



26. 2. – 30. 4. 2026  
The West Slovak Museum in Trnava

# Cantalamissa

## Luana Perilli

Curated by: Simona Caramia

*The solo exhibition by Luana Perilli at the Museum of Western Slovakia in Trnava presents two years of work carried out by the artist throughout the entire Italian Apennines.*

*Cantalamissa is a research laboratory, engaging with and speaking to local communities in order to retrace the memories of territories and map a geography of altitude. It is not a work of scientific cataloguing, but rather a collection of stories, serving as the incipit of an immaterial library of ancient knowledge.*

*Luana Perilli travelled through the inner areas of various regions, marked by depopulation and a low number of young people. Within inland communities, the artist involved older inhabitants in a series of video interviews, asking them to evoke childhood memories and recount interactions and games involving animals and insects. What emerged was a way of doing things far removed from political correctness and from the ecological education of recent decades, yet revealing the predatory nature of human beings. Perilli's research developed from the beloved phegea, a diurnal moth that accompanied the more or less cruel explorations of children throughout the Apennine regions of Italy and that, for this reason—more than other animals—has acquired various names in different Italic dialects, including cantalamissa, from the Calabrian dialect. The name became the title of the project, which, starting from Calabria, went on to involve numerous communities across Basilicata, Lazio, Abruzzo, Marche, Emilia-Romagna, and Piedmont, as well as partners such as the Conservatorio Etnobotanico of Castelluccio Superiore and the Poverella Nature Reserve of Taverna, thanks to botanist Carmine Lupia; the Harp association of Fontecchio led by Valeria Pica; Galleria 16 Civico in Pescara directed by Christian Ciampoli; ISIA Faenza with the support of Ivan Severi and director Maria Concetta Cossa; and the Museo della Montagna in Turin, with curator Andrea Lerda.*

*Balancing the politically incorrect aspects of childhood games of the past were educational actions aimed at bringing to light the intraspecific and interspecific pact between individuals and nature, particularly between humans moving through forests and mountains.*

*Students from academies, high schools, and local residents were thus involved in walking art practices as experiences of immersion in nature and shared animality, in order to overcome anthropocentric dynamics and grasp that multispecies participation in which animals—including humans—and plants exist in continuity.*

*A corpus of drawings completes the installation: they are portraits of shadows, anamorphic traces of those who took part in the walking art, unobtrusive presences that document the silent passage through the woods and further seal the pact between the human and the vegetal.*

*«We crossed the forest at each stage with temporary communities, asking the forest for a vegetal prosthesis to return to being animals with more legs, helping ourselves with a stick.*

At the end of the walks, each participant's stick became the object of a collective sculptural process, in which the prosthesis of the individual body also became a catalyst for animal imagination and shared pareidolia.

The result is the portrait of a heterogeneous and dissonant community that hybridizes language with animal calls, imagines faces in clay to seek prey or predators in the forest, and asks for help from the vegetal body of the forest in order to cross it as a pack». (Cantalamissa, Il Rio, 2026)

Cantalamissa is a project curated by Simona Caramia, produced by the Academy of Fine Arts of Catanzaro from 2024 to 2026, as part of the research activities of the PERFORMING project, funded by PNRR resources under Mission 4 "Education and Research" – Component 1 "Strengthening the provision of education services: from early childhood education to university, from research to enterprise" – Investment 3.4 "University teaching and advanced skills" T5, "Strategic partnerships / initiatives to innovate the international dimension of the AFAM system," funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU.

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At the Trnava exhibition, students together with lecturers from the Department of Art Pedagogy and Art Education at the Faculty of Education of the University of Trnava are taking part. In spring, they will go on a walk in the Little Carpathians with the curator and the artist. There, they will find their own walking sticks and, during a workshop, create original decorative handles for the sticks using Modra clay.

*Luana Perilli is an artist and Full Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, and a lecturer at St. John's University Rome Campus. Her work investigates the relationship between nature and culture, moving across narration, science, and the experience of both natural and human collectives. Initially structured around collective memory as a fluid and interchangeable narrative, her research later focused on models of natural aggregation in eusocial animal societies. Winner of the Tomorrows Unicredit Award (2024), she has exhibited in museums and galleries including: Auditorium Spazio Arte, Rome; MACRO, Rome; Hit Gallery, Bratislava; Co.As.it/Museo Italiano, Melbourne; MIC, Faenza; PAV, Turin; Museum Biedermann, Donaueschingen; PAN, Naples; MSU, Zagreb, HR; Palazzo della Permanente, Milan; MUSPAC, L'Aquila; Tese delle Vergini at the Arsenale, Venice; Kochi-Muziris Biennale; MAMM Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow; Fotografie Forum, Frankfurt; Museo della Montagna, Turin; Stadtgalerie, Kiel.*