

ANORAK STUDIO RESIDENCY – PROPOSAL 2026 - Cristiano Tassinari

What do I want to work on?

My proposal centers on developing a new body of work that extends the conceptual framework established in my 2023 exhibition *Gli uomini delle scintille* (The Men of the Sparks), exploring themes of masculinity, heritage, and biological determinism through the cultivation of dioecious plants—species with distinct male and female individuals. The core of this residency project involves growing various dioecious plant species within the anorak studio space, creating a living installation that parallels human gender constructs with botanical biology.

These plants—including *Skimmia Japonica* (already employed in my previous work), holly, asparagus, and others—will serve both as living sculptures and as agents of reflection on inherited traits, separation, and interdependence. The project interrogates the relationship between nature and human being, questioning how much of our identity is biologically predetermined versus culturally constructed.

By working with plants that are literally gendered, I aim to create a contemplative space where viewers can observe growth, care, and the subtle differences (and similarities) between male and female specimens. This investigation directly continues my autobiographical exploration of the father-son relationship but expands it into a broader meditation on masculinity, reproduction, and the systems—both natural and social—that enforce or transcend binary divisions.

Who do I want to work with, and why?

I propose to collaborate with Milan-based composer and sound artist Luigi Manfrin, who will develop a sonic component for the immersive installation. Luigi's approach to sound composition draws from contemporary practices of spatial audio that treat sound as a sculptural, three-dimensional element within physical space. His work will involve creating compositions based on time-lapse recordings of plant growth, environmental data from the studio (light, humidity, temperature), and field recordings.

The sound installation will utilize multi-speaker configurations to create an immersive acoustic environment where audio becomes material—present not just as background, but as a spatial phenomenon that viewers can physically navigate and experience from multiple perspectives. This methodology—where sound enters the body without filters and shapes our perception of space—aligns perfectly with the living, temporal nature of the plant installation.

The soundscape will employ techniques that make the listener uncertain about what is recorded versus what is occurring in real-time, creating an uncanny doubling effect between the actual studio environment and the sonic world layered over it. This approach to immersive audio—treating sound as sculpture that can transform our experience of physical space—will be integral to the work's ability to transport viewers into a heightened state of attention to the subtle processes of growth and transformation occurring around them.

How will working together in person in a shared studio environment impact the project?

The physical presence in the shared anorak studio is essential for several reasons: Daily observation and care: Dioecious plants require consistent monitoring. The three-month residency period allows us to observe complete growth cycles, document subtle differences between male and female plants, and respond to the living material's needs and changes. Sonic integration and spatial audio development: Luigi's research allows for sound composition that responds directly to the installation's development. The creation of effective spatial audio requires careful calibration within the actual acoustic properties of the anorak studio space. He will record the plants' environmental data over time and create an evolving soundscape that becomes part of the work's temporal dimension, utilizing multi-speaker configurations positioned to create three-dimensional sound fields that viewers can physically navigate. Shared studio dynamic: Working alongside the other residency projects will create productive friction and unexpected connections. The interdisciplinary exchange between my practice, Luigi's sonic research, and the work of fellow residents may generate new approaches to thinking about biological processes, temporal experience, and spatial perception. Process documentation: The residency's focus on process over production aligns per-

fectly with this project, which is fundamentally about growth, time, and transformation rather than finished objects. The daily rhythms of plant care, sound recording, and collaborative refinement will themselves become part of the work's conceptual framework.

How do I want to structure the residency period?

July (Weeks 1-4): Establishment and Foundation • Week 1: Setup of growing systems, soil preparation, initial planting of faster-growing dioecious species • Week 2-3: Configurations within the studio space, and begin environmental data collection from the plant systems • Week 4: Field recording sessions; Luigi develops initial sonic recording systems and conducts preliminary sound manipulations based on plant data August (Weeks 5-8): Growth and Development • Continued daily care and documentation of plants • Development of painted works and sculptures responding to the growing installation (building on techniques from *Gli uomini delle scintille*) • Luigi develops sound compositions, refining the spatial audio configuration as the plants develop • Organization of first internal 'sharing session' (mid-August) to discuss work-in-progress with fellow residents and invited guests September (Weeks 9-12): Synthesis and Presentation • Integration of all elements: living plants, paintings, sculptural components, and spatial sound installation • Luigi completes the multi-speaker sound installation, calibrating the acoustic environment for the specific spatial qualities of the anorak studio • Preparation for public presentation during Berlin Art Week (September 9-13) • Final sharing session with residents and invited guests

Bios

Cristiano Tassinari (b. 1980, Forlì, Italy) is a Berlin-based visual artist working across painting, sculpture, installation, and living materials. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna (2006). His practice is deeply autobiographical, investigating family memory, masculinity, and the intersection of personal and collective history. Recent solo exhibitions include *Fortune Cookies* (Ncontemporary, Milan, 2025), *Gli uomini delle scintille* (Ncontemporary, Milan, 2023), and *C is for Cherry* (Francesca Antonini, Rome, 2022). His work is held in the collection of the National Art Gallery of Bologna and the MAR Museum in Ravenna.

Luigi Manfrin (b. 1961, Melbourne, Australia) studied music composition at the G. Verdi Conservatory in Milan and completed his specialization with Franco Donatoni at the Civic School of Milan, at the Chigiana Academy of Siena (Italy)—where he was awarded the prestigious diploma with honors—and at the Academy of S. Cecilia in Rome. Manfrin's work has been performed at important contemporary music festivals including *Milano Musica*, *Nuove Sincronie* (Milan), *Gaudeamus* (Amsterdam), *Cervantino* (Mexico), and others internationally. In 2002, he received a degree in philosophy (full marks and honors) with a thesis entitled 'Spectromorphology and *Durée Réelle*: the presence of Bergson in the musical thought of Gérard Grisey.' His scores are published by Suvini Zerboni, Milan. His recent work explores spatial audio composition and the intersection of environmental data with musical structure.

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This project offers a unique opportunity to develop a significant new body of work that extends my ongoing investigation of inherited identity, biological determination, and the construction of masculinity. The three-month residency period, collaborative framework, and shared studio environment at anorak provide ideal conditions for this research-driven, process-oriented practice. The living, growing nature of the work requires exactly the kind of sustained attention and physical presence that the residency offers, while the interdisciplinary collaboration promises to generate new formal and conceptual territory at the intersection of art, science, and sound.

I am deeply grateful for anorak's consideration of this proposal and look forward to the possibility of developing this project within your space and community.

Cristiano Tassinari, Berlin, February 2026



A-B, Gli Uomini delle Scintille, *Skimmia Japonica (Male)*, 2023, Installation View, *The kissers*, 2022, 48 x 33,5 cm, oil on aluminum, Ncontemporary Gallery, Milan, Italy

C-D, Preliminary studies for the residency project, speakers, iron structures, dioic flowers