

# GALLERIA MASSIMO MININI

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## antonio marras seipersei

I never imagined I'd do a show with Antonio Marras. And why should I have thought of him as a possibility, for that matter?

A well-known -no, world-famous- designer of unique fashions, in some ways -no, definitely- linked to art, through the influence of Maria Lai, whose work Marras greatly admires and promotes, as a disciple, or colleague, maybe.

The world Marras comes from and moves in is a special one. It's an island world, Sardinia, with its own powerful identity, its own culture, its own language and history, prehistory even.

One day in Milan I went to the Triennale -that very special place- and with some surprise, found an exhibition by Marras. But then, the Triennale is a place of experimentation, of crossovers between different art forms and languages, "architecturefashiondesignartmusic," all together in this incredible spot, which has become a nerve center sending out volleys of ideas, often surprising ones.

Just like this idea of Marras's, which I liked from the get-go. You move through garments that hang down from the ceiling, amid rustling taffeta, and when you come out into the big curved room on the ground floor, there's a river of works that intertwine, intersect, overlap, elbow each other, allude to each other, along an exuberant, unpredictable, curious, contradictory path that comes to form a unified whole, beyond my fondest expectations.

I wander through that wilderness of cottons, patterns, portraits, soft yellow lights, cones that look like huge hats for fairies or witches.

And I succumb to the spell of a childhood world, a dream of childhood that has expanded and evolved, like a grown-up recreating the world that Lewis Carroll conjured up with Alice, or Gérard de Nerval with Sylvie, or of course Marcel with Swann.

From the erratic movements of a group of people I realize Marras is there, that he's the one being filmed and interviewed. I go up, watch, get their attention, say hello. "Pleased to meet you, Mr. Marras." "No, please - Antonio."

We talk about the works, he's short on time because they're filming for a show in China. Out of the blue I suggest doing an exhibition with me, the kind of on-the-spot offer I've rarely made in the past, maybe never quite like that.

His mind seems to be elsewhere. What can I say, maybe I expected him to be bowled over. Nope: unruffled, not even enthusiastic. "We'll see, right now I'm busy with China."

He must have asked around, and to make a long story short, here's a show coming up that will be a memorable one precisely because it's so unexpected.

When I talk about it, everyone's surprised. And rightly so.

Massimo Minini