



TITLE:	Ancestral Metamorphosis
ARTIST:	Soly Cissé and Seyni Awa Camara
PLACE:	Black Liquid Art Gallery Via Piemonte 69 - 00187 Roma
CURATOR:	Antonella Pisilli
INAUGURATION:	14 december 2024 17:30 Until 30 january 2025
OPENING HOURS:	Tuesday until Saturday from 12:00 to 19:00
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The exhibition **Ancestral Metamorphosis** explores the human condition through a lens that fuses myth and contemporaneity, placing the works of **Soly Cissé and Seyni Awa Camara** in dialogue. These two Senegalese artists, with different languages and mediums, share a profound reflection on the transformations of being and the link between the human and the savage. Their works take us back to an ancestral past, while evoking a future in the making, in which the boundary between reality and imagination, human and monstrous, natural and supernatural dissolves.

Cissé's hybrid, dreamlike creatures find a counterpoint in Camara's sculptural figures, dense with symbolism and charged with an archaic power that celebrates life, resilience and dialogue with the spiritual world.

Both artists use the concept of metamorphosis as a tool to question the identity and meaning of the human being, transforming their materials - painting and clay - into vehicles to tell universal stories.

Soly Cissé takes us on a journey into the unconscious through the fusion of human and animal forms, hybrid creatures that narrate a perennial transformation. His art moves between African myth and contemporary expressionism, evoking tensions between instinct and reason, past and present.

His paintings reflect a dramatic and dreamlike exploration of our existence, evoking an ancestral past and, at the same time, a future in the making. Through the manipulation of colours and shapes, the artist guides the audience on a journey into the unconscious, where matter, movement and imagination intertwine, creating a dialogue between the human and the wild, between instinct and reason.

Fundamental elements of his artistic vision include a pictorial virtuosity that recalls the boldness and power of the great masters, in which the contemporary combines with the primordial and ancestral. The influence of Bacon and Basquiat emerges in his style, which balances figurative power and strength of sign. The technique becomes a rite of creation and destruction, a visual language that evokes the imaginary and deconstructs the real, alternating human figures with hybrid creatures, in a synthesis between the human and the monstrous. The pictorial material is incessant becoming: a chaotic dance of shapes, colours and textures comes to life on the canvas, evoking a dreamlike vision perpetually poised between past and present. Intense colours and thick layers of paint give body to a work that does not conceal its structure, its physical fabric. The technique here is not mere illusion but an invitation for the viewer to embark on a journey into the fragmentation of reality and the multiplicity of being. Through grotesque and fragmented figures, evocative symbols and chromatic tensions, the artist invites us to confront the inner rhythm of existence.

Soly Cissé's art does not attempt to represent nature or tangible reality, but moves on the plane of imagination and myth. The metamorphosis of forms is at the centre of his aesthetics: bodies that deform, fantastic animals that emerge from matter itself, as if imprisoned in it. The artist does not describe reality; rather, he creates his own, where the human being merges with his own visions and fears, creating an imagery that is both familiar and alien, reassuring and disturbing.

In his works, African myth and tradition are amalgamated with an expressionist and strongly evocative language. The result is a suspended reality, where figures lose their materiality, dematerialise in colour and where the line between human and animal, natural and supernatural, vanishes. There is no clear distinction, but a fluidity that transforms each painting into an autonomous world, evocative of a timeless humanity.

The artist does not merely create images, but moulds the material into a true visual experience, where each brushstroke is a fragment of a universal story.

Seyni Awa Camara enters the contemporary African art scene as a voice that draws on the primordial roots of human culture, shaping sculptures that seem to belong to a mythical time. Like the Venus of Willendorf, her works celebrate fertility and creative energy, but her language extends far beyond this, addressing the relationship between human beings and the invisible forces that govern their existence. The pregnant mother, surmounted by a multitude of tiny beings, is not only a symbol of motherhood, but a complex allegory that speaks of conflict, flight and the weight of human relationships.

Clay, for Camara, is not just a material, but a medium through which the past and the present dialogue. His figures, modelled and fired in the courtyard of his home, carry within them a collective memory that interweaves spirituality, myth and everyday life. Unlike the Palaeolithic Venus, which synthesises the essence of fertility through essential lines, his sculptures are rich in detail and layers, as if to represent the intricate complexity of human existence.

The deliberately dramatic deformations and proportions in his figures are not aesthetic anomalies, but a language that translates the invisible into visible form. The multiplicity of hands, eyes and faces is not just a graphic sign, but a statement of connection between the individual and the collective, between the real and the transcendent. For Camara, every figure is a story and every deformation is a trace of the tension between the sacred and the profane.

The 'theatre without a stage' that Camara has built around his practice, where his works are arranged in size and meaning, recalls the ancestral places of artistic creation, where art was a ritual act. His sculptures are never a mere formal exercise, but totems that reveal the human need to understand the mystery of existence, interweaving the ancestral with the contemporary. Through his works, Camara not only tells personal stories, but builds a bridge between memory, identity and transcendence, challenging the observer to find in his complex universe a reflection on the human condition.