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Bowman Sculpture

A Century in Conversation: Sculpture Across Time at TEFAF

By Ty Murphy LLM for Art and Museum Magazine



*Sarah Bernhardt (French, 1844-1923) Autoportrait
Hand-modelled plaster with brown patina Height: 9" (23 cm)
Created circa 1870*



*Auguste Rodin (French, 1840 – 1917) L'Ombre (The Shade)
Signed A. Rodin, inscribed with foundry mark Georges Rudier
and © by Musée Rodin 1963 and with repeat raised interior
signature Bronze with rich dark green, black and brown patina
Height: 37.5" (95.2 cm) Conceived in 1880; 1963*

Every once in a while, a booth at TEFAF Maastricht stops you in your tracks—not because it's flashy, but because it speaks to something timeless. Bowman Sculpture's 2025 presentation promises to be just that: a sculptural conversation stretching across nearly two centuries, from the 1830s to the present. It's a journey not only through form and technique but through the evolution of our understanding of beauty, movement, and material.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of Art Deco, and Bowman leans into that celebration with elegant works like Attilio Piccirilli's *Flower of the Alps* (1917), Richard

Garbe's *The Red Shawl* (1928), and Boleslas Biegas's *The Wave* (1907). These pieces shimmer with the precision and luxury that define the movement—sleek lines, rich surfaces, and a sense of controlled drama.

But this presentation isn't just a celebration of style—it's a testament to the voices, especially female ones, that have shaped and expanded the field of sculpture. One standout is Sarah Bernhardt's *Autoportrait* (c. 1885), a work that offers a rare and intimate view into the artistic world of the famed actress. There's something powerful about seeing a self-portrait in plaster by

someone more commonly known for commanding the stage. It reminds us that creativity can't be boxed in.

Then there's Kim Lim's *Untitled Relief* (1995), an exploration of texture and space carved in slate. Coming on the heels of her retrospective at the National Gallery of Singapore, this work takes on even greater significance—an understated but profound example of Lim's ability to blend Eastern and Western aesthetics into something utterly her own.

Helaine Blumenfeld's *Messenger of the Spirit* (2006) is another highlight. Its soft, organic curves seem to breathe. It's a sculpture that doesn't just occupy space—it energizes it. Likewise, Dame Barbara Hepworth's *Three Forms (Winter Rocks)* (1965) is a poetic reminder of how abstraction can still evoke the natural world, reducing rocks and rhythms to their essential harmony.

Rodin is here too, of course—*L'Éternel Printemps* and *Le Baiser* (The Kiss) make an appearance, their passion and tenderness still palpable more than a century after their conception. Alfred Boucher's *Diana* (1890s) brings classical mythology into a realm of quiet elegance, while Émile Antoine Bourdelle's *Herakles the Archer* strikes a more dramatic chord, all muscle and momentum.

The 20th century holds its own with Henry Moore's iconic *Reclining Figure* (1939/1959), a compact expression of weight and poise, and William Turnbull's commanding *Large Siren* (1986), which calls to the viewer with an ancient resonance in a modern voice.

What ties this entire collection together isn't just the quality—though every piece stands out—it's the sense of legacy. The way that each work speaks to what came before it, and what might come after. There's a rhythm to it, a continuity that doesn't feel curated as much as composed. Like walking through a visual symphony of form and philosophy.

Bowman Sculpture continues to prove why it holds a leading place in the field—honoring the past while nudging us toward the future. TEFAF Maastricht 2025 won't just be an art fair this year. It will be a testament to the enduring power of sculpture to reflect, transform, and transcend.

Come for the masters, stay for the surprises—and let the conversation between centuries carry you away.

www.bowmansculpture.com



*Henry Moore (English, 1898-1986) Reclining Figure, 1939
Numbered 7/8 Bronze with golden patina Length: 9 7/8" (25 cm)
Conceived in 1939, cast in 1959 Edition of 8 plus 1 AP
Recorded in the Henry Moore Foundation archives under no.LH208*



Bowman Sculpture TEFAF 2025

Massimiliano Pelletti

Contemporary Stone Sculpture

By Ty Murphy LLM



Image from Massimiliano Pelletti exhibition “Versus” at the Museo Nazionale Roman at the Palazzo Massimo

In the heart of Pietrasanta—the Tuscan town synonymous with marble mastery and home to Michelangelo during his lifetime—Italian sculptor Massimiliano Pelletti is redefining classical ideals for the modern age. Born in 1975 and raised among chisels, plaster casts, and the resonant legacy of Renaissance artistry, Pelletti brings a fresh, thought-provoking voice to contemporary sculpture.

Rooted in tradition yet unafraid of interruption, Pelletti’s sculptures strike a delicate balance between classical harmony and geological disruption. His figures often emerge from

stone not as flawless deities, but as fragmented reflections of beauty—cracked, veined, and textured, echoing the imperfect realities of modern existence. Pelletti’s journey began in his family’s artisan workshop, under the guidance of his grandfather Mario Pelletti, a sculptor who famously worked on the restoration of Michelangelo’s Pietà in the Vatican. From this lineage, Massimiliano inherited more than tools and technique; he absorbed a deep respect for the material and its historical resonance. His grandfather’s Glyptothèque—a personal collection of plaster casts of classical models—provided not only formal inspiration but also

a philosophical foundation that continues to shape his work.

Every sculpture Pelletti creates is carved by hand, a nod to centuries-old traditions, but the materials he selects subvert expectations. He works not only with pristine Carrara marble but also with porous, richly striated stones, filled with natural fissures and crystalline anomalies. These imperfections are not flaws; they are essential components of his artistic language.

Pelletti’s sculptures are immediately recognizable—idealized human forms distorted by the raw honesty of their medium. Smooth, Greco-Roman torsos and serene faces are interrupted by the mineral chaos of the stone itself. These ruptures speak volumes. They symbolize time, trauma, and the impossibility of true perfection. The result is a dialogue between ancient form and geological truth, inviting viewers to reconsider long-held ideals of beauty.

In works like Heracles, to be exhibited at TEFAF Maastricht 2025 with Bowman Sculpture, Pelletti demonstrates this dynamic tension with mastery. The classical mythological figure, carved in onyx and Breccia Medicea, becomes a meditation on endurance, fragility, and time’s transformative power.

Pelletti’s international acclaim is matched by a robust portfolio of high-profile exhibitions and public installations. His monumental five-meter sculpture in white Carrara marble stands proudly in Acapulco, Mexico, while another major public piece was recently unveiled in Forte dei Marmi, Italy.

Exhibitions in China—including Looking Forward to the Past at the MARCA in Catanzaro and Gazing of Tranquility at the Zhejiang Art Museum, which later traveled to Wuhan and Guangdong—have expanded his global footprint. In 2021, his works were displayed alongside Antonio Canova’s in Canova. Between Innocence and Sin, curated by Beatrice Avanzi and Denis Isaia, creating an intergenerational dialogue between two Italian sculptural giants.

Most notably, Pelletti was recently invited to exhibit at the Palazzo Massimo National Roman Museum in Rome in a groundbreaking exhibition titled Versus (Oct 2024 – Jan 2025). There, his sculptures were placed in direct conversation with iconic classical pieces such as the Lancellotti Discobolus and Crouching Venus. As the first contemporary artist granted this honor, Pelletti’s inclusion marks a profound recognition of the cultural and artistic weight his work carries. His sculptures did not merely sit beside the ancient—they challenged, complemented, and recontextualized them.

In 2023, Bowman Sculpture in London became Pelletti’s exclusive UK representative, debuting his work with a sold-out solo exhibition, Eredità, curated by Mica Bowman. The title—Italian for “heritage”—aptly encapsulates Pelletti’s practice: a reverent yet radical engagement with the past.

The overwhelming response to Eredità confirmed what collectors and curators across Europe had already discovered: Pelletti’s sculptures are as intellectually stimulating as they are visually arresting. Following this success, Bowman Sculpture will host another solo exhibition of his work from 2nd to 31st October 2025, coinciding with his rising prominence on the global stage.

Massimiliano Pelletti is more than a sculptor—he is a storyteller who chisels through time. In each of his works, the echoes of antiquity meet the raw honesty of natural stone, challenging our assumptions about beauty, permanence, and the role of classical ideals in contemporary life.

Through his intricate, fractured forms, Pelletti reminds us that perfection is a myth—and that within the cracks, new stories are waiting to emerge. As he continues to exhibit on the world’s most prestigious stages, from Rome to Maastricht to Shanghai, his legacy is shaping up to be as enduring as the marble he so skillfully transforms.

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