



Photography 200 - Part I  
Matteo Basilé - Iwajla Klinke

On the occasion of the photography bicentenary NM Contemporary presents the first focus on photography.

Basilé and Klinke faced and fused each other from the first to the second room and return as a hymn to portrait.

Each artist through the means of different process and career focused their artistic research on revolutionizing contemporary portrait with a strong hold to old masters. Klinke utilizes classical portraiture to capture her subjects in either traditional costumes, or else manufactured creations that somehow preserve some semblance of ancient ritual.

Not far from her home in Berlin, the Sorbians of Eastern Germany still celebrate the annual Bird Wedding on 25 January of each year, in which two children are selected as bride and groom and brought together in a mock ceremony to celebrate the upcoming end of winter.

Klinke captures her child brides against dark backgrounds and in natural light, allowing us to admire both the fine detail and flourish of their traditional dresses as well as the determined expressions of reverence that are somewhat surprising to find on children's faces; they bespeak a worldliness that goes beyond our traditionally cosmopolitan conception of the term, a worldliness that is definitively earthbound and engraved in the machinations of a past that is eternally present.

In another series, Klinke travels to Bavaria during the Chinese New Year when all the village dress in Chinese costumes.

Recently she portraited the Vesting Prayer moment of a Cardinal as well as ordinations of priests.

"...Despite the seeming esoteric subject matter, Klinke's gaze is never clinical or desultory; rather, she holds her subjects in the same reverence and esteem with which they carry out their annual rituals. One could say that photography is Iwajla Klinke's own ritual, one whose results she generously shares. Even her method is quasi-ritualistic. In her travels, Klinke produces her photographs using the same method she practices in her home studio in Berlin's fashionably shabby Kreuzberg district. Eschewing unnatural light, her photo shoots always take place during the day time next to a window. Given the relative poverty of sunshine in Germany throughout most of the year, the light is usually soft, dim, and pale, as though to allow her subjects' "inner glow" to fill the frame.



It is no mistake that Klinko prefers photographing children. One cannot conjure a future worth living in without a cognizance of the past that entails at least some engagement beyond the superficial.

Iwajla Klinko's practice, after all, also extends beyond contemporary photography's limited concerns and is perhaps best seen situated among the paintings of the Old Masters that continue to inspire her, with

the chiaroscuro endeavors of Jean Barbault and Caravaggio immediately springing to mind.

Excavating some of the most unlikely sources of our contemporary fabric and forcing us to turn our

gaze on them in an intense consideration, Iwajla Klinko effectively re-invents the sublime and gives us a new politics of reality..." Travis Jeppesen

Matteo Basile's Floramagnifica on the second room stands as a visual manifesto of contemporary artistry, an hypnotic journey between nature and humanity that rewrites the codes of iconographic hybridization. Each portrait captures a fragment of an imaginative archaeology, where ephemeral beauty solidifies through creative action, generating an emotional short circuit between the tangible and the ethereal.

At the heart of the project lies the concept of a unique feminine DNA, unfolded across 21 ideal generations coexisting in a single timeless moment. Femininity becomes the symbolic axis of a cyclical and universal narrative, an allegory of eternal resilience transcending time and space.

Floramagnifica distinguishes itself through the pioneering use of artificial intelligence, meticulously trained by Basile over months of aesthetic and emotional refinement.

The AI, molded by the artist, emerges as a collaborator in creating portraits that go beyond mere representation of the visible, delving deep into the psychological and spiritual essence of the subjects. Here, a portrait of the soul takes shape, an evocation that transcends surface appearances to explore the profound realms of interiority.

The choice of black and white imbues the works with a timeless quality, a solemnity that heightens narrative intensity and draws focus to intricate details. Reinvented botanicals, with their dreamlike and impossible blooms, redefine nature as a theater of possibilities, a place where reality dissolves into fantasy. Basile pays homage to Flemish portraiture through meticulous attention to fabrics, lighting, and textures, transforming each portrait into a visual cathedral of detail.



The subjects emerge from a suspended universe, an oneiric limbo where the sacred and the profane intertwine seamlessly. Flowers become organic extensions of the body, visual metaphors of the fragility and strength that define the human condition. In this intertwining of nature and identity, Basilé invites us to reflect on the interconnectedness between humanity and its environment, redefining our relationship with otherness.

With Floramagnifica, Matteo Basilé reaffirms his poetics of cultural and technological hybridization, giving life to an artistic language that transcends boundaries and conventions. The works, powerful and layered, transform observation into an immersive experience, a visual dialogue that moves and inspires, urging us to look beyond the surface to uncover the complexity of existence.

Photography 200, Part I. Basilé - Klinke. Opening cocktail Thursday 9th April from 6 pm onward.

Exhibition dates : 9th -22 nd April 2026