

Marco Pariani

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MASSIMODECARLO Pièce Unique is very pleased to present the work of Brooklyn-based Italian artist Marco Pariani.

Describing his practice, Pariani expresses a particular affection for the experience of seeing, and perhaps indirectly so, of the time-old artistic ploy of *trompe l'oeil*: when looking at a painting, what are we really looking at? Are his shapes drawn from reality, are they the reflections of fictional elements or simply the fruit of the artist's imagination? Indeed, when taken out of context, an object is nothing more than a shape laying on a table: it could be anything.

Strongly influenced by the stillness and serenity of the chalky, compact still lifes of Giorgio Morandi (1890 – 1964), Pariani explores this genre, instilling his compositions with the restlessness of New York City daily life.

Optics, perspective and colour all collide in his bright, large-scale paintings. Replete with overlapping, merging elements, each work seems to find its starting point with a shape in the foreground, working its way towards more abstract lines in the back. In this new series of paintings, Pariani invites the viewer to focus on one layer at the time, leaving free range for interpretation of these poised, aesthetic clutters of infinite possibilities.

At the bottom of each work, stencilled shapes hint at the title of the paintings: in *Natura Morta (Fungo)*, a mushroom pattern signs the painting with a playful, hallucinogenic frise motif.

Pariani's particular appetite for colour and composition is largely informed by the urgency inherent to graffiti art, which he not only took to in earlier years but is also overwhelmingly present in his Brooklyn neighbourhood.

Bringing together the multiplicity of these influences and moments in time, Pariani layers the elements that are the most dissonant, difficult to combine. In the artist's own words, the higher the difficulty, the better.

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Pariani's love for manual work, which today defines his physical approach to painting, has its roots in the time he spent as a child in his father's carpentry workshop. Some of his earliest memories involve sanding and gluing wood – simple yet fundamental gestures that shaped his relationship with materials. From 2005 to 2010, Pariani studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Milan, where he focused primarily on figurative painting. Today, he mainly creates abstract canvases in vibrant colors that, through their compositional intensity, come across as highly experimental and contemporary works.

The complexity of the artist's practice also lies in the technical process behind his works: numerous layers of colored gesso are applied one over the other and then sanded down, resulting in a uniquely textured surface. A complex process that takes several days to complete, it remains essential to making color the true protagonist of the composition. His monochromatic, or often bichromatic compositions allow the paintings to appear as spaces constantly open to new formal solutions. In recent works, the artist has begun to incorporate new tools – such as domestic decorative rollers – to explore how they distribute paint across the canvas.

An abstract figure often emerges from the layered background, often based on online-found screenshots, like photos of dogs dressed in Christmas decorations. Through a process of deconstruction, the original image, though obscured by the frenzy of the painterly gesture, reveals itself in all its absurdity. The figures, lacking any defined form, are created by using spray paint, producing a sense of urgency and adrenaline reminiscent of graffiti. This method is influenced by the New York street art scene – particularly the graffiti-covered vans that roam the city, where Pariani has lived since 2019 – even though he began experimenting with this technique back in his university years.

Marco Pariani was born in Busto Arsizio, Italy, in 1986 and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.