University of Malta, leading workshops on sculptural techniques. She is now Lecturer in Sculptural Disciplines. Her research is divided between sculpture and site-specific works concerning events that have taken place, processes initiated, alterations of matter that only reach their final state after being subjected to stress. In this sense the artist considers sculpture a performative practice. References to Nature and to archeology are important aspects of her research: entering into greater detail in the study of iconography, in particular with regard to classical models of sculpture, she has begun to consider the archaeological object a synthesis of Nature and culture; a cultural product that Nature has reclaimed, transforming it over time. Excavation and discovery, like the use made of the 'remains', are thus part of her practice. Plaster, silicone rubbers, bronze and expanded polyurethane are the materials she prefers to work with.

WORKS
2022 | 2019

It's not yet / It is no longer

2022

bronze silicone rubber, plaster

variable dimensions

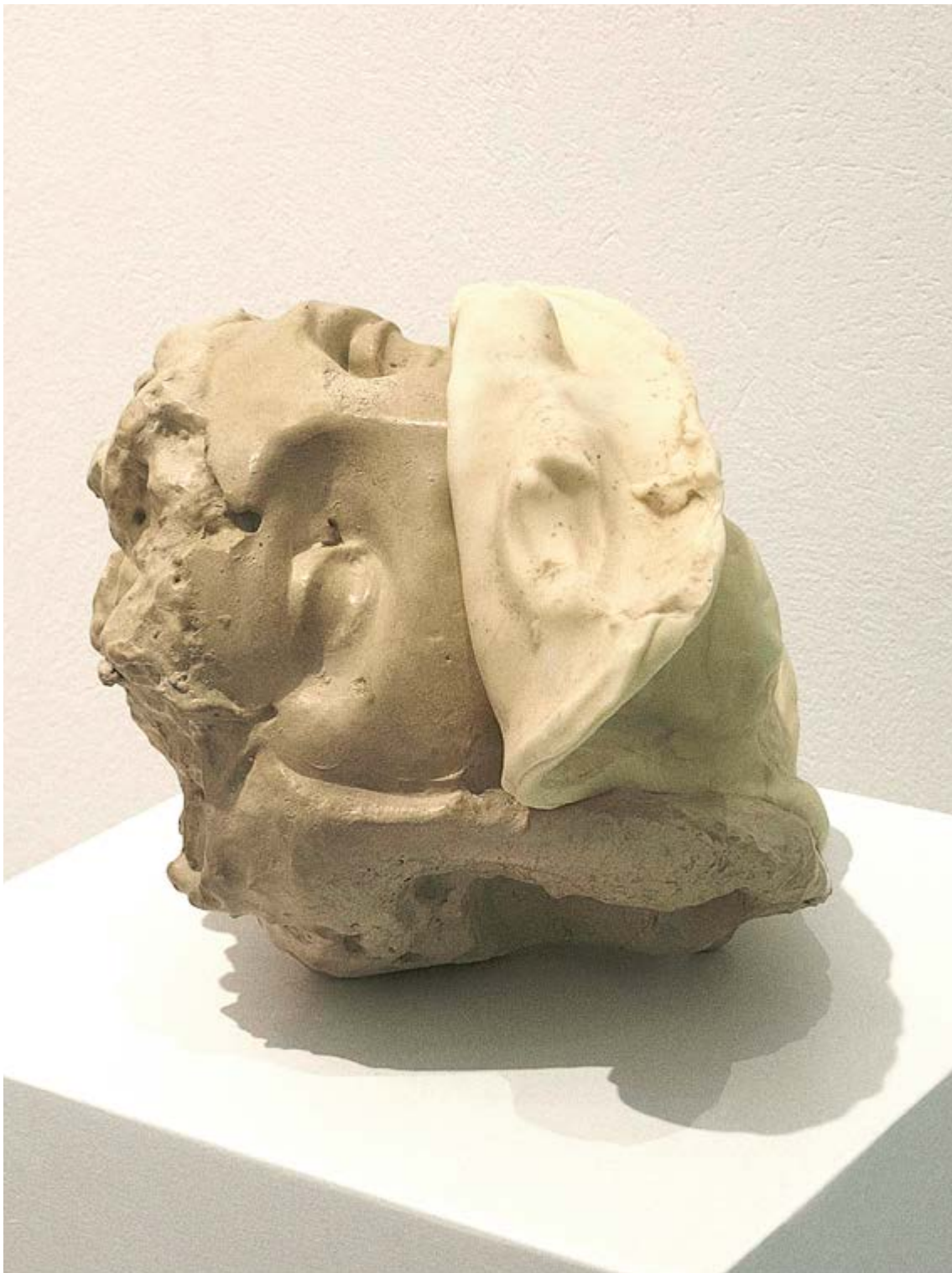




Self I

2021

patinated bronze, silicone rubber
20x20x20 cm

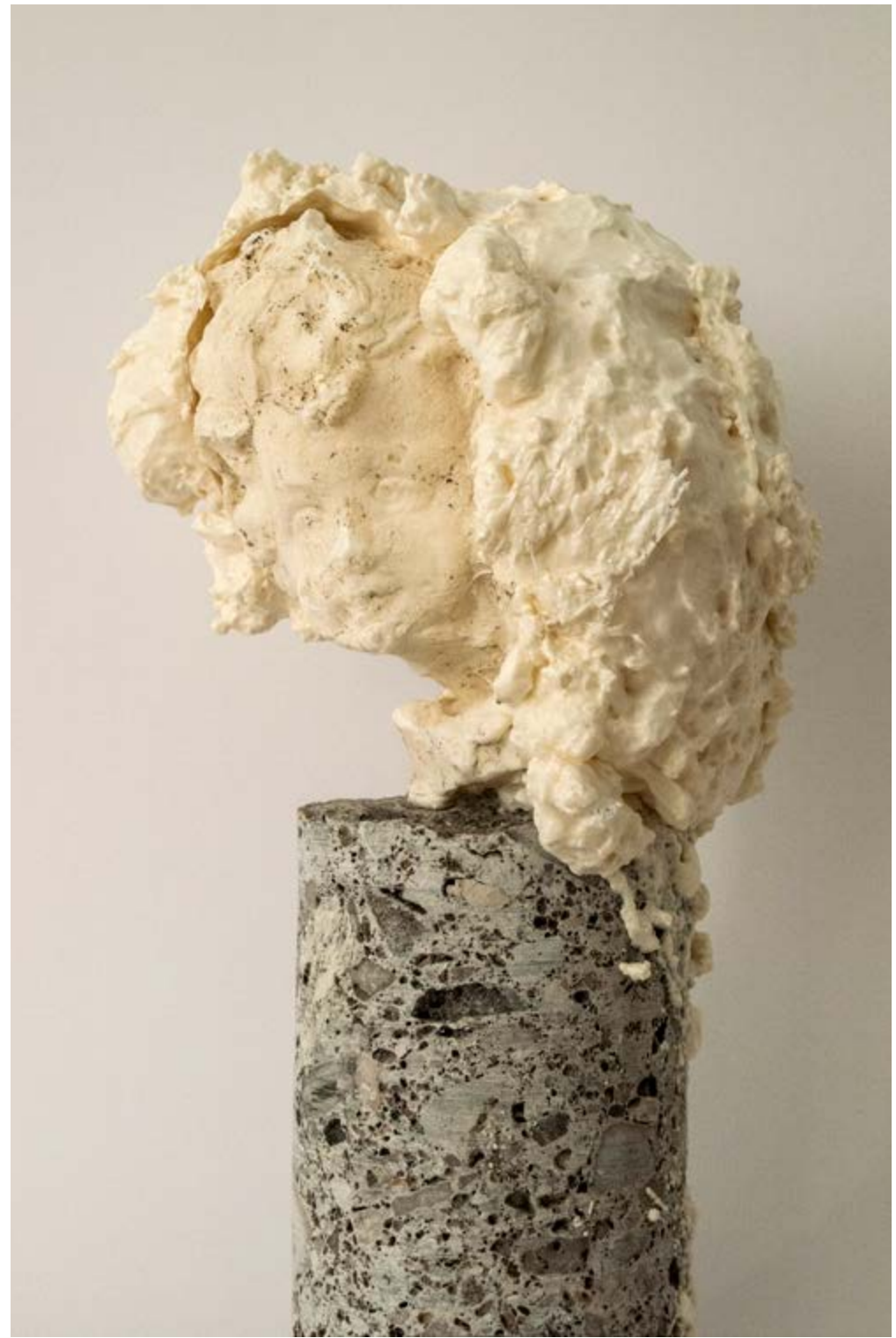




Expanded
serie

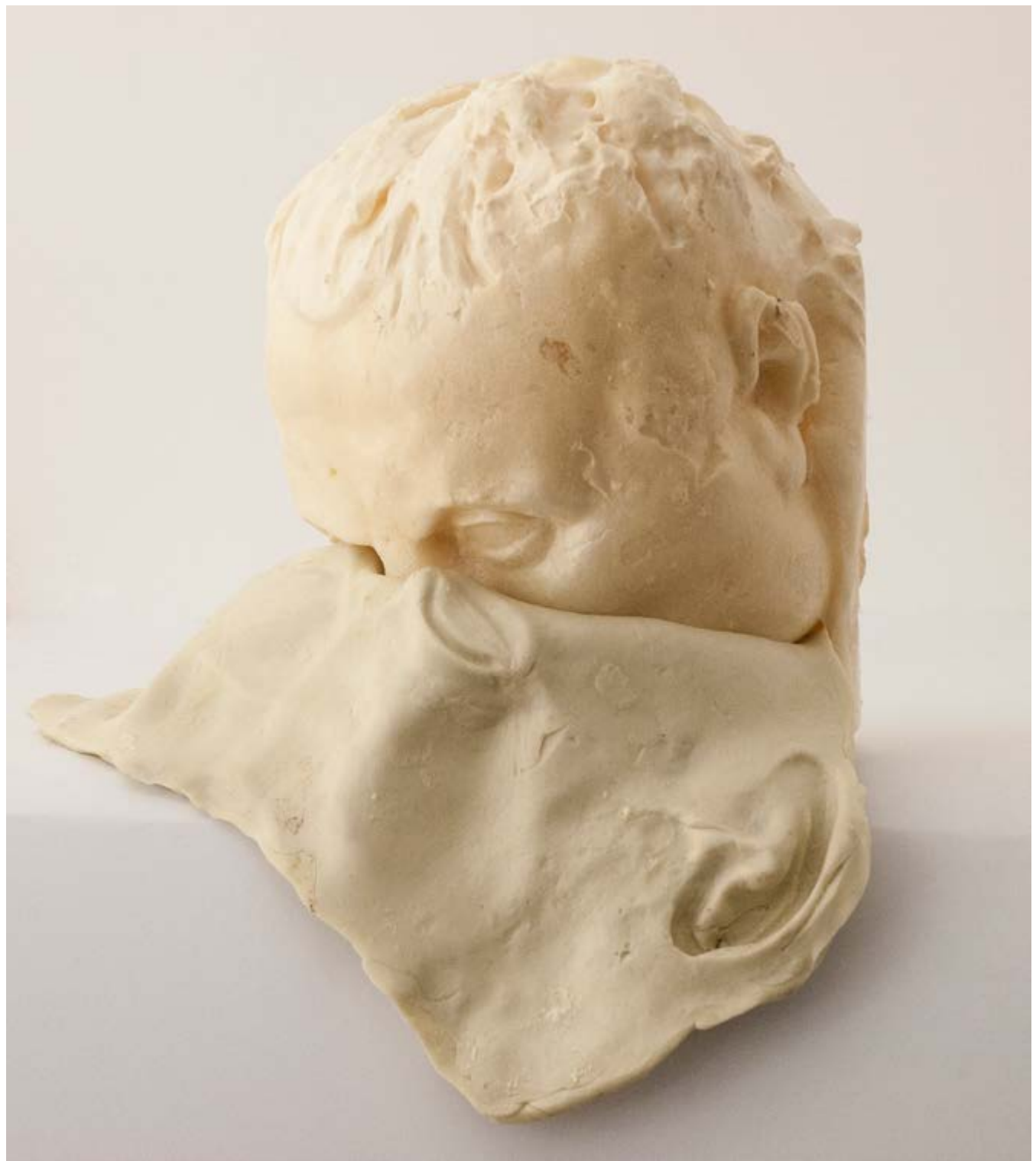
2022- 2021
polyurethane, silicone rubber,
various dimensions

The playful, tragic and precarious component are the basis of this series of sculptures that I started making from 2021. In the constraint of staying in the studio, I explored the possibilities of a new, easy to find material, polyurethane foam. The idea was to put in contact the countless amount of silicone rubber casts that I had accumulated over time with this new material. The autonomy and stubbornness of the foam intrigued me right away. Material in search of freedom and constant air, ready to rise unexpectedly. These contacts have given rise to sculptures that are sometimes grotesque and sometimes light, on the contrary, tragic and reflective.









While I was making an artwork, I create another

2021

polyurethane foam, spray can, wood, enamel

50x20x25 cm





Skins

serie

- 2021 - 2020 - 2016

silicone rubber

various dimensions

Since 2016 I have started making silicone rubber casts on walls or floors of ruined architecture (walls of ancient churches, abandoned houses and floors corroded by bad weather). The practice of treading on reality, as if it were a 3D photograph, has always accompanied me. I have always made negatives to create positive sculptures. In this series of works, on the other hand, the work resides in the mold that becomes the guardian skin of the traces that have marked and define these architectures. In the deterioration lies the expression and their beauty.

Traslato

2021

silicone rubber

200x300 cm







pelle II

2020

silicone rubber, wall residues, nails
30x31x3 cm









Migratio
Mdina-Valletta

2016

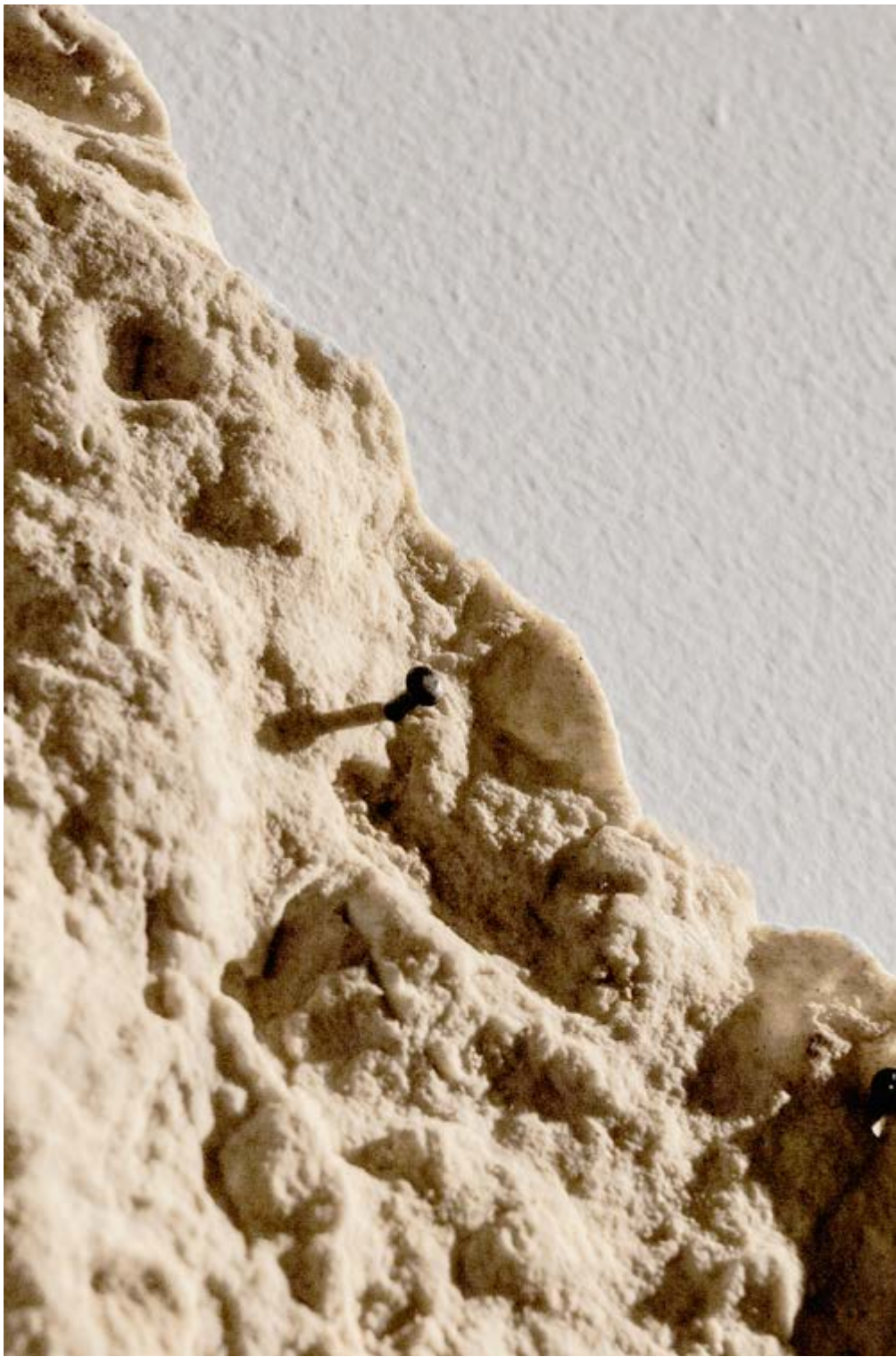
silicone rubber, wall rasidues, nails

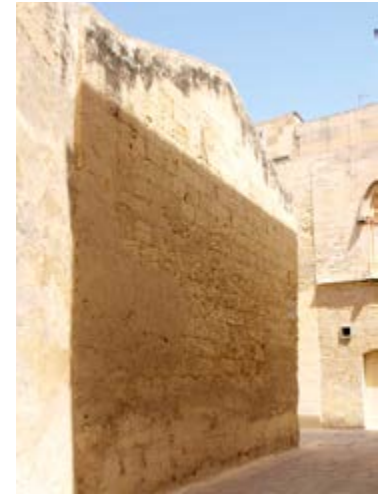
150x250 cm

During the period of residence on the island of Malta, I learned of the strong tensions existing between Mdina and Valletta, respectively the ancient and today's capital. These contrasts, which for various reasons have continued until today, date back to 1530 when the Order of the Knights of St. John arrived in Malta to settle there permanently. The aristocracy of Mdina immediately opposed the Knights by forbidding them access to the city. This was one of the reasons that contributed to the Order's construction of Valletta. The official story instead tells that the aristocracy of Mdina welcomed the Order well. Of this version there is a propaganda painting created in about 1750 by Antoine De Favray commissioned precisely to manipulate the reality of the facts and therefore alter the historical memory of that event. Reflecting on this false historical and on the persistence through the centuries of tensions between the inhabitants of the two capitals, I wanted to create a metaphorical bridge of union by moving a symbolic element of the city of Mdina within the walls of Valletta. Part of the oldest city walls belonging to the church of San Pietro in Vincoli were trodden and transported to Valletta as an invitation to the reconciliation of the two cities.









Mdina, the church of San Pietro in Vincoli and the selected portion of external walls.

Archaeological

serie

- 2021 - 2020 - 2019 - 2018

plaster, iron, iron oxide, sea salt, time

various dimensions

The title to which these works belong refers to the technique of making them. In some cases, the opening of the mold reveals the shapes that, as in an archaeological find, give light to objects that are often incomplete and deformed. Following this logic, the sculptures are placed on the borderline between being created and rediscovered objects. In other cases, by arbitrarily sculpting sculptures that have already been made, I rediscover their pulsating core, their essence. To fuel the distance from my authorship and the sense of self-generative randomness, the sculptures undergo an oxidation process only partially under my control. This physical reaction allows, in fact, the emergence of salt on the surface, which creates corrosion and blooms, as well as color changes.

2021

plaster, Ligurian sea water, oxide, mushroom, Ceppo di Gré®, time
35x30x35 cm



Sculpture's heart

2021

plaster, sea water, iron oxide, time

35x20x75 cm

25x25x50 cm



Emerged

2020

plaster, Adriatic sea water, iron oxide, time

18x15xh42 cm

18x15xh37 cm



The cultural artefact of the past is often attacked or modified by natural elements. What the archaeologist rediscovers is always a new cultural object on which nature has exerted its strength.

Starting from this principle, I imagined the emergence of the Italian symbols of underwater archeology, the Riace Bronzes, made up of sea water. Two columns stand out, as if the sea and marine sedimentations had incorporated the two archaeological icons, crystallizing them.



Natural Culture

2019

sea salt, mushrooms, time

30x25x25 cm



Natural culture is part of titled Archaeological series. In this group of works I started to explore the relationship between man and nature, in particular the relationship between the cultural product of man (such as the remains of works of art, the scraps of material processing etc ..) and the natural elements. The proximity of these shapes and textures creates short circuits in the memory, awakens memories and at the same time stimulates curiosity in discovering new forms and connections within the sculptures. In natural cultures the real presence of two mushrooms determines the meaning of the work; a culture that becomes natural again because it is nature itself that regains it.



**archaeological
between creation and discovery**

2019

plaster, iron oxide, sea salt and time
30x30x60 cm







Unearthed

serie

2021 - 2019 - 2017

plaster, natural materials

various dimensions

Inside the Torno wood, on Lake Como, are scattered the Erratic Boulders, very large serizzo stones that were moved by the glaciers. These boulders already in ancient times aroused a lot of charm, so much so that burials were obtained from the erratic boulders inside the Torno wood (between the end of the fifth century and the end of the sixth, by barbarian populations who lived in the area). Visually today these tombs are uncovered and appear as tanks full of water carved into the stone. In the path that accompanies the Massi Aveli there are dry stone walls and also some architectural ruins on which a lot of moss has grown over time. The interest of my project lies precisely in these elements: the moss that inexorably covers the architecture and the rainwater that fills them and changes their appearance. From a first attempt at interaction between my work and the wooded ecosystem, others followed. The sculptures presented were found months after their placement in the woods or the basins of the Massi Aveli.









Lake sculpture

2019

buoy, soccer balls, fragment of sculpture

55x65x40 cm





WORKS
2018 | 2003

Alba Fucens

2018

bronze, bones and black marquina marble

50x60x24 cm

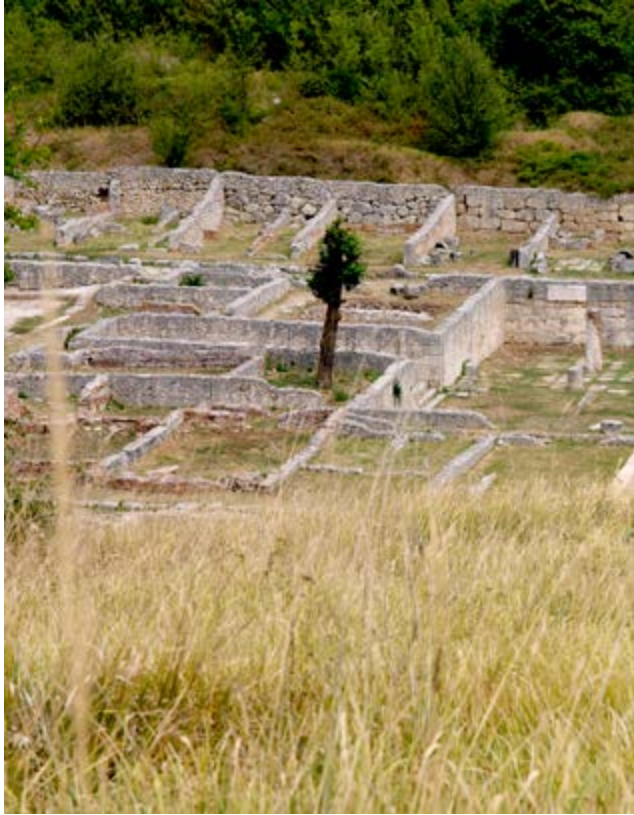
Alba Fucens is an archaeological site, a Roman colony located in the province of Aquila, in Italy. I visited this site in 2016 and was impressed by the total immersion in the surrounding mountainous landscape. the impression that time in that place had stopped for centuries was real; around there were no references to the contemporary era. Not far from the site, on the same day I found bony remains belonging to animals that had once grazed in those fields. The similarity between those bony remains and the capitals of the columns seen within Alba Fucens were extraordinary. I therefore decided to make bronze columns whose bases and capitals were the two animal finds found near the site.



2018

bronze, bones, Travertine
20x60x15 cm







Sali minerali

2017

white onyx / sea salt
bardiglio marble / Breton salt
brown antique granite / cyprus salt
pink quartzite / himalayan salt
variable dimensions

(text by Angela Madesani)



The reflection in this work is on the relationship between salts and minerals of different origins. Various types that originate abstract compositions in space. It seems to be, in this way, in front of delicate still life of Morandian reference. Cuccagna further explains: «At the same time the visual relationship between a salt and its mineral tells two stories: the destruction of a volume which crumbles into dust, or the construction of a volume that is generated from its own rubble». We are faced with a construction and a deconstruction of the whole, a fundamental reflection of his research.





Ossimori
serie

2017 - 2016

red marble / acer palmatum
var. dissectum atropurpureum
red Travertine / arbutus unedo
portugal pink marble / phytolacca americana
juparana classic granite / trametes versicolor
Travertine / hydrangea aspera
yellow Travertine / trametes versicolor
Calacatta marble / hydrangea cinerea
Carrara marble/ lavandula angustifolia
black marquina marble/phytolacca americana
black marble / grimmia pulvinata
serpentino green marble/nelumbo nucifera
verde marinace/asplenium trichomanes
portugal pink marble/cornus kousa
pink onyx / ganoderma applanatum

Cima

Carrara marble / feather

variable dimensions

Ossimori is a project in progress, an endless archive that relates heterogeneous and natural elements. On the one hand there is the eternal part, on the other the ephemeral part, the plants. The elements are exhibited by the end of their lifecycle; stones come from stones production scraps, plants have undergone a dehydration process up to become permanent. Observation and research work aims to fuse the two elements getting new visual balances which get over the opposite characteristics of vegetable and mineral kingdoms.







Vivrà finché ne avrai cura
serie

2016
Serizzo stone, moss and bronze
12x22x13 cm
20x22x13 cm

The series born from experimentation of encounters between different materials. Inside the wood of Torno, on Lake Como, I've selected some stones partly covered by moss. The second element is the bronze, product of an artificial process. By identifying the humidity like the common denominator between the natural and artificial element the whole idea behind this project is to create a single alive sculpture. In fact the natural bronze oxidation process is being emphasized by the presence of moss humidity. In this context the owner of the artwork plays an essential role for the work destiny. In fact the sculpture can keep its metamorphosis only with the maintenance of humidity conditions. Otherwise the process of change will stop.



2016

dust, postal waste and hair

7x7x7 cm each



The word "shapeless" describes everything that is formless and without a specific shape. It's usually related to the wastes. I wanted to confer dignity upon the dust, my hair cut off and postal waste, realizing defined cubes of 7 centimetres on each side. In the difficulty of achieving my goal, trying to model these different materials, I've created three infinitely perfectible solids.



2014 - 2004
bronze, red Travertine
10x27x10 each



this small composition represents my idea of the history of sculpture. When I was student I made a small Venus of Milo, in which I provocatively had cut off the head, to set it on one knee. Being one of my first bronze castings, the sculpture came out full of imperfections and shortcomings. For me, that little newborn sculpture and so strongly already lived, represented a work of recovered archeology; the archeology of the sense of sculpture itself. 10 years later, observing this old work and continuing to reflect on the idea of time, sculpture and materials, I took a new step. I juxtaposed to the small bronze a stone parallelepiped, with the same size as the sculpture. The stone volume is immediately became a sculpture, this time contemporary and minimal. Stone and bronze are the materials of sculpture, it can easily be said that these two materials constituted the history of sculpture from its origins until today.

(Text by Martin Holman)

Ilaria Cuccagna, *Sculptura*, ,2004-2014,
one of the works at Ilaria's thoughtful and
provocative show, just closed, at Galleria Ramo in
Como. Like many of her recent objects, the sculpture
contrasts materials and ways of
handling, concentrating into small, portable
dimensions wide-ranging thoughts about
personal time and larger histories, organic and
synthetic, growth and decline, processes of
making and surrendering control to the
chemistry of matter. Here an early,
unsteady experiment in bronze casting
(an attempt at a classical Venus) is set next to a
block of travertine marble found in a quarry; the
juxtaposition suggested itself in terms of art's
history, material origins, colour, surface, personal
history, myth and narrative
- a kind of overall chemistry.
Other materials in her repertoire include salt,
sand, clay, plaster, bone, silicone, and
processes like natural oxidation.
Slow sculpture with long shadows in its
implications.

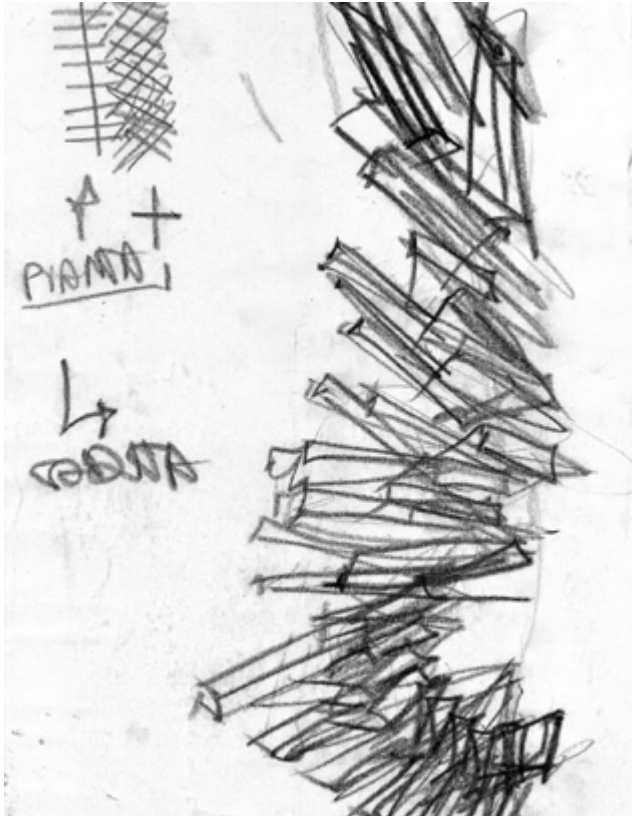


Archeologico
tra creazione e ritrovamento

2003
wood and concrete
variable dimensions



When the aesthetic models are worn-out, the reality is not in the images anymore, but it is in the work of the materials or in the elaboration of something found.



project, action, realization.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ilaria Cuccagna was born in Cesena, in 1981. She lives and works between Como and Milan.

Mostre personali/Solo exhibitions

2022

- Pelle Cruda, a cura di/curated by Diego Stephani, in collaborazione con/in collaboration with Annika Pettini, Fondazione Museo Mecrì, Minusio. Switzerland
- Un Tempo Lungo, bipersonale con/bipersonal with Giulia Marchi, testo di/text by Annika Pettini e/and Nicolò Fano, Galleria Ramo, Como. Italy

2021

- Traslati, a cura di/curated by Andrea Barda e/and Riccardo Lisi, Pigeons in love, Como. Italy

2019

- Vestigia del Presente, a cura di/curated by Simon David, Galleria Ramo, Como. Italy

2017

- Memorie di contatto, a cura di/curated by Monica Carrera e/and Francesca Damiano, Case Sparse, Tra l'Etere e la Terra, Malonno, Brescia. Italy
- Ossimori, a cura di/curated by Francesca Pagliuca, Galleria Riccardo Crespi, Milano. Italy

2016

- Ilaria Cuccagna, Open Studio, Centre Cultural la Mercè, Girona. Spain
- Migratio, Mdina -Valletta, a cura di/curated by Valletta 2018 foundation and Strada stretta Concept, Spazio Splendid, Valletta. Malta

Mostre collettive/Group exhibitions

2021

- This is not a Curated Exhibition, Galleria Ramo, Como. Italy
- Kairos, a cura di/curated by Isorropia Homegallery, Basilica di San Celso, Milano. Italy

2020

- Da ieri a oggi. Linee del contemporaneo in Ticino – La collezione, Museo d'Arte Mendrisio, Mendrisio. Switzerland

2019

- Secret Cabinet, a cura di/curated by Dimora Artica e/and Galleria Ramo, Dimora Artica, Milano. Italy
- Selvatico[14] 2019, Atlante dei margini, delle superfici e dei frammenti, a cura di/curated by Massimiliano Fabbri, Museo Civico Luigi Varoli, Cotignola-Ravenna. Italy
- La stanza in cui mi piace stare solo, a cura di/curated by Antonio D'amico, Musei Civici di Palazzo Silva, Domodossola. Italy
- Sinestesia nel mondo dell'arte, a cura di/curated by Gianna Macconi, Chasper Pult, Nicoletta Ossanna Cavadini, Spazio Officina M.A.X. Museo, Chiasso. Switzerland
- La terra è bassa, 10 luoghi per 10 progetti, a cura di/curated by Alessandra Pioselli, Farmacia Wurmkoos, Sesto San Giovanni, Milano. Italy

2018

- Brain-tooling, a cura di/curated by Gianluca d'Inca Levis, Riccardo Caldura, Petra Cason, Dolomiti Contemporanee, Pieve di Cadore, Forte di Monte Ricco. Italy
- Spatium, a cura di/curated by Angela Madesani, Castello Visconteo, Pagazzano- Bergamo. Italy

2017

- Riserva Creativa: Ilaria Cuccagna, Silvia Bigi, Giulia Vismara, a cura di/curated by Rad'Art Project, Mercato Saraceno-Forlì. Italy

2015

- Malta Biennale, a cura di/curated by Irene Biolchini, Nikky Petroni e/and Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci, Mdina. Malta

2012

- Officine dell'Arte, laboratorio di/workshop by Stefano Arienti e/and Italo Zuffi, a cura di/curated by Chiara Agnello and Milovan Farronato, Careof-Fabbrica del Vapore, Milano. Italy

2011

- RAM 2011, Abecedario della storia sotto il tappeto, a cura di/curated by Claudia Casali, Museo d'Arte della Città di Ravenna, Ravenna. Italy
- luogoComunelab 2006-2010, a cura di/curated by Rad'Art/Associazione artéco, Galleria Ex Pescheria, Cesena. Italy

2008

- Impact_art: place+relationships, a cura di/curated by Arteingenua S.p.A., Premio Internazionale Arteingenua 2008, Brescia. Italy

Laboratori e residenze/Workshops and residencies

2018

- Brain-tooling Residency, a cura di/curated by Dolomiti Contemporanee, Pieve di Cadore. Italy

2017

- Case Sparse, Tra l'Etere e la Terra, residenza/residency for a site-specific work, Malonno-Brescia. Italy

2016

- Bòlit, Centre d'Art Contemporain, residences exchange project Rad'Art-Bòlit, Girona. Spain
- Stage as a social platform project, a cura di/curated by Simone Frangi and Tommaso Sacchi. Workshop di produzione della performance/Workshop for the production of Continuum, a Luigi Coppola's performance, Viafarini, Milano. Italy

2015

- Mdina Cathedral Contemporary Art Biennale, Residency, Mdina. Malta

2014

- Laboratorio con/Workshop with Marcos Morau, a cura di/curated by Associazione culturale Mirada e/and associazione Cantieri, Ravenna. Italy

2012

- FDV Residency Program, Fabbrica del Vapore, a cura di/curated by Careof, Visiting professor Italo Zuffi, Milano. Italy

Premi/Awards

- 2020: Finalista premio/Finalist award 2020 OTTN Project
- 2019: primo premio/First prize Giovani Artisti 2019. Spazio Officina M.A.X. Museo, Chiasso. Switzerland. Giuria/Jury: Marco Francioli, Barbara Paltenghi Malacrida, Chasper Pult, Simone Soldini and Nicoletta Ossanna Cavadini
- 2011: Primo premio/First prize, categoria installazione/category installation, RAM 2011 Abecedario della storia sotto il tappeto, Ravenna, Italy

Pubblicazioni/Publications

- Diego Stephani, Annika Pettini and Moira Morinini Pe, 2022, Pelle Cruda I Ilaria Cuccagna. Catalogo/Catalogue
- Isorropia Homegallery, 2022. KAIROS Busato, Cuccagna, Migliazza, Senoner. Catalogo/Catalogue
- Antonio D'Amico, 2020. La stanza in cui mi piace stare solo. Catalogo/Catalogue
- Mickeal Milocco Borlini, Lelio di Loreto e/and Carlalberto Amadori, 2020. URBAN CORPORIS. The City and the Skin. Edito da/Edit by I.U.V.A.S. Firenze
- Massimiliano Fabbri, Sabrina Foschini, Massimo Pulini, Claudio Musso, Irene Biolchini, Gabriele Salvaterra, Alessandra Bigi Iotti, Riccardo Ciavolella, Nicola Samorì, 2019. Selvatico [14] 2019. Atlante dei margini, delle superfici e dei frammenti. Catalogo/Catalogue
- Angela Madesani, 2018. Spatium. Trentacinque artisti e un regista per sette spazi. Catalogo/Catalogue. Edito da/Edit by Scalpendi Editore
- Irene Biolchini, Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci, Nikki Petroni, 2015. The Mdina Cathedral Contemporary Art Biennale. Christianity, Spirituality and the Other. Catalogo/Catalogue. Edito da/Edit by Horizons
- Chiara Agnello e Milovan Farronato, 2012. Officine dell'arte dai workshop di Stefano Arienti and Italo Zuffi. Catalogo/Catalogue. Edito da/Edit by Silvana Editoriale
- Claudia Casali, 2011. RAM 2011 Abecedario della storia sotto il tappeto. Catalogo/Catalogue. GIUDA Edizioni
- Progetto Rad'Art/Associazione artéco, 2010. luogoComunelab 2000-2010. Catalogo/Catalogue. Edito da/Edit by Progetto Rad'Art/Associazione artéco

Istruzione/Education

2000-2005

Laurea in Scultura/Bachelor of Fine Art in Sculpture. Accademia di Belle Arti di Urbino. Italy

2003-2004

LLP Erasmus. UPV, Facultad de Bellas Artes San Carlos, Valencia. Spain