

Biography

The journey of the sculptor Maria Cristina Carlini started in the early 1970s in Palo Alto, California, where she partook in a ceramics masters for two years. Once she returned to Europe, to Brussels, in **1975** she continued her artistic activity and taught the potter's wheel simultaneously. After this, she returned to Milan and opens her own studio, "Le Terre", in Brera district in **1978**.

In **1983** she inaugurated her first solo exhibition at the Rocca di Angera (Varese) and from **1984** she took finishing courses at the Californian College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland - San Francisco, where she came in close proximity to the "New Ceramics" artistic movement.

During these years, she was present in personal and group exhibitions, in private and public places in Italy and in Europe, for example in **1990** the solo show "Il colore delle terre" at the Civica Raccolta della Terraglia di Cerro, Laveno (Varese). In **1992** she joined the Parisian world with her exhibition "Découvertes '92" at the Grand Palais, Paris, presented by Elena Pontiggia; the following year the Christine Colmant Art Gallery, Brussels, showed her works.

From then on, other than grès and lava stone, materials such as corten steel, iron and wood increasingly became part of her repertoire of materials, which have mostly been used in monumental works. The majesty of her work has become a distinctive character.

In **2003** she exhibited at the Galleria Borgogna, Milan, presented by Luciano Caramel.

2004 saw her take a leading role in Rome, at Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza – Archivio di Stato with a solo exhibition promoted by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, entitled "Tracce e Luoghi", curated by Carlo Franza.

Between 2004 and **2005** she took part in the show "Nutrirsi con l'arte" at the Museo delle Antichità, Turin. Again in Turin, in 2005, she held the solo exhibition "Stanze" curated by Carlo Franza at the monumental complex at the Palazzo Reale, promoted by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. In the same year the Villa Pisani National Museum in Strà-Venezia held her solo work "Reperti".

In **2006** she exhibited in the show entitled "Terre", sponsored by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, at the Archivio Centrale di Stato di Roma Eur by Carlo Franza; on this occasion the large sculpture entitled *Fortezza* was located permanently in the small square in front of the building. In the same year, she has a solo show at the Galleria delle Battaglie, Brescia, curated by Claudio Cerritelli, who asks her to participate at the Suzzara Award.

In **2007** the monumental sculpture *La Porta della Giustizia* located in the small piazza of the Corte dei Conti, Milan and two other monumental sculptures were permanently inaugurated: *La città che sale* at the Nuova Fiera, Milan-Rho, and *La Vittoria di Samotracia* at the Piazza dei Valdesi, in conjunction with her solo exhibition at the National Library in the Calabrian city.

In **2008** the Italian Cultural Institute in Prague held a solo exhibition by Maria Cristina Carlini; the artist worked at the same time on the scenic design for the work "Ecco la mia bell'Orsa" - music by Federico Gozzellino - on stage at the National Theatre, Prague. Following this, the artist exhibited at the National Archive, Milan, with a solo exhibition by Gillo Dorfles.

Maria Cristina Carlini's exhibitions over the course of **2009** were of great international importance.

Paris held the monumental sculptures from the "Maria Cristina Carlini. Sculture nella città" exhibition in the Mairie du V arrondissement and in the streets of the centre, in the Place du Panthéon, Place de la Sorbonne, Rue Soufflot and Boulevard Saint-Michel, curated by Luciano Caramel. From May until July her large works arrived in Madrid, in Calle Mayor, Paseo de la

Castellana, Calle de Juan Bravo, Plaza Alfredo Mahou and at the Italian Cultural Institute with an exhibition by Gillo Dorfles.

In Loreto (Ancona), some of her works were central to an important exhibition, entitled "Maria Cristina Carlini. Inventario Contemporaneo" in the Cantine del Bramante; the powerful sculpture *Pellegrini* is exhibited permanently in the Porta Marina Gardens. After this, Maria Cristina Carlini was honored in Rome at the Capitol with the Premio Ignazio Silone per la Cultura, confirming the importance of her innovative and cultural contributions to the world of visual arts. The year 2009 ended with an important presentation at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, of the volume *Maria Cristina Carlini*, curated by Yacouba Konaté.

During **2010** the exhibitions continued: in Reggio Calabria the Castello Aragonese held a solo exhibition and on the Lungomare Falcomatà the sculpture *Monumento al Mediterraneo* is in permanent exhibition.

The sculptress was appointed as a representative of the city and invited to participate in the Shanghai Expo with several monumental sculptures and in the exhibition organized for International Women's Day. Her monumental work *Viandanti II* was located permanently in front of the Italian Embassy in Beijing and in the historic Forbidden City Maria Cristina Carlini inaugurated her solo exhibit "Colloquio tra giganti".

In Jinan, the capital of the Shandong Province, China, Maria Cristina Carlini had a solo exhibition at the Shandong University of Art and Design. Again in 2010, the monumental sculpture *Letteratura II* was officially inaugurated in Tianjin - twinned with Lombardy - permanently positioned in the Italian Quarter. Once again in Beijing, for the IV Art Biennial, Carlini was present with her unreleased work, *Le Danzatrici*, at NAMOC - National Art Museum of China. Soon after, Shanghai, in conjunction with the World Expo 2010, received her with an exhibition of monumental works in the People's Square and the sculpture *Legami II* is permanently exhibited in the Sculpture Park.

Also in 2010, she exhibited in Denver at the university campuses of Auraria and the Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, where the two monumental works *Madre* and *Out & Inside* remain permanently; and in France, along the seafront of Cap d'Agde. She participated with the installation *Labirinto* in the International Sculpture Biennale titled "Sculptura Internazionale a Racconigi, 2010" curated by Luciano Caramel.

In **2011** Maria Cristina Carlini took part as guest of honor in the fourth edition of the Fiera di Arte Contemporanea AAM - Arte Accessibile Milano, in the headquarters of the 24ORE Group. Then she returned to Miami for the inauguration ceremony of one of her greatest monumental works, *Icaro*, with which she opened the new Sculpture Park of the Corpus Christi Church and the powerful sculpture *Vittoria di Samotracia* was positioned in front of the entrance to Dade College, in Miami. In December the artist was in Rome for the group exhibition "Lo scultore, la terra. Artisti e ricerche 1920-2011" curated by Flaminio Gualdoni with the participation of the greatest artists of the Twentieth century and contemporaries, who have dedicated themselves to ceramic sculpture.

In **2012** Maria Cristina Carlini's works were exhibited in the headquarters of the Provincia di Varese for the show "Scultori a Villa Recalcati" curated by Flaminio Gualdoni and the work *Bosco* exhibited in the park, becomes a part of the permanent collection of the Villa.

Between November 2012 and January **2013** she exhibited in Milan at the Fondazione Mudima and at the Fondazione Stelline, with an important solo exhibition where the artist's monograph was presented, curated by Flaminio Gualdoni.

The Royal Castle of Govone (Cuneo), hosted the artist with the anthological exhibition "Fare

secondo Natura” curated by Martina Corgnati. The artist also participated in the group exhibition “Futuro Anteriore. Le Arti della Ceramica” by Mara Ruzza at the Ex-Macello in Padua.

Between 2013 and **2014** Maria Cristina Carlini participated in the group exhibition “Wunderkammer. Arte, Natura, Meraviglia ieri e oggi” curated by Lavinia Galli and Martina Mazzotta at the Museum Poldi Pezzoli and Gallerie d’Italia - Piazza della Scala.

During 2014, on the occasion of the Italian semester of EU Presidency, the personal exhibition “Terra, fuoco, ferro, legno” curated by Martina Cognati is hosted at the Italian Cultural Institutes of Cologne, Strasbourg and Zagreb.

On the occasion of **EXPO 2015** the monumental sculpture *La nuova città che sale*, 10m tall and made of corten steel and wood, presented at the Triennale di Milano by Philippe Daverio, is permanently located at Fiera Milano Rho.

In 2015 she participated in the group exhibition “Teresa de Ávila - mística y transgresora” curated by Guadalupe Luceño and Ilse-Maria Dorfstecher at Palacio de Pimentel in Valladolid (Spain) and at the Inselgalerie in Berlin (Germany) and, on the suggestion from the critic and curator Martina Corgnati, the big sculpture *Vento* was permanently installed in the Parco dell’Arte of the Idroscalo in Milan.

During the Milano Design Week in **2016**, the artist exhibited at Superstudio Più the monumental sculpture *Obelisco* - made in corten steel and salvaged wood - and the medium and small size works entitled *Libri*. In the same year the solo exhibition “Maria Cristina Carlini. Le ragioni del luogo” curated by Flaminio Gualdoni was displayed at the MyOwnGallery of Superstudio Più, Milan.

In **2017** Maria Cristina Carlini was one of the artists of “Sequela”, the important group exhibition curated by Leonardo Regano and hosted at the former Church of San Mattia in Bologna, inaugurated in conjunction with Arte Fiera.

In **2019** the imposing work *Origine* is exhibited in Paris at the Beffroi in Place du Louvre and three works of the “Alberi” series are chosen as artist prizes for the winners of the “Made in Steel Awards” within the “Made in Steel” fair at fieramilano Rho. In the same year the work *La Chiusa. Omaggio a Leonardo* is exhibited under the historic arches of the Roman Bridge in Parma on the occasion of the fourth edition, curated by Camilla Mineo and Chiara Canali, of “PARMA 360 Festival della creatività contemporanea”. Moreover, the sculpture *Impronte* becomes part of the permanent collection of the Museo del Parco di Portofino, Centro Internazionale di Scultura all’Aperto. Artespressione gallery in Milan is hosting a solo exhibition titled “Concepire la materia”, curated by Matteo Pacini.

In **2020**, she was invited to exhibit in a solo show curated by Chiara Gatti and Maria Fratelli at Studio Museo Francesco Messina in the former church of San Sisto, where her works and installations were juxtaposed in relation to sculptures by the 20th-century master. For the occasion, Storyville produces a documentary about the sculptress directed by Stefano Conca Bonizzoni and entitled “Geologie, memorie della terra”.

In **2021** she was invited to the XIII Florence Biennale with her work *Foresta*. At Studio Museo Francesco Messina, during the events of BookCity 2021, she presented an important monograph edited by Chiara Gatti.

The year **2022** saw her involved in the group exhibition “Oro&Blu” at Nuova Galleria Morone. At the invitation of Fortunato D’Amico, she also participated in Genova Design Week. During the Salone del Mobile in Milan, she exhibited at Superstudio Più, where the evocative work *Foresta* welcomed visitors. Later in the year, a major solo exhibition curated by Vittoria Coen occupied the indoor and outdoor spaces at Fondazione Stelline, where monumental, medium and small

works gave full expression to her aesthetic approach. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue edited by Vittoria Coen.

In **2023**, she took part in the “Diciannovesima Giornata del Contemporaneo”, promoted by AMACI – Association of Italian Contemporary Art Museums, by opening her studio to the public.

Starting in **2024**, the monumental sculpture *Obelisco* was donated to the city of Milan and permanently installed. In the same year, it's made the docufilm about the life and art of the sculptress “Maria Cristina Carlini. Il coraggio della grandezza”, directed by Pino Farinotti and Tiziano Sossi.

In January **2025**, the sculptress officially opens the **Fondazione Maria Cristina Carlini ETS** to the public. The foundation was created with the aim of preserving and enhancing the vast artistic and documentary heritage built over more than fifty years of activity, with a special focus on dialogue, the promotion of contemporary art, and a keen eye on young artists.

www.mariacristinacarlino.com