

CHIARA CAMONI

casaZegna

**LUCCICANZA.  
DI FIORI E DI FILO,  
DI PIETRA E DI TERRA,  
DI PELLE E DI RADICE.**



Località **TRIVERO** Valdilana, **BIELLA**

Tutte le **DOMENICHE**  
**H 11:00 - 17:00**

Dal **24 MAGGIO**  
al **22 NOVEMBRE**

Con il patrocinio  
del Comune  
di Valdiana



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OASI ZEGNA



Fondazione Zegna

**Luccianza. Di fiori e di filo, di pietra e di terra, di pelle e di radice** (Shining. Of flowers and thread, of rock and clay, of leather and root) is an exhibition of work by Chiara Camoni at Fondazione Zegna (in the Casa Zegna facility). It sprang from a profound dialog between artistic practice, the territory and community. Curated by Ilaria Bonacossa, the exhibition offers an inhabitable landscape, an environment in which sculpture, weaving, ceramics and natural materials are entwined in a pattern of relations that are reflections of the relationship between the human body, the environment and memories of places.

The very title of the exhibition suggests a sensory and stratified dimension: *shining* is a property of certain materials, an intermittent glitter emanating from the surface of things. In Camoni's work, this shining is not only visual but symbolic, stemming from the encounter between different elements – flowers, fibers, minerals, clay – and their continual process of transformation, as if every material possessed a spark waiting to be revealed by the act and for the duration of the work.

Camoni's work is based in fact on a direct relationship with the materials and processes she uses. As emerges from her conversation with the curator, her work does not spring from an isolated design idea but from an ongoing process.

**“I don't wake up with new ideas: it's the work I just completed the day before that determines what I do the day after, as if it were a continual flow that's part of my daily existence.”**

This method of working makes every creation part of a genealogy of acts and materials in which the production of art resembles the dimension of a workshop rather than a modern art studio. Camoni herself describes her workspace as a collective place in which the boundary between art and craft is deliberately permeable.

**“I'd call it a workshop rather than an art studio. For me, the borderline that normally divides crafts and arts is an area of huge interest: a lot goes on in that short circuit.”**

Her collaboration with Fondazione Zegna provides a particularly fertile terrain for this tension between artistic act and artisanal know-how. The project is rooted in fact in the relationship with the Oasi Zegna area, a landscape built up over time through human intervention in the natural environment, with culture, work and nature coexisting in a dynamic equilibrium.

The project is in two parts: the new exhibition and the re-edition, in the chapel of San Rocco in Trivero, of **SENZA TITOLO, STABKARTE, 2014**, a work that years ago marked, in the words of the artist, “the beginning of a close collaboration on certain essential topics. I'd been commissioned to produce it following a visit to the company, during which I was able to observe the processing of wool, from staple to yarn. It was a magical moment for me to discover how the final color was the result of a process of material and pictorial assembly. The original work has a fairly abstract form, looking like a mass of threads hanging on a wall, but on moving closer you realize that each thread is made up of hundreds of tiny forms, all shaped by hand, in different earth colors”.

## Material, landscape, relations

The exhibition is designed to dialog with the architecture of the old greenhouse created by Pietro Porcinai and subsequently converted into an exhibition facility. Suspended between domestic interiors and the outdoor landscape, this place is the ideal working context for Camoni, who has for years been probing the zones of intersection between nature and culture.

The installation is made up of various elements that together create a welcoming environment that is also somewhat alienating. The ceramics – clay glazed with ash and minerals gathered in certain significant places in Oasi Zegna – give us a sensory reproduction of the local geography. Fired at high temperatures, the minerals used here vitrify, so the resulting color is a veritable physical transposition of the landscape.

The exhibits spring from this tension between natural and constructed. The vases, figures, mats and textile surfaces are made with materials coming from the surrounding land: clays, minerals, vegetable fibers and yarns. In many cases, the color is not added by the artist but emerges from the intrinsic properties of the material.

Camoni describes color as a physical, almost geological phenomenon.

**“I always think of color as matter. In the vegetable prints it’s the flower or leaf that leaves an imprint with their juices; in the ceramics it’s the minerals that produce that yellow or that pink. I choose a material and only afterwards discover what color it takes on.”**

This dimension of discovery is central to the artist’s practice: her materials are not neutral instruments but active agents capable of influencing and transforming the creative process.

## Body, form, transformation

One of the most interesting aspects of Camoni’s work is the way in which forms are continually crossing boundaries between different disciplines. Everyday objects – chairs, vases, mats – become sculptures, and at the same time those sculptures take on domestic and relational qualities.

The artist often asks a simple but radical question:

**“What happens if I start a sculpture and the subject represented is a chair? Or a vase? Are we still in the field of sculpture or are we entering other zones?”**

Here, this question takes form thanks to a series of elements that together transform the exhibition space into an inhabitable environment. Hand-woven mats dialog with ceramic shapes and vegetable elements to create a sort of interior landscape. The mats and chaise longue coverings are hand-made using traditional patterns and overlaying different color yarns to create pictorial surfaces capable of supporting other sculptural elements. Similarly, the vegetable prints on the silk screen float in space to conjure up impalpable fairies.

The mats take on a particular symbolic importance and render the collaboration with San Patrignano even more experimental. Their narrative dimension evokes a long tradition of women's practices and know-how handed down through their manual labor.

**“Mats have always been narrative media, maps of the cosmos. They've also been the creative space of the many women who had for centuries been denied access to the so-called high arts.”**

## Women and nature's grey areas

The generative dimension of the earth and of women recurs throughout Camoni's work, but she eschews any sort of idealized or romantic vision of nature. Her work focuses rather on the ambiguities and grey zones of this dimension.

As Camoni underlines in her conversation with Bonacossa:

**“We're used to looking to the feminine world and to nature for their luminous and comforting values, but I get interested when we also investigate the darker zones. Nature can be tremendous and also terrifying. The earth is also cavernous, dark, cold.”**

The figures that emerge from her sculptures carry just this ambiguity with them: they are at once comforting and disturbing, familiar and enigmatic. This tension opens up space for freedom of interpretation that directly involves the spectator.

## The public's experience

Camoni's relationship with the public is not primarily a matter of explanation or intellectual interpretation. Rather, her artwork operates on a corporeal and emotional level.

**“My work asks the spectator to be there with their body and have a relationship with that other body that is the sculpture. Something happens in that encounter, but it's not a relationship of an intellectual nature.”**

In this sense, the exhibition comes across as something like a secret garden to discover slowly rather than artworks to observe in sequence. Fondazione Zegna's position within Oasi Zegna favors such an approach to the exhibition: the public doesn't come just to see an exhibition but to cross a landscape, encounter an ecosystem and gradually build a relationship with the place.

## A working community

Lastly, the project highlights a fundamental aspect of Camoni's practice: the collective dimension of work. Many of the works were in fact inspired by her relations with the artisans, weavers and other people with whom she regularly collaborates.

Camoni tells us how her studio gradually grew through community relationships:

**“There are now ten, twelve people making up the studio, and many of them don't belong to the world of art. We've grown through spontaneous aggregation, allowing ourselves the time to work together and reciprocally develop our skills.”**

This relational dimension surprisingly resonates with the philosophy embraced by Fondazione Zegna, which has always promoted ongoing dialog between culture, territory and community.

In **Luccicanza**, art thus becomes a device for slow transformation, a way to observe matter, listen to materials and recognize relationships bringing together bodies, landscapes and stories. The result is an environment in which every element – a thread, a stone, a leaf, a figure – participates in the same pattern, thus rendering visible that fragile and intermittent spark the artist rightly calls *shining*.

Chiara Camoni (Piacenza, 1974) is considered one of the most significant artists on the Italian art scene.

In recent years, Chiara Camoni has seen her artistic language mature progressively, becoming one of the most established and highly regarded figures in Italian art. Her practice is distinguished by a renewal of sculpture and assemblage, beginning with the reuse of objects, waste materials, and natural elements, and at the same time by a conceptual use of ceramics that transcends the boundaries between minor and major arts, fine art and craft, as well as the notion of the sole author, favoring workshop-based practices of co-creation and co-participation.

In recent years, she has achieved considerable national success, exhibiting in many of Italy's leading public and non-profit institutions (including Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, GAM Turin, and the Festival dei due mondi), as well as in prestigious international venues (CAPC, Bordeaux; Manifesta 15 – Barcelona; Bangkok Biennale).

In May 2026, Chiara Camoni will represent Italy at the Venice Art Biennale 2026.