Still Life, VR artwork by Chiara Passa 2019-2020.

Still life is an art-installation both physical and virtual. Physical because it is composed of several augmented reality sculptures made of ceramic, 3D printing, and other materials. Virtual, because the heart of the whole installation is a virtual reality App, I designed for Oculus Rift or Quest. The artwork speculates on landscapes, paintings, and objects by recreating through virtual reality an object-oriented space formed by a vibrant still-life environment designed all around the spectators. To shape the immersive artwork's environment, I used the techniques of photogrammetry and 3D scan, then I worked on manipulating the related maps/textures. The onlookers wearing the VR headset feel like they are into a painting but with the possibility to interact with various domestic items encountered during the walk across the artwork. *Still Life* realized what the Futurists manifesto said: "We will place the viewer in the middle of the painting". The augmented reality ceramic sculptures, part of the installation, aim to animate the exhibition space, showing to the public (though tablet and smartphone) the digital and beating hidden part of them in a dreamlike scenario where the ontology of vision makes the invisible vivacious.

Still Life fits perfectly into the historical-artistic trend of mixed-immersive-reality that has its roots in Pompeian frescoes, as the first immersive works, where the great *trompe-l'oeil* projected the spectators into the life scenes of the time.

Still Life is an experimental project, which challenges physical place to render it vibrant and participatory. It is through audience experience that the artwork addresses us to the paradox of the modern space-time condition, even more diluted between physical and liquid space.

Still Life is part of a virtual reality research which slots into my artistic journey since 1997, the fruit of a deep interest in space and how it is transformed and shaped "by and in" the language of informatics.

My *Still life* by investigating and analysing the ancient and fervid European still life art-practice, wants to keep alive its tradition across the magical ontology of the immersive vision. In *Still Life* I designed each object to behave and move beyond its own functionality, according also to the Object-Oriented-Ontology philosophy. So, Spectators can discover hidden senses and new spaces of perception unfolding into diverse meanings.
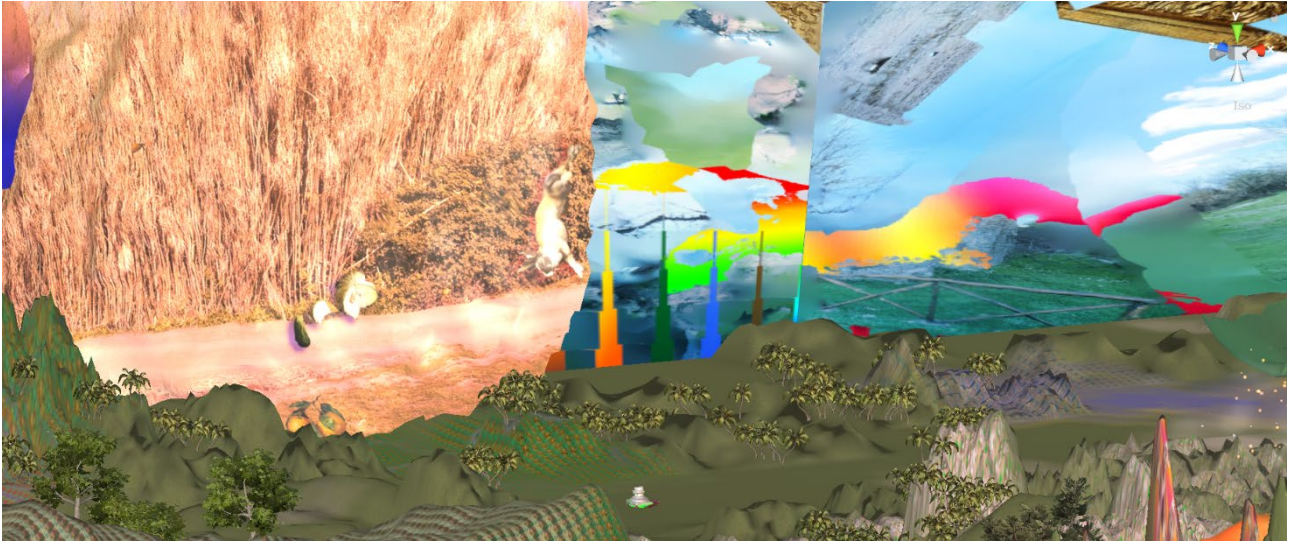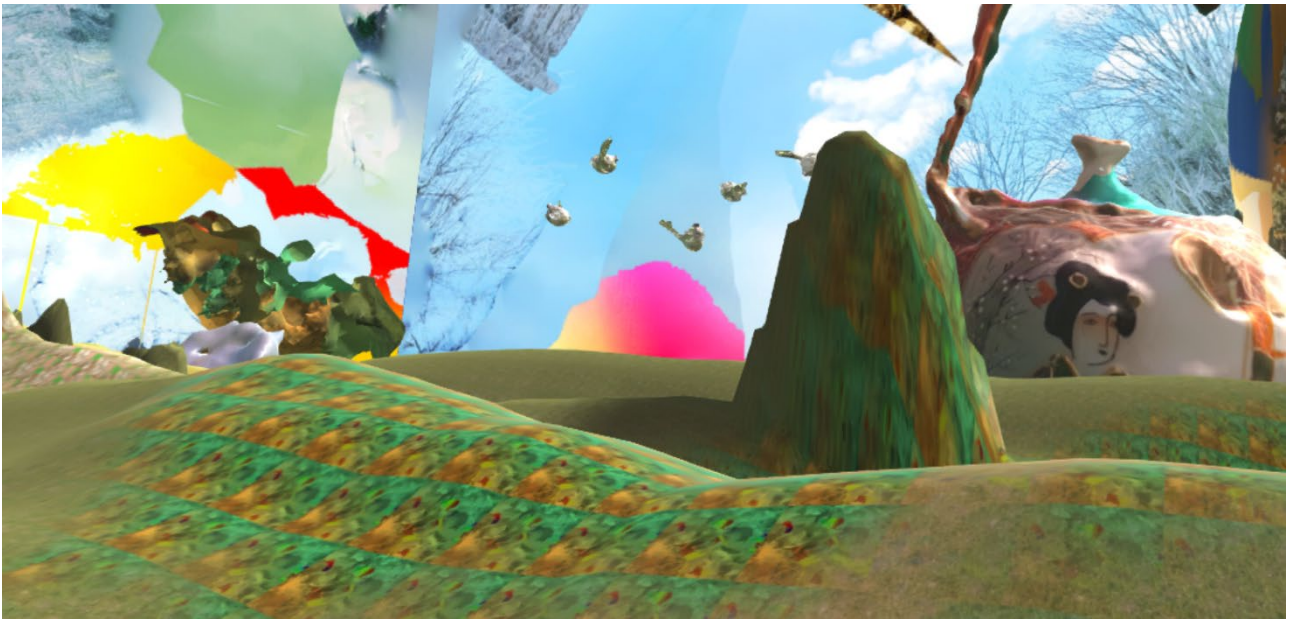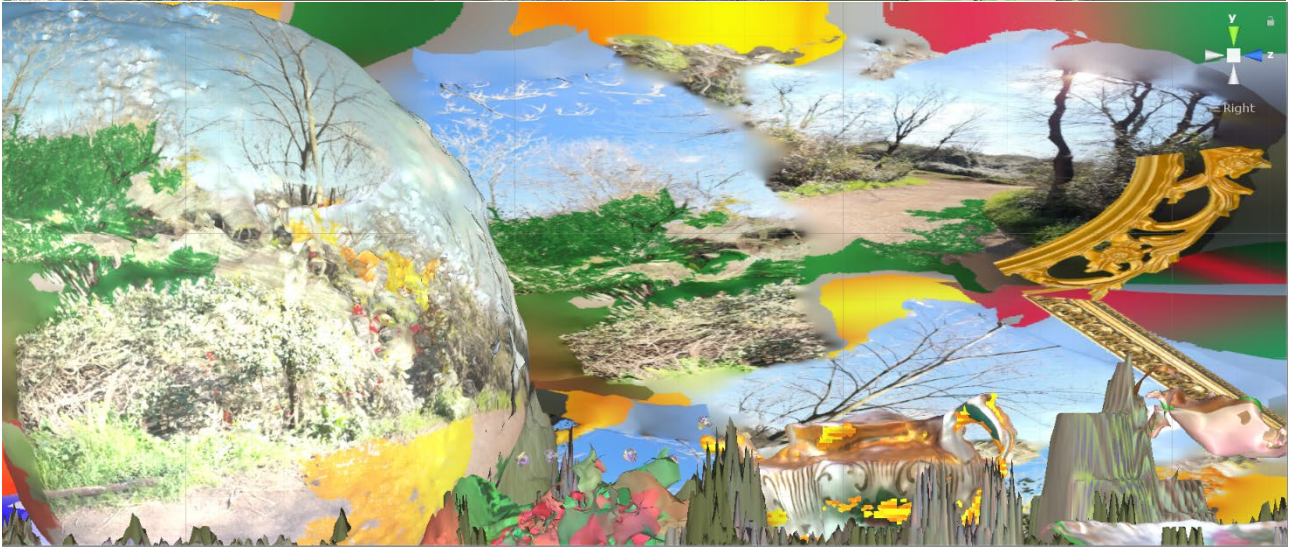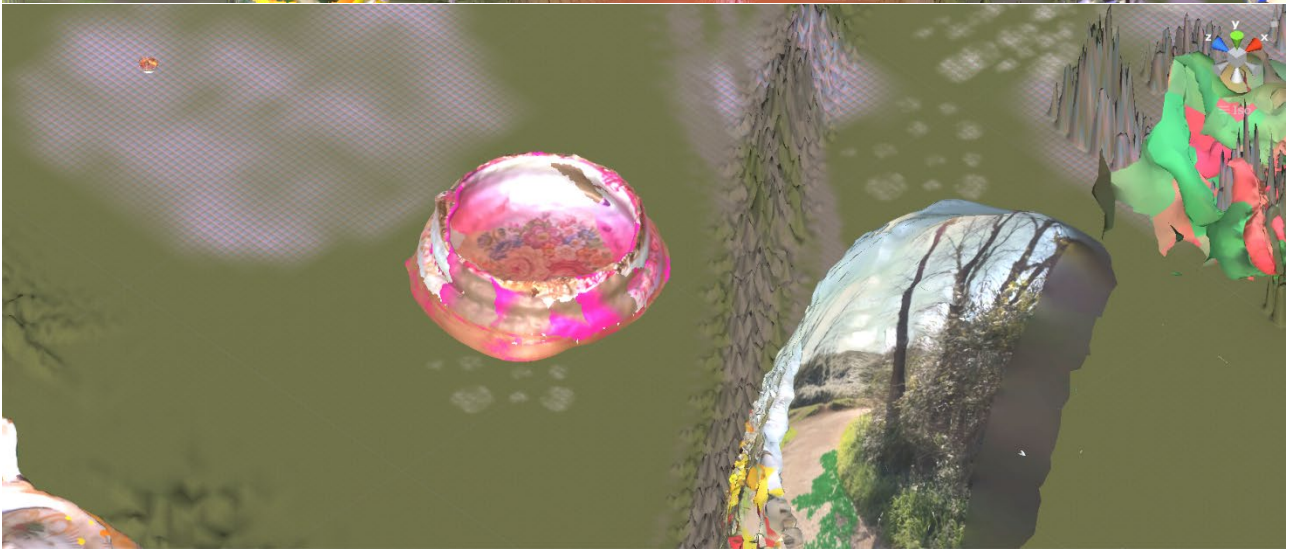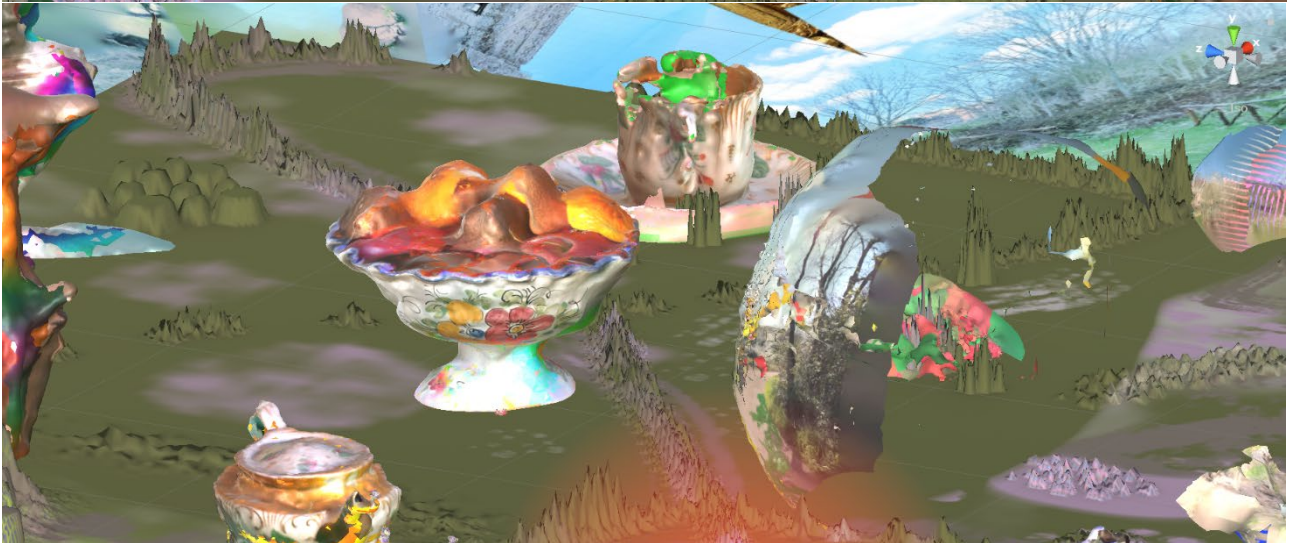
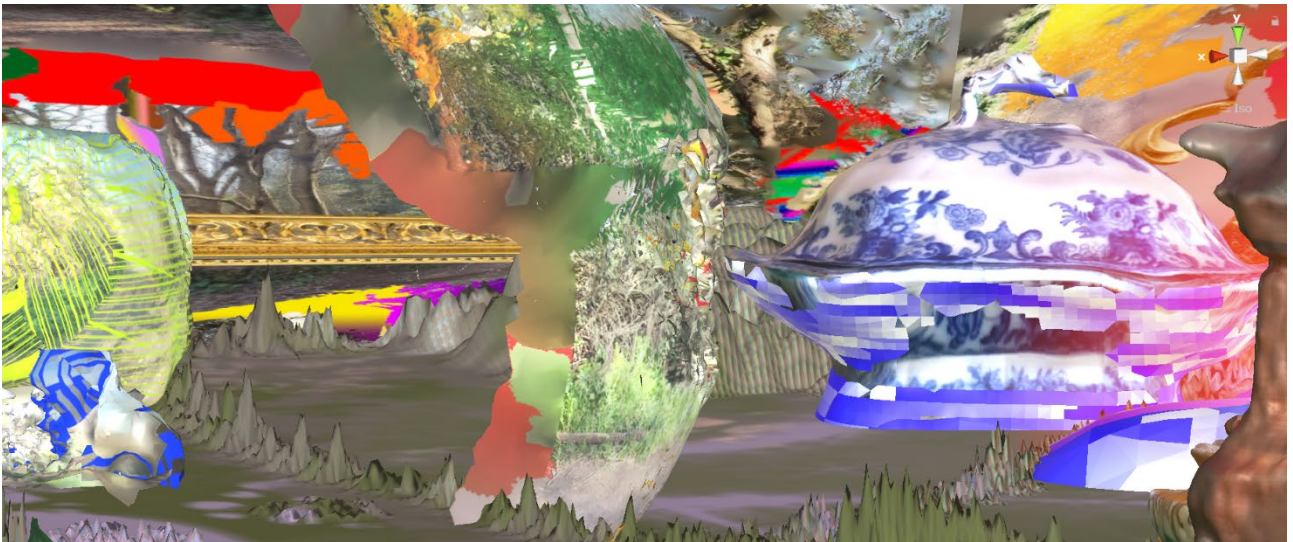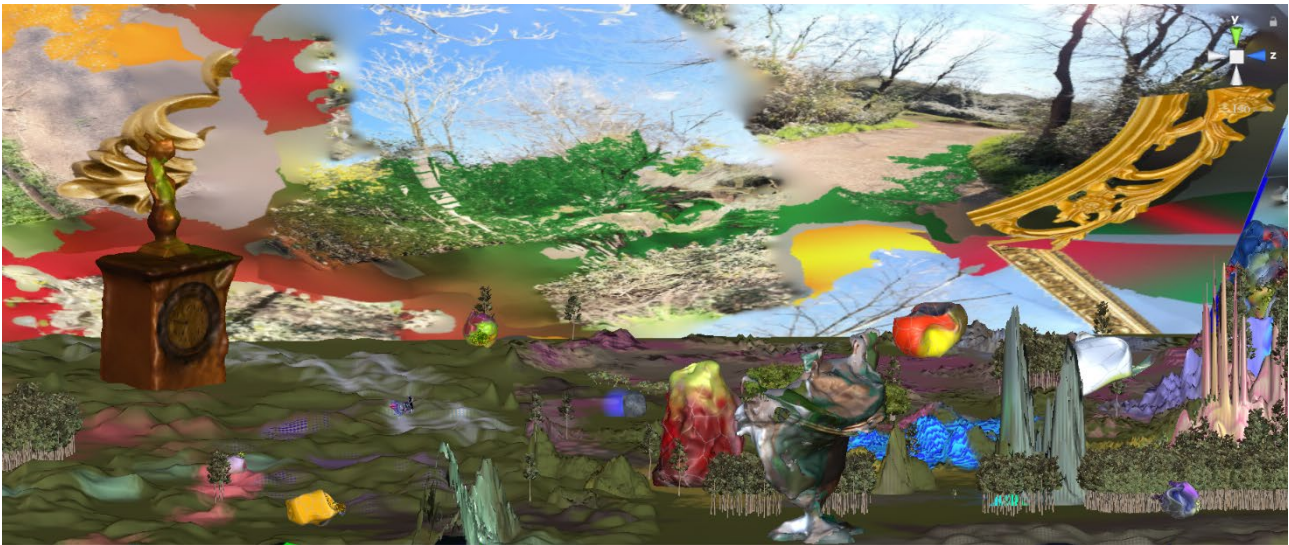*Stills from Still Life VR by Chiara Passa 2019-2020.*
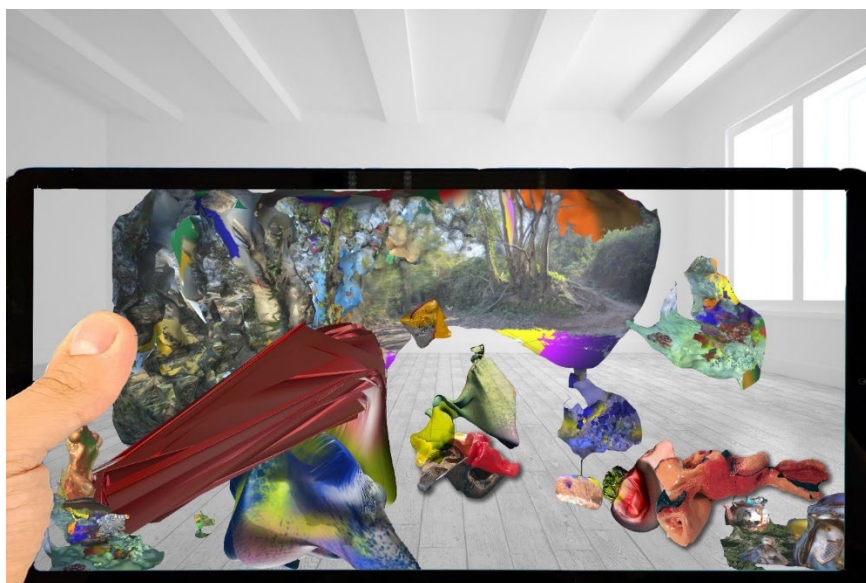
AR video extracts of the ceramic sculptures https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8_khKP-tDY & https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzbZKTHgsMc

Ceramic sculptures in AR (From Still Life), 2020-2021

Augmented reality APP

Video sneak-peek https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfLVlOTM0AE and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97U_zmovWio

Screenshots from Still Life augmented reality App, 2021.

Screenshots from Still Life augmented reality App, 2021

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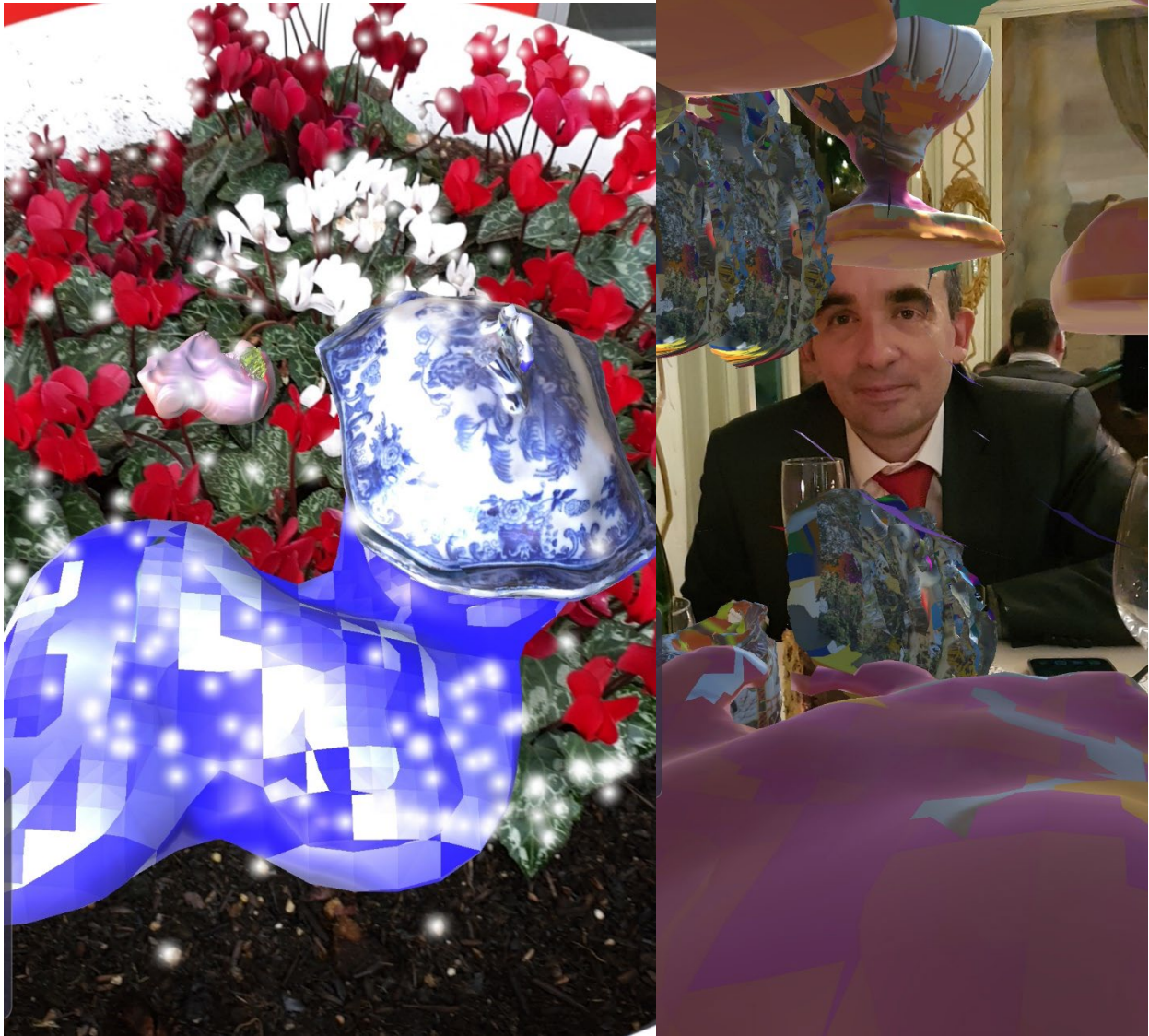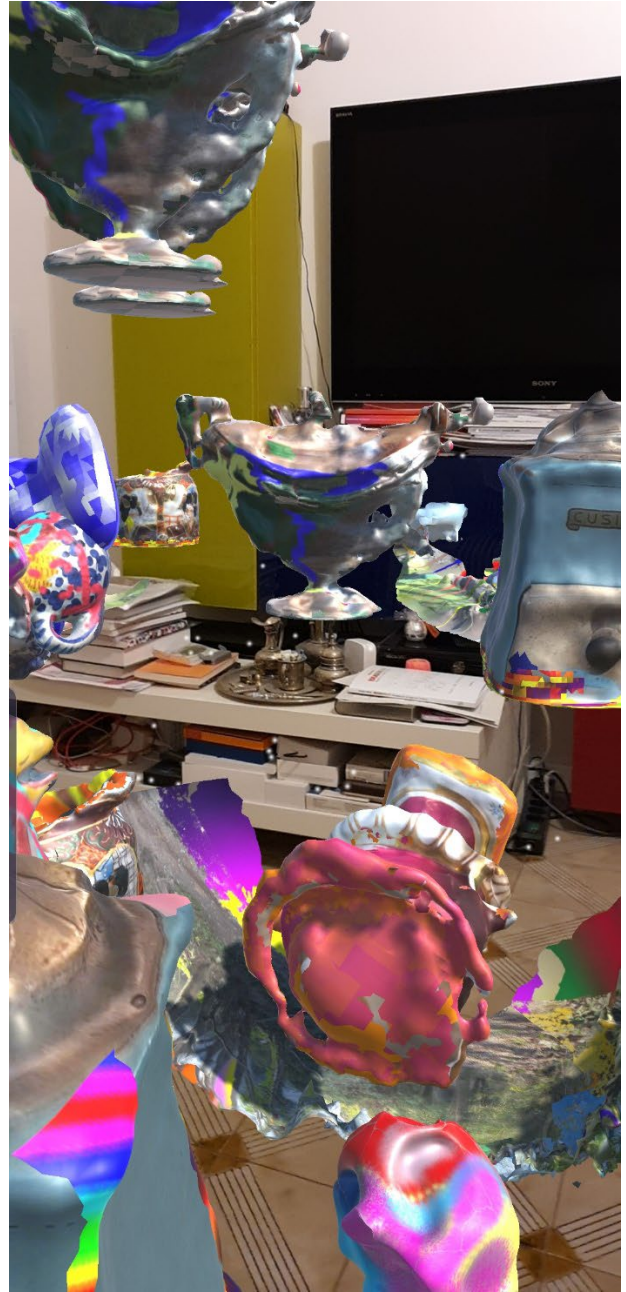**Installation and technical specifications for the tangible and VR art installation**

1 Oculus Quest 2.

Still Life VR App is composed of diverse large scenes. There are circa fifty objects/sculptures to interact with in each scene. Some are grabbable, deformable and emitting sound while shaked. Other objects are for climbing, someone emitting particles, etc. To switch between scenes, it is necessary to walk until the edge falls to be reborn in a new scenario.
Still Life is structured as a walk through the idea of labyrinth in which the spectator to see everything, must follow certain paths rather than others that are impervious. It is an experience in some ways, that is based on the choice of paths up and down, during the walk.

Still Life is not a game but an interactive three-dimensional painting; a still life in which the user does not shoot, does not run away and does not die. The user walks and experiences a rational environment in which it is possible to get things, doing and collecting information, including cultural information. Still Life is made up of 2 large scenes. To find all the objects, see the panoramas over the big objects and the whole scene takes 15 to 30 minutes. In the first scene there are 19 objects (to climb on, from to shake, to walk on to discover breathtaking views, etc.), some (those of human size and height) are graspable objects. 3 objects are also deformable. In the second scene there are 31 objects, 6 are graspable objects and 3 of them are also deformable.

Oculus instructions: adjust the viewer to find the right focus and thus have a clear vision. controllers: Left joystick forward for walking, and for walking fast or run you continue to hold the joystick forward. Furthermore, you press the trigger down to jump. (It is used for climbing on mountains or objects). Right joystick to rotate the head 360 and change direction while walking/running. The deformation of the 6 objects (3 per scene) is possible with both hands while grasping them. Continuing to grasp, the deformation continues over time. When you leave the taken, the deformation stops. To change the scene, that's enough let yourself fall into the void from one of the edges of the perimeter and you come transported to the other scene through colored dimensions. Experience not to be missed!

AR ceramic sculptures and AR APP

The exhibition space would be organized like a 3D-tangible still life (all around the audience) with diverse augmented reality ceramics sculptures installed in situ. The Augmentable sculptures transform physical materials such as glossy clay forms via photogrammetry into virtual matter. The viewers are invited to visit the ceramics closely, by going inside through AR exploring the liminal duality of the sculptures oscillating between tangible and virtual.
I conceived the whole *Still Life* installation as modular and adaptable to any space. Hence, AR sculptures can vary in number in relation to the chosen space.

360-video extract https://youtu.be/ccBOA8inkpU
Extract from scene 3 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zBCo2VYM4o
Extract from scene 2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oghnMPrMTds
Extract from scene 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=is-sLWPZzaw

On the artist – brief bio:

Chiara Passa, visual artist (b. Rome 1973) working in media art since 1997. I graduated (M.F.A.) from the Fine Arts Academy of Rome, Master in audio-visual media at the Faculty of Modern Literature. My artistic research analyses differences in virtual spaces through a variety of techniques, technologies, and devices - often using virtual reality and augmented reality technologies as artistic media to explore architecture as an interface. I use VR and AR to comprise their intrinsic language and so on for shaking-up and challenging the static notion of architecture, by exploring the liminal duality between tangible and virtual place, achieving in art a strange oscillation between spaces. Yet, I work with animations, net-artworks, interactive and site-specific video-installations, and AR / VR video-sculptures, sometimes made of Carrara marble, ceramic, fresco technique, plexiglass, or 3D printing parts. Moreover, I use VR medium to create site-specific video installations using a wide range of google cardboards. Typically, the 3D viewers are installed all over the real space, designing geometric shapes in liminal areas where onlookers can peek/peep thru 3D viewers over the wall, and so immerse themselves into a re-constructed/resized VR space made of wired geometric angles and futuristic views.

My work has been internationally exhibited from festivals, conferences, and institutions, including: «Object (RE) Oriented Reality» Panke gallery, Berlin (2023); «Still Life» Solo show at Zabludowicz Collection London (2021); «MADATAC XI» Bienal Virtual de Arte de los Nuevos Medios Digitales, Madrid (2020); «Object Oriented Space». Solo show at Museum MLAC Rome (2019); «Virtual Natives – Sculpture», Roehrs & Boetsch gallery, Zurich (2019); «Oslo Night show», HEK Museum Basel (2018); «InSonic» immersive art show, ZKM | Center for Art and Media Museum, Karlsrhue (2017); «From live architecture: Dimensioning», solo show at Furtherfield gallery, London (2016); «Off Biennale Cairo» (2015-2016); «ISEA Disruption», Conference and exhibition at Vancouver Art Gallery. (2015); «Morphos», Vortex Dome - immersion media, Los Angeles (2014); Media Art Histories IV - RENEW conference, Riga. (2013). FILE | Electronic Language International Festival, São Paulo. (2011); Electrofringe - festival of new media art, Newcastle, Australia. (2008); BizArtCenter, Shangai (2005); MACRO – Museo di Arte Contemporanea, Roma (2004), 11° Biennale of young artists of Europe and the Mediterranean countries: «Cosmos - a sea of art», Athens. (2003); 48a Biennale di Venezia (with Oreste group), Venezia (1999) e Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venezia (1999).

Selected shows: http://www.chiarapassa.it/SelectedExhibitions.html
Full CV statement http://www.chiarapassa.it/Artisticprofile.html