

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

Francesca Pasquali

Plastic Resonance

September 8 — October 22, 2016



White Straws (2015) Plastic drinking straws on wooden panel and metallic frame (39 x 8.6 in / 100 x 22 cm)
Photo by Marco Mioli. Courtesy the artist and the Francesca Pasquali Archive.

Opening Reception:
Thursday, September 8, 6 — 8 pm

568 West 25th Street
New York, NY 10012

NEW YORK, NY (August 2016) —Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to announce *Plastic Resonance*, the first U.S. solo exhibition of Italian artist Francesca Pasquali, on view from September 8 – October 22, 2016. Through the saturated hues of site specific installation, wall reliefs, and undulating, folded sculpture, Pasquali's work redesigns the contours of organic forms through ready-made inorganic material, rendering elegant, playful designs.

In Pasquali's work, inert plastic and industrial material—straws, neoprene, polyurethane foam, bristles, balloons—take on an appearance flush with life. Often colorful and always laboriously

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arranged, cut drinking straws adopt the appearance of coral structures or microscopic topographies; vibrantly-hued plastic bursts for *Spiderballs*, once intended to serve as cobweb dusters, clustered on wall mounted reliefs, recall prolific sea urchins far more than prosaic domestic equipment. Indeed, stripped of their use value, Pasquali's materials at evoke the influence of *Arte Povera* in their quotidian banality turned into objects of uncanny movement and beauty.

For Pasquali, material is also metaphor. 'Plastic' means adaptable, prone to its environment, subject to being molded, to impressions, touch, or change. Likewise, works such as the polyurethane foam cocoons of the *Bozzoli* series, respond to the presence of the spectator. The *Frappa* series, inspired by the layered Italian pastry of the same name, invites the caress of the viewer. Their delicately patterned layers of black, white, or grey neoprene take on the appearance of flesh—animal, insect, or otherwise.

In this inaugural U.S. exhibition of Pasquali's oeuvre, the evolutionary and mutative state of microcosmic textures of plants and animals is mirrored in the weaving of reused industrial plastic materials that form the core of her sculptural works.

About the Artist:

Francesca Pasquali received her degree at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, Italy. In 2013, alongside other artists and the curator Ilaria Bignotti, she founded the artistic movement "Resilienza italiana" (Italian Resilience) with the goal of further developing the international dialogue surrounding sculpture by contemporary and emerging artists. A finalist of the Cairo Prize 2015 and Second Prize at the Henraux Foundation Prize in 2014, Pasquali's work has been analyzed by international art critics and curators such as Matt Williams, curator of ICA-London, and Michael Petry, director of MOCA, London. Pasquali has also been invited to participate in several major international art fairs, and her works are housed in important private and public institutions such as the Museo Diocesano, Brescia, the MAR Museo d'Arte della Città, Ravenna, the Ghisla Art Collection, Locarno; and the Thetis Foundation, Venice.

In 2015 was founded the Francesca Pasquali Archive, under the scientific direction of Ilaria Bignotti, with the goals of cataloging, archiving and authenticating her works, organizing it according to scientific and definitive parameters, of promoting her works in collaboration with public and private institutions, of improving the message of her artistic research with innovative communication systems and sophisticated technological resources.

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