

Tutti i racconti



# Tutti i racconti

MALGERI ENDO

Curated by Domitilla Dardi

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Magazzino, Rome



PLAQUE WITH UNREADABLE INSCRIPTION



## “Tutti i racconti” by Malgeri-Endo

Domitilla Dardil

When I suggested to Gianluca Malgeri and Arina Endo that we reflect together on the stories of Primo Levi, I had no idea that Gianluca was dyslexic. His dyslexia was the first of two epiphanies that accompanied this project and the works in the collection that emerged from it.

There are many specific learning disorders (SLDs), and this particular one concerns reading. Their classification as "disorders" is, in fact, inherently problematic, with issues that extend beyond the diagnostic and nosological spheres, reaching, dare I say, philosophical and existential dimensions. This ties into one of the central themes in Primo Levi's literary work: the definition of a normative canon and its application. Those who do not learn through standard, codified methods were once excluded from knowledge—at least as it was traditionally understood in academic and scholastic contexts. Only recently have neurological studies highlighted the compensatory abilities of those who fall outside the category of what is considered "normally able," thus revealing the infinite variety of ways in which the human brain can adapt and develop alternative resources for learning. Throughout Primo Levi's oeuvre, there is a persistent tension between a rigid, tragically exclusionary norm and the recognition of free and inclusive variations - an idea central to his work.

In his novels, the genre for which he is best known, this theme is directly tied to his experience as a Holocaust witness and survivor. In his short stories - some written before and others after his novels - this theme is explored with a more pronounced lightness and irony. In particular, *Natural Histories*, published under the pseudonym Damiano Malabaila in 1966 (though largely written earlier), presents a series of episodic stories. Dr. Simpson, a scientist employed at the high-tech NATCA company, introduces potential buyers to the results of years of research that have led to the creation of, to say the least, futuristic machines. In other cases, fantastic machines are described by a scientist-inventor to a user, as in *Mnemagogues*, where devices evoke memories through scents—leveraging the sense of smell, the most effective trigger for activating the part of the cerebral cortex associated with memory, thereby emphasizing both its significance and its fragility. Similarly, *The Calometer* presents a beauty-measuring device calibrated according to parameters derived from the features of movie stars. Meanwhile, *The Sleeping Beauty in the Fridge* explores cryonics, telling the story of a 163-year-old young woman who has only actually lived 23 years - those corresponding to her birthdays, when she is briefly thawed by her scientist-demiurge.

These stories flow lightly, bringing a slight smile to the lips. And

yet, they are incredibly powerful. Their greatest strength lies in their relevance and foresight; as Levi himself warns, “these stories are more possible than many others.” Indeed, here we are today, with contemporary *Calometers* now replaced by filters and surgeon's scalpels, the promises of cryonics, and a reality in which the right to age has been banished—or at least delayed as much as possible. Meanwhile, on the other hand, memories grow ever shorter, dramatically so.

Malgeri and Endo were particularly drawn to this aspect of Levi's poetics—his constant confrontation with a norm that can become a prison, especially when applied to the body, physicality, the condition of a brain that learns and remembers, or the various forms a body can take. The establishment of an absolute model, a canon, reflects a longing for order that is too dangerous not to be exposed, given its potentially harmful effects.

Within a possible taxonomy reminiscent of the Periodic Table of Elements—the tool of Levi the chemist, a scientist who seeks order in the pursuit of understanding, not coercion. Observing is not necessarily surveilling; ordering is not punishing. Even the great body-vase can serve as an invitation to situate oneself within a habitus, reflecting on the frameworks and structures that confine us to a

predetermined form, dictated by a conformist society that presumes to define and impose "normalcy."

Yet perhaps the most chilling and thought-provoking story is that of *Angelica Butterfly* - a caterpillar that never becomes a butterfly because it reproduces and dies before undergoing metamorphosis. "What's the point of becoming a 'perfect insect' ? One can do without it," the writer suggests. However, the story soon takes a dystopian turn: the scientist who attempts to turn men into angels, only to find horror and monstrosity, serves as a stark warning about the dangers of transformation when it crosses the line into manipulation. Malgeri and Endo have built exoskeletons and structures with their own hands, bending, welding, and forcing the physics of metal beyond its natural malleability. The giant insect into which the visitor is invited to immerse themselves becomes an act of humility, an inclusive and empathetic gesture: we are all soft beings supported by rigid parts, desperately seeking transformative improvement.

And here comes the second epiphany: Arina and Gianluca introduced me to an aspect of Primo Levi's work that I had never known - his sculptures, publically revealed only in 2019, crafted from copper wire. Yes, the very same copper wire that the artists have

chosen as their elected material for years, the wire of the machines and playgrounds where we first met. Levi bent the enameled wires discarded from his scientific work, following a practice once embraced by his father. Arching, flexing, shaping - these are transformations, metamorphoses of elements, chemistry of morphologies. The laboratory scientist thinks and analyzes but does not touch. The human being, on the other hand, finds meaning in tactility - a meaning that cannot be reached in any other way. The artist transforms.

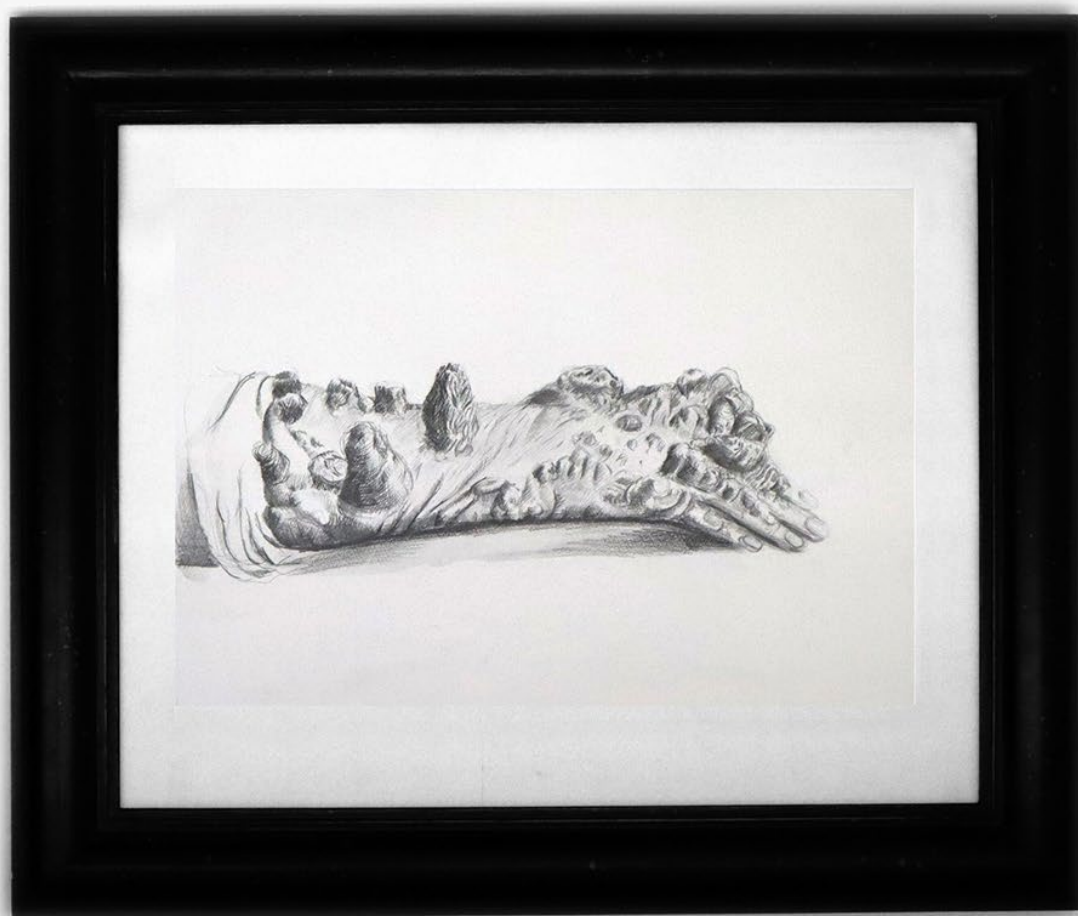
The works of Malgeri and Endo bear the mark of the gesture that finds meaning, but also of the thought behind a form that, if open and physical, will never be a cage. History is never singular; it is always a collective narrative, and it would be wise to remember this—especially now.

*We are all the stories.*





*Piccole Creature del Sottobosco, 2025*  
Iron wire  
236 x 470 x 280 cm



*Paese Paesaggio*, 2023  
Graphite on paper  
50 x 60 cm (framed)



*Tavola Periodica, 2025*  
Copper wire, red clay





*Tavola Periodica (C)*, 2025  
42 x 24 x 24 cm



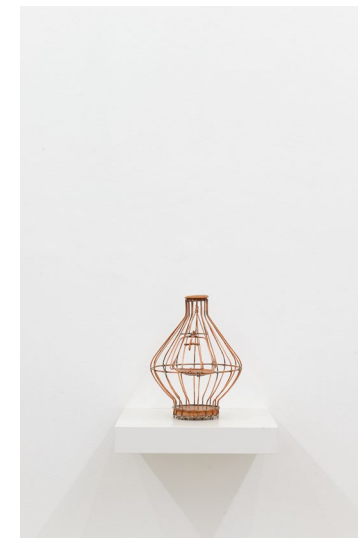
*Tavola Periodica (H)*, 2025  
46 x 24 x 24 cm



*Tavola Periodica (N)*, 2025  
53 x 27 x 27 cm



*Tavola Periodica (O)*, 2025  
31 x 25 x 25 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Na)*, 2025  
24 x 16 x 16 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Mg)*, 2025  
52 x 16 x 16 cm



*Tavola Periodica (F)*, 2025  
56 x 24 x 24 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Si)*, 2025  
51 x 24 x 24 cm



*Tavola Periodica (P)*, 2025  
42 x 16 x 16 cm



*Tavola Periodica (S)*, 2025  
60 x 24 x 24 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Cl)*, 2025  
35 x 22 x 22 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Zn)*, 2025  
50 x 31 x 31 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Ka)*, 2025  
51 x 24 x 24 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Ca)*, 2025  
58 x 42 x 42 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Cr)*, 2025  
34 x 15 x 15 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Ni)*, 2025  
50 x 20 x 20 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Fe)*, 2025  
39 x 33 x 33 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Co)*, 2025  
38 x 36 x 36 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Mn)*, 2025  
41 x 15 x 15 cm



*Tavola Periodica (Cu)*, 2025  
46 x 23 x 23 cm





*Bella Addormentata*, 2025  
Copper tube, silver brazing, pedestal  
185 x 120 x 120 cm



*Il Sesto Giorno*, 2025  
Copper tube, copper wire  
85 x 194 x 180 cm



*Spose*, 2025  
Copper wire, dried flowers, dried fruit  
Two elements, each 31 x 16 x 16 cm