



MONFERR [ARTE]

— ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

# Paola Grassi

**SCULPTOR · ETCHER**

TERRACOTTA, ENGRAVING,  
WATERCOLOUR

MASSA, 1955 · MONFERRATO

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*“ For me, being able to create is  
fundamental. ”*

— PAOLA GRASSI

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**INTRODUCTION**

- 01

**A** life run through by a simple and constant need: to *create*. From the sculpture inherited from her grandfather to terracotta, from engraving to colour – always in search of matter and light. For Paola Grassi, art has never been a career to display, but a way of being in the world: a daily creativity, practised every day, far from the spotlight.

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**ORIGINS AND TRAINING**

- 02

Paola Grassi was born in Massa in 1955, into a family in which art was already at home: her grandfather was a sculptor of figurative marble, and it is from him that her passion is born. From an early age she draws continuously – even at her school desk, where tracing marks is her way of concentrating.

She trains in sculpture at the Liceo Artistico and at the **Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara**, the city of marble. The years at the “*Il Malbacco*” art printing house in Pietrasanta – between the drawing of mosaics and the practice of etching – bring her closer to the graphic arts, which will accompany her whole research.

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**ASTI, TEACHING, A MEETING**

- 03

In 1978 she moves to **Asti**, the city to which she will bind her life and her long teaching career. During the years of her chair in Plastic Disciplines at the “Bramante” Liceo Artistico, she sets up a workshop of her own in the school's storeroom, always open to her students.

It is precisely in Asti that, in February 1979, during a visit with the CAI caving group, she meets Claudio, an expert caver. The experience of demanding caves makes clear to her in an instant two things destined to remain – that she is claustrophobic and that she has found the man of her life. Two opposite personalities that, as she likes to say, complete each other.

*“I am very autonomous, but I would never have done what I have done without him.”*

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**FROM MATTER TO COLOUR**

- 04

After an initial period of working with marble, **terracotta** becomes the privileged technique of her language. Alongside modelling and casting, experience leads her into unexpected territories: the modelling of wax for jewellery and the design of the cutting of precious stones, subjects she taught at Valenza Po.

It is precisely from the design of gemstones that her encounter with *computer graphics* and with colour is born, which prompts her to rework her own etchings, printing them on canvas and then intervening with other pictorial techniques.

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**THE FARMHOUSE AND THE LANDSCAPE**

- 05

In 1992 she buys a farmhouse in the countryside and, together with her husband, oversees its restoration for over ten years: house and garden are experienced as a single great sculpture "*to live inside*", enriched with rose windows and capitals in terracotta, frescoes and dedicated works. Her love for the landscape leads her to become one of the founding members of the **Landscape Observatory for Monferrato and the Asti area**.

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**WHY A WORK BY PAOLA GRASSI**

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**I** *A hand that moves across techniques*

Terracotta, etching, digital graphics, watercolour: a plural language where every work is born from the crossing of different crafts, mastered over decades of practice.

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**II** *A work in the Vatican*

The bronze medal dedicated to John Paul II, donated to His Holiness, is today displayed at the Vatican Museums: the mark of a career recognised at the highest level.

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**III** *Art as daily life*

Far from the market and the spotlight, Paola Grassi creates out of inner necessity. To own one of her works means bringing home an authentic gesture, not a pose.

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## A DAILY CREATIVITY

- STATEMENT

*At the centre of everything, a need: to create.*

Sculpture is her grandfather's legacy, but it is art in every one of its forms that fascinates her – terracotta, etching, drawing, colour, watercolour, the design of gardens. She chose teaching precisely to secure the time and the freedom to keep making; and after her retirement, in 2016, she is finally free to devote herself to creating, to practising mountaineering and to tending her garden.

## TECHNIQUES

- LANGUAGE

Terracotta and cement sculpture · etching · traditional and digital graphics · watercolour.

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- SELECTION

<i>Medal for John Paul II · Vatican Museums</i>	1983
<i>"Asti – Antiche e nobili casate" · cover &amp; 36 plates</i>	–
<i>Solo show · Promotrice delle Belle Arti</i>	ASTI · 1984
<i>Group sculpture show · Palazzo Mazzetti</i>	ASTI · 1985
<i>Solo show · Palazzo ex Pretura</i>	POMARANCA · 1985
<i>Solo show · Palazzo dei Priori, Year of the Etruscans</i>	VOLTERRA · 1985
<i>"1st Sculpture Biennial of Asti"</i>	ASTI · 1986
<i>"Quattro espressioni plastiche" · Palazzo della Provincia</i>	ASTI · 1991
<i>Group sculpture show · Palazzo Ottolenghi</i>	ACQUI TERME · 1991
<i>"Vibrazioni nel silenzio" · Casa della Donna</i>	PISA · 2003
<i>"Il magico mondo della mente" · int. group show</i>	MONTECASTELLI P. · 2018

*Art as a way of being in the world.*

PAOLA GRASSI'S WORKS ON MONFERRARTE FROM 1 JUNE 2026 · DEDICATED ADVISORY FOR COLLECTIONS