

Nicola Samorì: *Thrust* 尼古拉·萨莫利：进发

ZIAN Gallery

7 November - 5 December, 2025

No.801, Building 15, Tianmu Li, Xihu District, Hangzhou, China

ZIAN Gallery is delighted to present *Nicola Samorì: Thrust*, opening on 7 November in Hangzhou. Showcasing a new body of paintings, the exhibition delves into the delicate tension between materiality and spirituality, decay and renewal, and the organic and human imprints that define Samorì's practice. This exhibition marks his first solo presentation at ZIAN Gallery and in mainland China.

The act of creation has always been fundamental to the human experience. Through image-making, humans give form to thought, memory, and desire, translating the invisible currents of life into tangible expression. When this creative impulse is stilled, the unarticulated accumulates, gathering weight and tension, leaving the spirit stagnant. Through the act of making, humans inscribe dignity, beauty, and aspiration into the material world, shaping paintings, sculptures, and architecture as vessels of presence and spirit. Each work becomes a testament to the sublime persistence of human imagination, a dialogue between hand, mind, and the wider cosmos. Yet throughout history, this cycle has never been unbroken: humans have repeatedly destroyed and dismantled the very traces that carry their sublimity, obliterating the marks of their own ingenuity. And yet, from these remnants, new forms inevitably emerge, a perpetual rhythm of degeneration and rebirth that defines the human endeavour.

Daniel's Degeneration takes its point of departure from a still life by the Flemish Baroque painter Daniel Seghers. In this painting, Samorì reimagined the pictorial surface with drastically subdued tones and staid gesture. He violently pierced into the painting's skin, reaching into it until the still-soft oil pigment began to ooze out to expose the very essence of the subject, just as the gesture of St Thomas putting his finger into Jesus' wound. The drama unfolds in the bleeding colour of the flowers, where revelation and matter converge. Through this sacred touch, Samorì reanimates the painting's body: it does not merely depict the flower but enacts the very process of flowering, embodying the cycle of degeneration and renewal.

In *The Stainless Pure* series, idealised faces inspired by Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio merge with AI-generated imagery drawn from personal photographs, classical sculptures, and Baroque portraiture. Each work is painted on marble—Carrara white or Portuguese pink—within which a geode pulses through the stone's fissures, like flesh exposed from a geological wound. The series inherits the idealisation of Renaissance form while reimagining it through a postmodern lens, where technology, warfare, and contradiction coalesce

into an ambivalent body. The icons of Western art appear eroded, their sanctity fractured—yet from this decay, new standards and forms of life emerge, much like the geode bursting from the stone’s surface.

In *Flagello*, executed in oil on copper leaf applied to wood, the flayed surface of the figure evokes the fragility of human skin and the trauma inscribed upon it. The gleaming metal attaching above introduces an inorganic chill, a subtle separation of spirit from flesh—as if sublimity itself had ascended beyond materiality. By contrast, *The Garden Flame* draws from Baroque garden sculpture, dissolving its classical composure into a vibrant, molten flux. Its liquified figures seem to rise from soft, dissolving pigments like smoke—a fleeting apparition shaped by intuition and immediacy. Here, Samorì relinquishes control, allowing form to consume itself in the act of becoming, sculpting presence out of intangibility.

About Artist

Nicola Samorì

b.1977, Forlì, Italy

Lives and works in Bagnacavallo, Italy

Born in Forlì, Italy in 1977, Nicola Samorì currently lives and works in Bagnacavallo. His works have been exhibited internationally, including presentations in the Italian Pavilion at the 54th and 56th Venice Biennale.

Trained initially as a sculptor, Samorì has developed a multifaceted practice that traverses painting, sculpture, and installation. His process is marked by a deliberate and often violent manipulation of materials—using knives, hands, thick impasto, and solvents to construct, erode, and reconstruct surfaces. Through such acts of transformation, he destabilizes the image’s integrity, producing contemporary works that both draw from and rupture the classical canon. The resulting compositions oscillate between beauty and desecration, presence and erasure.

Samorì’s oeuvre engages deeply with the dialectics of cultural inheritance, mortality, and the metaphysics of the image. The human condition—its fragility, transience, and spiritual residue, remains central to his inquiry. In his sculptures, mythological metaphors and distorted corporeal forms serve to unravel the symbolic structures of “the human,” endowing matter with sentience and introspective potency. In painting, his method of metaphorical “skinning”, peeling, slashing, and layering pigment, exposes the strata of the image, revealing internal tensions between surface and depth, illusion and revelation. Through this persistent dialogue with art history and materiality, Samorì situates his practice within a lineage of both reverence and resistance—an archaeology of the image that confronts the persistence of beauty amid decay.

Samori's work has been shown in numerous international institutions and museums, including solo exhibitions at the Villa d'Este, Tivoli (2022), the MART Rovereto (2020), the Yu-Hsiu Museum of Art, Nantou, Taiwan (2012), and the Kunsthalle Tübingen (2012). In autumn 2025, the Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte in Naples will host an extensive solo exhibition of his work. His exhibitions include KAFKAesque, DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, Prague (2024); Luce e sangue, Duomo di Napoli, Neapel (2023); Luce e sangue. Chiesa di Santa Lucia alla Badia, Svrvakus (2023); Le Ossa della Madre, Villa d'Este, Tivoli (2022); Sfregi, Palazzo Fava, Bologna, Italy (2021); Back Square, Made in Cloister, Naples, Italy (2020).

Press

ZIAN Gallery
info@ziangallery.com

Ziyi Liu
ziyi@ziangallery.com
+86 134 7789 2488

Address

20-2, Chekengwu, Yuhang District,
Hangzhou, China

E-mail

info@ziangallery.com

Mobile

+86 177-6716-9419