

### **The biomorphic woven universe of Ianthi Aggelioglou**

Ianthi Aggelioglou's visual work develops as a language of organic shapes and color compositions – a “biomorphic literacy” and at the same time a bodily writing, where shapes function as codes of an enigmatic language and images are not “read” but experienced haptically and emotionally.

Her works are composed of fabrics on canvas that are sewn, with fragments detached and recomposed. Each piece of fabric is a “tessera” incorporated into the surface, building an assemblage-collage –an almost sculptural, stratified map of bodily hints, layers of memory, fragments of identity and lived events. Repetition, rhythm and movement, immersion, spiraling stitches, textures, fibers and re-stitches. And always a challenge: to approach the work haptically, not only visually.

Looking at I.A.’s works, affinities with various art movements and styles come to mind:

- The biomorphic abstraction (e.g. Hans Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Joan Miró) where form emerges as a natural development, as an organism, poetry and flow together.
- The kaleidoscopic compositions of Orphism works as well as the art brut works of Dubuffet works. And the latter’s phrase that “art must make you laugh a little and make you a little afraid. Anything as long as it doesn’t bore”.
- The tradition of textile art and fiber art, which since the 1960s has elevated fabric from a “feminine” ornamental medium to an equal medium of visual innovation. Many contemporary artists have turned to the power and ‘disobedience’ of textile art, fabrics and fibres, in order to engage “with systems of power and hierarchies, and therefore with histories and lived experiences of oppression and detachment, in order to forge new visions of the world in which we live”, as L. Johnson notes in the catalogue of the exhibition *‘Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art’* (Barbican Art Gallery and Stedelijk Museum, 2024-2025).

Ianthi’s motif-codes function simultaneously as particles of volumetric stratification and as cosmic arrangements. In a series of her work, the composition spreads across the surface, creating a rhythmic abundance, like a folding imprint of a continuous flow of energy. In others, the forms are gathered in a circular formation, just like a cosmic galaxy or a specimen under a microscope. This ambiguity makes the works open to multiple interpretations: maps of the universe, cosmic circulations, microscopic organisms or visual musical compositions. Something of a ‘treasure hunt’, evoking the exhibition’s title.

The chromatic units– sometimes intense (blue, ochre, burgundy, orange), sometimes neutral ( black, olive, brown, white) – function as complementary or supplementary pulses and the intermediate empty space is also active; like a breath that dialectically co-defines the pauses between the forms.

On a theoretical level, this practice intertwines with the concept of “gestural randomness” and embodied creation, where form does not obey strict geometry but emerges from flow, natural movement and internal rhythm. At the same time, it is connected to contemporary

ecological and bio-cultural quests: the works resemble depictions of ecosystems, with impressions of the complexity that characterizes nature. Fabric as a material is not accidental; it carries memory, sensation and a cultural load, functioning as a primordial “carrier” that underlines the corporeality of art.

Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy of the “flesh of the world” (*la chair du monde*) seems to be in a silent dialogue with this visual practice. The works are not “images” but incarnations; they do not represent but touch the viewer with their own materiality, just as fabric touches the world and is touched by it. On the other hand, Deleuze’s thoughts on “rhythm” and “chaos” lead to another liaison: the forms move on the border between randomness and harmony, composing a space where chaos is not a threat but a creative field of genesis.

The extension to other arts is equally fruitful: the repetition of motifs is reminiscent of musical structure, like a visual transcription of a fugue or a jazz improvisational flow, where each shape is a note and each chromatic area a chord. Like poetry, the forms refer to an unwritten ideogram, to an “other” way of writing that does not follow the “alphabetical” language but the internal rhythm of memory and dream.

Thus, the visual universe of Ianthi Aggelioglou is in a fruitful interaction between abstraction and matter, between the microscopic and the macroscopic, between biomorphic heritage and the modern textile renaissance, between impulse and delicate gesture. It is a practise that recycles, reuses, recomposes, and reinterprets.

Perhaps, ultimately, these works are like the breaths of the world; islands of forms that do not confine reality but allow it to circulate, to pulsate, to remind us that art is an experience of living matter.

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