

LAMPOON



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FLAMINIA VERONESI

Madre
Scienze



I would like to make the sound of a whale, pink,
swimming high, giant bringing everyone
down into the abyss of the unchanging silence,
and stay there, then reemerge into another
steaming world of pink and purple breast forms,
which rages the impatient earth, for so long
opposed in its flowering life.

Soft and warm earth, gushes primordial ^{motherly}
ment and is embodied into mutable maternal
beings. Everything vibrates at a very high
frequency and follows along the sound of ceaseless
activity.

The more we interact the more we
transform into violet creatures that in the warmth
and fullness of the senses, grow breasts and beings
from the body. Another force moves within us, it
erupts into Wonder. Being its media and

CAREER returns us to the limit, ultimate gift
of bringing into the world. Yet on this world
we have all already been long ago. Yet we
show an ambivalent relationship with mothers.
How could have we forgotten mothers? Isolated
them into domestic persons?

MOTHERHOOD CONFINED TO THE HOME
TURNS OUT INTO SLAVERY - BROUGHT INTO THE PUBLIC FREES
THE HUMAN FROM ALIENATION.

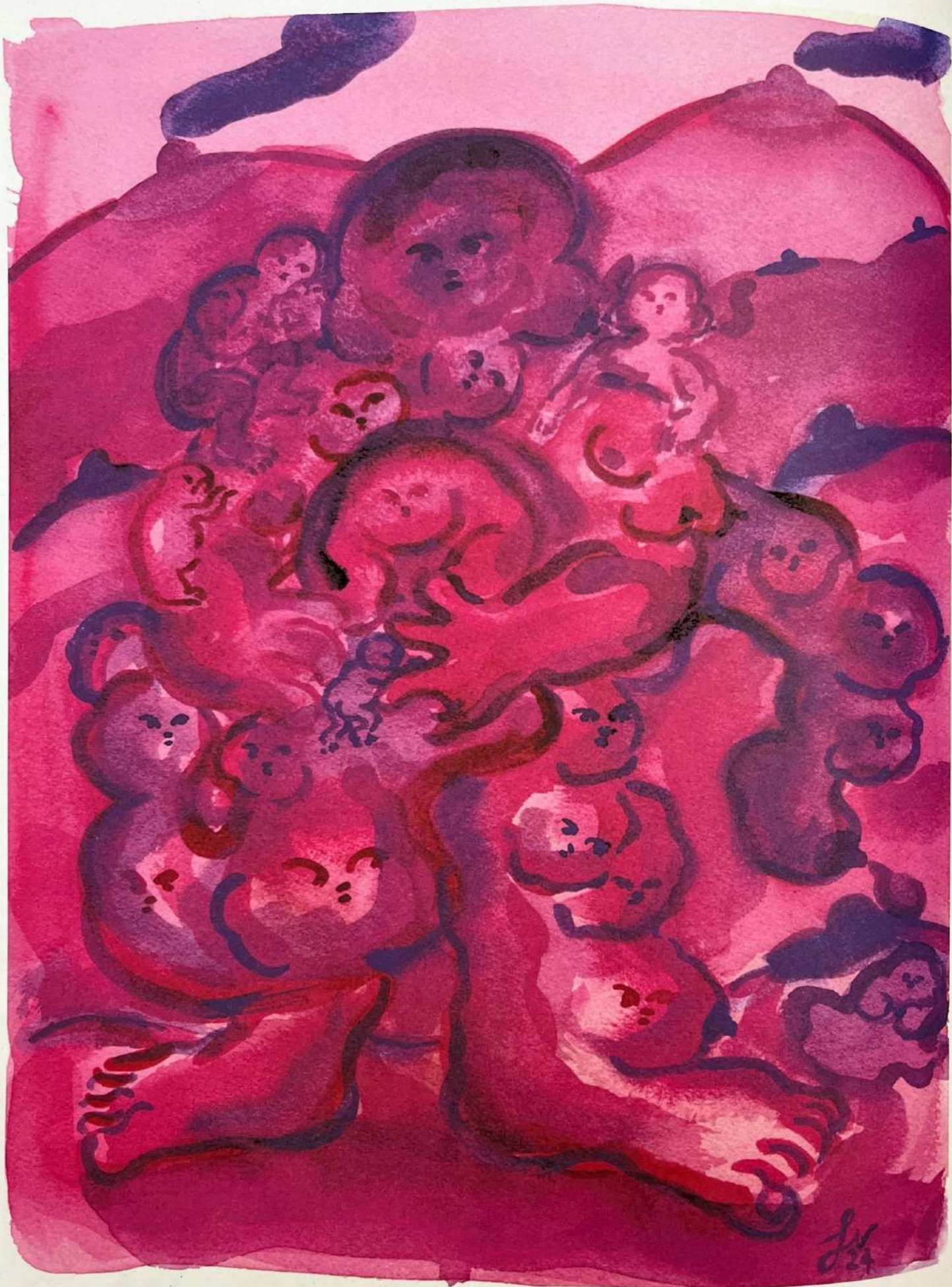
MOTHER NOT THE ONE WHO PROCREATES
BUT THE ONE WHO MANIFEST THOUGHTFULNESS TOWARDS A NEW
LIFE.

MOTHERHOOD THE CHOICE TO BE RESPONSIBLE
FOR IT, ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, UNBOUND FROM BIOLOGICAL IDENTITIES.
HERE THE EXPERIENCE OF MOTHERHOOD OPENS UP TO THE COMMUNITY
AND BECOMES SOCIAL. IT TRANSCENDS THE DOMESTIC DIMENSION, GROWS
INTO AN IMMENSE COLLECTIVE BODY.

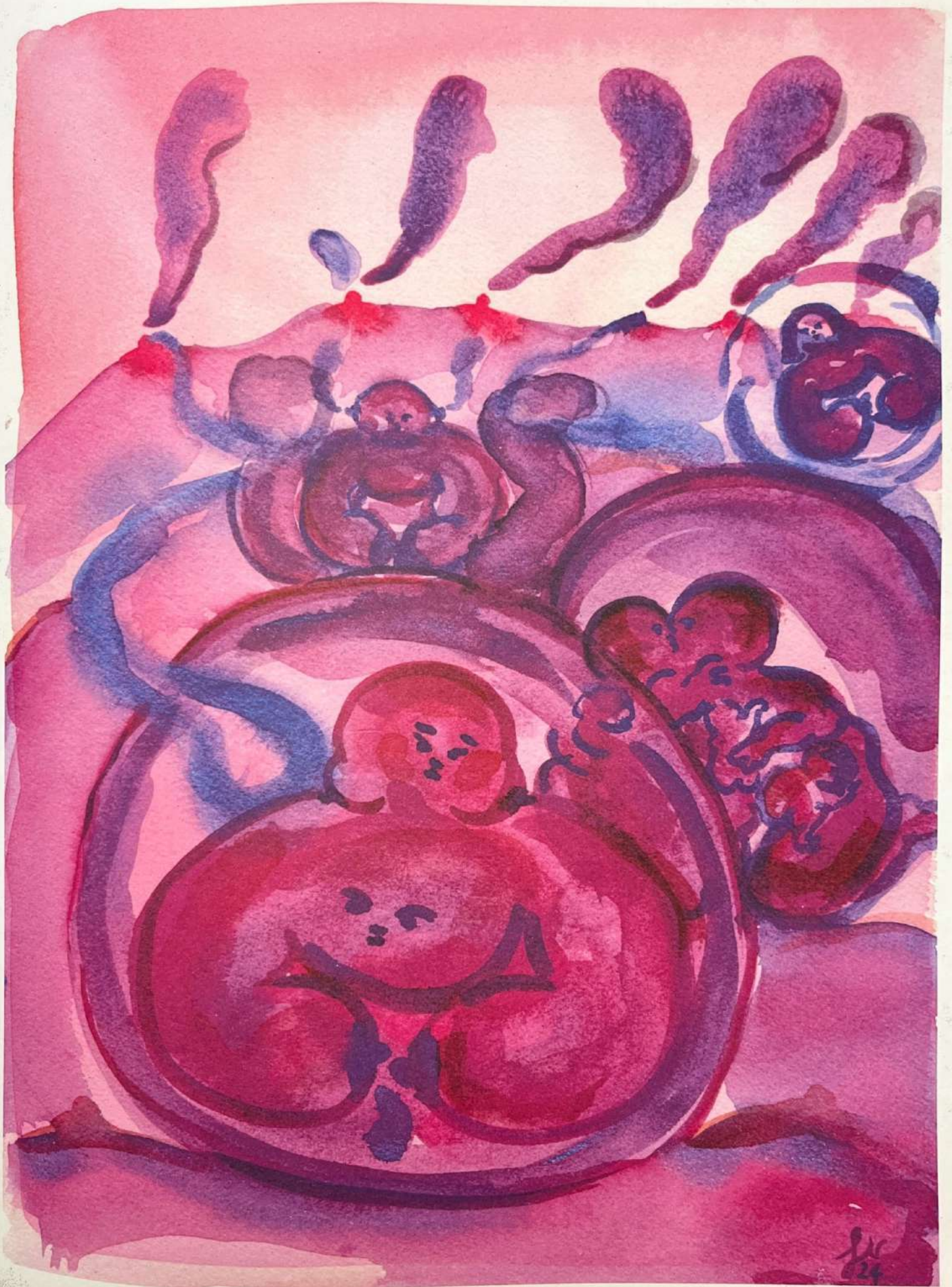
SOCIAL MOTHERHOOD, GREAT MOTHER OF ALL
CHILDREN - FORM THAT TAKES LIFE TO PROTECT ITSELF AND REGULATE
THE RELATION. BETWEEN EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING.
AN IMMENSE SOCIAL HUMAN BODY TO IDENTIFY WITH
ALSO FEMININE, WHICH WILL MAKE WORLD THROUGH CARE,
PEACE, THE EXERCISE OF MEASURE AND SELF DETERMINATION.

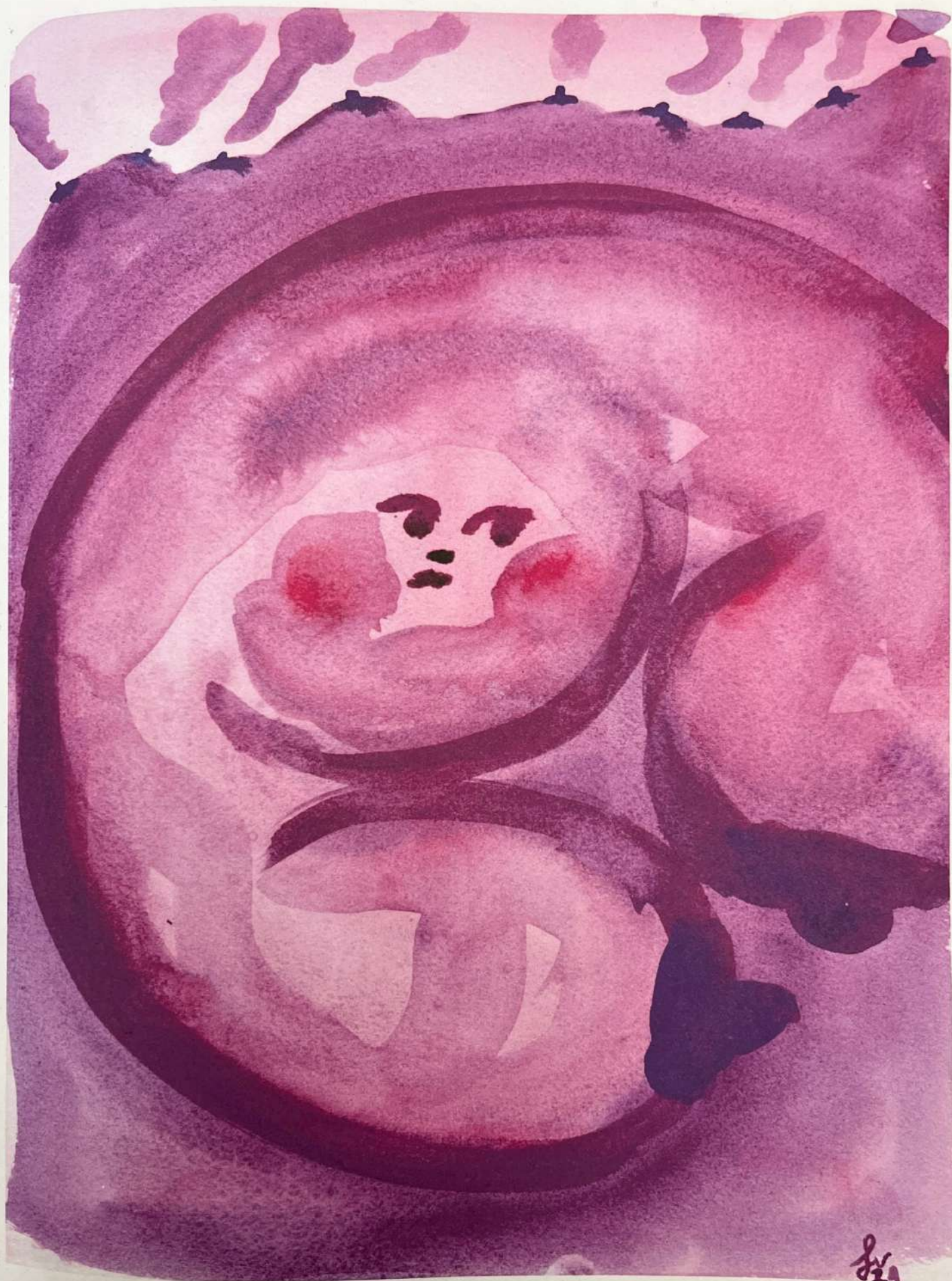
Madness the development
in the collective body that takes responsibility
for life.





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Flaminia Veronesi

[a dialogue with the transcendent]

I no longer define myself by my name, my nationality, or gender
Adam wasn't only male but both male and female
this was until when, God created the woman by dividing Adam into two

[I am a seaweed]

FLAMINIA VERONESI Social Motherhood is a concept I learned reading Maria Montessori's speeches on women's causes.

She identifies three types of women and describes the path feminism must take so that humanity can find freedom by overcoming itself, its egoism.

The first woman is the *Domina et Mater*: relegated to home, she benefits from social recognition for her domestic duties of transforming raw materials into goods for the family. As for the Pioneer woman, she painfully struggles to gain a new role in society while still being unprepared for this change in the environment and herself. She finds herself between family and public responsibility without support or equal opportunities.

This is where we stand today: women are gaining new roles bringing new values to power to a very high cost.

When this phase is over, it will be the turn of the third woman: the *Social Mary*. She will showcase on a social level the virtues that women develop through motherhood. The State will then be equipped to be the social mother of everyone and protect, educate, and care for children. At this stage feminism will have completed its main mission and equal opportunities for women will become possible. Maria Montessori has some libertarianism, if not anarchism, as her philosophy is self-determination.

Montessori argues that the true educator is one who can take a step backwards, allowing the child to find the teacher within himself. A good educator only has to provide an ideal environment for the child to acquire things through play.

So what do mothers learn from caring for new lives? To step out of the center of the universe, and step back in front of the untamable nature within us. This is why through motherhood we practice measuring and gaining back the sense of limit.

When taking care of life we witness its limitless power and learn to let it blossom. This process occurs also in the creative process of play. It is how artists can be the vessel of the collective unconsciousness and transform it into a visual universal language. Allow me to share the conversation I had with a friend that described her experience of giving birth.

She told me that after ten painful hours of contractions she wouldn't dilate. The pain was so unbearable that she said: «*Alright, you get out. You live, I Die*». She believed she was dying. In that moment that she let go of herself she suddenly dilated ten centimeters and gave birth to her child Alba. She then told me: «*I felt I was dead and reborn into a new life at the same time. The old me, the center of my universe, died. From that moment my center shifted to Alba. No matter what happens to me and Alba,*

even if she decided to grow up on the other side of the planet, she would have been my new center of gravity». I see this story as the right representation of what becoming a mother could be for us all. To move the center of the universe from our self to new life on this planet.

ARIO MEZZOLANI How do you step beyond the stereotype of Eve as an objectified and procreating woman?

FLAMINIA VERONESI Women, their sexuality and body that can give life, death and pleasure are problematic for all monotheistic religions and capitalism as they bind humans to their bodies and could guide them to reconciliation with nature.

You might have heard of Lilith's myth, the first woman before Eve. When Adam saw her covered in blood and mud, he was terrified and sent her away. According to certain interpretations, Adam wasn't only male but both male and female. This was until when, because he felt lowly, God created the woman by dividing Adam into two. I like this version of Adam and Eve. I also made the exhibition *Masculin/Féminin* based on it. Taking it back to what we said, Lilith represents the sacred that we refused and were afraid of when we were the double Adam. When God separated Adam into two, I like to think Lilith merged into Eve. I still need to study more in depth with Lilith's mythology, but it symbolizes

what humans fear in nature, and what men fear in women. It represents the capacity of giving life or death, the menstrual blood and their sexuality.

AM How did you free yourself from patterns that caged and limited your womanhood vision?

FLAMINIA VERONESI I define myself more as a creature than as a woman. I often identify with seaweed. Because it is alive. Sometimes I question myself if being fluid or androgens wasn't also a way to empower myself from the subordinated role of women that still lives today. Now that I know the responsibility of being a woman, I sometimes step out of my seaweed form. I take on the challenge of being a woman.

If I put it aside for a second, I don't even feel Italian or connected to my own name anymore. I feel the result of every sculpture and painting I make, much more than the cities I've lived in, the jobs I've done and the experiences I've had. This is because art is the manifestation of collective unconsciousness and has transformative power. Therefore I felt shaped by the artworks I came across.

AM How do you connect social motherhood to environmental care and responsibility for life on Earth?

FLAMINIA VERONESI Social Motherhood is the form that the collective body of relations between everything and everyone can take to protect life on this planet.

AM Nature teaches us about the collective body. You have explored relational systems such as fungi and mycelium.

FLAMINIA VERONESI Last September I took part in a group exhibition curated by Laura Pugno titled *Symbiosis: the interconnected threads of fungi*, which took place at Simóndi Gallery in Turin. The body of work of this show brought me to the intuition that what was happening in nature could also happen with humans (I don't believe humans are separate from nature even if we like to think so, but in the context of this question this distinction is required to make my point).

We found only the visible part of the mushroom in the woods, or its fruit. There is a dense network of Mycelium under our planet that wraps around it all. This net regulates how nutrients, information, viruses and who knows how much else gets distributed between plants. It can stop virus propagation, or to supply nutrients to a tree that has enough nutrients to another tree struggling. It seems like there is an intelligence that acts through the mycelium. I like to identify this presence with Mother Earth or *Pachamama*, or the Great Mother Goddess of abundance. As well as being connected to one another,

we also have a force that controls us through a net that connects us all and thoroughly.

AM How do you position yourself relative to feminist theories and the contemporary art movement? What connections do you make with other women artists of the past and present?

FLAMINIA VERONESI Today I might relate the most to the Materialist Feminism of Donna Haraway, which sees within matter an energy that propounds through interaction. Animism infused with quantum theory and the latest scientific discoveries on matter, as well as feminist views on interconnection, equality, and sustainability. Also because of Montessori's interest in the potential within a playful use of hands and her path from medicine and feminism towards pedagogy, her view on women resonates with my practice which is focused on play and fantasy.

At art school they often ask you this question about who your references are and I never knew what to answer. Art practice comes from within and not from outside. I see art as a poetic science, I see artists as *poetic scientists* that carry on the job from where it was left from the one that came before.

As doctors use centuries the same two routes through the human body to access one specific bone, artists pick up tricks, freedom and references from the lifelong work of the artists that came before. For these reasons now I recognize how perceptive I am to the work of Leonora Carrington, Sara Lucas, Louise Bourgeois, Carol Rama, Niky De Saint Phalle, and Cinzia Ruggeri. I feel the responsibility to push their research forward, and therefore I listen to their practice.

AM What is the role of fantasy in Flaminia Veronesi's work? How does it affect our historical moment?

FLAMINIA VERONESI As a child I was dazzled by wonder. I used to play and fantasize about amazing things. Those visions and parallel dimensions gave me such joy and freedom that I kept getting back to them. Slowly a pink world took shape inhabited by new archetypes, including dragons, cyclops mermaids and flying pink whales. As it was so beautiful to me I wanted others to feel the same way. I started imagining things, and through playing with my hands, I made up ways to bring those visions from my inner world to everyone.

This is still the process I make art with and that generates many visions and creatures. A fantasy is the ability to combine existing things to create a new one. It's a manifestation of a metamorphic process that bursts wonder - which is feeling beauty and beauty is where we can grasp the transcendent. Fantasy is a tool for humans to evolve in new

forms. More and better use should be made of it. Not as a form of escape, but rather as a primary source of connection.

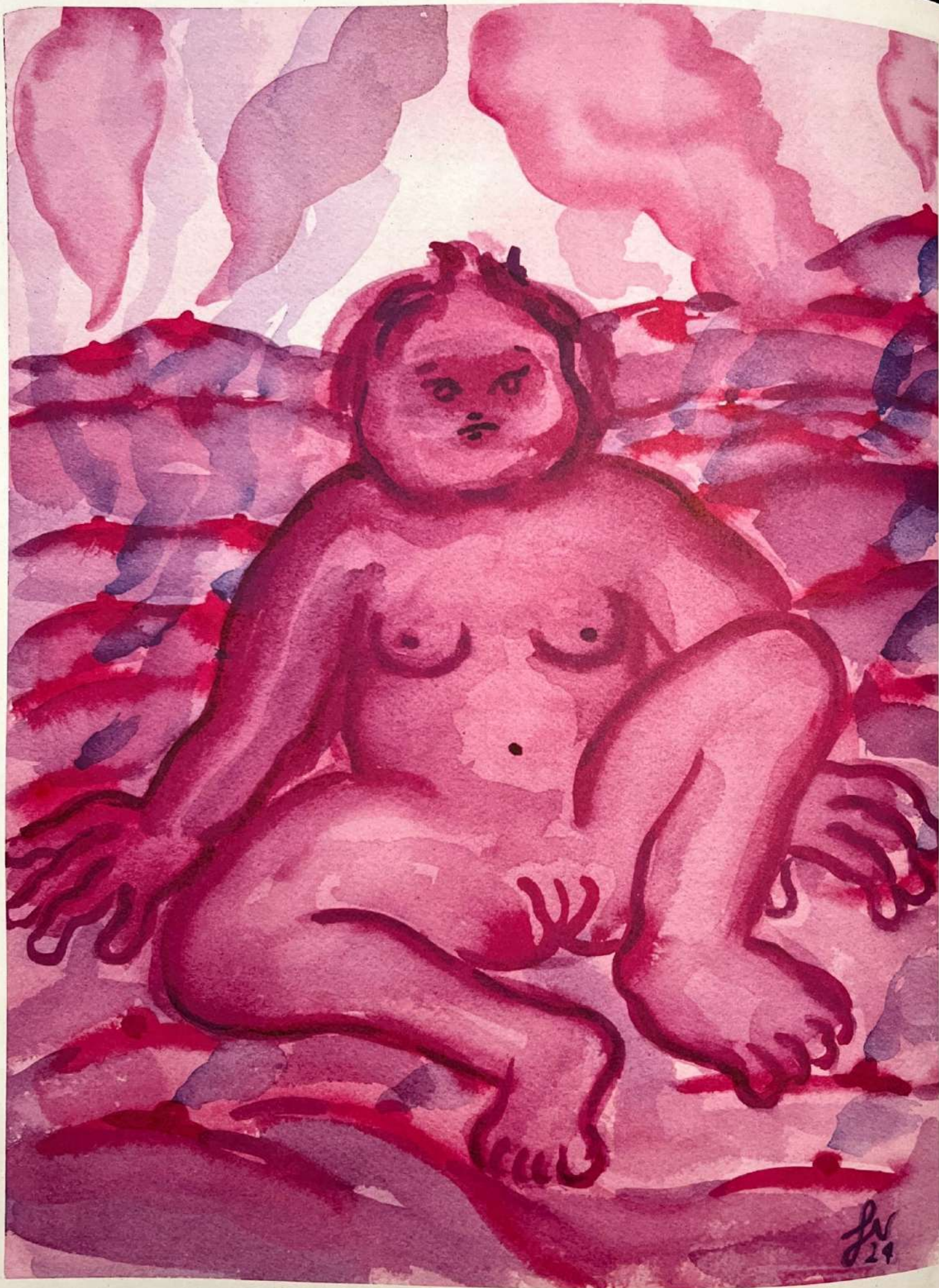
AM Tell us about imagination and wonder. What role do they play in the artistic process?

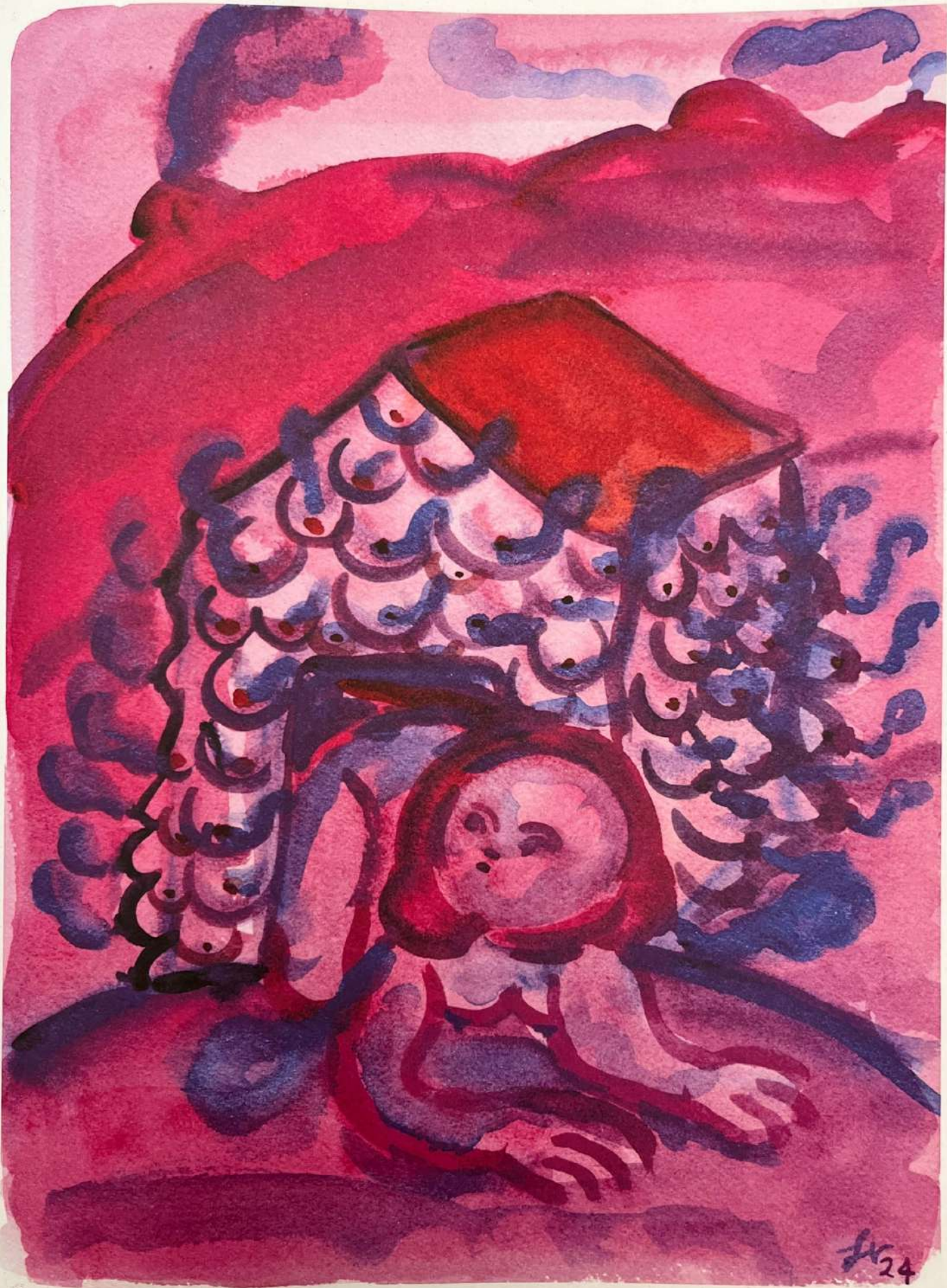
FLAMINIA VERONESI My understanding of art as a poetic science is inspired by *La Scienza Nuova* by Giambattista Vico. Beauty is an expression of the transcendent for humans. The manifold finds a particular harmony that simplifies his manifestation so that humans can grasp it briefly. If we find beauty we feel wonder. For a moment, wonder makes us desire to reach the transcendent. As we can't understand it we develop mythologies, symbols and allegories to get the closest to it. What Vico calls the Poetic Sciences.

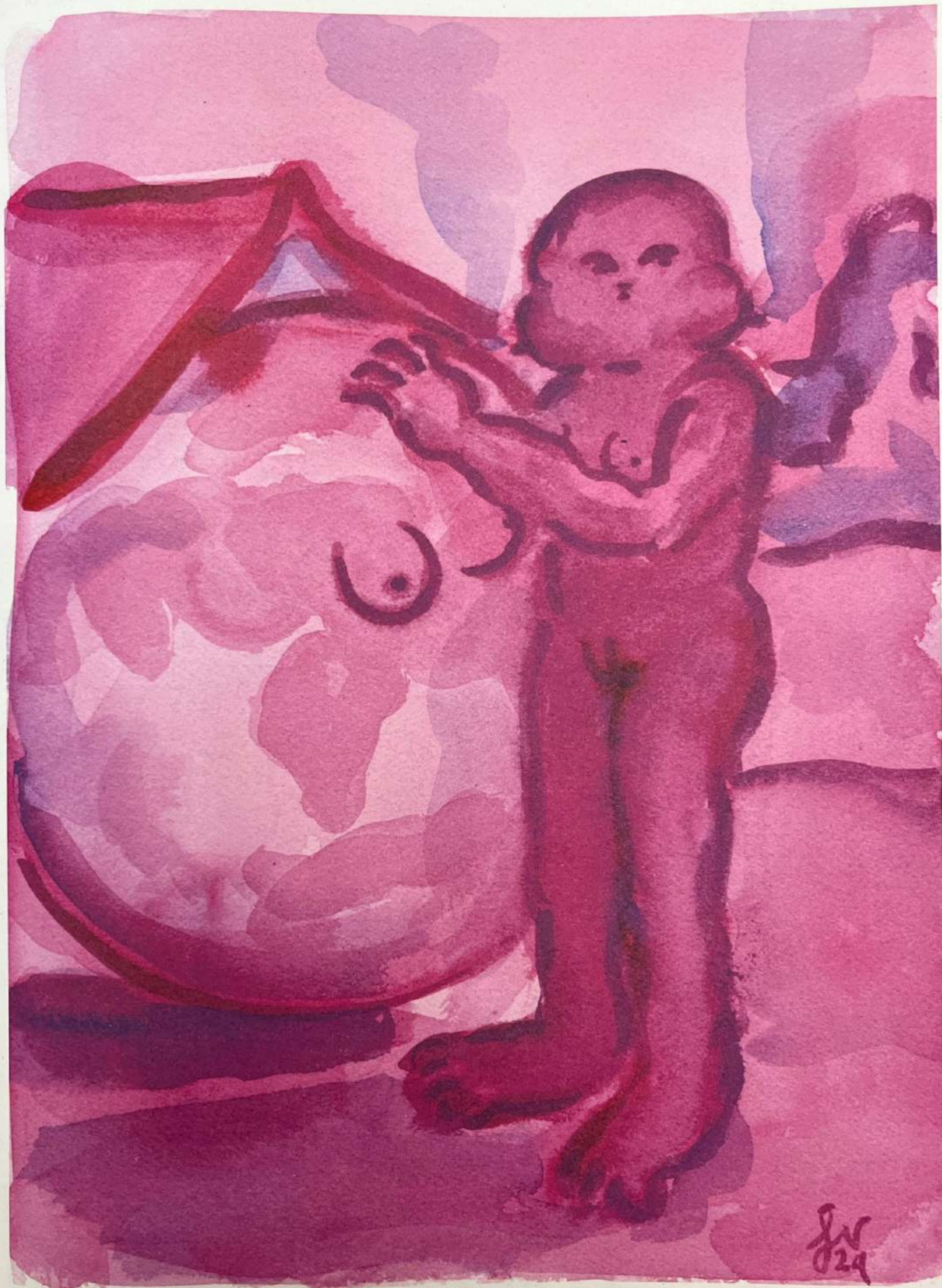
Still today Greek mythology helps us understand human nature better than our modern and rational approach to the world. Still today we refer to that culture because in western culture fantasy has been misplaced into escapism or commodified in consumer products, but we need a healthy use of fantasy in order to be in dialogue with the transcendent.

In my practice I try to heal the perception of fantasy by recovering the visual heritage of Wonder and by creating reimagined mythologies and archetypes. Fantasy's symbolic visual language is much more inclusive and exhausting than verbal language. Verbal language is a second stage of representation and divides concepts through rationalization. Daydreaming and creating parallel worlds can create new horizons, new perspectives and possibilities for the future.

In a biography on Giambattista Vico by Marcello Veneziani I read *man is born a poet, he animates the world, he names and gives life to things with his vivid imagination; by creating he plays and by playing he creates, he exercises awe, the son of ignorance and the father of knowledge*. It expresses my statements on fantasy and play as tools to generate poetic science. Art is a playful act, a transformative act of matter that passes through the hands. It is a metamorphic act that generates wonder. My desire is to share the joy of wonder with the world by being a player that gives form to it. I see poets as celestial natators coming out of the planet's atmosphere. They catch things in the dark and unknown universe and bring them back to Earth. Shy mermaids and parallel dimensions.









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