



la Bussola

## **Madness and Freedom in the Art of LAMAGNA**

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**MARIA PIA CAPPELLO**  
**MADNESS AND FREEDOM**  
**IN THE ART OF**  
**LAMAGNA**



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**Madness and Freedom**  
in the Art of  
**LAMAGNA**



The visionary dimension, inventive narratives, and stark realism of Lamagna's sculptural and pictorial work are defining features of his art.

Consistently drawing inspiration from human experiences, he transforms them with a sensitivity that gives rise to a distinctive and innovative artistic style. Whenever he narrates, sculpts, or paints, new visions emerge. His instinctive ability to amaze and astonish within a surreal atmosphere that envelops his realistic style, is remarkable. In his work, reality and fantasy intertwine, persisting even within the unreal and often unsettling imagery.

Lamagna meditates deeply before translating, through his creative subjectivity, the diverse facets of reality that individuals experience and grapple with. His subjectivity is inherently complex, shaped both by personal experience and collective reflection, encompassing historical memories, shipwrecked dreams, and unresolved chimeras. These are passionate immediacies, layered allusions, polarities of opinion, and fluctuating rationalities, culminating in a theatricality rooted in the Baroque tradition and influenced by Expressionism, yet subtly tinged with symbolic references. These features intertwine without overshadowing the cultural and philosophical ideologies at play, crafting eloquent messages that harmonize material, form, and tension. Indeed, while form endeavors to infuse material, the resulting intense and irresistible tension ascends toward both the identity of truth and the fragmentation of the self.

On an objective level, it may appear as a distorting vision; on an artistic level, it becomes an exploration of reality within reality. This leads to the conclusion that a profound symbolism strives to decode and refine both the formulation of sculpture and the latent image within the material, even as Baroque and Surrealism remain foundational influences. It is a demanding introspection, dynamic in perspective and idealism, essential in its outcomes, and distinct in the immediate authenticity that intensifies both the narrative and the affective rendering of the characters. For this reason, Lamagna emphasizes the necessity of narrating the bonds and pivotal phases of life: motherhood, youth, old age, and illness.

By gradually transcending appearances, plunging vortex-like into the essence of existence, and stripping reality of all formalism, the surface can no longer remain smooth. It becomes marked by furrows and scars, reflecting the individual's perpetual connection to their emotional world.

Striving to reach the depths of sentiment, the grooves echo the notion of emptiness, while the cuts evoke the pain that, like the running of a film camera, bears witness to history, life, and the existential journey. The skeletal forms, the scratches, the inevitable scars of decay, the imperturbable cracks, and the painful lacerations give life to historical moments and circumstances that transform thoughts, customs, reactions, and even sensitivity in subjects torn between existential heroism, passionate impulses, dynamic actions, devastating defeats, painful failures, and absurd injustices. These elements vibrate, tearing through the air, creating voids that long to be filled and consoled.

From these torn depths, figures and shapes emerge, integrated into a space infused with surrealist inspiration. These are unsettling images that impart a suggestive tension to the dramatic element, evoking a surreal sense of loneliness and, perhaps, a precarious estrangement from reality. The momentum and vertical ascent, moving as if to capture moments of human uncertainty, originate from sudden thoughts, yet remain poignantly bound to transience.

This theme of impermanence connects him to Hugo von Hofmannsthal: *"Is it possible that days so close / are gone forever, lost in the past?... everything slips away and passes."* It is important to emphasize that Lamagna stands out as both sculptor and painter, giving voice to human suffering through the interplay of voids, wrinkles, cracks, and arrhythmic, atonal marks, heightened by the chiaroscuro technique. His work conveys anguish through angular figures, jagged lines, restless fragments, and the painful grooves etched on the body.

If one notes the intransigent expressive parabola of Lamagna who is both a lucid and visionary observer, his recognition of the horrific disillusionment with ancient civil and human values arises. It is also important to recognize that a recurring theme in his work is the constant questioning - often with an ironic tone - of art's fate in a consumer-driven society in the new millennium, shaped by artificial intelligence. In this context, the artist may find himself ensnared in inextricable contradictions concerning the acceptance or rejection of modernity - a modernity marked by transience. In line with the philosophical theme of his art, Lamagna draws and sculpts the insoluble and universal dilemmas of humankind, namely life and time. However, he focuses on the present, and with his characteristic dramatic style, examines the contingent issues of the historical periods he engages with. It could be argued that his art, originally conceived as comedy, gradually evolved into forms of drama or parody. In works where he sculpts or draws the mask, he aligns with Ernst Jünger's words: *"Being masks itself behind time and the times; but we are unable to discover its face, because, if we were to unmask it, all that would remain in our hands would be a mask."* Lamagna attributes alienation to humanity's difficulty in communicating and forming authentic and lasting relationships.

Various symbols in his work suggest that the contemporary individual is more alienated than ever, despite being surrounded by millions of people. Moreover, what appears to be communication often occurs not directly between individuals, but is mediated through computers and social media. Contemporary alienation is thus understood as painful incommunicability, a profound inner void, an acute inability to understand, excruciating social maladaptation, and above all, the passive resignation of modern man in the face of the negativity brought by the technological and industrial world. This is Montale's "alienated man": *"I see faces devastated by a boredom that has nothing existential about it, but is the result of a passive acquiescence to all the worst aspects of our time: a time that, after all, has been made by us."*

Worsening this discomfort is the dominance of technology, which deceives man into believing he can fill his inner voids and loneliness, while in reality, it distances him further from himself and from the world.

Lamagna portrays the anguish of those who feel compelled to fill these voids, even as they try to defend themselves against them.

This is the most insidious form of loneliness: the kind that slowly settles into the soul and becomes true boredom and pain. When the character confronts an alter ego and absolute nothingness, the sculptor reveals that this malaise stems from a lack of certainties and reference points. Thus, the **Old Mad Acrobat** and the **Kairos** teeter on their pedestals, embodying a gradual loss of hope. Lamagna's vision of modernity becomes either a reclamation or an illusion of a man still capable of fighting to express and safeguard values, above all the value of freedom: the freedom to act and live without wearing or hiding behind a mask. It is neither a mere acceptance of a fragmented present nor a complete rejection of reality, but rather an assertion of courage, determination, and the vague and elusive indefiniteness of mad realizations and semantic meanings that could be symbolic, allusive and composite.

For this reason, scars and furrows emerge from the bodies. They are scratches that surface like sudden gashes on the coldness of bronze, resolving into flames that burn briefly before extinguishing, perhaps representing final, dramatic defenses or flickering hopes for freedom.

The groove on the body serves as a metaphor for feelings laid bare in their raw, naked reality. This furrowing of bodies also dissolves their masks, revealing the paradox of existence beneath. The hermetic nature of the character is one reason why the work's message is not always immediately apparent, but it is also one of the features that adds to its allure.

Indeed, what further complicates the interpretation of the fundamental concepts in his art are its duality, the often unconventional modeling, and its notable, multifaceted expansiveness. If poetry, according to Günter Kunert, "*perceives what disappears behind the horizons / similar to an old love and death / the two wings of life / moved by ultimate anxiety / in a perfect / definitiveness,*" then art likewise emphasizes and perceives the subtle tremors and disturbances that constitute the most intimate and fascinating aspects of existential tension.

The search for space and the sensitivity directed toward powerful dynamism are also explicative, as seen when the hands of the **Old Mad Acrobat** yearn for life or extend toward the infinite for help, becoming charged with symbolism, often connected to the creative act through semantic verticalities that find introjection in different, yet parallel currents.

This spatial-seeking attitude is likewise apparent in painting, characterized by the free use of color, which often diverges from naturalistic canons, as seen in the work **Dreaming the Illusion**. Boldly and perhaps revolutionarily, Lamagna paints and sculpts his imaginary narrative by shaping the figure and modulating

effects both with broad brushstrokes, violent and dense applications, and delicate tones. He frequently combines acrylic, oil, and textured materials, such as gluing jute fragments of burlap on the canvas.

In this way, he communicates the possibility of observing a visionary image to glimpse the truth without getting lost in nothingness.

It is also a way to satirize the absurd, indifference, intelligibility, and injustice, paying great attention to authentic values even by using chromatic alterations, distorted forms, and inventions characterized by torments, anguish, unrest, melancholy, and spontaneous sensitivities that not even the wind can blow away. Connected to Surrealism, the philosophical expansion in Lamagna's sculptures does not diverge significantly from classical figurativism.

However, his novelty lies in the sharp presence of reality and the dramatic lyricism, the suffering modulation of forms, the underlying terror, the intimate anguish, and existential bewilderment. In the expressionist or variously neo-surrealist vision of reality, he demonstrates mastery in merging visionary art with rational art, blending the free realm of his imagination with calculations based on classical canons. This is because reality is generated and can be improved from different interpretations, expressive modulations, and energetic solutions.

Such authentic truth, such painful sincerity in the naïve, resigned, rebellious, proud, or fearful wonder shining through the eyes of the characters: the adolescent in ***Ed è subito sera***, the mature woman in ***Mother Matuta***, the clown in ***Kairos!*** Indeed, it is only by intensifying the characterizing power of a few details or by imbuing the image with powerful suggestion and immediacy - qualities that only great artists can convey through their unique perspective on history and human experience - that his powerful messages can be truly deciphered, striking the conscience. In spectral images that delineate faces or masks, faceted by loneliness and human suffering, Lamagna conducts an important aesthetic, philosophical, poetic, and conceptual analysis of emotions that encompass various fields and can be defined by four distinct artistic features.

The first, "Art as Illusion," is characterized by images imbued with unreal hues yet marked by delicate irony in depicting the countless situations of life.

Creating emblematic architectural illusions aimed at swapping fiction with reality, this art becomes primarily an ideological metamorphosis like the allusion to the escape from homogenization analyzed by Eugène Ionesco: "*To think against one's time is heroism. But to say so is madness.*". It is probably the scream of the Old Mad Acrobat from yesterday —precariously perched on a pedestal with four wheels and his eyes closed— shaking consciences amid contradiction, turmoil and apprehension, in the dark silence of a great Shakespearean truth: "*Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun; it shines everywhere.*"

Thus, it is an infinite scream that shakes the mists of existential paths, wavering the images of a world torn by pain, while memories rise in their burning and the inhumanity of disorientation sculpted over the centuries.

This absolute scream becomes a thirst for love, a call from closed eyes reaching for the vault of the sky, the light at the end of the tunnel. It transforms into an exclamation, an impulse that hovers between vagueness and suggestion, encompassing even the dispersal of a destructive, irreplaceable, and sunken time. In this scream, the drama of existence unfolds.

It is the nightmare, the bitter vision, the image on the faded mirror, the poignant distortion of existence described by Heinrich Heine: "*A dream, so strange and frightening, / filled me with joy and terror. / Some images still appear to me, / and they tremble, dreadful, in my heart.*" In Lamagna, madness and freedom collide, struggling to express synergy through images, yet offering only relentless signs of disorientation. It is the eternal contrast between the darkness of madness and the unyielding glow of freedom. It is a millennial migration in search of freedom, where madness may erupt from the painful realization that freedom remains elusive—both in society and, most tragically, within oneself.

It is a migration across time, from past to present, between nations and lost homelands, memory and identity, yellowed pages and a history woven with the images and words of Nietzsche, Erasmo da Rotterdam, Miguel de Cervantes, Aristotele, Hegel, Kierkegaard.

In this tension, faces with hollow eyes and wrinkled visages appear, awaiting answers, chained within a frenzied, suspended, and blurred circularity. Perhaps it is the Beckettian waiting for nothing, Leopardi's cosmic despair, the dissemination of Orwellian identity. In the arduous exploration of the abysses of inner life, unmanageable madness rises to the surface, accompanied by a frantic search for freedom, profound disorientation, and acute pain. These emotions manifest on canvases and in raw materials, etched into the faces of those who suffer and struggle against the chaotic impulses of the unconscious, often without the power or will to control them.

The cornerstones of Lamagna's art are the themes of the mask and the circus, recurring motifs in both sculpture and painting that are intrinsically tied to the concept of the double: the moment when the opposing tendencies of the human soul emerge, both separately and in unison, shaping visions. The madman, *lost in his own life*, assumes a significant role because, by transmitting ugliness and turmoil, the sculptor reflects a state of painful frustration—transforming him into a cosmic symbol of disproportion and emotional disharmony.

This figure embodies isolated, hidden, and rebellious individualism, shaped by inner rupture and existential estrangement.

Lamagna aims to highlight that the untamable forces of a character who feels alienated from and estranged by the world cannot be chained. This figure finds no peace but writhes within the stillness of matter, driven by the power of will, in a vortex of passion and suffering. In other sculptures as well, the artist moulds the conceptual frameworks alongside strained, suffering figures.

Their faces convey anxiety, pain, and acceptance. With vehemence, strength,

impetuosity, impulsiveness, and fervor, the artist communicates the tortuous paths of the psyche, pursuing an introspective investigation to "draw" the dark motions of a soul perhaps irreparably lost.

The sculpture is interpreted as a diary of the soul, in which all the crises of identity are inscribed. Each person carries as many truths, idealisms, and illusions as their experiences on earth, shaped into a different image: poetic, tragic, pathetic, sentimental, childish, melancholic, confused, joyous or sorrowful. If everything is intertwined with the domains of perception, reason, and the unconscious, the artist gives form to the discordances and disharmonies concealed between being and appearance in a Pirandellian sense. In his characters, joy and sorrow, dreams and nightmares converge and collide. Amid the maddening, excruciating torment wherein opposing sensibilities are revealed, the defining traits of the antihero emerge: rebellion, screams, and inner struggle. Reality is not merely reduced to appearance or its objective manifestations; rather, it harbors hidden dimensions - elusive and difficult to grasp or interpret. If the world appears illogical, absurd, incoherent, precarious, and contradictory—and if everything is obscured and enigmatic—the artist's task is to unveil these dualities and pierce the darkness to expose even ugliness and distortion. This gives rise to a disturbing vision that evokes horror and anguish, as powerfully demonstrated in the work **Mattanza**. The subjects are not mere symbols of unreality; they exist among us.

They are not simply products of metaphor, but desperately seek communication within the fractured fragments of existence, perpetually on the verge of collapse. It is the gradual erosion of identity that becomes a labyrinthine loss of self, compelling one to wear a mask and adopt shifting roles in order to survive and navigate the obstacles imposed by both life and society.

The second defining feature of Lamagna's art is "Art as Truth", because he captures essence by focusing on reality, magnifying its significance and daring its starkly enigmatic quality. Through the modeling of material, his figures appear to empty themselves, and their grooves are rendered even more dreadful and unsettling when filled with the alienation of the modern world.

In his endeavor to delve into the depths of human interiority, his expressive language embraces not only objective reality—external events and historical circumstances—but also subjective reality, encompassing the soul's inner metamorphoses. The naked figure of the **Old Mad Acrobat** becomes a potent symbol of lovelessness in a world corroded by injustice, hypocrisy, and indifference. In the fragmentation of identity, it is a profoundly dramatic image, rendered even more poignant by the figure's desperate grip on a mask, pressed tightly to his chest, evoking Rainer Maria Rilke's maxim: "*There are quantities of human beings, but there are many more faces, for each person has several*".

Amid this anguished fragmentation, values appear to collapse, revealing the self's estrangement from society. Within the correspondence between the microcosm of the individual and the macrocosm of the universe, the once-stable planes of

certainty and equilibrium are eclipsed by conflicting, divergent, blurred, crumbling, and fragmented realities. If human metamorphosis is shaped by environmental forces and society is governed by the shifting tides of history, then the haunting sensation—or perhaps the terrifying certainty—of standing alone before the world gives rise to disorientation, frustration, dismay, and vulnerability. In this heterogeneous scenic horizon, T.S. Eliot's quotation resonates: *"Everyone's alone — or so it seems to me. They make noises, and think they are talking to each other; They make faces, and think they understand each other. And I'm sure they don't. Is that a delusion?"*

The third feature of Lamagna's art is his concept of "Art as Spectacle," marked by an intense tension and hallucinatory parody staged on a symbolic and phantasmagoric plane. Beyond its irresistible theatricality, his oeuvre emerges as one of the most tragic of the twentieth century and the New Millennium, offering a profound reflection on absurdity and the radical inversion of values—where the comic turns tragic and the invisible signs of guilt, defeat, humiliation, pride, cowardice, vanity, anguish, fear, and endless cycles of vengeance and unresolved conflicts come to the fore. These are not merely representations of existential failure but rather expressions of a spasmodic spiritual quest for peace, forgiveness, and the essential acceptance of the self, a state in which the protagonists are suspended within a tragic farce or a millennia-old cosmic comedy. While recalling the Baroque in its most defining traits, his work infuses the spectacular with emotional intensity, rendering it both dynamic and communicative. Through compositions where theater and sculpture converge and interlace, he merges Baroque principles with existential inquiry, probing human fragility—now intensified by a new and disquieting unease that distinctly marks the Third Millennium.

Between reality, vision, and mimesis, Lamagna creates forms and structures, crafting a new image of reality and the world.

However, he also gives life to dreams and nightmares, culminating in spectacularity with the Baroque technique of perspectival breakthrough.

This technique expands space into infinity, particularly by directing heads and limbs in oblique directions toward multiple vanishing points.

By means of Baroque multifocal perspective, he guides the viewer's gaze in several directions, offering multiple viewpoints.

Indeed, from the continuous movement of the figures - with limbs suspended in the void or vibrating in space - social, individual, and historical themes arise. By applying the elliptical structure that multiplies and expands angles, the narrative modeling diverges into the material fragility of the human condition. Consequently, theater and sentiment become the foundational elements of total relief sculpture: characters appear and perform, their emotions laid bare, even though the mask, a recurring motif, remains almost ever-present.

It is the duality of the mask and reality—therefore, of two faces—that resonates

with the powerful theme of dualism.

The fourth peculiarity of Lamagna is "Art and Spirituality". Through a poetic-religious language and the development of forms and experimentation, he achieves not only formal and original outcomes but also spiritual ones.

This dialogue unfolds between matter and modeling, between the plastic volume and form, and between God and man.

Art becomes an intimate journey of religious faith, marked by meditations, suspensions, and pauses that follow a reflective rhythm. These elements are woven into the melodious flights of Angels in celestial joy, evoking a sense of a new, free union with angelic goodness and the mysterious earthly dimension, often filled with sorrow. For this reason, the faces of the Angels are frequently astonished, shocked, and compassionate toward the sufferings they witness in the world. Highlighting the need for salvation and the transitory nature of earthly life, Lamagna underscores these themes through his personal use of angelic flights, which are almost symbolic and metaphorical representations of his vision of the afterlife. In this state of terrestrial-spiritual suspension, the importance of religion, God's help, angelic support, and the limits of the human race are perceived. It is primarily a sculptural art that prefigures a melodious chant, an announcement, followed by the vision of flights, modeled through vertical ascents in both joyful and contemplative circles. Suspended in the immensity of the sky, the Angels, freeing themselves from stone and bronze, soar upwards.

Born of inner visions, they are recast into dancing forms, reaching into an ethereal realm that preserves the essence of spiritual presence. Flying in silence within a suspended dimension, they become metaphysical narrative figures and spectators of humanity. From above, they observe the events that, across the span of existence, intertwine and intersect in parallel and absurd stories along the paths of the earth. By shaping his spiritual figures as physical entities within a universe of both gladness and light, Lamagna strives to achieve harmony between man and nature. Through his Enlightened Spirits, he conveys the idea that they are a conduit to spiritual happiness and access to the transcendent sphere of the absolute. Thus, his angelic sculptures embody a profound yearning for grace, evoking mercy, and divine assistance.

Following the global solitude of man, the invisible descent of Angels to earth with their salvific power occurs. In the vast space of Lamagna's sculptures, the Catholic faith reveals the way to salvation, by which man may preserve both joy and the purity of his identity. It is by means of the union of spirituality and humanity that he truly gives meaning to human life.

The imperative of experiencing faith both heroically and profoundly defines the tormented and suffering personages central to his art.

Thus, religiosity emerges as a dominant theme: it is the main motif expressing both the joyful and reassuring dimension found in the shadowed sides that can manifest objectively upon the bodies and subjectively within the soul.

Man feels alone and lost, but he may seek help from the Angels, who appear with wings of symbolic grandeur. Their slender plasticity symbolizes the flight toward God, embodying the human aspiration for forgiveness, peace, and Paradise.

The Celestial Beings, who find in God their immense, definitive, and supreme good, seek to spread His goodness on earth. Baudelaire's verses come to mind: *"Angel full of happiness, of joy and of light, it is said that the dying David sought healing from the perfumes of your enchanted body... But from you I implore only prayers, Angel full of happiness, of joy and of light."* By uniting man with the Angel and the universe, Lamagna conveys hope and the mystical correspondences between nature and divinity. Human aridity stands in contrast to the enduring quest for a divine glimmer that transcends pain, anxiety, war, and terror. In this spiritual perspective, art becomes a form of angelic proximity—an intimate nearness to the sacred.

Through their soaring wings, Angels protect both the Church and humanity. Bearing the weight of universal sorrow, they illuminate the darkest periods of history, marked by destruction and despair.

In the solidity of his sculpted forms, Lamagna whispers profound messages, evoking a healing dimension of art within history.

Everything repeats and reproduces across the centuries; everything transforms with each era. And yet, only wars and hatred remain constant.

Furthermore, grounding his artistic exploration in the concept of simultaneity and spatial unity between shape and impetus, he reproduces classical harmony while delving into Expressionism. Indeed, the features expressed in the angelic sculptures render the non-classical forms dissonant and imbued with intense pathos, reflecting a shared sense of suffering and despair. While aiming to communicate serenity, lightness, and grace, the acknowledgment of evil on earth unsettles the Celestial Beings amidst the complexity of the universe. If Goya, in the engraving of his work, wrote that *"El sueño de la razón produce monstruos"*, for Lamagna the dimming of reason clouds vision, obscuring the right path and divine guidance. This obscurity gives rise to arrogance, oppression, selfishness, and war. The result is a profound existential pessimism, as these human actions and emotions fracture peace and devastate the harmony of the universe.

Nevertheless, Lamagna's Angels are bearers of light, descending from Heaven with both vertical and horizontal momentum.

However, they appear amazed, saddened, and troubled as they witness the madness, irrationality, vanity, hatred, and injustice that prevail on earth.

Lamagna reaffirms the principles of Christianity, particularly the evangelical values of forgiveness, peace, and equality among men.

The Angels, Masters of light, assume a salvific role within divine harmony, offering solace and comfort. By highlighting the tension between human limitations and the yearning for blessedness, the sculptor elevates Christian values, exploring themes of redemption and forgiveness.

Within this renewed artistic context, it becomes imperative to carefully interpret the messages evoked by his figures over the decades. These are messages that, now more than ever, resonate with urgency in a world increasingly oriented toward power, success, and falsehood, as exemplified in the work ***Pinocchio***.

Beyond mere narration, the artist articulates a profound sense of solitude and laceration, perhaps an oscillation between presence and absence.

Through visual expression, he both teaches and pursues the value of freedom, either silently conveying or openly declaring the fluidity of emotional experience embedded within the hidden recesses of existential complexity.

This expression unfolds through the interweaving of history and character, wherein the tragic persistence of memory confronts the absurdity inherent in historical narrative - not merely as a correlate of illusory transformation but as a natural embodiment of desolate and nostalgic objectivity.

The characters created by Lamagna inhabit a conceptual museum, a human gallery where he has gathered and shaped the most diverse voices of reality to fuel a grand and evocative spectacle offered to the world with the intent to raise reflection, meditation, understanding, and growth.

It is a primarily metamorphic relationship in which historical facts become symbolically essential for conveying allegorical meaning.

Consequently, sculpture arises as an emblem of humanity and of the perennial quest for freedom, echoing the enduring resemblance to myth, surviving across centuries, often shipwrecked in the madness of illusion.

In the symbolic transition from the artist's inner immediacy to conceptual mediation, spaces emerge for the poetic and philosophical articulateness that define the characteristics of his language.

Immersed in memories, he creates the work ***Ecce Mater Dulcissima***, bringing to the surface themes of maternal love, illness and the nostalgic remembrance expressed by Jorge Luis Borges: "*I have always remembered my mother reading to me, her voice, the stories, the worlds she opened for me.*" It is the language of the human condition, oriented toward both plastic and cultural evolution, that finds its horizons and correspondences in Sartre's existentialism: "*Everything was full, everything was in act, there was no interval; everything, even the most imperceptible quiver, was made with a touch of existence*".

A central aspect of Lamagna's work is the contemporary perspective of a research based on the identity between object and subject, and the foundational role of interpretation. This constitutes a new phenomenology of phenomenological analysis in the Husserlian sense—one that strives to engage a range of images, whether comic or tragic, dreamy or resigned—drawn from memories embedded not only in individual consciousness but also in collective memory.

In this new artistic expression, the figures shift, rise, and contort within spaces that are alternately dark or luminous, fraternal or hostile—together weaving a hermetic network that conveys an undefined yet essential need for introspection

and harmony. Indeed, in images shaped by a dynamic sensibility, the interplay between mass and void evokes a profound sense of suffering.

In Lamagna's view, art represents a path of interpretation that never relinquishes the poetic pathos emerging from both social analysis and meditative reflection. He intensifies the sensation of disintegration within a decisive and vital dynamism, wherein forms are not randomly positioned in space but rather expand and orient themselves within an indeterminate spatiality, following a continuous and concentric rhythm akin to the ebb and flow of the tide.

While closely aligned with the creative progress of his contemporaries, Lamagna proposes personal solutions that reflect a profound ferment of disquiet and existential bewilderment in response to reality.

Each instance of inner turmoil is gradually integrated into the very substance that initially provoked the soul's impact, expanding with all its impetuous force.

This process reflects a natural progression from rational analysis to existential awareness. His works reveal a disposition toward sculptural expression as a powerful articulation of the multifaceted self, situated within specific historical, existential or spiritual contexts. Indeed, they testify to a persistent tension that materializes in forms emerging from a background of magmatic impulsivity, in which they are confined and trapped, yet rise to the surface imbued with intense dramatic power. The completeness of the sculptural forms does not convey the Raphaelesque vision of life's joy; rather, it reflects the exacerbation ignored by an upside-down world.

One of the hallmarks of Lamagna's sculpture lies in its steadfast adherence to classical canons, which it is nearly impossible to disregard, while simultaneously revealing a rich interplay of genuine emotions, renunciations, sufferings, and passions. Through the wrinkles and folds of light and shadow, he reveals all that is concealed on the faces of individuals, where the human condition is inscribed. Each work represents significant elements of knowledge, concepts, and broader revelations, all conveyed through poetic means and in accordance with the ethics of art. They gradually expand like concentric circles of awareness, weaving fundamental sensations—not in limited terms, but as universal, eternal, absolute, and immutable truths within an expressive language. Such resonances echo in André Malraux's conception of art, wherein "*forms become style*".

Over a career spanning decades, Lamagna has been consistently engaged in the pursuit of significant and aesthetically compelling forms, guided by both the complexity and uniqueness of the human figure. Since essentiality transcends the particular, his research navigates between Sartre's creative existentialism and Camus's solidaristic and reflective existentialism.

In fact, Lamagna moulds the most intricate and obscure dimensions of the psyche and the unconscious. He brings to light even the abnormal, the pathological, and the surreal. For these reasons, in comparison with various artistic movements, his work reveals a distinctive feature: the manifestation of a personal "I" that,

through material, drawing, colour and dramatic tension, aims to assert itself and emerge in a renewed form in the pursuit of freedom and perhaps happiness, as exemplified in the work **Bacchus**. By studying and subsequently creating the image from an unprecedented perspective, he directs art along a new trajectory that is both realistic and idealised, oriented toward the expression of interiority. While maintaining a connection to classical canons of stylisation, the form becomes twisted and fragmented, following a divergent conceptual path aimed at revealing the scars of the soul and the wounds of the heart.

Through his gaunt and perplexed figures, he conveys a sense of discomfort, fragility, submission, and the absurdity of the human condition, in which the individual is no longer the protagonist but rather a victim of greater forces - of events he is compelled to endure, and of visions contemplated with sadness and dismay by the **Funambolo**. These are images of the inner world, relived through the tangible presence of ideologically charged works, united by an expressionistic and affective significance. He expresses the concepts and vulnerabilities of contemporary man through a dynamic interplay of smoothness and incision, emptiness and fullness, permanence and ephemerality. In the stratification of structures, powers, and even of nothingness, these elements reflect the very nature of contemporary society. Perhaps these voids await fulfillment through peace, solidarity, love, understanding, help, renunciation, and the idealistic rebellion against conventionality within the established system.

His characters often wear or conceal themselves behind a mask, as the artist explores the theme of the difficulty of being oneself and the necessity of suppressing one's essence or autonomy in order to conform to societal expectations.

And yet, despite conformity, the figure sorrowfully holds the mask, which ultimately grows larger than the self. The face does not dissolve into infinite contemplation but remains suspended, stunned within the spirit of the age.

In this interplay between antithetical personalities, reality is not grounded in appearance or objective manifestations; rather, it is composed of concealed, obscure, hallucinatory, and elusive dimensions. He engages directly with material, unveiling the world's duality as he delves into its darker, unexplored sides to expose - even its ugliness, distortions, and madness—and render them visible.

It is, therefore, a struggle etched on the human face, accompanied by a continuous search for identity - an effort to assert oneself as a free and victorious form within a complex universe, where the chaos of emotions obstructs the assimilation of noble meanings. Along this indispensable path toward freedom, the scream can no longer be silenced: it is necessary to build a new and authentic humanity.

One of the main characteristics is the ability to decipher the hidden language of the mask, concealed in a gaze that is at once incredulous and surprised, serene and questioning, astonished and meditative, lost and unsettling, resigned and furious, enigmatic and transparent. In recognizing the need for the affirmation of the self, trapped by the shyness that limits its yearning for boundless freedom