

Art

#ART HISTORY #MASSIMILIANO PELLETTI #SCULPTURE #STONE

Through Spliced Stone and Crystalline Patches, Massimiliano Pelletti Brings a Contemporary Touch to Antiquity

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GRACE EBERT



“Optical Venus” (2022), emerald and ochre onyx. All images © Massimiliano Pelletti, courtesy of Bowman Sculpture Gallery, shared with permission

Undulating stripes of emerald and ochre, spliced sections of sodalite and Mexican white onyx, and dense, glimmering patches of crystalline stone characterize **Massimiliano Pelletti**'s elegant sculptures. The Italian artist (**previously**) is known for his distinctly contemporary interpretations of classical statues that highlight imperfections, fallibility, and convergence. “Pink Eros,” for example, depicts the god of love through a typically smooth carving that’s met with a jagged midsection and shoulder. Two other “Venus” works combine segments of stone in herringbone, pixelated, and striped patterns that meld the subject matter of antiquity with more modern motifs.

Many of the sculptures shown here will be on view in October for Pelletti’s solo show, *Eredità*, at **Bowman Sculpture Gallery** in London. Included is “White Noise,” a new bust that appears wrapped in a gauzy veil and evokes the towels the artist uses in his studio to cover finished works so that they’re protected from dust. He explains:

I always find myself looking at those covered figures that do not have their physiognomic characteristics visible. I am fascinated by them because even if they are covered, you can still read the outlines of their physical shape, leaving more room for imagination... I decided to create some of my artworks in their veiled version. The world of contemporary art is one in which appearance often reigns at the expense of substance. I wanted to allow the viewer to see beyond the veil that is both a visual reality and a metaphor for a mental barrier.

Following *Eredità*, Pelletti will open an exhibition at **Galleria Doria Pamphilj** that, for the first time in the museum’s history, will pair a contemporary artist’s work with those of greats like Caravaggio, Titian, and Raphael. Follow news about those shows and keep up with the artist’s latest projects on **Instagram**.



“Pink Eros,” pink onyx



“Dreaming of Olympia”



“White Horizon,” sodalite and Mexican white onyx



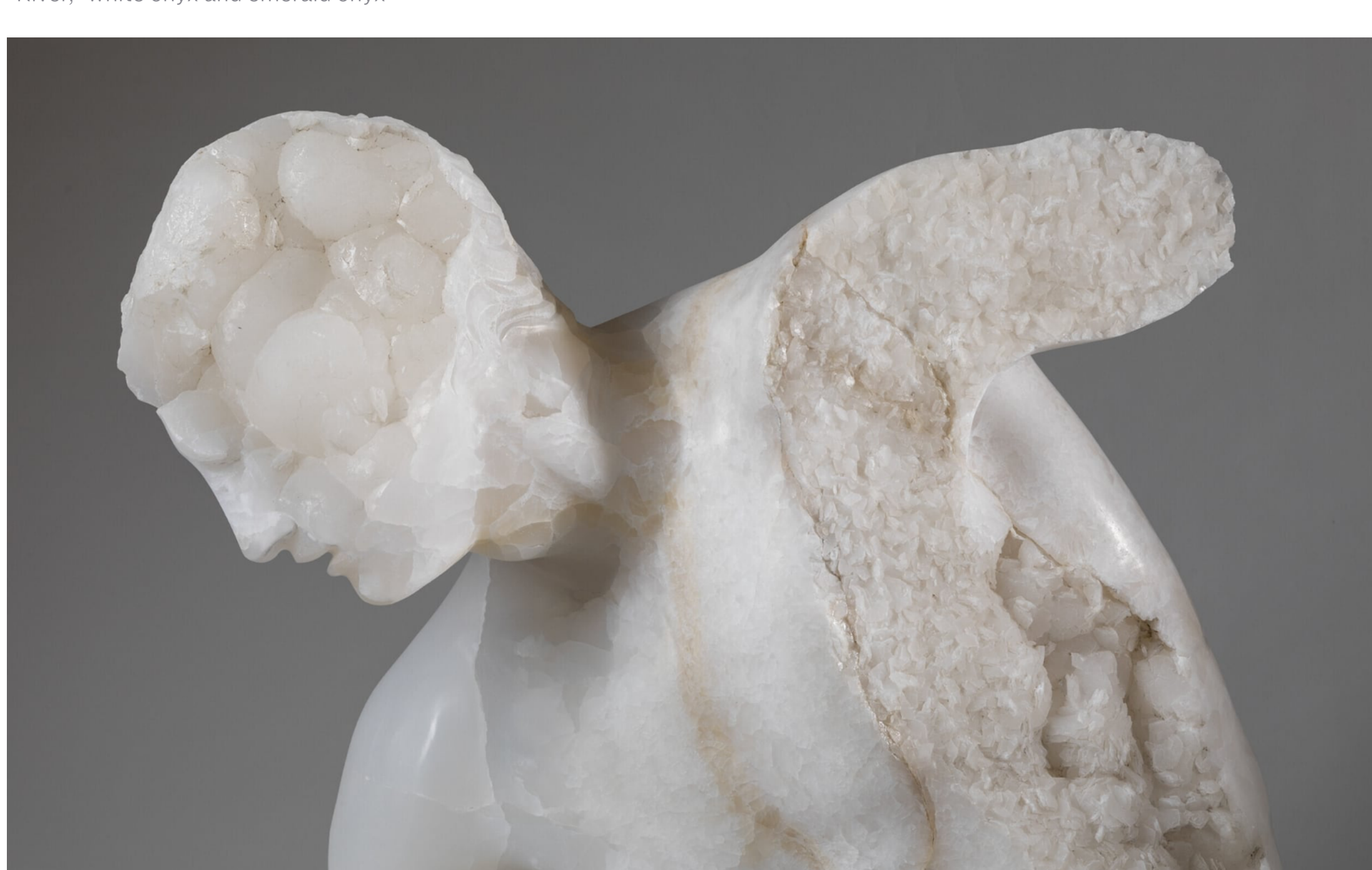
“Polychrome Venus,” white onyx, sodalite, and volcano onyx



“White Noise,” Mexican white onyx



“River,” white onyx and emerald onyx



Detail of “Dreaming of Olympia”