FRANCESCA PASQUALI

PLASTIC RESONANCE

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Frappa (Detail), 2015
White and grey neoprene on wooden panel and metallic frame
55 x 27.5 x 8.6 in / 140 x 70 x 22 cm

Red Straws (Detail), 2015
Bicolor red and black plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
∅ 15.7 x 8.6 in / ∅ 40 x 22 cm

ON THE (INTERCONNECTED) NATURE OF THINGS: OBSERVING AS REINTERPRETING, EXPERIENCING AS REMINISCING

ILARIA CONTI

at nunc, inter se quia nexus principiorum
dissimiles constant aeternaque materies est,
incolumi remanent res corpore, dum satis acris
vis obeat pro textura cuiusque reperta.
haud igitur redit ad nihilum res ulla, sed omnes
discidio redeunt in corpora materiai.

–

Ma ora, poiché connessioni dissimili stringono tra loro
i principi, e la materia è eterna,
le cose conservano incolume il corpo, finché non si presenti
una forza che sia abbastanza gagliarda in proporzione alla tessitura di ciascuna.
Non ritorna dunque al nulla alcuna cosa, ma tutte
per disgregazione ritornano agli elementi della materia.

–

But now, because the fastenings of primordial parts
Are put together diversely and matter is everlasting,
Things abide the same unhurt and sure, until some power
Comes on strong to destroy the warp and woof of each.
Nothing returns to naught; but all
Return at their collapse to primal forms of matter.

– Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* [On the Nature of Things], I.244-249

When something appears too obvious, art compels us to look harder, to reconsider it. What follows, usually, is a process of discovery. This adagio is at the very heart of Francesca Pasquali's practice. Her research across the biological and artificial realms stems from a fascination with the ways of nature, where scientific processes, tangible matter, and visual qualities are inextricably connected. In nature, the artist finds a repository of structural and visual permutations whose endless declinations constitute all we know and can conceive.

Inspiration often emerges, to echo Pasquali's words, when she is not paying attention to what surrounds her. Inquisitiveness moves her when she is not seeking. The initial step of her creative process lies in a scientific analysis of encountered organic elements: a quest for the secret structures, materials, textures, colors, and ever-changing shapes of the biological realm. This close observation leads her to discern the inherent resonances between the products of nature and those of technology – that is, the manmade. Through this process, Pasquali develops artworks that shed light on such reverberations: the forms of nature mutate into their artificial counterparts in an exercise of experimentation and interpretation.

The microscopic structure of a fly's eye, or the crystals of salt in an iceberg, find their structural and functional analogies in the artist's *Straws* series, where compositions of plastic straws are presented in dynamic forms that echo their organic equivalents while physically reaching out to the viewer. In another instance, cocoons of polyurethane foam flutter through the *Bozzoli* series,

Green Straws, 2013
Green plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
35.4 x 23.6 x 10 in / 90 x 60 x 25 cm

while testing the work's ability to embody different scales, structures, and kinds of public interaction. The *Frappa* series – taking its name from crisply indented Italian pastry sweets – uses sinuosity as a way to survey bread, marble, and neoprene, once again creating a game of references across the natural and the manufactured that involves all senses: the aroma of the dough, the visual perfection of marble, the sinuosity of the rubber that Pasquali invites us to touch. Some of this series' iterations even feature mirrors, so as to secure the viewer's visual presence in the artwork while accentuating its curvy maze.

Pasquali winks at us, but that is not all. The mutations she enacts are not a simplistic aesthetic exercise where natural shapes are imitated through manmade materials; rather, her practice deconstructs artificial objects of mass-scale consumption and utilizes them as conceptual lens through which 21st century observers can reinterpret nature. By weaving a net of intellectual, visual, and material references between the biological and the synthetic, the artist asks the viewer to take advantage of their familiarity with the latter to reinterpret the former – to reminisce about something inherent to our human nature that was forgotten in the technological process, but that we inevitably seem to replicate when conceiving our manmade inventions.

In her game of micro and macroscopic vision, the artist plays with different scales and values: utilitarian and aesthetic, conceptual and material, scientific and artistic. Her artworks are occurrences in which cognitive and physical responsiveness meet instinctive memory and aesthetic experience, thanks to materials originally intended for mere use, consumption, and discarding. The consumerist thus escapes this fate in the artist's transformative process and becomes a vehicle of production of knowledge.
Pasquali operates across and around the confines and expectations associated with art-making and the public experience. She acts upon ideas of creation and use, innate and mediated, art and design, and explores the ability of her research to adapt, to fluidly embody new shapes as they change contexts and substances. The artist restrains from mediating the experience of the work for the public – this is why her titles identify creative frameworks but are never descriptive. They point towards the conceptual direction in which the artist is interested in challenging the viewer, as if bringing us to a foreign terrain in which we have the independence to construct our own points of reference and understanding.

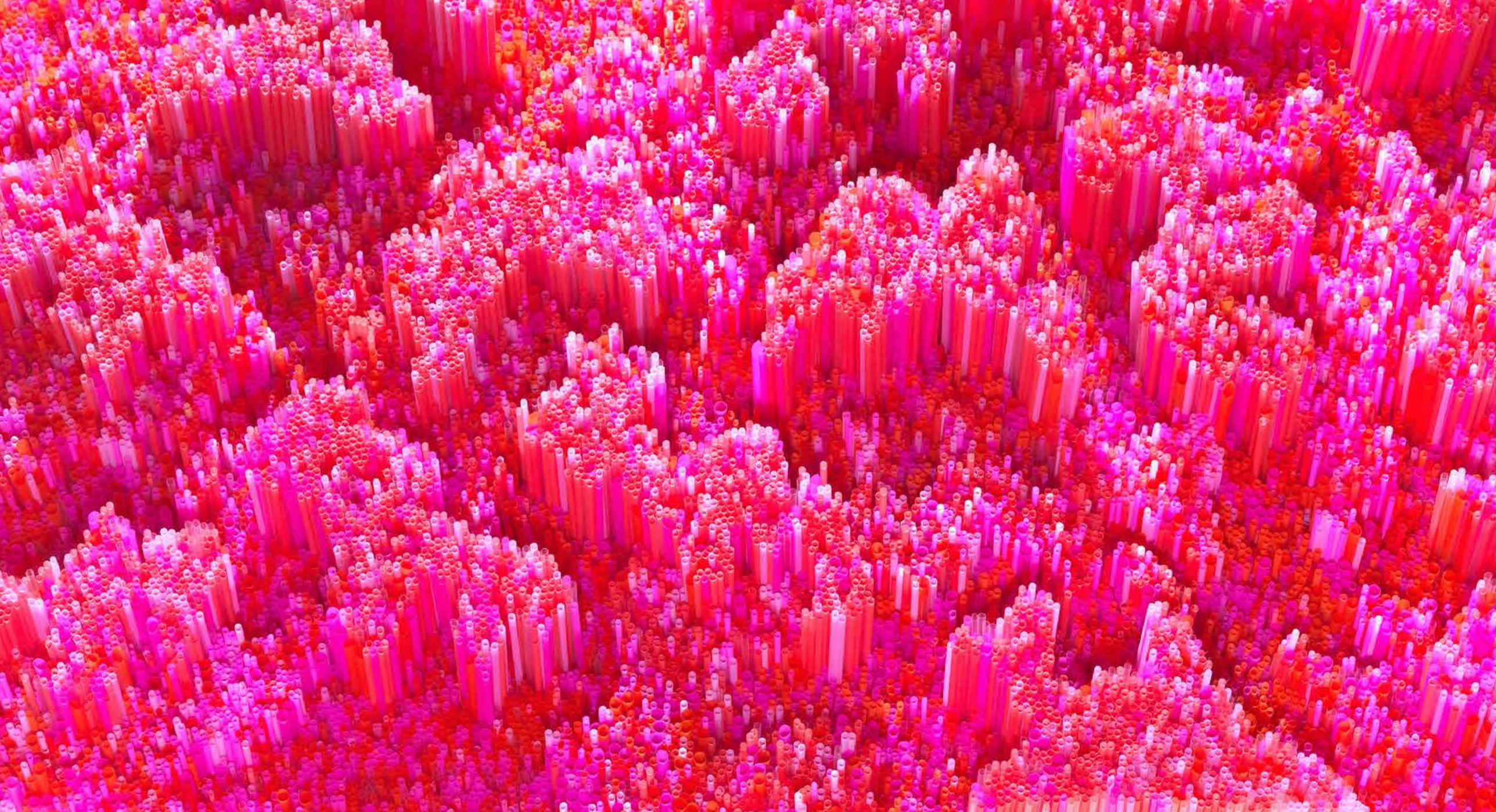
Her work, therefore, is not meant to function independently of its audiences. Its context and the gazes it encounters are central to the process. The artist activates us by asking to look, touch, interrogate, and reminisce. Her work is never confined to bidimensionality. By trespassing the boundaries of the sculptural, it expands into the environmental and the temporal, reaching at times the field of immersive installations featuring sound and video. Matter thus becomes space, and space reacts to matter. The relationship is inextricable, and the viewer is the one galvanizing it.

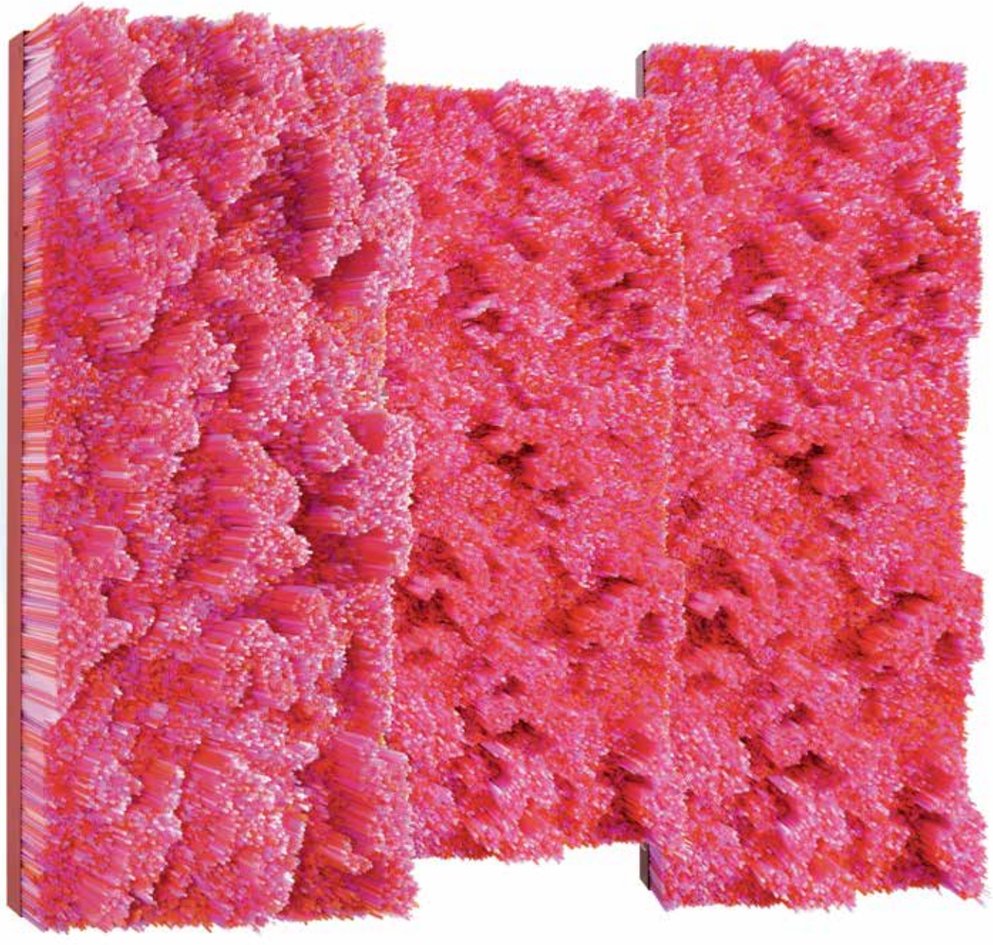
However, Pasquali's practice points to more than the dualism of nature and artifice. Her research is not self-referential: it works around key aspects of modern and contemporary creative experimentation. It interrogates the grounds of artistic monochrome and abstraction in the era of consumption and tests the possibilities of spatial and bodily engagement, trespassing into architectural construction. Her series investigate public interactions and their multiple interpretations through a performative and engaging nature. Ultimately, if 20th century artistic research led to the use of common materials, from Alberto Burri's Celotex fiberboard to Arte Povera's protean strategies, Pasquali pushes further the question of which readily available materials, perhaps rich in conceptual potential but with commonly unsophisticated social status, can be incorporated into the aura of art-making.

Ilaria Conti is a New York-based contemporary art historian and curator.

Portrait of Francesca Pasquali, 2014
Photo by Pietro Savorelli

Previous Page
Spiderballs (Detail), 2014
Grey, fuchsia, red and blue cobweb dusters on metallic net and wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 47 x 10 in / Ø 120 x 25 cm



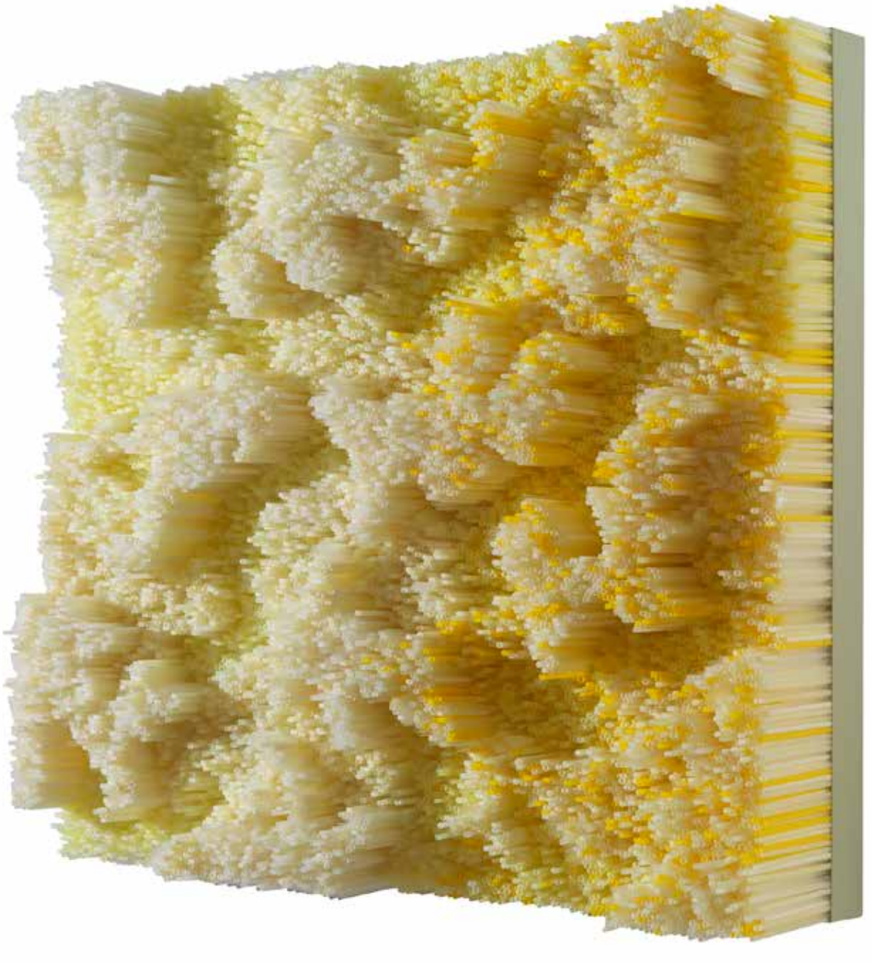


Straws, 2015
Fuchsia, red, pink and transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panels and metallic frame
78.75 x 98.4 x 9 in / 200 x 250 x 23 cm

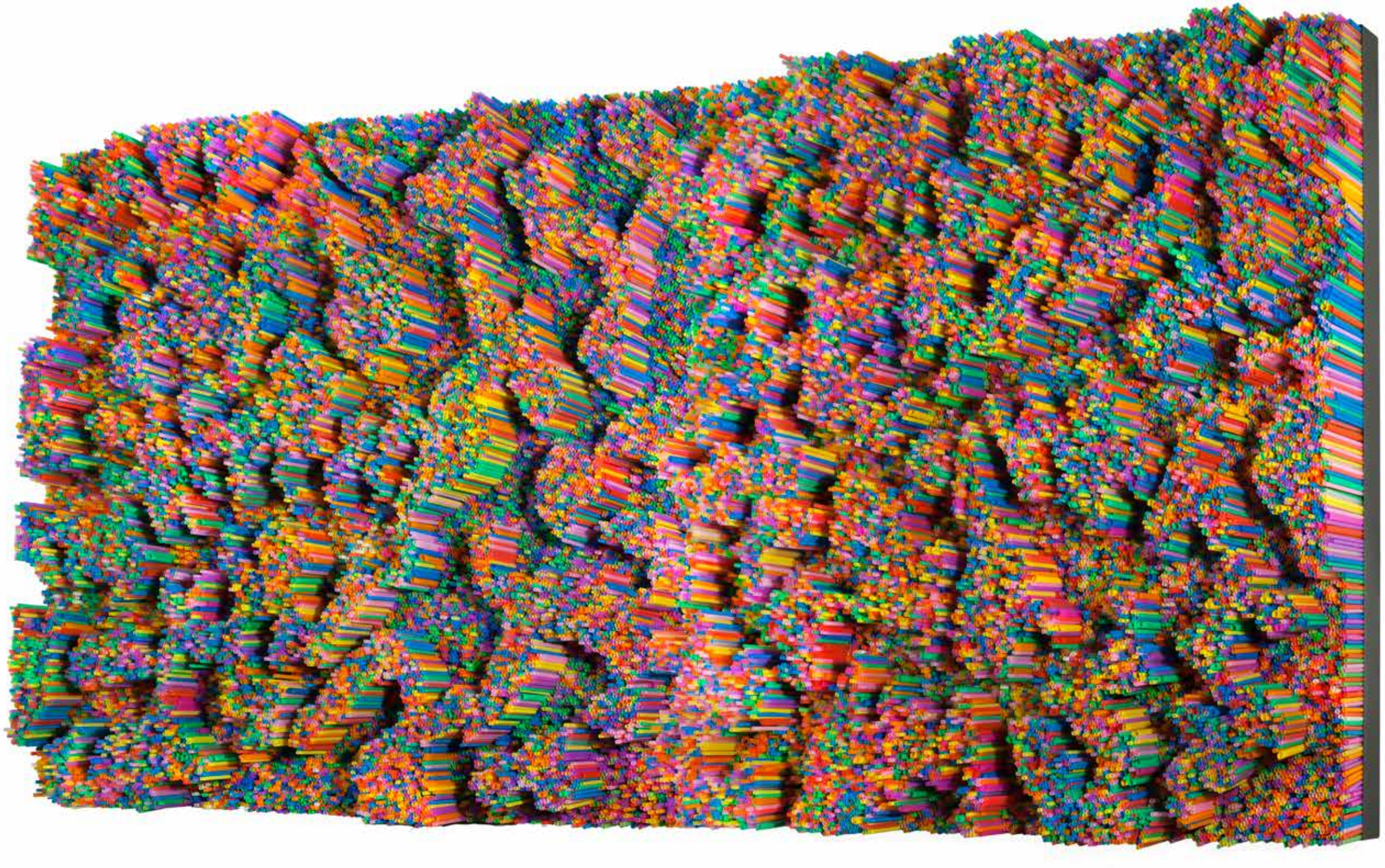
Previous page:
Straws (Detail), 2015
Fuchsia, red, pink and transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panels and metallic frame
78.75 x 98.4 x 9 in / 200 x 250 x 23 cm

Gold Straws, 2015
Gold and brown plastic drinking straws on wood panel and metallic frame
42.5 x 33.4 x 10 in / 108 x 85 x 25 cm

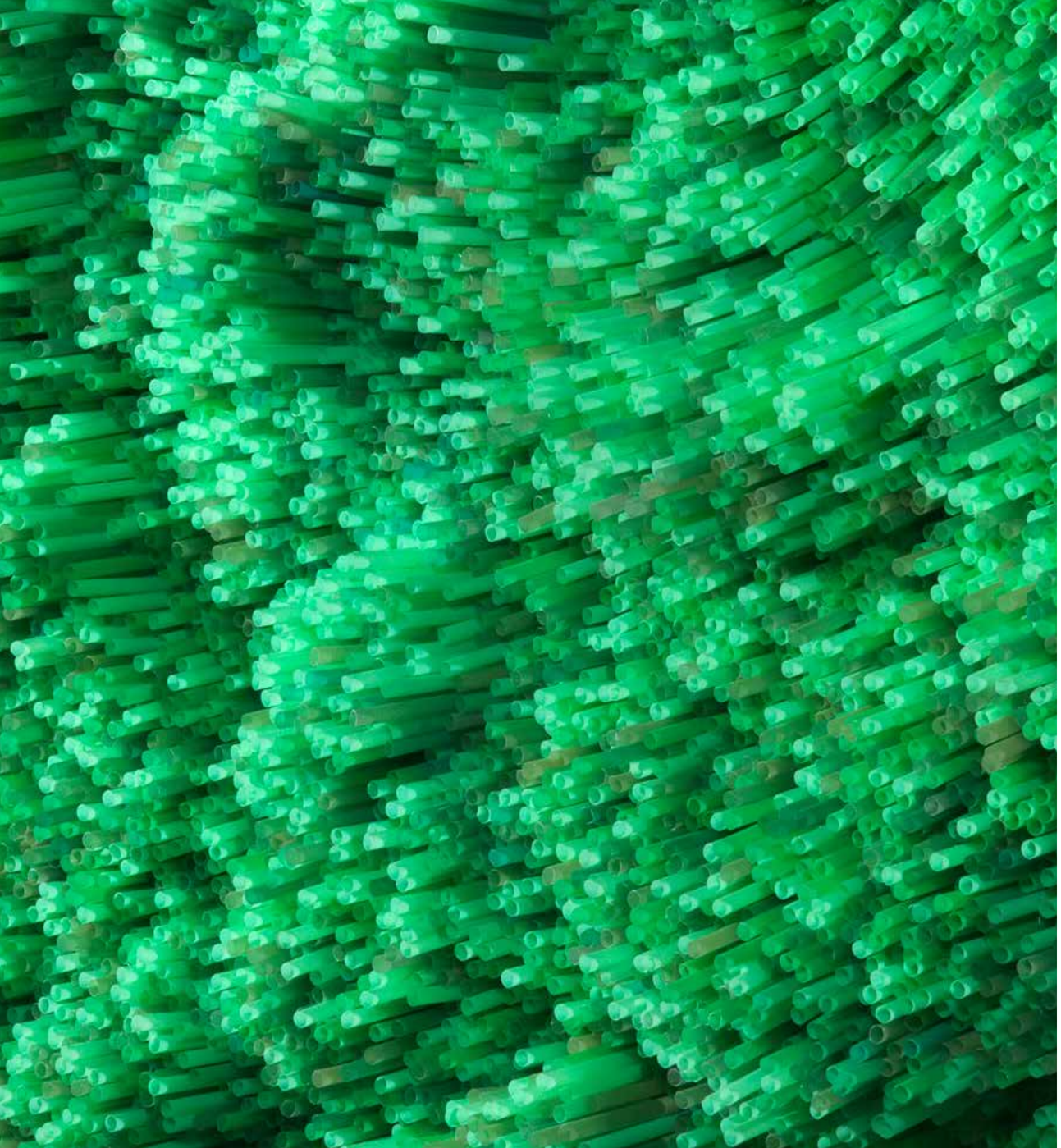
Transparent Straws, 2015
Transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
39 x 43 x 10 in / 100 x 110 x 25 cm

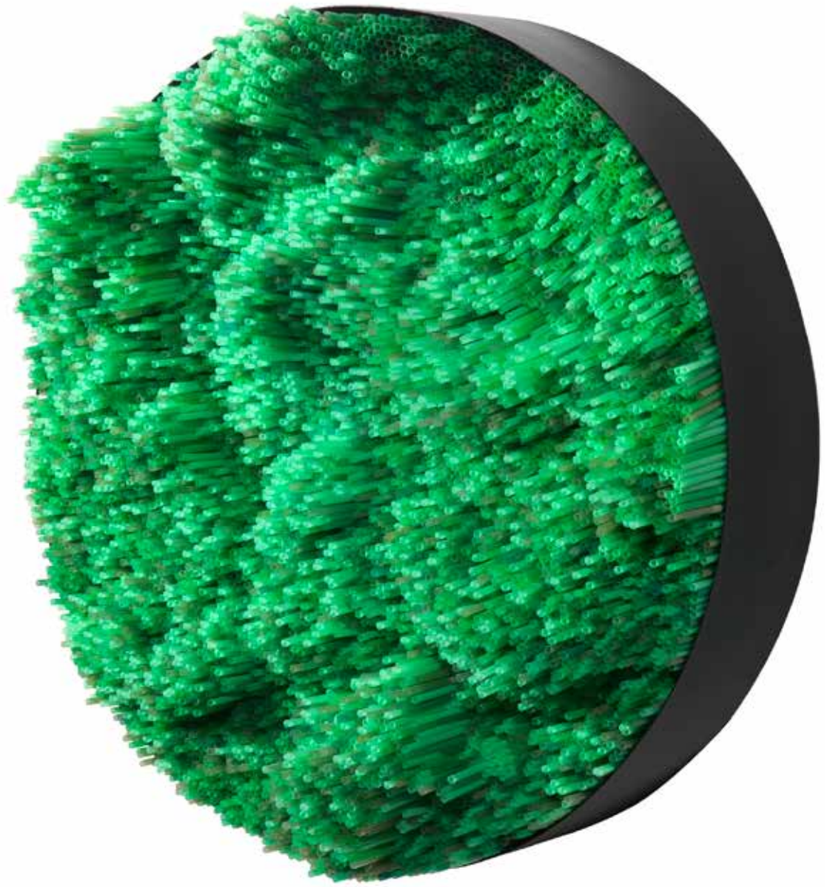


Light Yellow Straws, 2015
Transparent and light yellow plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
39 x 43 x 10 in / 100 x 110 x 25 cm



Straws, 2016
Multi-colored plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
51 x 118 x 8.6 in / 130 x 300 x 22 cm (Diptych)

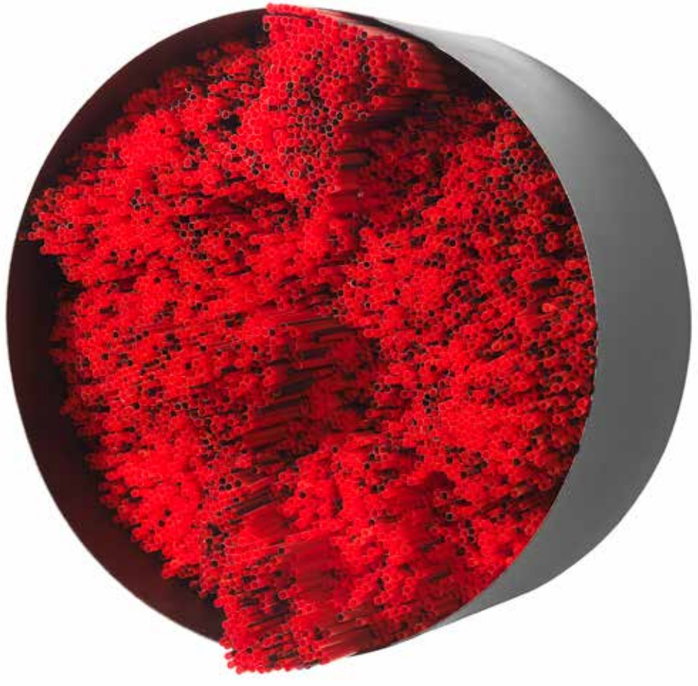




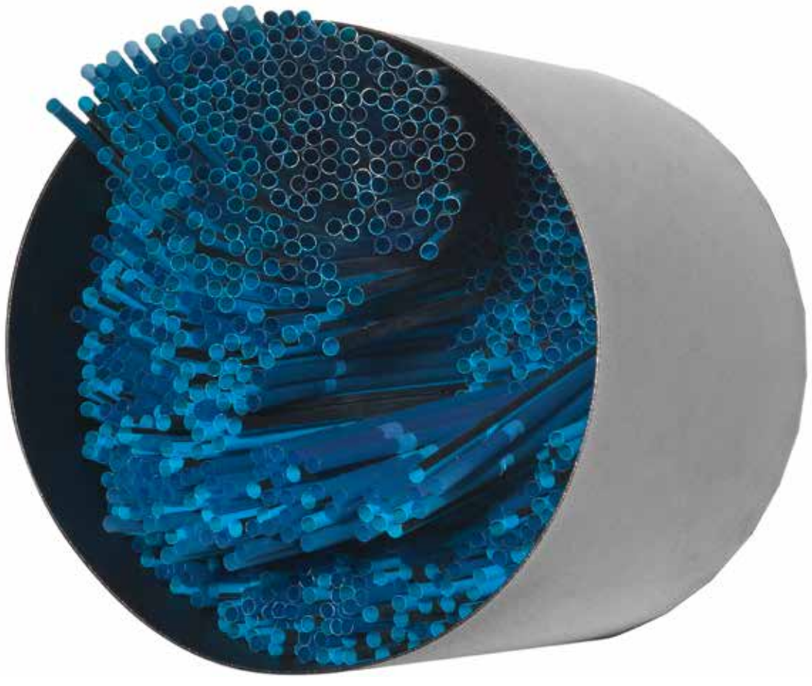
Green Straws, 2015
Green plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 24 x 10 in / Ø 60 x 25 cm

Orange Straws, 2015
Orange plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 20 x 8 in / Ø 50 x 20 cm

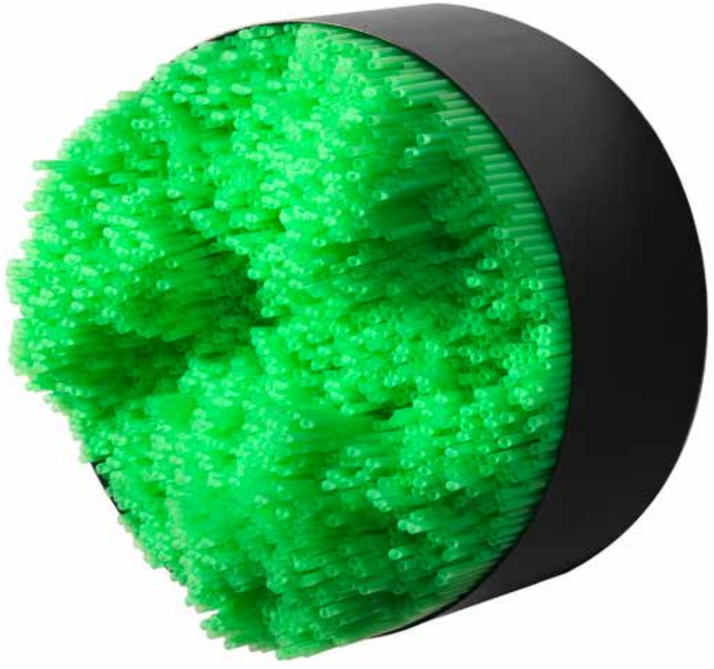
Yellow Straws, 2015
Yellow plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 24 x 10 in / Ø 60 x 25 cm



Red Straws, 2015
Bicolor red and black plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 15.7 x 8.6 in / Ø 40 x 22 cm



Blue Straws, 2015
Bicolor blue and black and sky-blue plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 8 x 8.2 in / Ø 20 x 21 cm

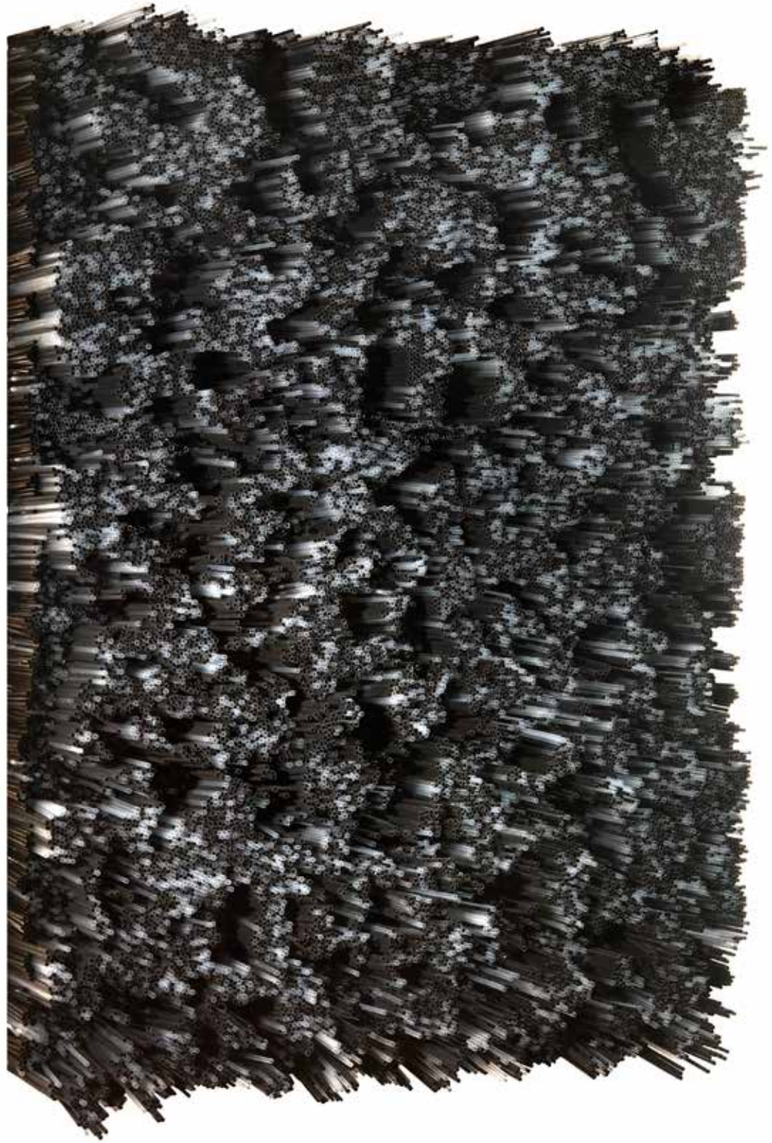


Green Straws, 2015
Green plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 12 x 6 in / Ø 30 x 15 cm

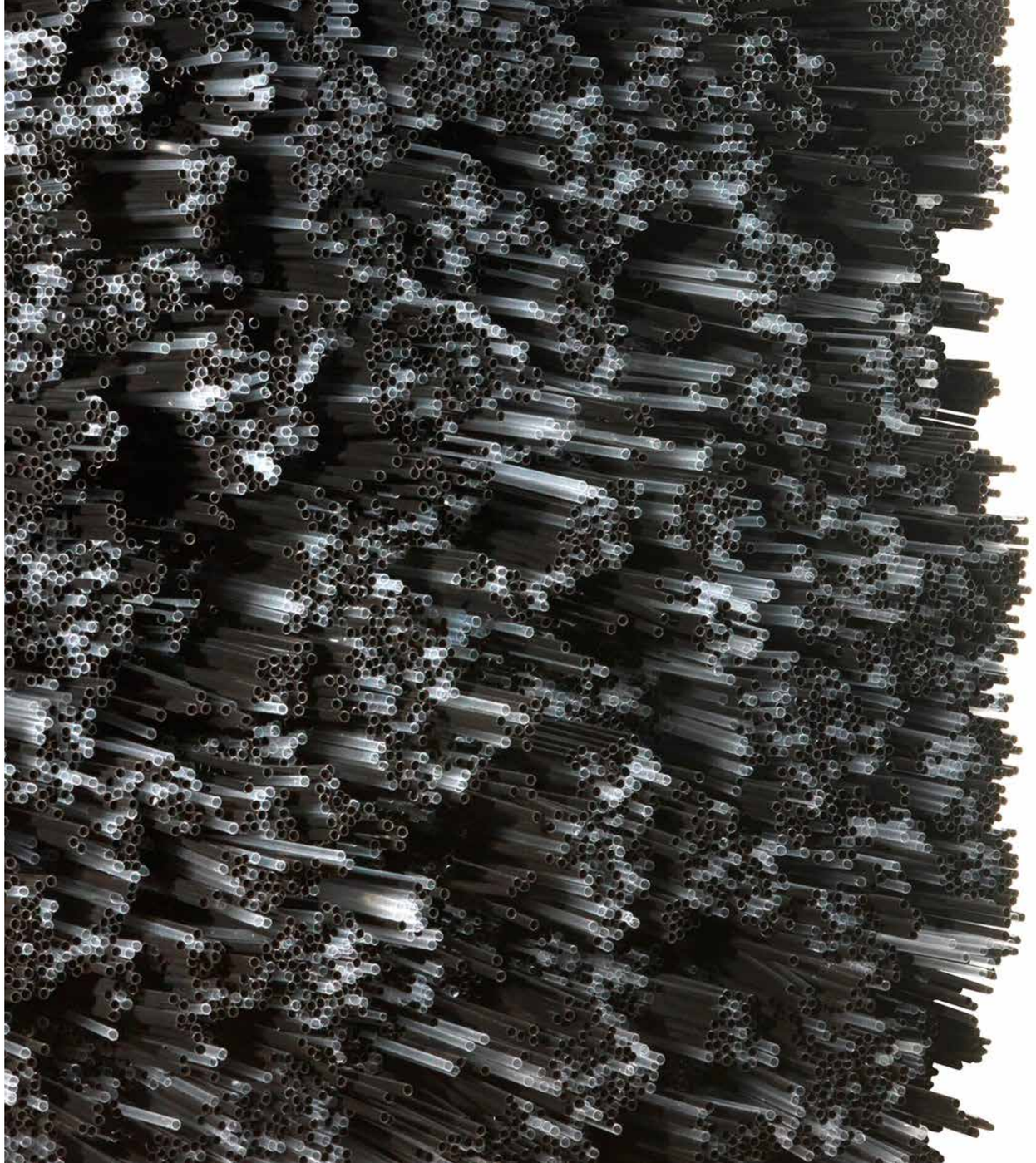
Orange Straws, 2015
Orange and yellow plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 8 x 6 in / Ø 20 x 15 cm

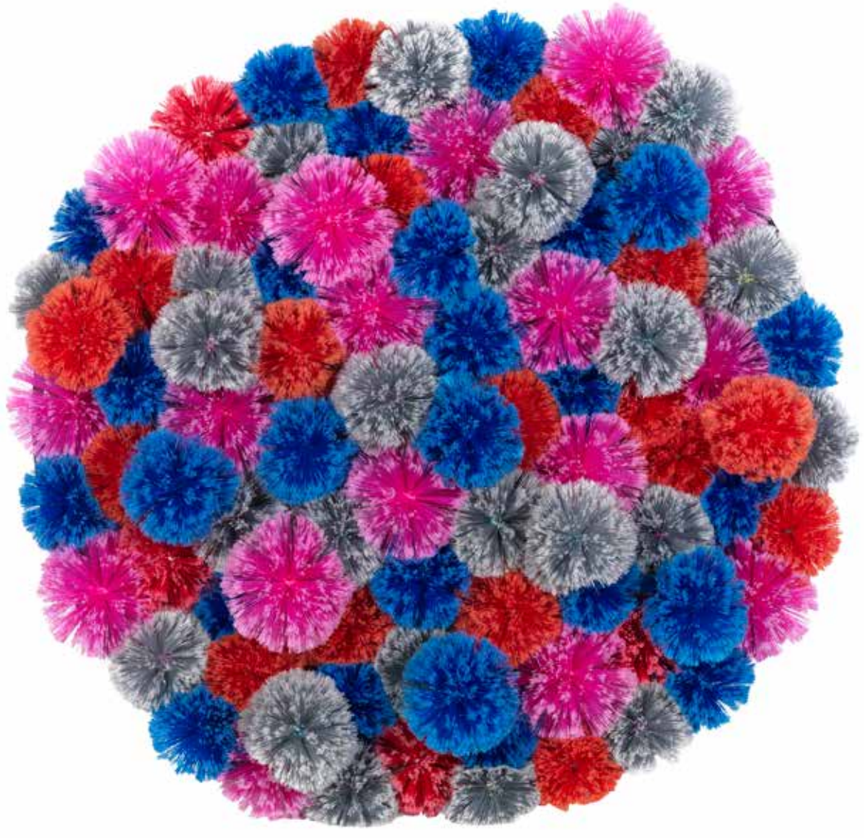
Black Straws, 2015
Black and transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 39 x 8.6 in / Ø 100 x 22 cm

White Straws, 2016
White and transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 39 x 8.6 in / Ø 100 x 22 cm



Black Straws, 2015
Black and transparent plastic drinking straws on wooden panels and metallic frame
61 x 44.8 x 8.6 in / 155 x 114 x 22 cm





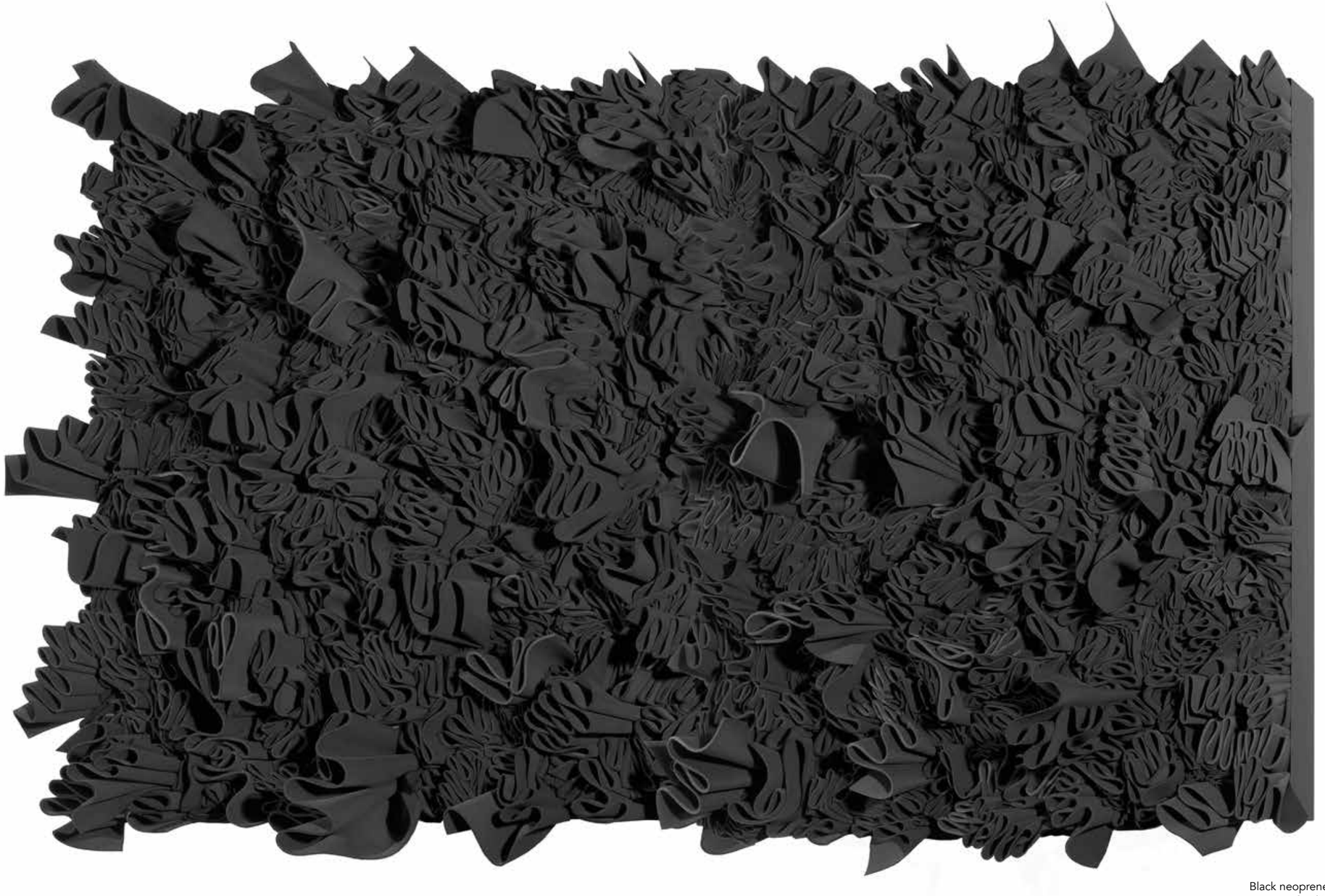
Spiderballs, 2014
Grey, fuchsia, red and blue plastic cobweb dusters on metallic net and wooden panel and metallic frame
Ø 47 x 10 in / Ø 120 x 25 cm

Spiderballs, 2014
Grey, green, yellow and blue plastic cobweb dusters on metallic net and wooden panel and metallic frame
47.25 x 35.4 x 10 in / 120 x 90 x 25 cm

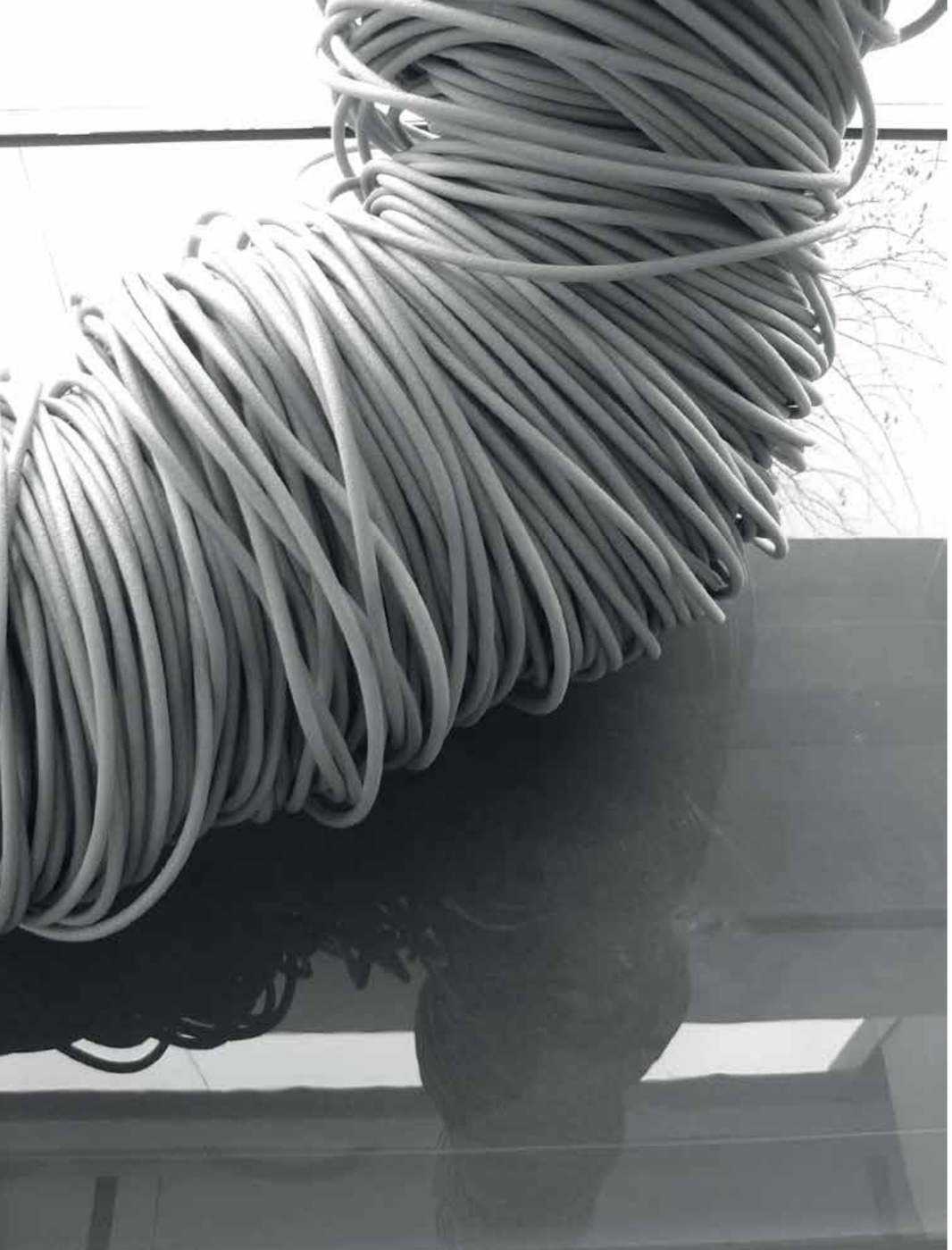
Iceberg, 2016
Transparent plastic drinking straws on mirror polished Plexiglas and metallic frame
Ø 39 x 9.4 in / 130 x 24 cm

Frappa, 2015
White neoprene on mirror polished Plexiglas and metallic frame
Ø 39 x 10 in / Ø 100 x 25 cm

Frappa, 2016
White and grey neoprene on wooden panel and metallic frame
55 x 27.5 x 8.6 in / 140 x 70 x 22 cm



Frappa, 2016
Black neoprene on wooden panel and metallic frame
43 x 86 x 8.6 in / 110 x 220 x 22 cm (Diptych)



Bozzoli, 2016
Site-specific installation
Polyurethane foam
Dimensions Variable

FRANCESCA PASQUALI

B. 1980 Bologna, Italy
Lives and works in Bologna, Italy

2015 Foundation of the "Francesca Pasquali Archive," Bologna, Italy, under the direction of Ilaria Bignotti
2013 Co-Founder of the art and culture movement "Resilienza italiana" (Italian resilience), with the curator Ilaria Bignotti and other sculptors.

EDUCATION

BFA, Academy of Fine Arts, Bologna

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2016 *Plastic Resonance*, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
Kinesis. Francesa Pasquali, Laura Renna, two solo exhibtions, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, ALT Museum, Alzano Lombardo, Bergamo, Italy
Spiderwall, curated by Michael Petry, in collaboration with Francesca Pasquali Archive, Tornabuoni Art, MOCA London, London, UK
FRANCESCA PASQUALI metamorphoses, in collaboration with Francesca Pasquali Archive, Tornabuoni Art, London, UK
2015 *Plastic shapes*, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Gino Pisapia, Tornabuoni Arte Contemporary Art, Florence, Italy
Spiderball cloud, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, Biennale Giovani Monza 2015, Arengario and Museo Casa degli Umiliati, Monza, Italy
2014 *Sixties spiderballs*, curated by M&C Saatchi, The House of Peroni, London, UK
39000 light straws, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Federica Patti, Fondazione Cardinale Giacomo Lercaro for Art First Off, Bologna, Italy
2013-14 *Critica in Arte. Francesca Pasquali*, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, MAR Museo d'Arte della Città, Ravenna, Italy
2012 *Francesca Pasquali. A me gli occhi,* curated by Ilaria Bignotti, Galleria Colossi Arte Contemporanea, Brescia, Italy
2011 *Elastic*, curated by Eleonora Mayerle, Spazio Thetis, Venice, Italy
SCOPAmi, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Denitza Nedkova, Galleria OltreDimore, Bologna, Italy
Camminando/Contaminando, curated by Mazen, Spazio Capo di Lucca for Art First Off, Bologna, Italy
2010 *Metamorfosi,* curated by Ilaria Bignotti, Museo Diocesano, Brescia, Italy
Intrecci, curated by Paolo Insolera, Palazzo Gnudi, Bologna, Italy
Mi sento S-gonfia, Galleria La Pillola for Art First Off, Bologna, Italy

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2016 *Kinesis. Francesca Pasquali and Laura Renna,* curated by Ilaria Bignotti, ALT Museum, Alzano Lombardo, Italy
Per vie diverse, curated by Claudio Spadoni, Magazzini del Sale, Cervia, Italy
*Flux-us. Mary Bauermeister, Francesca Pasquali, *fuse,* curated by Angela Memola and Pascual Jordan, C.U.BO Centro Unipol, Bologna, Italy
2015 *Black. An idea of light*, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Paola Formenti Tavazzani, Cortesi Gallery, Lugano, Italy
Macrocosmi – Ordnungen anderer Art, Pattern of another order, curated by Martina Cavallarin, Petra Dregger and Pascual Jordan, Altes Postfuhramt West, Berlin, Germany
Trame contemporanee, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, Fondazione La Verde La Malfa, Catania, Italy
SIHX arte e industria alla Corte Deloitte, curated by Paolo Carli, Enrico Ciai and Philippe Daverio, Corte Deloitte, Milan, Italy
Arte Mashup. Il gusto di fare arte, curated by Davide Sarchioni, Associazione Culturale Il Frantoio, Capalbio, Italy
White not, curated by Chiara Massimiello, Spazio Ersel, Turin,Italy
Art on loan, curated by Enzo Fiammetta, Creative Lab Museo Arte Contemporanea, Alcamo, Italy
Macrocosmi – Ordnungen anderer Art, Organismi fuori centro, curated by Martina Cavallarin and Pascual Jordan, Teatri di Vita, Bologna, Italy
Reti di resilienza, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Enzo Fiammetta, Fondazione Orestiadi, Gibellina, Italy
2014 *Reti di resilienza*, curated by Ilaria Bignotti and Enzo Fiammetta, Museo RISO, Palermo, Italy
Street Scape ComOn, curated by Chiara Canali and Ivan Quaroni, Museo Archeologico Paolo Giovio, Como, Italy
Eccentrico Musivo. Young Artists and Mosaic, curated by Linda Kniffitz and Daniele Torcellini, MAR Museo d'Arte della Città, Ravenna, Italy
Premio Fondazione Henraux, curated by Enrico Mattei, La Versiliana, Marina di Pietrasanta, Italy
Espressioni contemporanee, Tornabuoni Arte Contemporary Art, Florence, Italy
Resilienza italiana. Il mare visto da monte, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, PAV Parco, Arte Vivente, Turin, Italy
Resilienza italiana. Punti di partenza, curated by Ilaria Bignotti, Spazio GIVA, Milan, Italy
2013 *O(Ax) = dO(Am) Equazione Impossibile,* curated by marte Associazione Culturale and Daniele Torcellini, Galleria Ninapì, Ravenna, 26 October – 10 November
Bianco Italia, curated by Philippe Daverio, Tornabuoni Arte, Florence, Italy
D.A.B. Design per Artshop e Bookshop, curated by Ornella Corradini, Galleria Civica, Modena, Italy
Bianco Italia, curated by Dominique Stella, Tornabuoni Art, Paris, France
2012 *NaturalMente,* curated by Associazione Aikal, Biennale Italia-Cina, Villa Reale, Monza, Italy
roBOt Festival, curated by Federica Patti, Palazzo Re Enzo, Bologna, Italy
Personal Effect on Sale, curated by Francesco Calzolari, David Casini, Viola Emaldi, Irene Guzman, Valentina Rossi, Marco Scotti and Sissi, Esprit Nouveau Pavillon for Art First Off, Bologna, Italy
2011 *D.A.B. Design per Artshop e Bookshop,* curated by Ornella Corradini, Castel Sant'Elmo, Naples, Italy
ARTE nell'ARTE, curated by Fondazione Brescia Musei, Museo della Città Santa Giulia, Brescia, Italy
2010 *FabulART, il sentiero delle fiabe,* curated by Simona Gavioli, Palazzo D'Accursio, Bologna, Italy
Attraverso lo specchio, curated by Elisabetta Modena, Castello dei Pico, Mirandola, Italy
Il segreto dello sguardo, curated by Andrea Dall'Asta S.J. and Angela Madesani, Galleria San Fedele, Milan, Italy
Riciclarti. Cantiere Arte Ambientale, curated by Natasha Bordiglia and Marisa Merlin, Ex Macello, Padua, Italy
Premio Arte Laguna, curated by Igor Zanti, Italienische Kulturinstitut Wien, Vienna, Italy
Premio Arte Laguna, curated by Igor Zanti, Italian Cultur Institute Prague, Prague Czech Republic
Premio Arte Laguna, curated by Igor Zanti, Arsenale, Venice, 6 – 27 March
Organic/Inorganic, curated by Andrea Lerda, Galleria Neon>Campobase, Bologna, Italy

PRIZES AND MENTIONS

2015 Cairo Prize. Finalist
2014 Henraux Foundation Prize. Second Prize
D.A.B. Design per Artshop e Bookshop. Winner
2013 Curators on Sculpture Today Prize, Sculpture Network, project by Ilaria Bignotti, *Strategy of resilience. 2013. Fundamentals, negatives and survival in the Italian sculpture of younger generation*. Winner
Area SLAM, Art Verona. Selected
2012 Premio Nocivelli. Third Prize
DesignER. Giovani Designers in Emilia Romagna, Fashion Design section. Winner
2011 CO.CO.CO, Como Contemporary Contest. Finalist
Premio Arte Rugabella. Finalist
Premio Bice Bugatti - Giovanni Segantini. Finalist
2010 Riciclarti. Cantiere Arte Ambientale, Visual Arts section. Winner
A cura di..., project by Simona Gavioli, *FabulART, sentieri nelle fiabe*. Winner
Premio Arti Visive San Fedele. Finalist
Premio Arte Laguna. Finalist
A cura di..., project by Andrea Lerda, *Organic/Inorganic*. Winner
2009 Talent Prize, Visual Arts section. Mentioned

WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

Ghisla Art Collection Foundation, Locarno, Switzerland
Thetis Foundation, Venice, Italy
Museo Diocesano, Brescia, Italy
MAR Museo d'Arte della Città, Ravenna, Italy

COLLABORATIONS

2016 *Setole,* "Francesca Pasquali for Salvatore Ferragamo", Salvatore Ferragamo boutique, London, UK
Setole, "Francesca Pasquali for Salvatore Ferragamo", Salvatore Ferragamo boutique, Milan, Italy
2015 *SCOPAmi* for cover of the album by Aaron und Pascal, In front of you, #01, Sorry for this Records, Berlin, Germany
2014 *Alberi riflessi for Itlas,* in collaboration with Archea Associati, *Abitare il tempo,* Marmomacc 2014, Verona, Italy
2013 Sofia straws, artist's bag for Salvatore Ferragamo, Milan, Italy
2012 *Spiderballs* for Guru Store, Milan, Italy
Marazul for Guru Store, Barcelona, Spain

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Conti, Ilaria, *Francesca Pasquali Plastic Resonance*, exhibition catalogue, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, (2016).
Spadoni, Claudio, *Per vie diverse*, Magazzini del Sale, Cervia (2016).
FRANCESCA PASQUALI metamorphoses, edited by Tornabuoni Art in collaboration with Francesca Pasquali Archive, texts by Fatos Üstek, Michael Petry, Matt Willams, and Ilaria Bignotti, Tornabuoni Art, London, UK and Forma Edizioni, Florence (2016).
Capelli, Pia, "Francesca Pasquali metamorphoses", *Elle Italia* (June 2016).
"Francesca Pasquali metamorphoses", *Aesthetica magazine*, (June – July 2016).
"Francesca Pasquali metamorphoses", *Elephant magazine*, n. 27 (2016).
Memola, Angela Pascual Jordan, *Flux-us. Mary Bauermeister, Francesca Pasquali, *fuse*,* C.U.BO Editions, Bologna (2016).
"News. Francesca Pasquali", *Barche*, (April 2016): 10.
"Salvatore Ferragamo. Nelle vetrine d'artista c'è l'essenza del vero lusso", *Fashion Icons*, n. 6, (March 14, 2016): 3-4.
Freddi, Stefania, "Francesca Pasquali ha realizzato un intervento per la boutique di Salvatore Ferragamo," *Sabato Sera* n. 9 (March 2016): 2-3.
Caprile, Luciano, Pierre Casè, and Annamaria Maggi, Ghisla Art Collection, *Ghisla Art Collection*, Vol. I, Fotoearte (2016).
Arte Moderna e Contemporanea. Antologia scelta, Tornabuoni Arte, Florence (2016).
Carli, Paolo, Enrico Ciai, and Philippe Daverio, *6 opere in marmo dalla Fondazione Henraux,* Corte Deloitte, Milan (2015-2016).
Bignotti, Ilaria and Gino Pisapia, *Francesca Pasquali. Plastic shapes,* Tornabuoni Arte Contemporary Art, Forma Edizioni, Florence (2015).
Luppi, Stefano,"Una personale della Pasquali alla galleria Tornabuoni Arte" *Gazzetta di Modena* (October 14, 2015): 37.
Astrologo Abadal, Daniele, Anna Bernardini, Ilaria Bignotti, Francesco Cavallucci, Claudio Cerritelli, and Elio Grazioli, Arengario, *Biennale Giovani Monza 2015*, Monza (2015).
Massimiello, Chiara, *White not,* Spazio Ersel, Turin (2015)
Cavallarin, Martina and Pascual Jordan, Teatri di Vita *Macrocosmi – Ordnungen anderer Art, Pattern of another order,* Altes Postfuhramt West, Berlin (2015).
Bignotti, Ilaria and Paola Formenti Tavazzani, *Black. An idea of light,* Cortesi Gallery, Lugano, Mousse Publishing, Milan (2015).
Arte Moderna e Contemporanea. Antologia scelta, Tornabuoni Arte, Florence (2015).
Mattei, Enrico, *Premio Fondazione Henraux. In memoria di Ermino Cidonio,* Henraux Foundation, Baldecchi e Vivaldi, Pontedera (2014).
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Front and back covers:
Straws, (Detail), 2016
Multi-colored plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame
51 x 118 x 8.6 in / 130 x 300 x 22 cm (Diptych)

Interior covers:
Frappa, (Detail), 2016
Black neoprene on wooden panel and metallic frame
43 x 86 x 8.6 in / 110 x 220 x 22 cm (Diptych)

Published on the occasion of the exhibition

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PLASTIC RESONANCE
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