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THE FIRE AND ITS GHOSTS

Andrea Luzi and Nicola Ghirardelli

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Text by Zoë De Luca Legge

The Fire and Its Ghosts, a double solo show by Nicola Ghirardelli and Andrea Luzi, presents two artistic practices composed of impetuous and invigorating actions, alongside the contemplation of their consequences, traces, and evocations. For both artists, work is a transformative process in which they act as conduits for co-creative agencies that shape the artwork.

An agent of change and of creative destruction, fire is the element that connects and inflects these two poetries. It relates directly to Ghirardelli's sculptural process, where he shapes matter and consumes it until it is reduced to a residue, or perhaps a relic. Yet it is also vital and instinctual energy, the mystical glow that animates Luzi's painterly gesture, capable of illuminating the surface, casting shadows, and evoking archaic presences. Energetic in Luzi's work and organic in Ghirardelli's, these forces inhabit the tension between mythological pasts and the future for which they offer visions.

Nicola Ghirardelli's work takes shape as a research device that moves across sculpture, installation, and site-specific interventions. His practice generates meaning through a system of impressions, archaeological fragments, and natural suggestions selected from everyday life, staging unresolved frictions between the natural and the anthropic. His works are hybrid organisms in which forms of otherness, generational trauma, and apocalyptic omens coexist, in search of a new formal balance. In the first room, *Un cumulo di sassi finché non vedi la cattedrale* (2026), two plants of Gothic memory rise from quartz and pyrite on basalt, as if reaching for the light emanating from Andrea Luzi's paintings. Luzi's works are the result of acts of energetic channeling, rituals that transform gesture into vision. His painterly process begins with a meditative yet instinctive gesture, the result of a deep study of intaglio printmaking and engraving as much as of graffiti culture. The artist thus transfers the discipline of the monotype and the speed of mural painting into his practice, proceeding through complex stratifications. His imagery draws on suggestions that appear distant, if not outright irreconcilable. Popular in its immediacy yet liturgical in its construction—capable of holding together low and high culture—this figurative universe tunes us to other frequencies. In *La signora del gioco* (2026), the chromatic rhythm of psychedelic music merges with the iconography of sacred art, creating a ceremonial moment populated by phantasmagoric, obscure, and surreal figures. The composition, with its miniature-like and apparently symmetrical features, recalls liturgical illustration only to abandon its classical perspectives in favor of a more dynamic and vertiginous narrative.

The canvases and wooden panels host these apparitions within their own architectures, moving across different scales. In the polyptych *La grandezza del nulla pt. 3* (2026), the work fragments into an infinite visual vocabulary. Its elements expand and fold back into a series of shells, in an attempt to decipher the unknown through an almost encyclopedic painterly gesture.

In the following room, the individual panels dramatically decrease in size, losing their vertical dimension and taking on a nearly object-like quality, as in *Tumulazione di una lacrima* (2026). Here it becomes clearer how the artist's visual repertoire converges into a language that employs codices with a divinatory value. If the paintings initially take shape from an abstract and gestural base, they eventually welcome the emergence of graphic elements that settle on the surface like seals. Figurative elements, symbols, ideograms: each sign carries the potential of a language.

These works face *Barrueco* (2026), two works by Ghirardelli inspired by the irregular pearls from which the Baroque takes its name. The pair of plaster bas-reliefs echoes the structure of a reliquary, where bone-like elements alternate with mother-of-pearl shells to create a complex frame. At its center emerge delicate structures in silvered brass inspired by valves and poisonous plants.

Anni Wu Gallery

Via Rosolino Pilo 14, Milano 20129

anniwu.com | info@anniwu.com

+39 351 3288 223

The exploration of matter and its processes of transformation is central to Ghirardelli's poetics. In his work, fire and biochemical elements actively participate in the coagulation of the artwork, deconstructing the myth of the artist as a solitary creator and opening instead to a more-than-human creative dimension. References from art history graft themselves onto more contemporary morphologies, forming a bestiary of fragile and iridescent shapes that draw on forgotten narratives or stories entirely overlooked by an anthropocentric perspective.

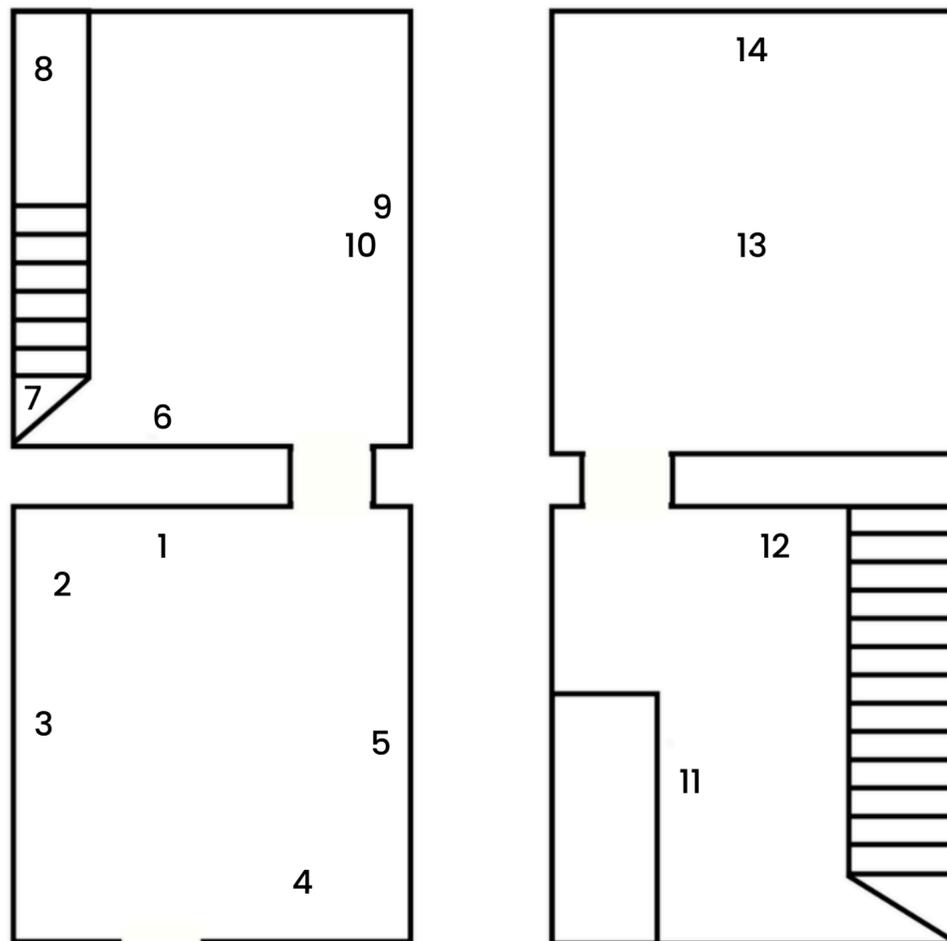
On the lower floor, this intention reaches its fullest momentum in *Viriditas* (2026), a ceiling wall intervention born from research into media archaeology. Inspired by the celestial vaults of Byzantine churches—products of an era in which the biological contiguity between humans and animals was perceived as largely self-evident—this double Fibonacci sequence composed of starfish, shells, and vertebrae guides us toward *Agape* (2026): a large shell in dark bronze oxidized with sulfur, revealing a mirrored interior filled with water and psilocybe. An invitation to entrust one's senses to nonhuman agencies, and to experience the exhibition as a new cosmogony.

Andrea Luzi (Ancona, 1997) develops a pictorial research that investigates the persistence of symbolic images in the present. His practice creates tension between archaic iconographies and contemporary imagery, constructing ambiguous spaces in which mythical, corporeal and narrative elements intertwine in a suspended dimension.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Lupercalia' at Isorropia Home Gallery, Milan (2025), 'Megiddo' at the Church of Santa Maria di Portosalvo, Naples (2025), and 'Unexplored Realms' at 10 & zero uno, Venice (2025). He has also participated in group exhibitions at Vunu Gallery (Vienna and Bratislava, 2025), Sofart (Bologna, 2024), and Rizzuto Gallery (Palermo, 2023), as well as participating in 'Chiamata alle arti' at the Italian Cultural Institute in New York (2024). Winner of the IsorropiaHomeGallery Prize at Prima Art Prize, he recently completed an artistic residency at Palazzo Monti in Brescia.

Nicola Ghirardelli (Como, 1994) develops a sculptural and installation-based practice that investigates the transformation of matter through a post-human lens, merging traditional craftsmanship with digital technologies. Through techniques such as Etruscan bucchero, lost-wax casting, and 3D printing, his hybrid forms intertwine historical fragments, organic morphologies and industrial residues, generating experiential devices that reflect on the fragility of matter and on anthropocentric hierarchies.

Among his most recent solo exhibitions are 'Giardino in cenere' at The Address Gallery, Brescia (2024) and 'Vestigia' at Daniele Agostini Gallery, Lugano (2023). He has also participated in group exhibitions at Montoro12, Brussels (2025), Palazzo Experimental, Venice (2025) and MO.CA Centro per le Nuove Culture, Brescia (2024). A finalist of Premio Sparti 2025 and Generazione Contemporanea 2023, he has also taken part in residencies including L'Armonia: Manifattura Tabacchi in Florence and Made In – Latera Artfarm within Artissima.



1. Andrea Luzi
La signora del gioco
oil on canvas
cm 180x150
2026

2. Nicola Ghirardelli
*Un cumulo di sassi finché non
vedi la cattedrale I*
aluminum and quartz
cm 38x42x40
2026

3. Andrea Luzi
La grandezza del nulla pt. 3
oil on board
cm 90x130
2026

4. Nicola Ghirardelli
*Un cumulo di sassi finché non
vedi la cattedrale II*
aluminum and pyrite
cm 29x51x34
2026

5. Andrea Luzi
*Succhiando nel vizio di chi rifiuta
di soffrire*
oil on canvas
cm 30x24
2026

6. Nicola Ghirardelli
Barrueco I
brass coated in silver and
plaster
cm 57x41x16
2026

7. Nicola Ghirardelli
Barrueco II
brass coated in silver and
plaster
cm 64x47x21
2026

8. Andrea Luzi
Capo di bestiame umano
oil on canvas
cm 45x60
2026

9. Andrea Luzi
Coding of a wild style
oil on board
cm 30x24
2026

10. Andrea Luzi
Tumulazione di una lacrima
oil on board
cm 12x8
2026

11. Andrea Luzi
Onibi
oil on board
cm 24x18
2026

12. Andrea Luzi
Potenza mietitrice pt. 2
oil on board
cm 25x49
2026

13. Nicola Ghirardelli
Viriditas
site-specific installation - plaster
dimensioni variabili
2026

14. Nicola Ghirardelli
Agape
bronze
cm 9x23x14,5
2026