

First part (Foyer)

Villa Igiea presents the exhibition *“What We See Is Not What It Is, But What We Are”* by Bertozzi & Casoni, curated by Raffaele Quattrone. The undisputed masters of contemporary ceramics return to Sicily on the occasion of World Art Day, engaging in a compelling dialogue with the historical and architectural charm of Villa Igiea.

The protagonists of the exhibition are the duo’s astonishing creations, celebrated for their hyperrealism and meticulous attention to detail. Their works often portray everyday objects and still lifes, inviting reflection on contemporary society. Themes such as transformation, decay, and the passage of time are explored in depth, prompting contemplation of the ephemeral nature of existence.

For this exhibition, the artists pay tribute to three icons of art history: Vincent van Gogh, Lucio Fontana, and Giorgio Morandi. Bertozzi & Casoni reinterpret the works of Van Gogh, Fontana, and Morandi through their distinctive ceramic technique, transforming these homages into something strikingly contemporary.

Van Gogh’s iconic *Sunflowers*, originally painted to explore the expressive potential of color and light and to symbolize friendship and gratitude, are recreated with their original chromatic vibrancy, yet now infused with a sense of precariousness and decay. Petals appear to wilt, and the flowers subtly evoke the passage of time. The artists focus on ephemeral beauty, creating a dialogue between natural exuberance and material fragility.

Fontana’s famous cuts, symbols of a new spatial dimension in art, are reimaged in ceramic. In a paradoxical gesture, Bertozzi & Casoni treat ceramic—a material known for its solidity—as if it were canvas, opening it up into fissures that defy its very nature and amplify the tension between surface and depth.

The silence and suspension of Morandi’s still lifes are reinterpreted through ceramic compositions that rebuild flower vases with obsessive precision, yet introduce a subtle sense of estrangement: they are perfectly recognizable and yet seem to belong to another dimension, where time stands still and matter takes on an almost painterly quality. Some of these vases contain ceramic beetles, hyperrealistically rendered, which play with the ambiguity between reality and illusion. The beetles seem alive but remain motionless, frozen in time, generating a visual and conceptual short-circuit between the natural and the artificial.

In this context, the beetles are not merely decorative elements but narrative devices that enrich the symbolic stratification of the work, raising profound questions about life, time, and our perception of reality.

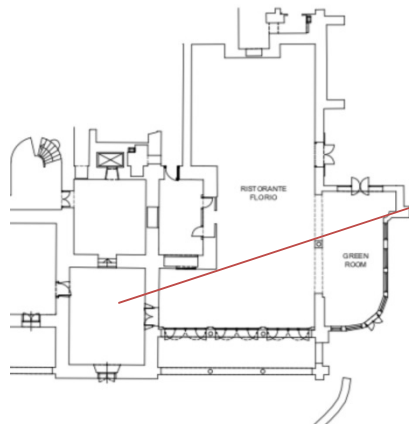
These homages are not mere citations but true acts of reinterpretation. Bertozzi & Casoni keep alive the dialogue with the great masters of the past, projecting their vision into a new realm where ceramics become a contemporary language capable of probing perception, time, and illusion.

The exhibition continues in the Green room.

In cooperation with Athena Antichità

For more information about the works on display, please contact the reception





FIRST PART



Cover bianco, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover blu, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover oro, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover rosso, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover giallo, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover rosa, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover rame, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Cover verde, 2023, polychrome ceramic, cm h 11 x 66 x 20



Per Van Gogh, 2020, polychrome ceramic, cm. h. 76 x 66 x 46



Per Morandi, 2020, polychrome ceramic and bronze, cm. h. 56 x 27 x



Per Morandi, 2020, polychrome ceramic and bronze, cm. h. 50 x 30 x 25



Per Morandi, 2021, polychrome ceramic, cm. h. 37 x 15 x 15

Second part (Green room)

In this room of the exhibition, Bertozzi & Casoni take us on a journey through objects and symbols that challenge our perception of reality. Here, ceramic material transforms into a true form of *magical realism*, deceiving the eye and sparking reflection on the relationship between nature and artifice, stability and change, luxury and decay.

The hyperrealism of their sculptures merges with dreamlike elements, revealing a poetics of fragmentation and transformation that has always defined their work.

The elephant, a universal symbol of memory and strength, is here transfigured into a hybrid and mutating creature. Far from the solemnity with which it is traditionally represented in art and popular culture, the animal disintegrates and reassembles, suggesting an ongoing process of metamorphosis. This vision recalls other works by Bertozzi & Casoni, such as *Composizione in bianco* or *Regeneration*, where matter seems to either fall apart or be reborn from itself. Here, the elephant—often associated with wisdom and stability—takes on a destabilizing appearance, prompting the viewer to question concepts of balance and identity.

A pair of abandoned shoes, still and yet full of lived experience. This intimate and personal object becomes a metaphor for journey, experience, and memory. The title itself, *In Your Shoes*, suggests an exercise in empathy: imagining the stories and paths of those who might have worn them. This work fits within the duo's poetic language, which often explores the relationship between time and things, as seen in pieces like *Avanzi* or *Le bugie dell'arte*, where everyday objects are imbued with histories made of absence and suspended presences.

A set table, left behind—like a banquet interrupted or never truly begun. Here, plates, glasses, and food remnants coexist with a chameleon, the ultimate symbol of adaptation and metamorphosis. The animal camouflages with its surroundings, becoming part of the work and amplifying the sense of perceptual instability. This theme recalls pieces like *Ultima cena* and *Vanitas*, where Bertozzi & Casoni use lavishly set tables to stage the interplay between opulence and decay, abundance and dissolution.

Finally, we find *Helene*, a handbag that seems ready to be grasped, yet its weight and fragility betray the illusion of the material. This accessory, a symbol of status and identity, is stripped of its original function and becomes sculpture: a perfect illusion of luxury made eternal. As in *Bidone con fiori* or *Souvenir*, the everyday object is transformed into an icon, frozen in a state of stillness and contemplation.

Through these works, Bertozzi & Casoni urge us to “look beyond the surface of reality,” to perceive the fine line between the real and the illusory, the ordinary and the fantastic. Their ceramic art is never a mere technical exercise, but a profound reflection on our relationship with the world and the objects that surround us.

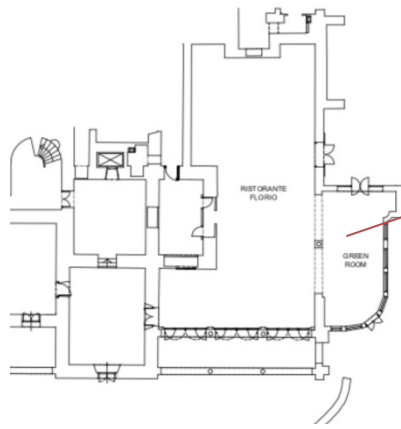
Matter bends to their vision, becoming a vehicle of memory, irony, and poetry.

The exhibition continues in the foyer

In cooperation with Athena Antichità

For more information about the works on display, please contact the reception





SECOND PART



Helene, 2024, polychrome ceramics, cm h 20 x 31 x 23,5



10 febbraio, 2020, polychrome ceramics, cm h 37 x 53 x 44



Metamorfoelefante, 2023, polychrome ceramics, cm h 63 x 53 x 53



Nelle tue scarpe, 2025, polychrome ceramics, cm h 30 x 34 x 12