



Palazzo
Chigi Zondadari

CORTEMPORANEA

BIANCA BONDI

EARTH, CORAL, CLOUDS

Curated by Cloé Perrone e Fiammetta Griccioli

CORTEMPORANEA

Fondazione Palazzo Chigi Zondadari

Via Banchi di Sotto, 46, Siena

18/05 - 8/12 2025



*Bianca Bondi "Earth, Coral, Clouds" Installation view
Photo Ela Białkowska @oknostudio*

Earth isn't just a blank sheet for the projection of human desire: the desire loop is predicated on entities (Earth, coral, clouds) that also exist in a loop form in relation to one another and in relation to humans."

– Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology*

From May 18 to December 8, 2025, as part of the fourth edition of **CORTEMPORANEA**, *Earth, Coral, Clouds*, the first solo exhibition in Italy by Italo-South African artist Bianca Bondi (Johannesburg, 1986), will be on view at the historic Palazzo Chigi Zondadari in Siena. Bondi, currently a fellow at Villa Medici in Rome (2024-2025) and a nominee for the 2025 Prix Marcel Duchamp.

Bianca Bondi transforms the halls and courtyard of the 18th-century Palazzo Chigi Zondadari in Siena into a dynamic intertwining of organic and inorganic forms in constant flux. The exhibition title, inspired by *Dark Ecology* by Timothy Morton, invites reflection on the cyclicity of the natural world and the uncomfortable truths of our ecological existence. Following this philosophy, Bondi creates site-specific interventions that explore themes of transformation, memory, and time through processes of crystallization, oxidation, and chemical change.

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In the courtyard, *Procession for the lost and found* (2025) emerges as a floating ritual: a suspended composition of flowers and burned crucifixes evokes gestures of devotion and memory, symbolizing an offering to the invisible. The delicate, precarious forms recall the fragile balance between destruction and rebirth, between presence and absence.

In the ballroom, *The Nymphaeum* (2025) is presented as a large turquoise saltwater basin that reflects and distorts light. Recalling both a ritual cup and an ancient nymphaeum, the installation channels the ancestral relationship between water, ritual, and transformation.

Further along, in the dining room, *What grows after us* (2025) unfolds under a ceiling decorated with starry skies: a banquet table overwhelmed by time, where lace and minerals merge into a relic suspended between past and future. On the walls, two works from the *Lorelei series* (2024) sublimate the idea of a saline aquatic environment, recreating floating surfaces through photographic manipulations of copper amphorae immersed in water. Translated into textile patterns and enriched with symbolic flowers like amaranth, jasmine, and hydrangea, the two tapestries evoke a suspended dimension, a space where time seems to expand.

Throughout the rooms of the palace, the display cases from the *Bloom series* (2025) act as portals to dormant life universes. Inspired by the life of the Megabalanus tintinnabulum crustacean, they reflect on the concept of stasis and the sedimentation of memory. Organic materials cover objects from past eras, which, through crystallization processes, assume new forms in continuous evolution. Finally, in the gallery, *Cabinets* (2024-2025) are containers of crystallized nature fragments: shells, salts, and moss that transform these cabinets into relics suspended between care and dissolution.

"For the exhibition Earth, Coral, Clouds," explain curators Fiammetta Griccioli and Cloé Perrone, "Bianca Bondi, through her works, infiltrates the spaces of Palazzo Chigi Zondadari, entering into a symbiotic dialogue with the allegorical iconography of the ceilings and walls of the 18th-century palace. Nature is at the core of the artist's practice; using materials like sand, salt, moss, and flowers, she brings to life installations capable of transforming over time, challenging the immutability of the surrounding space. Bondi's work stands out for its radical approach to materials, which mutate through ancient alchemical processes, creating works where ancestral knowledge and new rituals converge. The artist reflects on the cyclicity of human existence and the urgencies of the present: from the loss of collective meaning to the fragile relationship with our ecosystem."

As visitors move through the exhibition, they are invited to lose themselves in a circular path between blossoms and relics, a suspended ouroboros that reveals the magic of the artist's passage, highlighting the symbiotic nature of her work.



A monographic catalogue will be published to accompany the exhibition, offering an in-depth exploration of Bianca Bondi's work through an interview with the artist, curatorial texts, and extensive photographic documentation.

CORTEMPORANEA, initiated in 2022 by Flavio Misciattelli, President of the Fondazione Palazzo Chigi Zondadari, has established itself as a platform for dialogue between contemporary art and historical heritage. Italian and international artists are invited to create site-specific works in the courtyard and rooms of the palace. Following editions dedicated to Pietro Ruffo (2022), Paolo William Tamburella (2023), and Zhanna Kadyrova (2024), Flavio Misciattelli has invited Fiammetta Griccioli and Cloé Perrone as visiting curators to select the artists for the next three editions.

Bianca Bondi (Johannesburg, South Africa, 1986) lives and works in Paris. Multidisciplinary in approach, her practice involves the activation or elevation of common objects through chemical reactions, primarily using saltwater. The materials she works with are chosen for their transformative potential or their intrinsic and symbolic properties. Her aim is to create experiences that go beyond the visual and sustain the life of matter, with a focus on interconnectedness, transience, and cycles of life and death. Passionate about ecology and occult sciences, Bondi combines these elements into transformative multidisciplinary works where the aura of objects plays a central role. Often site-specific, her poetic outcomes are deeply connected to the places in which they exist. She graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy in 2012, after previously studying at the WITS School of the Arts in Johannesburg. She is currently a fellow at Villa Medici, Rome (2024-25) and has been recently nominated for the 2025 Prix Marcel Duchamp.

Fiammetta Griccioli (Milano, 1987) is a Curator at Pirelli HangarBicocca where she has recently co-curated the solo exhibitions of Jean Tinguely (2024), Thao Nguyen Phan (2023), Dineo Seshee Bopape, Anicka Yi, (2022), Trisha Baga (2020) and Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (2019) and co-edited their respective monographs. In Pirelli HangarBicocca since 2012, she has also worked as Assistant Curator organizing numerous solo exhibitions and coordinating publications on artists such as Joan Jonas, Laure Prouvost, Lucio Fontana, Philippe Parreno, Mario Merz and Steve McQueen among others. In 2023 she curated the main section of the first edition of the new art fair STAGE, Bregenz in the Festpielhaus in Bregenz, Austria. Prior to her time at the museum, she worked as curatorial assistant at WIELS Contemporary art Center in Brussels on solo and collective shows. In Milan she has lectured at several universities such as the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera and the Università Luigi Bocconi. She earned her master's degree in economics and management in Arts, Culture, Media and Entertainment at Università Luigi Bocconi, Milano.

Cloé Perrone (Roma, 1987) is an independent curator. She currently works at Galleria Borghese, Roma, where she curated and edited the respective monographs of *Louise Bourgeois Unconscious Memories* (2024) and *Wangechi Mutu* (2025). She curated Sophia al-Maria *Mirror Cookie*, Caroline Mesquita *La Casa dell'Eremita sul Naviglio*, Rebecca Ackroyd *Underfoot* at Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro, Milan, (2019); Cécile B. Evans *Amos' World: Episode Three* (2019) and Camille Henrot *Luna di Latte* (2016) at MADRE, Napoli; Camille Henrot, *Monday* (2016); Shannon Ebner, *Auto Body Collision* (2014); Sterling Ruby, *Chron II* (2013); Sara VanDerBeek (2012) at Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2012-2016). Perrone worked as assistant curator at the Venice Biennial *May You Live in Interesting Times* (2019) and was a Research Scholar at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in



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the department of Modern and Contemporary Art (2017). She earned her master's degree from CCS - Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson and she is currently enrolled at the IMT PhD program.

Palazzo Chigi Zondadari, commissioned by Cardinal Antonfelice Zondadari (1655-1737) and his brother Bonaventura (1652- 1719), has been the family's Sienese residence since 1724 and was the last palace to be built in Piazza del Campo in Siena. The building features a linear architecture with five rows of windows, an internal courtyard, and an elegant grand staircase. Among its interiors, the piano nobile is of greatest interest, with its succession of salons and galleries, frescoed ceilings, and collection of artworks.

The **Casa-Museo** (house-museum) –open to the public by appointment only– holds treasures of art and architecture, including frescoes by Marco Benefial, Placido Costanzi, and Giuseppe Colignon, tempera paintings on canvas depicting architectural views inspired by the Bibbiena family and Giovanni Battista Marchetti, known as “Pianpianino,” as well as the rich Chigi Zondadari collection.

Guided tours include both the CORTEMPORANEA installations and the museum itinerary, where contemporary works engage in dialogue with history.

CORTEMPORANEA#4 | Bianca Bondi *Earth, Coral, Clouds*

Palazzo Chigi Zondadari

Opening hours:

Courtyard: Monday- Friday 8am-7pm

Casa Museo - by appointment only: prenotazioni@palazzochigizondadari.com

www.palazzochigizondadari.com

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