

con il patrocinio di



COMPLESSO DI SANT'AGOSTINO Pietrasanta (Lucca)

Stefano Chiassai: Incantamento

curated by Gianluca Ranzi

26 October 2025 – 8 February 2026

Opening: Saturday 25 October, 18:00

Press release, 1.10.2025

From 26 October 2025 to 8 February 2026, the historic **Complesso di Sant'Agostino** in Pietrasanta is hosting the major exhibition **Stefano Chiassai: Incantamento**, curated by Gianluca Ranzi. The exhibition brings together more than **100 works, most of them never shown before**. These include **works on paper, tapestries, design objects and monumental sculptures**.

The site-specific exhibition interacts with the surrounding space, evoking in viewers not only ancient and contemporary memories but also individual and collective emotions. The exhibition route runs the length of church's majestic nave to the chancel, continuing into the Putti and Capitolo rooms and ending in the Piazza del Duomo, where the large-scale **bronze sculpture RISPETTO** is installed beside the bell tower.

The works on show highlight an essential aspect of Stefano Chiassai's visual research, namely the highly original way in which he interweaves forms, colours, writing, movement, passion and wonder, merging spontaneity and expressive vitality, cultural memory and the energy of gesture and colour into an intense union with art that engages the senses and stimulates thought. Chiassai uses graphic signs in the form of images and words to render a perception of present history, reinterpreted with undertones of irony and in a popular style: an activity that has become for him a daily exercise that allows no errors or revisions.

Among the inventions the artist uses to express his imaginary world are his characteristic **Sgorbis**, lively creatures from a fantasy world that appear in his works and in the exhibition staging. These figures take the form of invented characters, talking animals, goblins and surreal floating objects that exist somewhere between the real world and the world of fairy tales. They represent positive human attitudes and embody the mainstays of Stefano Chiassai's artistic universe, which focuses on present-day issues yet is always oriented towards a better future.

The **tapestries**, executed on a jacquard loom **from felt-tip pen drawings**, span the entire length of the evocative **nave** in a brightly coloured visionary narrative of contemporaneity, reimagined through the artist's kaleidoscopic creative filter.

In his drawings Chiassai reflects on major and minor **historical events** that influence our **constantly changing society**, portraying collective traumas and individual feelings with sensitivity and empathy.

In addition to reporting facts, Stefano Chiassai's critical reaction offers us the stimulus to reconsider reality in other guises, through his depiction of events, visions, enthusiasms and the contradictions of everyday life. In this way *Los Angeles apocalisse* (2025) acts as a vehicle for ecological themes; *Spring* (2023), expresses the passage of time and seasons, while *Love... le donne si accarezzano* (2024) and *Giulia e tutte le altre* (2023) examine topical news events and their influence on **today's major social movements**. The artist pays particular attention to **prominent present-day personalities** and the memory of the past in works such as *Senza memoria non c'è futuro 2* (2024), or to **the value of sport**, embodied in *Italia è in Davis* (2023) and in *Superamento dei limiti* (2024). *Peace-Future-Hope-Dream-Humanity-Equality* (2024) and other works convey earnest **appeals**, including the plea for **peace**, portrayed in Chiassai's work as a fervent cry of **hope** that challenges the dramatic conflicts currently taking place.

Impressions evoked by the works along the nave culminate in the chancel, which hosts the *Aliens*: tall, magnetic anthropomorphic figures suspended between a distant future and tribal memory. Constructed from 3D prints, these beings form a series of four sculptures identical in structure but different in posture. Changes in the movements of the arms and legs generate rhythm and speed, eliciting a sense of mutation and evolution. Standing two and a half metres tall, these silent figures invade the sacred space of Sant'Agostino church to remind us to question ourselves about 'being' rather than 'appearances'. In Chiassai's words: 'They are 'alien', but they are deeply human; they are dark, but coloured with signs and words. They are future totems, but of our time: hybrids of technology and craftsmanship, artificial intelligence and archaic human design, they are both archive and prophecy.'

The powerful aura of these entities is reinforced by the textured surface that covers their bodies to form a three-dimensional archive of **Sgorbis Positivity**, one of the works most representative of Chiassai's artistic philosophy: 'An alien skin tattooed with symbols whose words and drawings bring us back to Earth. It's a cryptic but universal narrative, a journey among concepts dear to me, such as Future, Peace, Hope, Dream, Humanity, Equality and Love: traces of an increasingly dehumanised present.' A video related to this theme enables visitors to follow the creative process involved in making the various works on display.

To enter the **Sala del Capitolo** is to step into a world completely reshaped by Stefano Chiassai's playful creativity. **Tapestries** mingle with everyday objects, among them **carpets**, **clothes** and **seating**, created according to his iconic signature style.

The **Sala dei Putti** houses a selection from the representative series of drawings in felt-tip pen that the artist began in 2020 with *Diary of a Lockdown*. These small-scale works are presented on panelling entirely covered with a fabric that features the 'Sgorbis' and their positive, energetic message of hope for the future. The drawings record Chiassai's daily interpretations of national and global events (the Olympics, Civil Defence bulletins, European Parliament economic policies), transformed into dreamlike graphic signs that are at the same time rooted in reality

Also on display in the room is a remarkable series of works on paper characterised by a meticulous attention to detail and a layered message rendered in densely composed writing, figures and colourful patterns.

Chiassai's work illustrates events in **international politics**, the horrors of **war**, **environmental emergencies** and **news stories**. Thoughts, fragments of life, reflections suspended between silence and the agitation of everyday life are collected in a **diary that is both as personal as it is universal**.

Located in the **small piazza housing Pietrasanta's bell tower**, the imposing bronze sculpture **Rispetto** was conceived as a universal hymn to kindness and coexistence. Three and a half metres high, the work flows like the silent soul of nature: intertwined branches, flowers, eyes, hands, mouths and symbols form a contemporary floral totem whose simple voice speaks of acceptance, listening, diversity and balance.

At the top, like an epigraph, is the word 'respect', a mantra repeated down to the base, an invitation to be more attentive to our surroundings, and a reminder that respect is a way of living in the world. According to the artist, 'This "human plant", a symbol of a humanity rooted in the earth and at the same time unfolding toward the sky, invites us to halt.' Stefano Chiassai's works are visual prompts that speak of fear and hope, frustration and reaction, beauty and contradiction at a constant point of equilibrium between reflection on the present and an openness towards the future.

A comprehensive **volume**, published by **Dario Cimorelli Editore** and containing a critical text by Gianluca Ranzi, accompanies the exhibition.

Si ringrazia per il contributo

INTESA  **SANPAOLO**

Biographical notes Stefano Chiassai, an artist, fashion designer, art director and author, studied at the Florence Art Institute. In 1980 he created his own eponymous brand 'Stefano Chiassai'. In 1987 his fashion concept represented Italian style at the Barcelona Youth Biennial. From 1988 to 2000 he taught Menswear Fashion Design at Polimoda in Florence. In 1995 he co-founded SCS Studio Chiassai with his wife Alessandra Dall'Anese. Since the early 2000s he has designed various international menswear collections that combine traditional craftsmanship with new technologies. With the support of his team, since 2009 Chiassai has been the designer of the Fendi Uomo menswear range. Over the years the Tuscan artist has compiled a collection of more than 20,000 vintage garments, housed today at TheCube Archive, a meeting place for designers, artists, musicians, students and creatives eager to interact.

His most important recent exhibitions held in public spaces include Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea, Arezzo (2022); ADI Museum, Milan (2023); MAD Murate Art District, Florence (2023) and Museo del Tessuto, Prato (2025).

Important publications accompany Chiassai's numerous activities, including books published by Silvana Editoriale and Dario Cimorelli Editore.

Exhibition details

Title: Stefano Chiassai: Incantamento

Curated by Gianluca Ranzi

Exhibition Project Manager Alessandra Chiassai Dall'Anese

Venue Complesso di Sant'Agostino, Via Sant'Agostino, 1 – Pietrasanta (Lucca)

Dates 26 October 2025 to 8 February 2026

Exhibition Opening Saturday 25 October, 18:00

Opening hours Tuesday to Friday 16:00–19:00, Saturday and Sunday 10:00–13:00 / 16:00–19:00

Free admission

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