



Giulia Piscitelli

Giulia Piscitelli

Naples, 1965

Lives and works in Naples

Solo Exhibitions

2023 *Pittura Mura*, Galleria Fonti, Naples

2020 *Nella Società, in Gesellschaft*, Kunstmuseum, Luzern

2019 *Anime*, curated by Rita Selvaggio, Casa Masaccio Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea, San Giovanni Valdarno

2016 *Live the Dream*, Galleria Fonti, Naples

2015 *Wide Rule*, Kayne Griffin Corcoran, Los Angeles

2013 *Intermedium*, curated by Andrea Vilianni, Eugenio Viola, MADRE, Naples

Sim Sala Bim, Galleria Fonti, Naples

2012 Kayne Griffin Corcoran, Santa Monica

2011 *Contested Zones*, curated by Fiona Parry, CUBITT Gallery, London

Rischi minori, curated by S. Chiodi, Fondazione Giuliani, Rome

2010 *Beige*, Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples

2009 *Protocollo*, Galleria Fonti, Naples

2008 *Ballhaus*, curated by Salvatore Lacagnina, RISO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Palermo

2006 *Selected video works 1989-2002*, Galleria Fonti, Naples

Selected Group Exhibitions

2023 *GOAL!*, Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples

2022 *Bellezza e Terrore: luoghi di colonialismo e fascismo*, curated by Kathryn Weir, Madre, Naples

Keep on Movin'. Storie dalla Collezione Morra Greco, curated by Giulia Pollicita, Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples

2021 *Utopia Distopia: il mito del progresso partendo dal Sud*, curated by Kathryn Weir, Madre, Naples

Parthenope, Lighea d altre storie..., special project curated by Galleria Fonti on the occasion of the centenary of UniversitàParthenope, Villa Doria D'Angri, Naples

2020 *Intermezzo Strumentale*, Galleria Fonti, Naples

2019 *Stendale – one: urban expo* - installazione stendali, Mura di Corciano, Corciano

2018 *Secret of the Landscape*, curated by Rita Selvaggio, Frith Street Gallery, London
Studio eine Phantastik, Shedhalle Zurich, Zürich

- 2017** *documenta 14*, studio 14, Athens
- 2016** *16a Quadriennale d'arte* di Roma, Rome
abstração?... minha paixão, Galleria Fonti, Naples
- 2015** *Sleepless – The bed in history and contemporary art*, 21er Haus, Vienna
- 2014** *Non potendomi arrampicare presi per le colline*, Galleria Civica di Valdagno
in SongEun, SongEun Art and Cultural Foundation, Seoul
- 2013** *La Materia di un Sogno*, Collezione Paolo Brodbeck, Fondazione Brodbeck, Catania
Sette Opere per La Misericordia, curated by Mario Codognato, Museo Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples
- 2012** *Sõida tasa üle silla (Ride gently over the bridge)*, Galerii Noorus, Tartu
Radici, curated by Eugenio Viola, Fondazione Malvina Menegaz, Castelbasso
- 2011** *54th Mostra Internazionale d'Arte La Biennale di Venezia*, curated by Bice Curiger, Venice
Premio Maretti III edizione, curated by Eugenio Viola, Centro per l'arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato
Italian Video Today: Social and Individual Identity, curated by Ludovico Pratesi e Shara Wasserman, Crane Arts LLC, Philadelphia
- 2010** *Trailer park*, curated by Jorg Heiser, Teatro Margherita, Bari
Sehnsucht, a video and film screening, curated by E.Oreto, Uqbar, Berlin
Mediamorfosi 2.0 Contributi alle lingue dell'arterità, curated by G.Perretta, SUDLAB, Portici
Video Report Italia 2008.09, curated by Andrea Bruciati, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea di Monfalcone
Strange Comfort (Afforded by the profession) curated by Adam Szymczyk e Salvatore Lacagnina, Kunsthalle, Basel
Linguaggi e sperimentazioni, curated by Giorgio Verzotti, Museo MART di Trento e Rovereto
- 2009** *Barock*, curated by E. Cicelyn and M. Codognato, Museo MADRE, Naples
Historias, cuentos y amnesias, curated by F. Boenzi and S. Blas, La Casa Encendida, Madrid
Palinsesti-Strutture precarie, curated by Denis Viva, San Vito al Tagliamento (Ud)
The Italian Sight, TEA (Tenerife Espacio de las Artes), curated by Laura Barreca, Tenerife
Aqua, Festival Internazionale Time in Jazz, curated by Laura Barreca, Berchidda (OT)
Lago Film Fest, curated by Saul Marcadent in collaboration with con Careof DOCVA, Lago di Revine, Treviso
Eppur si muove (And yet it moves), Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Guarene d'Alba /Palazzo Ducale, Genova,
curated by Inti Guerrero, Julia Klaring, Pieterneel Vermoortel
Emergency Room, PAN Palazzo delle Arti, Naples
IV Biennale Arte Amore e Anarchia, Naples
- 2008** *Fate presto*, curated by Bonnet, Fonseca, Lacagnina, Riera, Viola, Complesso Monumentale di Santa Sofia, (Salerno)
Italie Italien Italy Wlochy curated by Del Vecchio, Rabottini, Scipioni, Viliani,
ARCOS Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Sannio, Benevento
When things cast no shadow-5th Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art, curated by Adam Szymczyk and Elena Filipovic, Berlin
dai tempo al tempo, curated by J. del Pesco, F. Parry, P. Uran, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Guarente d'Alba (CN)
Camera con vista, curated by Adriana Rispoli e Eugenio Viola, PAN, Palazzo delle Arti, Naples
Were, there, severe,(Thin line), curated by G. Del Vecchio, Galleria Alessandro De March, Milan

- 50 Lune di Saturno*, curated by Daniel Birnbaum, T2 Torino triennale, Turin
Video Report Italia 2006.07, curated by Andrea Bruciati, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea di Monfalcone
- 2007** *Vesuvius*, curated by Gigiotto Del Vecchio e Stefania Palumbo, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
- 2004** *Incursione Vesuviana*, curated by Gigiotto Del Vecchio, 50esima Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte della Biennale di Venezia in Campania, Mostra D'Oltremare, Naples
- 2001** *Risoluzione light di Laboratorio*, Casina Pompeiana, Naples
Rassegna video internazionale curated by Raffaella Morra, Studio Morra, Naples
Laboratorio, curated by Ismaele Monte di Dio, Naples
- 1997** *Pour Artaud*, curated by G. Perretta, Galleria Bianca Pilat, Milan
Laboratorio Politico di fine secolo 2, curated by G. Perretta, Teatro degli Artisti, Rome
- 1996** *Pour Bataille, Dossografia del dilettantismo*, curated by G. Perretta, Galleria de' Serpenti, Teatro Politecnico, Rome
Laboratorio Politico di fine secolo curated by G. Perretta, Per Mari e Monti, Macerata
- 1995** *Corto Circuito*, Festival Europeo della Comunicazione audiovisiva breve, Naples
One Fax Show, Galleria Volante
- 1993** *Quattro giorni a Palermo*, Studio Aperto Multimediale, Naples
- 1990** *Sei artisti dell'Istituto Napoletano di Cultura*, Galleria Avida Dollars, Milan
- 1989** *Walk don't Walk*, Antiquariat e buchlandlung an der musikhochschule, Köln
We, Galleri Sommering, Köln
- 1988** *Documenta banana*, Ultimate Akademie, Köln

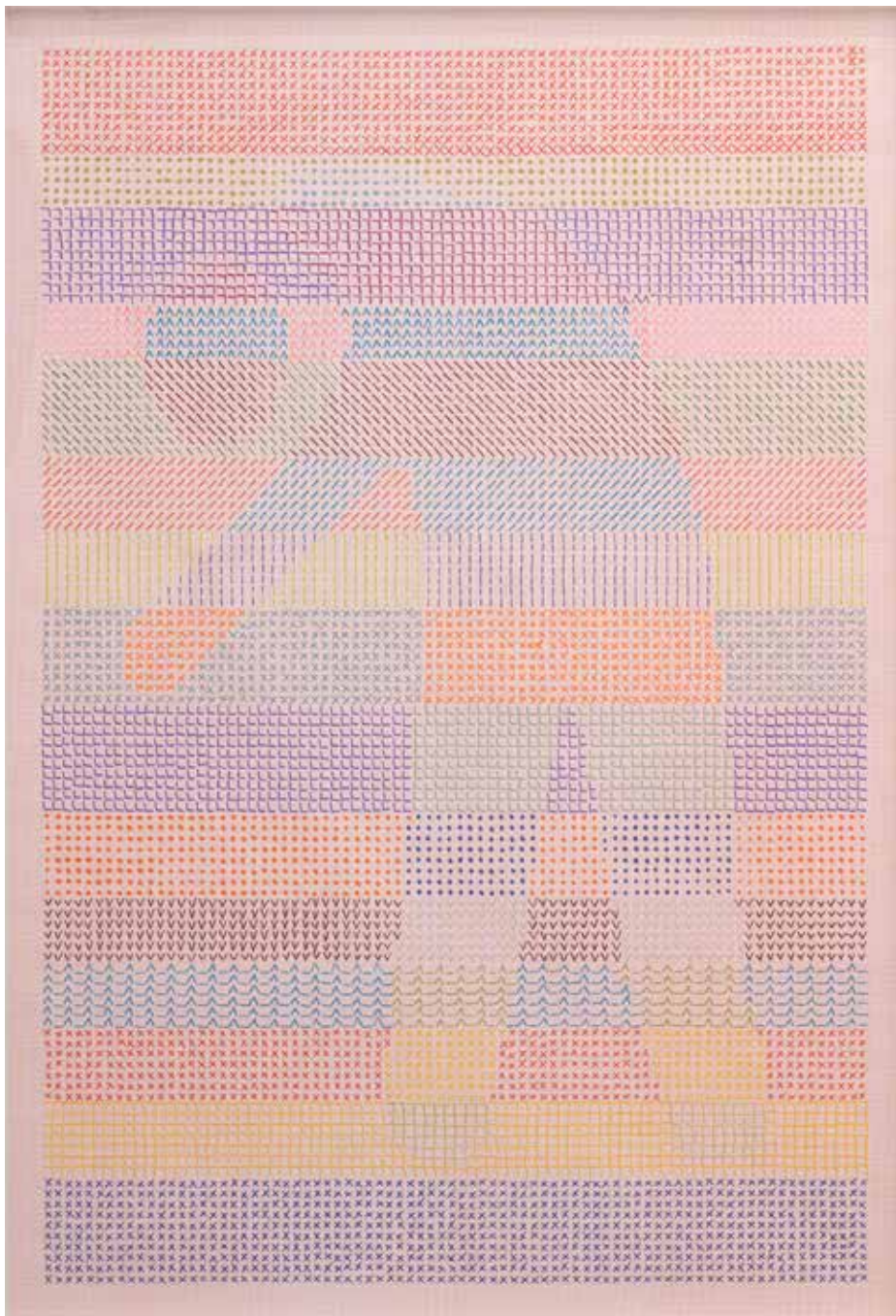
Bibliography

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 Civiltà Delle Macchine, n.1/2023, Fondazione Leonardo
- 2021** *così fan tutti, artworks form the collection of Ernesto Esposito*, text by M. Agliottone, edizioni Art'm
- 2020** *L'Arte ir-ritata si racconta*, Nicola Valentino, Ed. Sensibili alle Foglie
- 2019** *Manifatture*, Kunstmuseum Luzern and NERO Editions, texts by Bice Curiger, Fanni Fetzler, Rita Selvaggio
Murder Magazine n. 03, Blood / Home, editors Sita Valrùn, and Bergrùn Anna Hallsteinsdóttir, Los Angeles
- 2016** *16a Quadriennale d'arte Roma, Altri Tempi Altri Miti*, edizioni NERO 2015
- 2015** *Sleepless – The bed in history and contemporary art*, 21er Haus, Wien

- 2013** *Intermedium*, Museo MADRE, Naples, ELECTA
Sette Opere per la Misericordia, curated by Mario Codognato, Pio Monte della Misericordia Napoli. Edizione arte'm
- 2012** *Radici*, curated by Eugenio Viola, Fondazione Malvina Menegaz, Casalbasso, (TE), Italy, Maretti Editore
- 2011** *ILLUMInazioni*, 54. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, la Biennale di Venezia, Marsilio Editori
Giulia Piscitelli, Modern Painters, November 2011
Giulia Piscitelli: Contested Zones, text by Kathy Noble, Art Monthly, October 2011
Italia in Opera, curated by Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, edizione Bollati Boringhieri Editore, Torino
"Interviste illuminate". Giulia Piscitelli, text by Gino Pisapia, ArsKey July, 2011
Premio Maretti, curated by Eugenio Viola, Museo Pecci, Prato, Italy
Rischi Minori, text by Stefano Chiodi, Salvatore Lacagnina, Fondazione Giuliani, Rome
- 2010** *SPECIAL PROJECT by Giulia Piscitelli, Trasformazione Libera*, NERO Magazine, No 22 Winter
Videoreport Italia 2008.09, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea di Monfalcone, Italy
Languages and Experimentations, curated and text by Verzotti, Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Museo MART, Silvana Editoriale, Milano
Inseguire le ombre, text by Stefano Chiodi, Flash Art n°280 February Edizione Italiana
Between Me and You, text by Pàdraig Timoney, Frieze, April 2010
- 2009** *Barock*, curated by E. Cicelyn e M. Codognato, Museo MADRE, Naples, Electa
Contro Biennale, text by Stefano Chiodi, Specchio n. 583, June 2009
The spirit in any condition does not burn, Premio Furla Giovani Artisti Italiani VII edition, Edizioni Charta, Milan
Filippo Romeo, Artforum September 2009
Videoreport Italia 2006.07, Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea di Monfalcone
- 2008** *Arte, non icone pubblicitarie*, text by Stefano Chiodi, Specchio n. 577, December 2008
50 lune di saturno, T2 Torino Triennale, ed Skira
Camera con vista, PAN, Palazzo delle Arti, Napoli, ed. Electa Napoli
Dai tempo al tempo, curated by Joseph Del Pesco, Fiona Parry, Pelin Uran, Fondazione Sandretto re Rebaudengo, Guarene d'Alba, Italy
When things cast no shadow, 5th Berlin Biennial for Contemporary, text by Stephanie Von Spreter, Jrp/Ringier Zurich
Italia italie italien italy wlochy, Arcos, Museo d'arte Contemporanea Sannio, ed Electa
Fate presto, text by Giuseppe Fonseca, Centro Studi di Arte Contemporanea, Salerno, Italy
- 2007** Beatrice Salvatore, tema celeste, March/April 2007
- 2004** *Sensi contemporanei in Campania*, Utopia Station revisited-50esima esposizione internazionale d'arte della Biennale di Venezia, Mario Adda Editore
- 2000** Filippo Romeo, Pompeiorama n°3/8, 2000 Electa Napoli
- 1997** *Laboratorio politico di fine secolo 2*, Teatro degli artisti, Roma, ed. Dell'ortica Bologna
Pour Artaud, Galleria Bianca Pilat, Milano, ed. Dell'ortica Bologna
- 1996** *Laboratorio politico di fine secolo*, ed. Per mari e monti, Macerata
Pour Bataille, dossografia del dilettantismo, Galleria de' serpenti, Teatro Politecnico, Roma, ed Collant



Schiavo charta visa
2022, ink on paper, 13x9 cm



Schiavo schema del motivo
2022, felt tip pen on graph paper 80 gr., 123x88 cm

The starting point is the legend of a historical atlas published in the 1980s. In some of its maps, under the heading "other activities", amidst hunting, fishing and products of colonial trade (arms, leather and shipyards) a symbol is featured: it is a slave, a man hunched over and bent by fatigue.

The discovery of this legend triggered a series of reflections on the past and present use of human resources and the very concept of the human being as a commodity of colonial exploitation.

Starting from these ancient geographical maps, the artist questions the places and identities of today's slaves and reflects on a possible contemporary mapping.

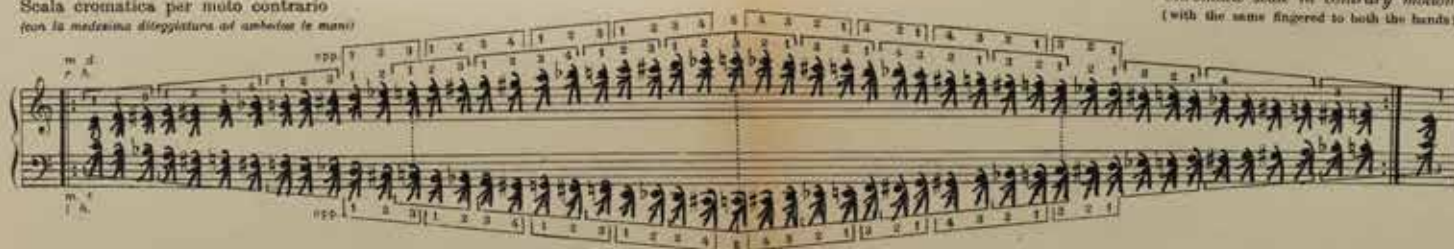
The profile of a human figure, with its head lowered, almost a hieroglyphic, is embedded in already existing paper materials. It is as if it had always been there, even if not visible, revealing its history both near and distant, and certainly still very relevant: a negative hallucination, for which one cannot see what actually exists, to quote the social research cooperative Sensibili alle Foglie.

All the note-heads of a musical score become slave-heads, a long procession of slaves. The weaving motif of a knit or a rug reveals the shape of the slave through the patterns of colours and stitches. The slave also emerges as a stamp made by the artist on a sheet of her own cancelled passport, it is drawn on a sheet stamped by the Ministry of the Interior Electoral Service, and placed on the cover of a notebook from the fascist era in lieu of the name of the owner.

SCALE CROMATICHE CHROMATIC SCALES

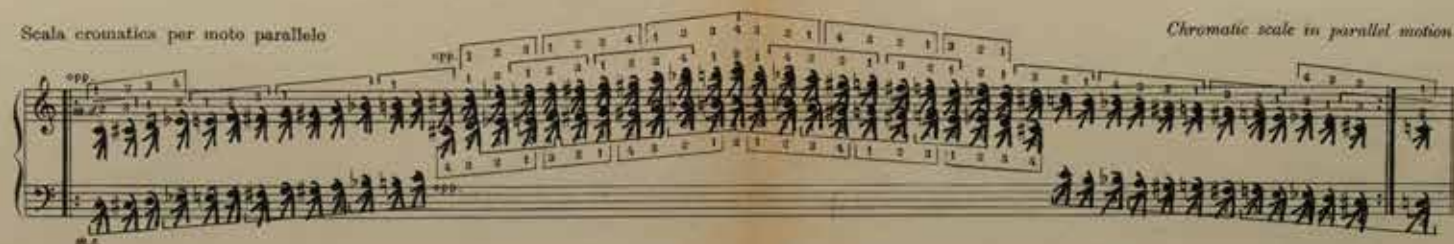
Scala cromatica per moto contrario
(con la medesima dizione di scrittura ad ambedue le mani)

Chromatic scale in contrary motion
(with the same fingered to both the hands)



Scala cromatica per moto parallelo

Chromatic scale in parallel motion



Scala cromatica per moto contrario
(con dizione di scrittura differente per le due mani)

Chromatic scale in contrary motion
(with different fingered for both the hands)





Nella Società, in Gesellschaft, 2019, exhibition view, Kunstmuseum Luzern

PITTURA MUTA



Pittura Muta #31#029
2019, silver leaf on oil on canvas, 40x35cm

Pittura Muta is realised through a masking of colour on paintings on canvas produced by unknown painters from the 1930s to the 1970s, depicting landscapes, still lifes and scenes of everyday life.

The masking of the colour is achieved through the application of silver leaf over the entire surface of the canvas. The characteristic of silver leaf, which is infinitely thin, is that it covers the part underneath whilst simultaneously revealing any existing marks or matter.

With this system, the skeleton of the painting is returned to light, like a photographic negative, an X-ray or a relief map.

The original paintings were purchased at various flea markets, selecting artefacts that correspond to a taste, but also to a social class.

Painting, more than any other artistic technique, holds a place of honour in decoration, not only of furnishings, but also of the political, economic and social status of a class.

These works mutate from absorbing surfaces into reflecting surfaces, like prehistoric mirrors, a reflection of our history, imagination and modern recognition. Mute, naked painting.

In the Italian language, the word *muta* has two meanings: a person who is unable to express themselves with the voice and, in biology, a change of skin.

Pittura Muta was created in 2019 and exhibited on the occasion of the artist's solo exhibition *Nella Società, in Gesellschaft*, at the Kunstmuseum Lucerne.



Pittura Muta, 2023, exhibition view, Galleria Fonti, Naples



Pittura Muta #31#032
2019, silver leaf on oil on canvas, 40x30cm



Nella Società, in Gesellschaft, 2019, exhibition view, Kunstmuseum Luzern

Human Resources (on the floor)

2019, Ju-gommaflex on a 3,00 mm rubber canvas tile, 28,5x28,5 cm each, 150 pieces, 826,5 x 541,5 cm area

Human Resources

The square symbol of definition and delimitation.

Adopted by the Pythagoreans as a symbol of justice; it represents the law.

Symbol of the earth.

Creativity is a human resource, it has the ability to induce us to find ways to stay within a predefined system, creating a slit from the inside.

Like this design of a child who is forced to alternate full squares with voids, and where he uses all his creativity in error.

Creative error has created a hole.

The project consists of 150 square tiles of about 28,5 x 28,5 cm, the material used for the realization of the tiles is the black rubber, the whole will be installed on the floor forming the design I proposed.

The original design is by Elvis Jaggi Germano of 5 years.





Nella Società, in Gesellschaft, 2019, exhibition view, Kunstmuseum Luzern



Una nuvola come tappeto (005)
2019, Prayer cotton rug on wood, 96x66x62 cm

The place of prayer is the place where the Soul also confesses his fears. And it asks for help. It is the place of contradiction, because fear kills the Soul.

This project consists of an installation of 21 Catholic kneeling rooms completely covered with carpets for Muslim prayer use.

The title is taken from the text of Erri De Luca, which translates from Hebrew on line 39 of Psalm 105, where they sing God who guides the Jews in the desert.



Una nuvola come tappeto (016)
2019, Prayer cotton rug on wood, 96x66x62 cm



Disarmo
2019, Video, audio, (HD 1920×1080), 02'36"

Disarmato /dizar'mato/ adj. [past part. of disarmare].
– 1. [disarmed: a d. force] ≈ unarmed. armed. 2. (fig.)
[helpless: feeling helpless in the face of difficulties] ≈
undefended, defenceless, vulnerable. I weak, frail. tou-
gh, strong. invulnerable. (Enciclopedia Treccani).

I am helpless, weak, but tough too; I'm vulnerable, but strong as well. I may be defenceless but at the same time I deal with the difficulties I encounter. Like a coin I'm the obverse and the reverse, but I'm also the edge. And it is on the edge that I re-create myself. It was on the edge of my life that I met Yuriy Onishchuk, a Ukrainian from Zmerinka whom I asked in 2019 to take part in the realisation of a video project. Disarmo. It was all in Yuriy's hands, no margin of error was allowed for. The video had to be shot in one go, the time set aside for the take short. We did a simulation to work out lighting, support, set up, but everything was in Yuriy's hands. There was only one steel object to be cut. Action. The sparks from the grinder looked like fireworks, the screech of the tool in action sounded like a factory floor. Men at work. Two minutes and thirty-six seconds of bated breath. We are disarmed.

text by Giulia Piscitelli



Ceneri

2019, Ash from a steel revolver, glass, graphite, silver, 9,3×3,7×6cm



Nella Società, in Gesellschaft, 2019, exhibition view, Kunstmuseum Luzern

Pour Bataille

1996, Photograph on baryta Hahnemühle Photo Rag 315gr. on aluminium, 135 × 90 cm each

Ricalchi ("Copies"), imprints created using acrylic paint to trace the outline of a penis on a sheet of transparent plastic, and then in turn utilized to make unauthorized colored figures on the walls of a stand. This repetitive gesture serves to objectivize the obscenity of the image, its derisive force with regard to the institutional space it has infiltrated, to explore the genetic link with the "thing" that produced it, and ultimately, to evoke contact with the living body and thus to stage (as we can see even more clearly in the 1996 photographic triptych *Pour Bataille*) a role-play with the male member, with its symbolic weight and its social meanings, filtered through key themes of feminist criticism (the male regime of the gaze, the sexualization of the image, the unconscious relationship between offer and possession that runs through it, etc.).

text by Stefano Chiodi, *Rischi Minori*, 2011





Anime, 2019, exhibition view, Casa Masaccio, San Giovanni Valdarno, Italia

Planeta

2018, Kevlar fabric, nylon, 220 x 180(x2) cm



Ex Voto Suscepto
2019, 24 kt gold galvanic bath on brass, steel, 15,6×2,6×1,3 cm



Live the Dream, 2016, exhibition view, Galleria Fonti Napoli

I could describe these works like ecological fields of the soul. They are part of a research about the connection between earth and sky and they are connected by the real proportion and the divine proportion.

The real proportion is made by the reproduction in scale of the maps I use as support for my artworks, the divine proportion is made by the reproduction in scale decided by me of historical artworks I choose for the selected maps on which I reproduce in golden leaf just the halos of the original images.

The old geographic map shows the changing of the borders made by politics or by geological events during the history. So we can make a virtual trip into the landscape of time.

Art history from XI to XVI century depicts the Divine prominently through the iconography of the halo.

Halo is an iconographic element used not only in the Christian history, as shown by the example with the three divinities Baalshamin, Aglibol and Malakbel coming from the city of Palmira in Syria

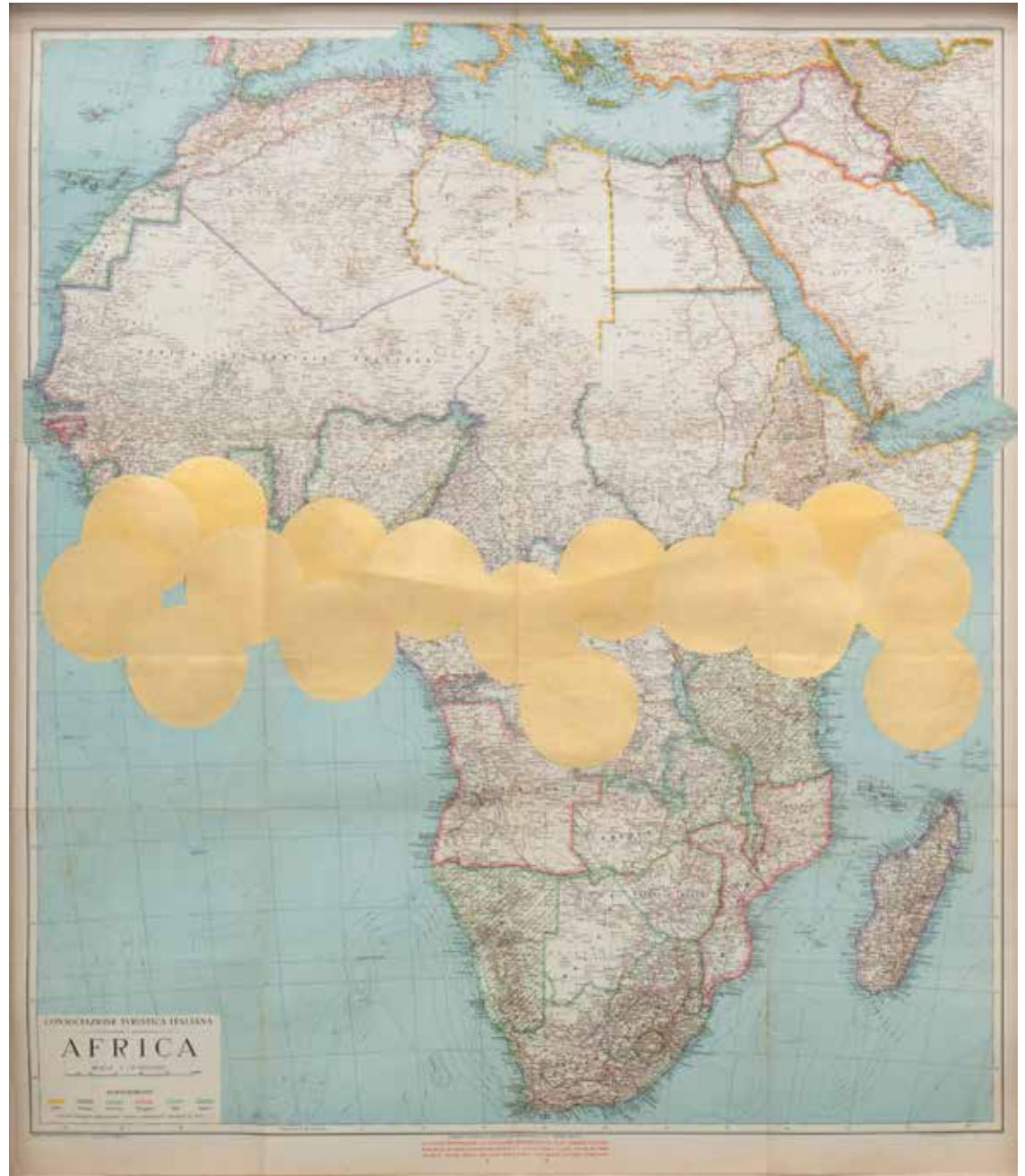
I realize my works removing halos from the characters of some ancient masterpieces of art like frescos, miniatures, tempera paintings.

The protagonists of my works are represented in the lack of their bodies, in their golden condition.

Almost all those old maps were realized using light colours like pink, green, light blue: they look like realized by children for children.

The position of those golden circles could remind the placements for a military air strike or a surface attack like in Risiko, but even a landscape full of undiscovered resources.

For every single map I choose a specific artwork to trace.



Scene della vita della Vergine e altri Santi
2017, golden leaf on paper, 110 x 97,5 cm

FERENS ART GALLERY

Appropriating a series of historical maps that date from 1930 to 1957, conceptual artist Giulia Piscitelli explores how we distinguish between land and sea, borders and territories, and how in this way we create and define a sense of self and other.

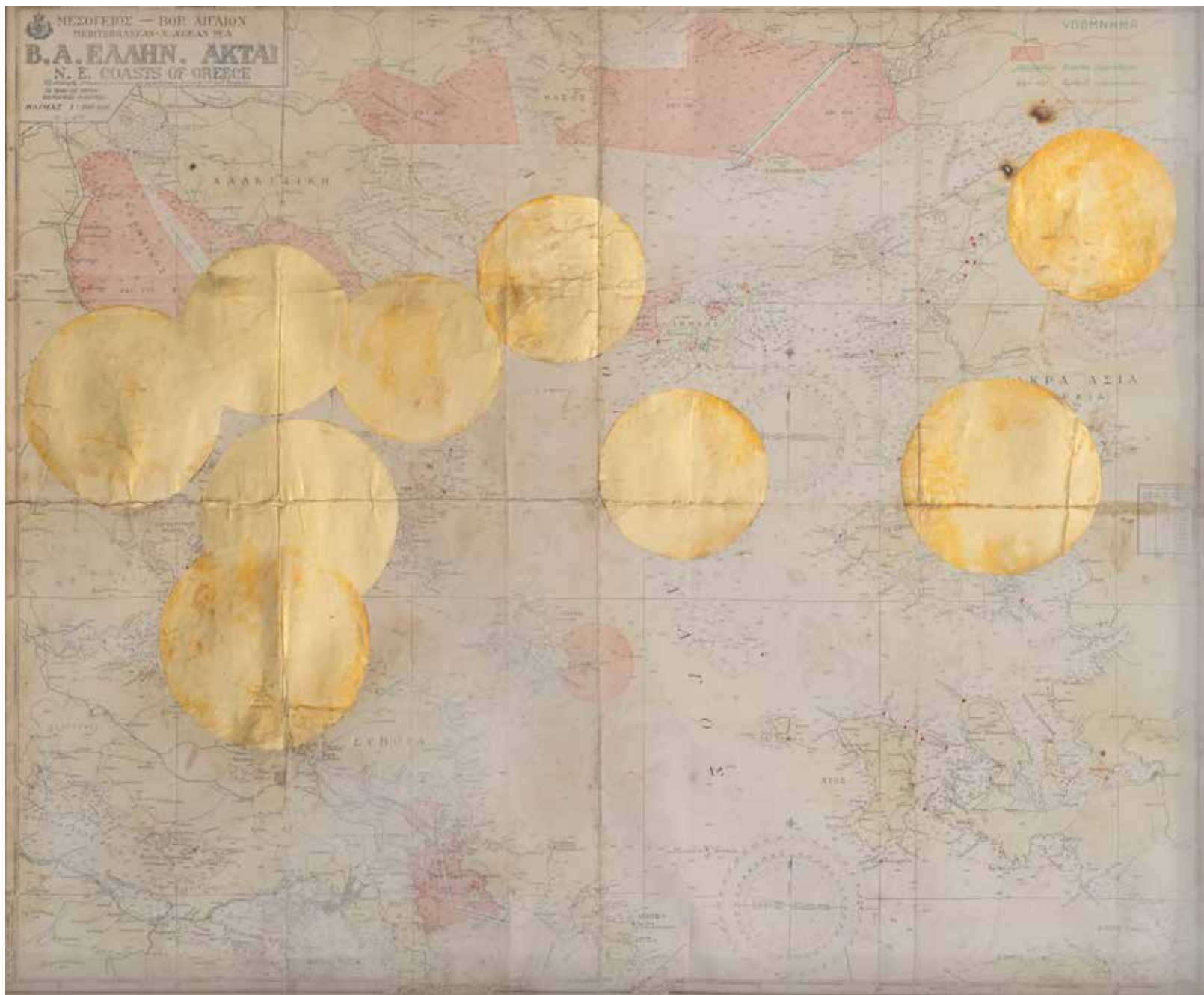
Gold-leaf discs are overlaid onto Piscitelli's maps, copying the position of saints' haloes from Early Renaissance altarpieces, which in their original church settings provided a visible means for viewers to distinguish between the divine and earthly realms. Political geography, like other belief-systems, shifts and changes over time. Through the absence of saints' bodies in the artist's appropriated maps, Piscitelli highlights how man-made constructs affect collective understanding, be those beliefs faith-based and spiritual, or political and earthly.

As a port-city, Hull's collections are defined by its maritime heritage. Piscitelli's recent map works resonate by bringing new, multilayered perspectives and a contemporary slant to the city's complex interactions and relationships with the sea. In this acquisition for Ferens Art Gallery, a 1935 military map of the Tyrrhenian Sea evokes for Piscitelli, 'a state of alert linked back to drownings over the centuries' and connects with the contemporary global refugee crisis. The overlaid golden haloes reference an Early Renaissance panel painting by Lorenzo Veneziano Christ Rescuing Saint Peter from Drowning (1370). On a human level, Piscitelli's concern about loss of life at sea resonates with the experience of Hull's fishing communities. Her work also provokes thinking afresh in the context of a now largely forgotten aspect of the development of Hull, through its acceptance and absorption of migrant communities over the centuries.

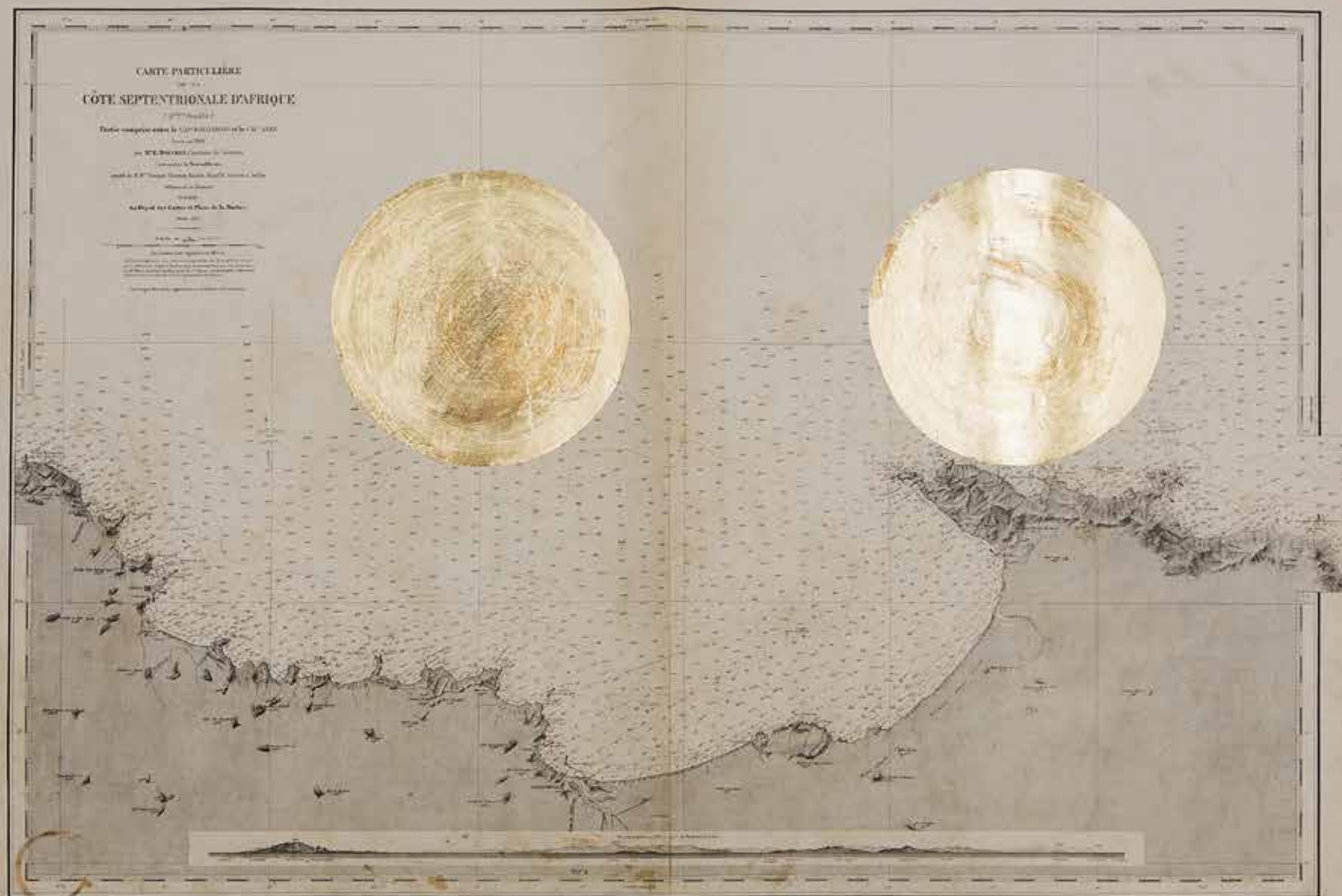
Presented by the Contemporary Art Society, 2018/19



San Pietro salvato dalle acque
2017, golden leaf on paper, 69 × 106 cm



Antimension
2017, golden leaf on paper, ,79x94cm



Annunciazione (Beato Angelico)
2016, golden leaf on paper, 75 x 106 cm



Wide Rule, 2015, exhibition view, KayneGriffinCorcoran Gallery, Los Angeles

Wide Rule

Wide Rule includes a series of tapestries, sculptures, drawing, photographs, and a video work. The phrase 'Wide Rule' is taken from the cover of a typical American notebook, used simply to describe the spacing between the lines on each page. Separated individually, these two words seem to stand in opposition, yet together they suggest an openness to language and its interpretation. In this exhibition Piscitelli seeks, in her own words, to "give wideness to regulation."

Is enacted in repetitive motion, like the mechanisms of a factory, while the wig half-obscuring Piscitelli's face takes an excerpt from Pop Art. Emphasizing the tension between mundane action and its alienation from the 'correct' context, Piscitelli meditates upon the complex relationship between labor, subjectivity, and gender. Further indexing this relationship are two photographs of a woman—in one she stands outside of a factory, in another she is sewing—who could easily be mistaken for the artist herself.

In her work, Piscitelli has found herself driven to rescue the debris of modern life, often shifting the visual significance or site of 'meaning' within these objects. Referencing icons of Italian cultural history, in a new set of sculptures Piscitelli has repurposed a group of objects. Seemingly united by their intended use in assisting or creating movement, Piscitelli adorns each with the Ferrari emblem. The yellow logo, pulled from covers of found Ferrari Encyclopedias, represents the apex of Italian industry and manufacturing, yet it also signifies a culture of luxury and excess deeply at odds with the country's recent austerity measures.

Wide Rule includes a new group of tapestries, each making reference to symbols found within American history and often with a pointed relation to masonry or, more generally, to 'work'. Using the textural richness of velvet as a canvas, Piscitelli uses bleach to draw, a process in which creation and destruction become inextricably entwined. Several tapestries display a symbol of utility—for example an anvil, a tuning fork, a level, and a compass—humble objects of work or production yet nonetheless each with their own historical and cultural significance. On others appear more material icons such as the "1" of a dollar bill, a simple handshake, or the familiar Coca Cola script written in a foreign language, portending the slyer undertones of creation and exchange. Shown alongside these works is a video of the artist engaging with her tapestries through the familiar domestic ritual of ironing. This performance of historically 'female' work

KayneGriffinCorcoran Gallery, Los Angeles, 2015



Ferrari Carrello
2015, Iron, plastic, paper, 93 × 40 × 33 cm



Wide Rule
2015, HDDVD Video, Sound, 15'59"10", Loop



Wide Rule, 2015, exhibition view, KayneGriffinCorcoran Gallery, Los Angeles



Tre Carte
2012, ink on lithographic stone, 20 x 23 x 5 cm

INTERMEDIUM

(solo exhibition, MADRE - Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina Napoli, 2013)

The new exhibition project by Giulia Piscitelli is titled INTERMEDIUM, Latin word used by the artist with the meaning of be in the middle, between limits of space and time that define a creative process not finished yet.

Intermedium becomes the meaning that goes with Giulia Piscitelli's work that exhibits in MADRE Museum works realized in a period going from '90s to nowadays.

It is not a retrospective, but an overview on the creative process of the artist which is never made of separate moments but of a continuum of ideas and objects that from time to time, are reused and put into play. It is no coincidence if some of the works realized in the past years will be exhibited for the first time.

This is the case of S.A.M., a video edited for the occasion and that collects images shot during the 90s within Studio Aperto Multimediale, an independent laboratory-space founded in 1992 by artists and that for some years was one of the most interesting place in Napoli.

Also the photographic and video works, collected in a project titled La Mela, are archive images in which the artist

reveals the duality of an Italian emigrant in America who succeeded in combining his work in a restaurant with his creativity.

This one and other works refer to a self-consciousness path in which, from time to time, various aspects as the work, the body, the sexual identity, the memory, the death are involved, all of them linked somehow to the necessity of a pacification with the conflicting strengths that inhabit the ego and all of them tended to create a sort of suspension between past and present, between what you were and what you will be.

This is the concept also expressed in recent works: Tree in which, between two tapestries representing two sections of a trunk, the viewer stays in "the middle" relative to a big uniqueness; the series Rendiresto realized in marble, almost an eternal crystallization of a daily exchange;

Contested Zones, an installation realized in Cubbit Gallery London in 2011 for the first time, composed by streamers glued on wall that reproduce a barrier existing in Napoli, Nisida Porto Paone, where the reformatory resides. The barrier that divides the reformatory from the beach is a symbol of division, of a social and territorial intermedium; Tre carte, project composed by a lithographic stone used for the realization of playing cards and of a video in which is possible to see the artist's hands from above playing the "three-card monte" using plexiglass transparent rectangles on the stone itself. The project comprehends also three tapestries put on the wall, realized fading the fabric using bleach, that represent respectively the three playing cards.



Tre Carte

2012, bleach on cloth, 290 x 150 cm



Intermedium, 2013, exhibition view, Museo MADRE, Napoli



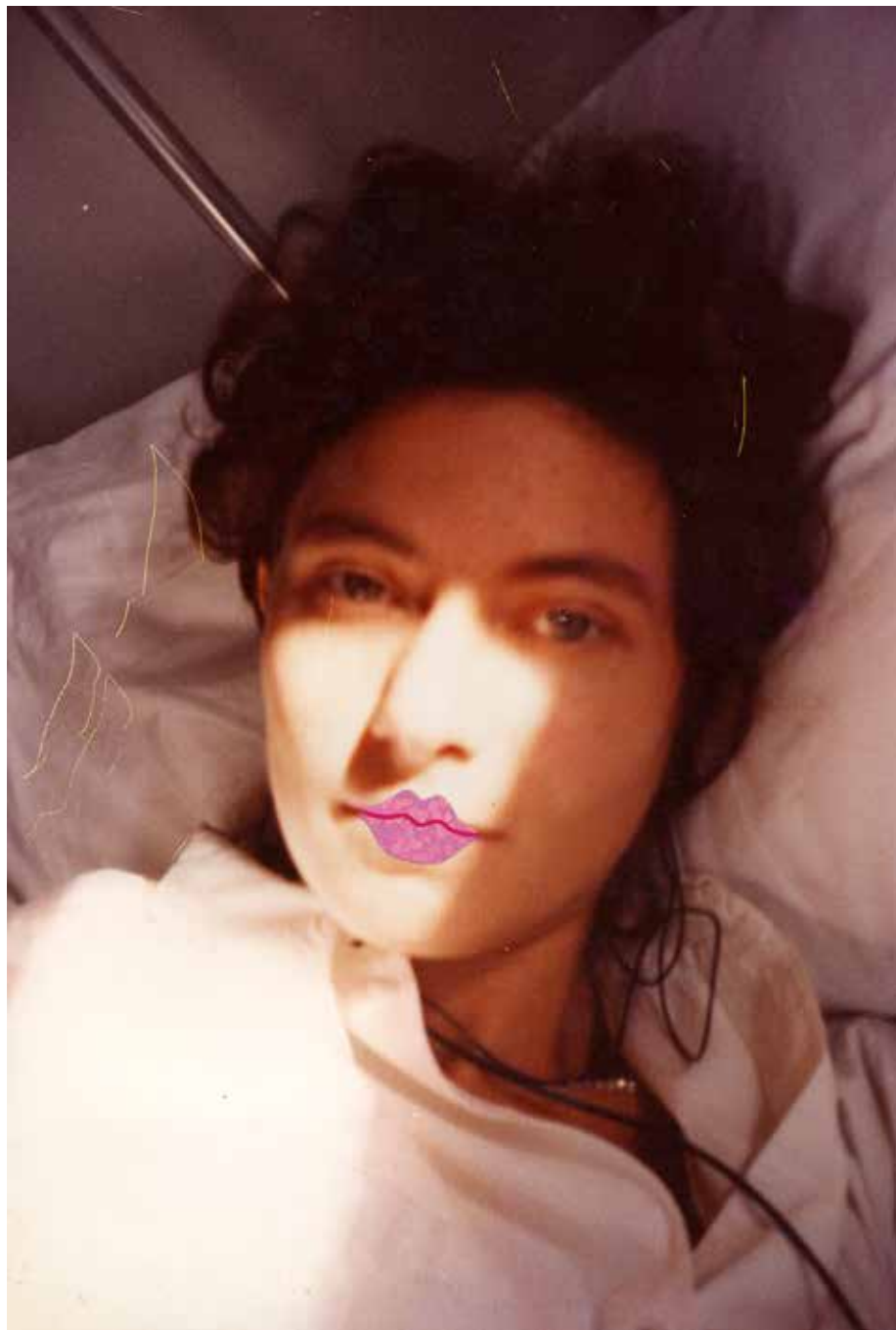
La Mela
2004, lambda print mounted on forex, 90 x 110 cm



La Mela
2000 - 2013, DVD video audio, 10'11"08"



Intermedium, 2013, exhibition view, Museo MADRE, Napoli



Biopsia
1992, photo print, stiker, 10 x 15 cm



Furore
1996, passport photograph, 11,5 x 9 cm



Maschera bellezza
2009, photo print on satin cotton mounted on aluminium, 50 x 62 cm



Scintilla
2010, Rubber shoe upper, steel nails, 9 × 23 × 9 cm



Rendiresto
2013, Marble, 11 pieces, 22 × 18 × 3 cm each



Rendiresto (Changegiver)

Money trays come from bars. They are not a real outdated object, but their form expressed by Giulia Piscitelli reminds me particularly of the Italian cafés of the 50's. Piscitelli considers the gestural immutability of exchanging coins on a concave surface from a non-nostalgic perspective – indeed this artist happily decided not to envisage this feeling is her poetics. Through the gentleness of that curve, fingers can easily reach flat, small value but rigid coins, rather than banknotes that you could grab anyway even if you had slightly wet or greasy hands.

The money tray is overall tactile, obviously including its pronunciation.

You drop your small change, the cashier's hand takes it and maybe will give you some more back.

It is a small value exchange. But that curved surface could also induce to voluptuousness. My memory – based mainly on movies – goes back for a second to cashiers in post-war bars as the only women, in their small tower-cashes isolated from the bar counter, in the men's social microcosm of the historic evolution of the Italian trattoria. Girls, young ladies, bartender's mother, characters of work emancipation but also tangible objects of desire displayed next to sweets.

The series of 11 different marble money trays was created for the solo exhibition of Giulia Piscitelli at MADRE in Naples, opened in May 2013. They were displayed in one room almost at the end of the non-chronological exhibition itinerary (in a long and narrow base where each item was next to the other one) together with the series Rischì Minori (2010) entailing work garments and uniforms, folded and stiffened through a latex coating conveying a vaguely pictorial result.

This is evidence that we are dealing with body and economy. Work, tiredness, factory, danger and then my dear garments - where I experience all that – I go back home, wash and fold you, everything is done: life in this series (created prior to Rendiresto) is stuck, as if it were frozen; it is displayed, hanging and not sticking to the wall, but with small metal bars creating distance, in a demonstrative but also aggressive way – because of their pointed ends. (Rendi-

resto could be the feminine of Rischì Minori, a new iconography of the uterine protection.) On the walls of that room hence these daily-life uniforms and in the middle this line of multiplied and empty objects devoted to exchange. You can touch Rendiresto; you may be seduced by their marble surface and swing back and forth with your fingers. The rhetoric of vacuum can be won with a sensitive, minimal experience.

The idea of exchange – as well as its quantification and purchasing power) becomes incomprehensible since the Rendiresto are located in the middle of the room. The position of the cashier and the one of the customer are not there any longer, there is no more direction where you give and one where you receive.

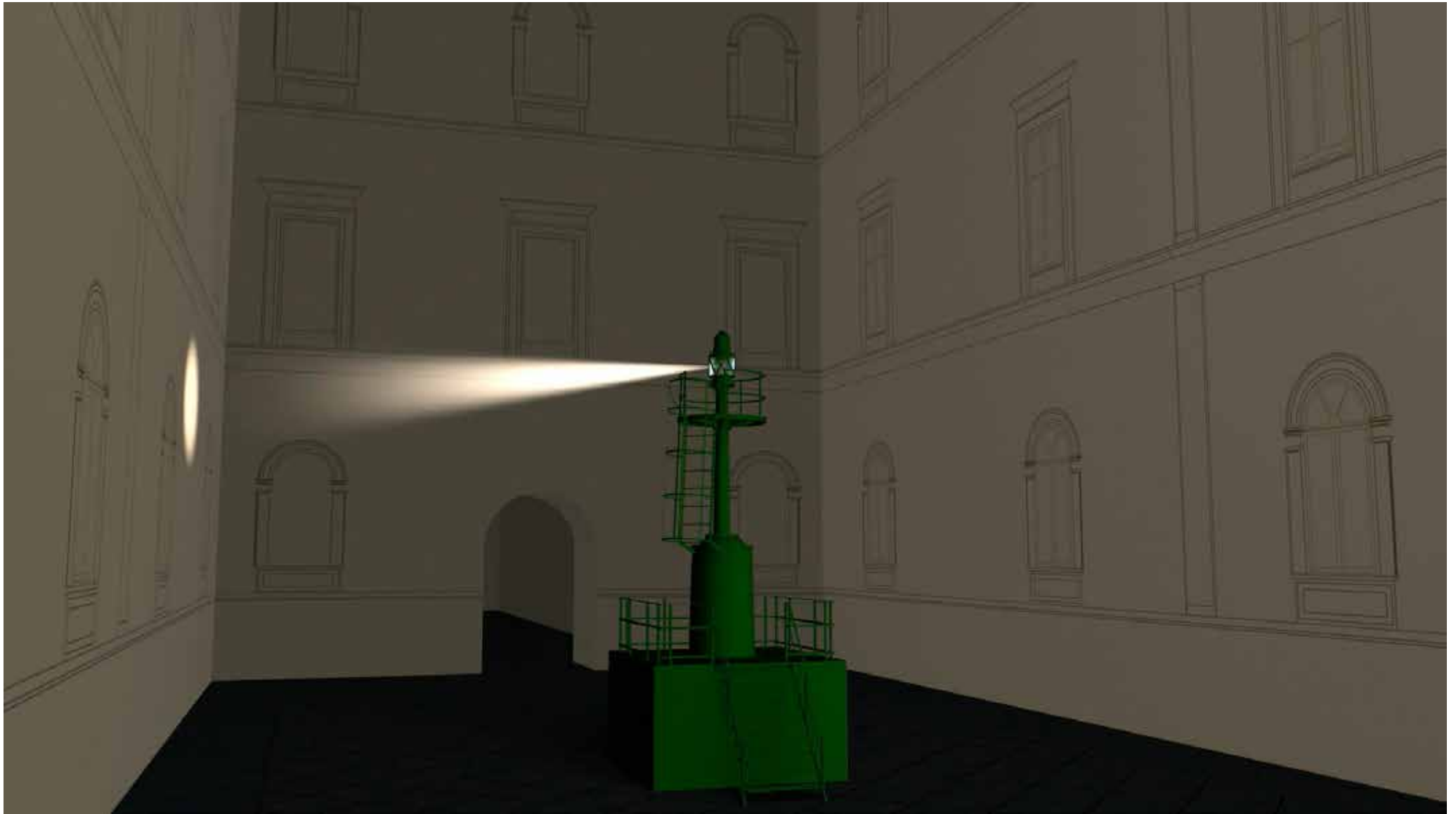
Just like the protagonist of the room at the MADRE exhibition devoted to an Italian restaurant in Little Italy: he was the owner, but he enjoyed having fun and entertaining his clients informally like a home party – excessive, run-down, smiling. Is he a customer or does he work here?

Did I give or did I take?

Did I give money back or did I pay?

The question is outdated in the time of plastic money. The answer is swinging, sensuous and melancholy, uncatchable, unsolved.

text by Eva Fabbri, Rendiresto, T-A-X-I, 2015



Lighthouse Project
2013, 3D animation, 2' loop

Hovering Over Send.

On the steps of New York Public Library, people take photographs of each other, smiling. The people who are in this town, and who visit it, come from all over the world. A lot of them find themselves standing in front of this building, and under the portico, there's no real need for anyone to 'paint 'library' on the library'.¹

Onto the house of words used is added the inscription of the image of the person. A photo in front of the library, part of recognition of humans by humans of its voluntary great work of accessible story and communication. Here is a monument, adherence, proximity, (easily understood, the basis of souvenir image), my nearness to this trove of names that could be any names at all! And here is the wordless name of me, inherited body, the new cave of my ancestors, inherited face, inhering and cohering with the fame of the name but the fame of the name that could be any name that comes from all 'we' and for us all and by us all. There was an ancient famous library at Alexandria in Egypt, destroyed nearly two thousand years ago. International scholars came from far and wide to study there. The reason we know of it is the physical words that escaped in time; some of those words say that library had an inscription on the wall. "The place of the cure of the soul."

Given how much hectoring capital's intrusive message is windowlicking most adjacent space, the New York Library stands out. It gets respect without demand, as an active cultural centre, where new things are being made and discovered in the midst of things that were made and discovered, and a lot of the time, with their direct help. I find it a genuinely direct and strange thing that is happening here, outside and in.

On a stairwell inside the building, a quote from the writer Toni Morrison is cut into soft marble from Vermont. "Access to knowledge is the superb, the supreme act of truly great civilisations. The New York Public Library is, in this regard, both symbol and act of what the best civilisation has to offer." She warns against the paranoia of any exclusive civilisation that would not be truly great, and the quote is set as a measurable standard. The craft of her admonition is to avoid nationalising

civilisation.

That famous library rule, silence, as much as possible. Vocal silence. It's easy to tune out the sounds of chair scrape, sigh, pen-clicking, keyboard tapping, stair climbing, book-cracking, throat-clearing. Subvocalisations murmur in the leaves of books and in the throats of visitors. There is a feel of voices. Easy community, unspoken. Going for break leave your notebooks on the desk. Wide open. It's nothing yet, that scribble in there, 'all those gyres and cubes and midnight things'.²

Sneezes in the library get the traditional blessing though. Everybody knows you can't help it. The sneeze sticks out too as something between speech and a sound- it's been taken as an appeal, but it's involuntary. The people doing work in the great reading rooms, and the visitors, keep their other exclamations inwards. Eureka! That's already in a book, eureka of pulling sources together. The info was there, just put myself to seeing it. I've got in the bath before, but today something clicked. Spoken words do ring out though, and take a certain longer path to fall into their messages. Being long inside oneself in this world of printed words, to hear them as originally invented is shocking. The sound of words has to be translated, as if heard for the first time... 'The library will begin closing in fifteen minutes'.

The study room walls are twelve shelves high, on two levels. Regular lines of tucked-in books, white designation labels on the bottom of every spine, yellow ones (CR) for catalogues raisonn  . The labels bubble along the shelves like foam pushed up the beach from windblown serried waves.

You can do a library visit via its catalogue or by grabby wandering- there's license in the very availability. Recuperation is in the movement of a hand, the taking down from a shelf. Inversion is the path that takes the discarded back to use. The stuff is on the shelf though- the library books are there and ready.

That is all they have to be. At some point they might be taken down, handled, opened, they might meet urgent voluntary efforts: the leaping light for your delight discovers...that most of the work done in here is voluntary...and is liable to head in whatever direction it feels, and guide itself through. Allowing time, research runs its course eventually. And it builds an inspirational atmosphere of purpose.

Here is what some humans have done, now with guardianship and labelling. Another group comes in to look around, eyecatch the incarcerated. You could be here doing this. Play your cards right. The visitors enjoy the being silent. A holiday within a holiday.

Still outside, people move up the steps constantly, closer to the portico, even when the main doors are closed; sit on the steps, the rocks under its name, like a tour group at a coast. Is there not some part of all the named rocky coastlines, the Giant's Causeway, for example, called the Library? There must be one somewhere. Words for place. Need them to get there. Nomenclature. There and here, and this and that; Montauk Point, Eddystone, Fraggie Rock, St. John's Point, Alexandria and Clonmacnoise. Wait, at Alexandria there was a library and a lighthouse? Hold on...

Yes. One of the Seven Wonders Of The Ancient World, the great lighthouse of Alexandria was built on an island off the Nile delta called Pharos. The lighthouse on Pharos lent its name to Greek, Persian and the Romance languages, pharos, fanus, faro.

Seen easily, even from shoals of Brooklyn, rhythmic camera flashes from the Empire State building's viewing platform. More visitors on the Sky Tour. Heavenly lightning. Making images from the non-location. Sending photons in the hope they come back. Eventually bounced flash. Such distance, such instance.

It takes a parabolic reflector to push new photons out in a beam. A slit in a rotating cowl also makes a messaging lamp. Regularity of pulse, or a shepherded beam, is intention. Rotation sends to surroundings. Different to a mute raging unrefuelled burn, that could be house, ship, meteor, planet, a life, all or one afire in the night.

Giulia Piscitelli lays out a project for the introduction of a lighthouse/faro into the courtyard of the Museo Madre. The attraction of this proposal, apart from its conceptual coherence encountering genuine magical contradictions in systems of display, is that it can do this while being imaginary, as yet an artist's impression. The model for a beacon like this, although non-central to most everyday experience, exists due to necessity, a real assessment of danger, steps taken to reduce potential harm. Its placement is generous, the cura of a 'state', maybe, or at least some more local adult concurrence, to warn about the territory it knows.

In a cruder sense, it's not exactly laissez-faire. The lighthouse is out there doing work for people, that's all it needs to be.

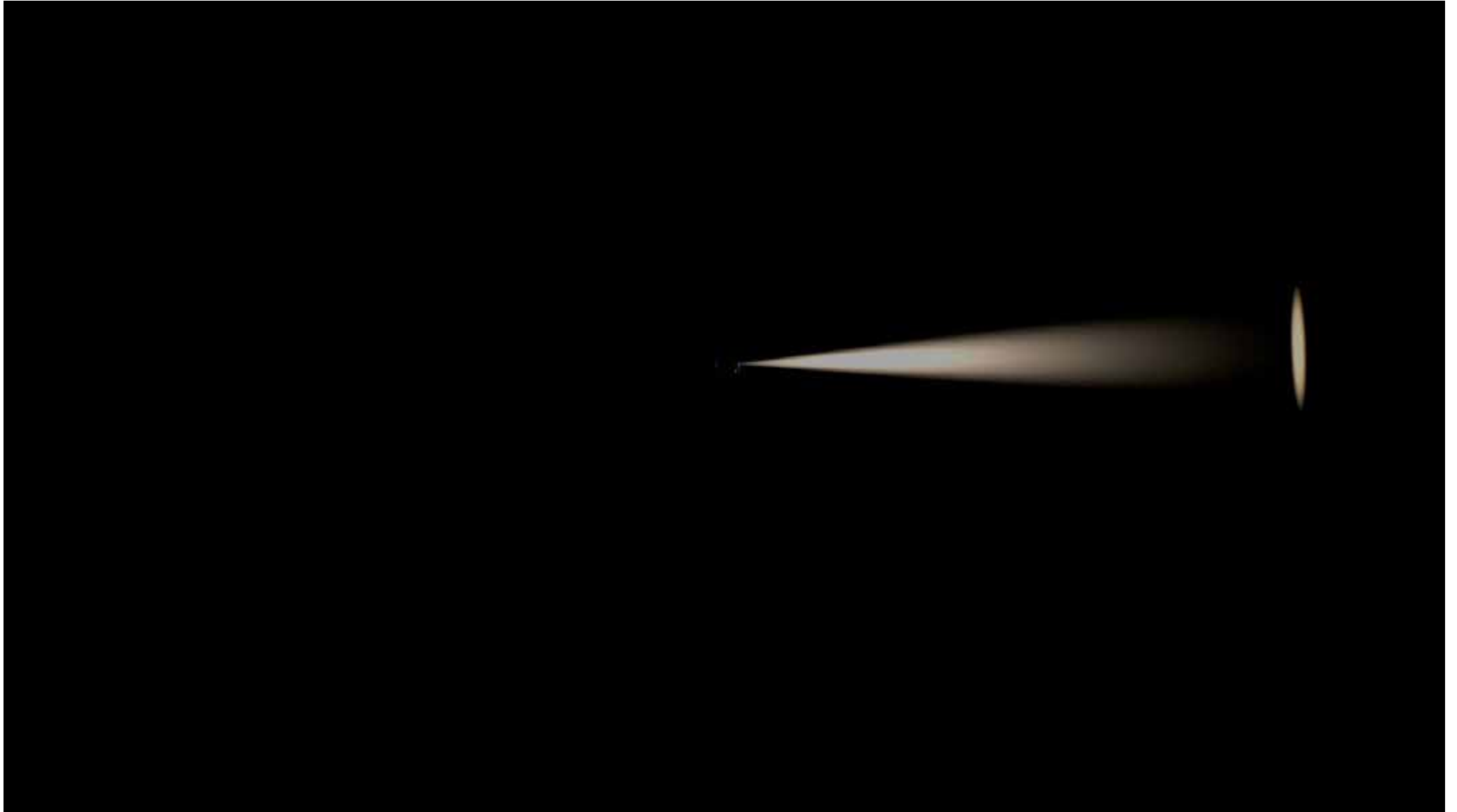
Giulia's Madre faro speaks of itself as a speaker of elsewhere, a literally truncated indication of a location and a distance, a placement, centrality to radial awareness and it's an invitation to stay away from the light. The faro, made new from plans, is an efficiency that implodes the museum by not beaconing its own position- rocks, avoid. It's too late now. Here's where I am in relation to warning, to what I know a signal means. It becomes a twisted lamp now, cyclically illuminating a surface, no longer just an indication of a source; so close now it sets off all sorts of excitements and alarms. The translation of an indicating source, the clearest possible information, into something that is not to be looked at, is to be looked at, is not to be looked at, a medium recycled into an object that minute by minute tries to refind its distance. A lighthouse beam in here is a scan by a prison searchlight. The exercise yard.

In the act of illuminating the physical frame, the repurposed building, the eye's retina sees itself thrown up as courtyard walls. Can reading that make the museum a brain, an eye, or both? The museum's precinct prevents 'proper' reach of the light, and exposes the idea of that propriety. The revelation of the precinct as itself containing an internally problematic space is a forceful moment. The courtyard retreat, being inside and outside at once, fundamentally affects the usual function of the object, and not solely in 'an operation of meaning'. It is asked by the museum, and by the faro, where is the limit of approach to object. And it is also asked how did it get in here in the first place? A slight panic ripples through the museum and out into the street...

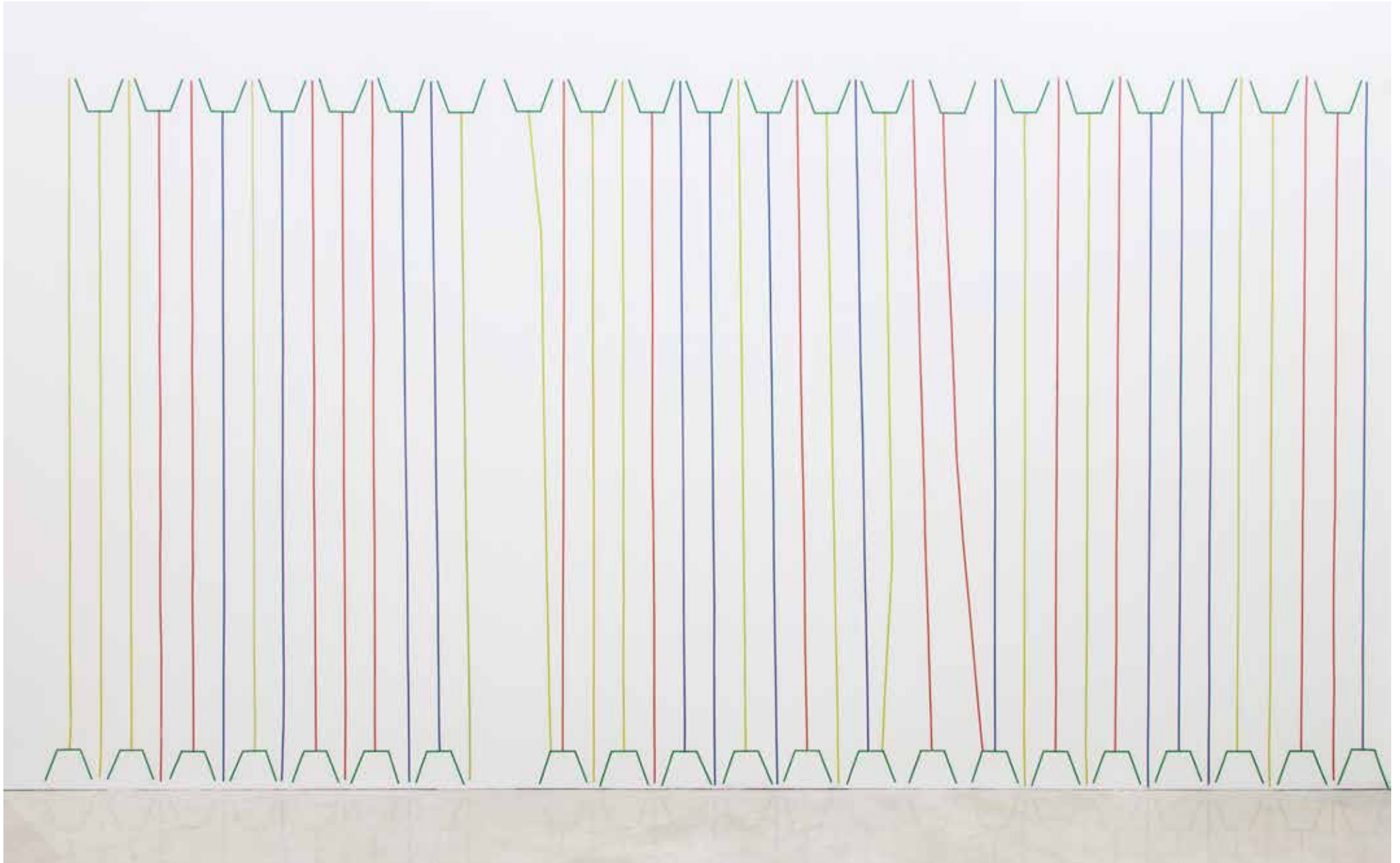
Some things look good in your house or your phone memory and are sufficient, but are not museum quality. This is. The faro is out there if needed, the books are in the library if needed. The library is a place to study, and the lighthouse is a keeper.

Text by Pádraig Timoney, Between Me and You, Frieze, 2010

1. Van Morrison For Mr. Thomas 1983
2. W.B. Yeats The Gift of Harun Al-Rashid 1928



Lighthouse Project
2013, 3D animation, 2' loop



Contested Zones

2011, streamers on wall, variable dimension (detail)

Intermedium, 2013, exhibition view, Museo MADRE, Napoli

The central piece in Piscitelli's exhibition at Cubitt is *Contested Zones*, 2011, inspired by her immediate surroundings. Off the coast of Naples is the volcanic Isle of Nisida, which houses a NATO naval base and juvenile detention centre. Prohibiting access to the island are broken though and patched up metal railings. Appearing like an abstract drawing Piscitelli will re-create these railings around three walls of the gallery using colourful paper streamers. She warns us not to be fooled by the bright and weak appearance of this paper barrier. "It marks your limits; never lower your guard."



Contested Zones, 2011, exhibition view, CUBITT Gallery, London



Sleepless – The bed in history and contemporary art, 2015, exhibition view, 21er Hause, Vienna



Temporary State
2011, mattresses springs, cotton coverd latex, 220 x 180 x 20 cm



Sim Sala Bim

2013, woollen sugar-soaked blanket, 196 x 50 x 50 cm

Sim Sala Bim, 2013, exhibition view, galleria Fonti, Napoli

ARTFORUM

Galleria Fonti, Via Chiaia 229 February 15–May 18 2013 Naples

Giulia Piscitelli's research entrusts its poetic power to nuances, to the revival of fragility and the ephemeral, to the revaluation of small things and gestures. She investigates tensions in the aesthetic redemption of the quotidian; her process often favors minimal intervention, a focus on microevents or micronarrations that lead, as if by magic, to epiphanic experiences of those nearby. Magic as art has the power to modify reality, an equation that Piscitelli reintroduces with "Sim Sala Bim," the title she borrowed from an exclamation that will be familiar to those, like this writer, who were children in Italy in the late 1970s and watched on TV the exploits of Silvan the magician. Like Silvan, the artist creates a jagged landscape of disorienting images and impressions—disrupted fragments of reality.

Viewers are welcomed by an unsettling sound of wind, emitted by BRICST, 2013, a video whose acronymic title (referring to Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and Turkey) gestures toward economic growth rather than crisis. A stationary shot of a torn red flag—the sort used on beaches to indicate danger—stands out against a stormy background. This image is echoed in the piece *ART. 12, 2013*—an Italian flag from which the red strip hangs down, having come unstitched—its title referring to the article in the Italian constitution that precisely defines the formal characteristics of the nation's flag. Enchantment finally materializes in full as a sculpture, for which the artist revived an ancient traditional technique, working on a hand-woven woolen blanket. But Piscitelli makes the process dysfunctional by impregnating the piece with water and sugar and transforming it into a rigid structure. This is the artist's moment of true prestidigitation, during which she transforms everyday materials into something with unexpected form—as magically, in a sense, as the women's work to which this piece pays homage. In this piece Piscitelli offers a sort of mysterious trunk: provisions for an exhibition that provides no answers, but poses further questions.

Text by Eugenio Viola



ART. 12

2013, Ministerial Italian flag, 220 x 106 cm



BRICST
2013, DVD audio-video installation, 22" loop



GUERRA E PACE

2013,1957 edition of War and Peace by Lev Tolstoj, 26 × 18 × 6 cm



RADICI

Memoria, identità

e cambiamento nell'arte di oggi a cura di Eugenio Viola
Fondazione Malvina Menegaz, Castelbasso (TE)

Giulia Piscitelli's art is linked to the everyday, to remnants, to what the distracted and hasty eye usually trivializes and ignores owing to a complete lack of interest. Using various mediums the artist transforms objects, images or even just personal feelings in an intimate poetics that is sometimes imperceptible but always loaded with an explosive humanity. They are fleeting, ephemeral traces that Piscitelli makes perpetual with a simple gesture, ennobling sign, vivifying actions or immortalising moments stored in the memory. The three tapestries in the exhibition are "paintings" produced by (chemical) subtraction by means of bleach, a method dear to the artist. They are melancholy "portraits" in which the time of the corrosive action of cancellation becomes the protagonist and whose end result are reminiscent of the photographic prints dating from the early nineteenth centuries. They are estranging works which, on one hand, remind us of monumental standards- strong power symbols- and, on the other hand, are plain portraits of a vanishing footprint, of sandals abandoned on the beach or the remnants of an anonymous humanity washed up on the seashore, the likely metaphor of a journey that was never made.

Text by Adriana Rispoli



Dispersed (02)
2010, beach on cloth, 288 x 144 cm



Dispersed (03)
2010, beach on cloth, 286 x 144 cm



Dispersed (01)
2010, beach on cloth, 286 x 144 cm

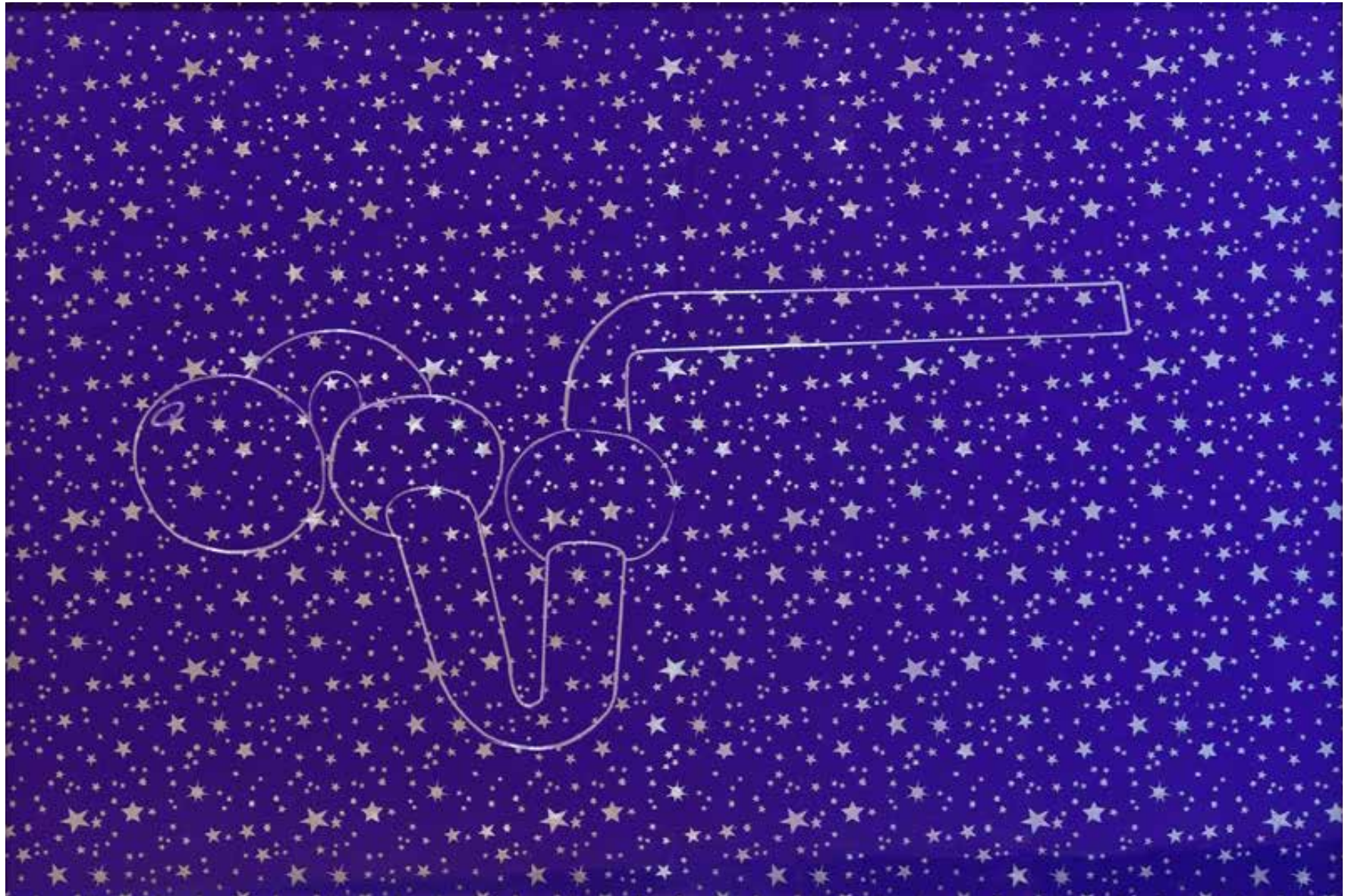


In Giulia Piscitelli's exhibition—her first in the United States— she explores themes of loss, renewal, and transformation. Many of the objects and materials that Piscitelli uses in her work, such as books, textiles, and old clothes, have been found or collected by her over many years. She embraces the prosaic by embalming, erasing, restoring, and revisiting everyday objects and in the process imbues them with alternative meanings. For example, the artist uses thinner to "draw" a collection of crack pipes on starry blue mylar giving them celestial status; a wool blanket typically used for comfort is rolled, covered in latex, and suspended from the ceiling as a punching bag; the stately aura of a series of tapestries is subverted through abstract compositions in bleach based on views from the spy holes of prison cells; and the coveralls of a worker, also coated in latex, become a proxy for the headless Greek heroes immortalized in statues throughout the artist's native Italy. Also included in the exhibition is a new set of drawings which continue her series based on windows and American Skin, an animal's hide which she conceived as paradoxically symbolic of both disappearance and restoration: One can, in a shamanistic fashion, restore life by occupying another's skin.

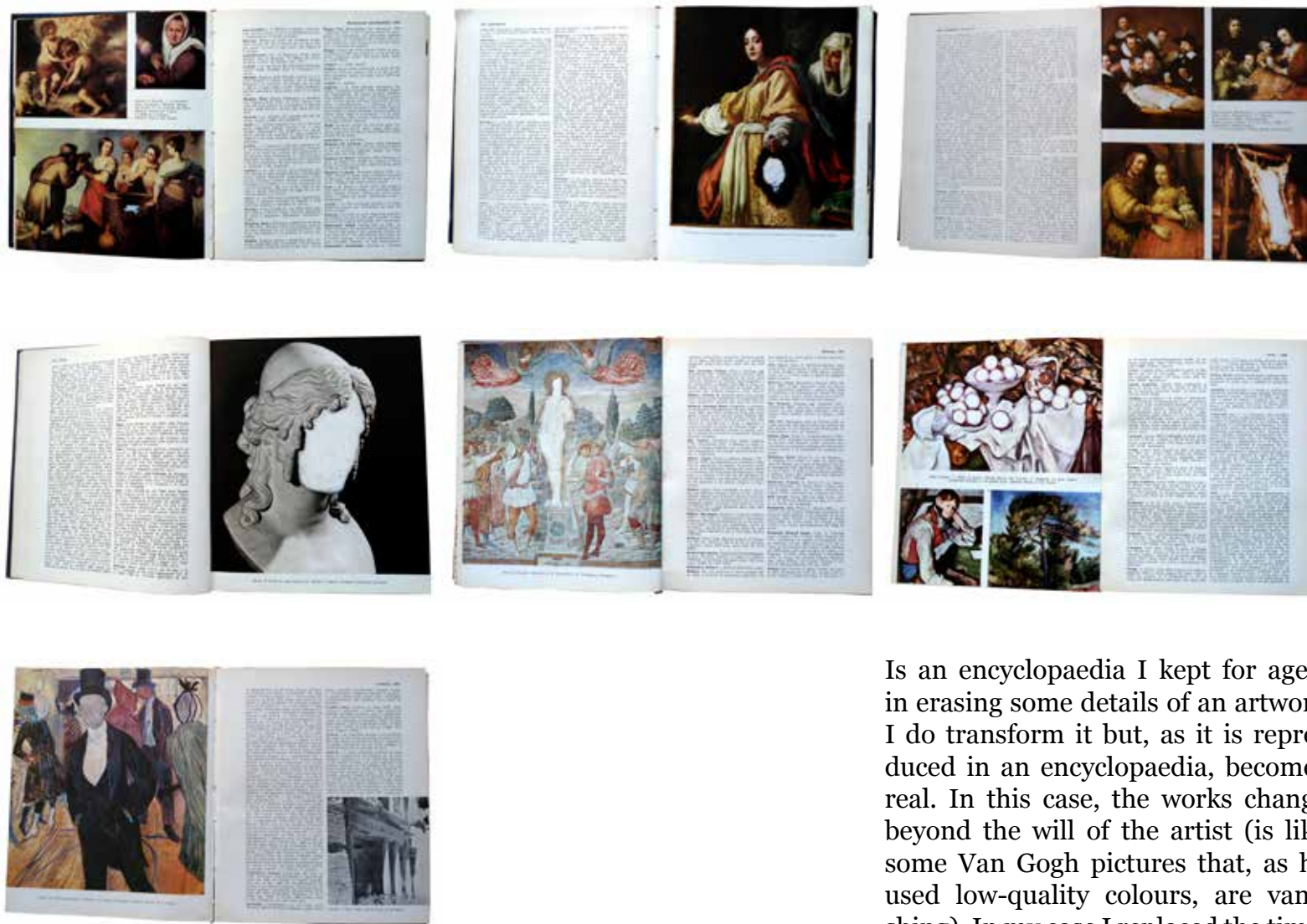
Kayne Griffin Corcoran Gallery
2012, Los Angeles



American skin
2011, cow skin, 115 x 240 cm



Pipe's Constellation
2012, nitro thinner on metal paper, 70 x 100 cm



Is an encyclopaedia I kept for ages: in erasing some details of an artwork I do transform it but, as it is reproduced in an encyclopaedia, becomes real. In this case, the works change beyond the will of the artist (is like some Van Gogh pictures that, as he used low-quality colours, are vanishing). In my case I replaced the time.

Universalis Encyclopaedia

2012, Trichloethylene on paper, Nuova Enciclopedia Universale Curcio, Edizione 1972, volumi n° 7, 40 x 24 x 4 cm each



Spica

2011, bleach and hydrochloric acid on 11 silk cloths, 400 x 150 cm each
Installation view, 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale

SPICA

Spica is piece unique composed by eleven silk cloths treated with bleach and hydrochloric acid that fading reveal the image. The revealing is always absorbed in a different way, that depends by the amount of the bleach and the quality of the cloth used. Bleach act as a laser that lights the wet fields. For this new project I chose taffeta and shantung silk cloths. The image obtained will be always the same but elaborated in different ways: symbol of fertility and growth, of death and rebirth, of the passage from nomad to geographically stable life, of mother earth, of ancient Eleusini myths (1200 B.C.) in the Mediterranean culture, "...in the else agriculture world, where is not possible to enter without a magic key" (Cristo si è fermato a Eboli, Carlo Levi).

References to spike corns: spike fossile 1800 B.C.; Spiga/ Tripode 280-242 B.C. ; Lire coin 2- 1949-Repubblica Italiana; Segale cornuta; Spike corn; Dracma- Metaponto 340-330 B.C. ; 10 pfenning 1949 Republic of Germany; Statere –Metaponto 550-470 B.C.

Eleven is a first number, is a team, and is also an Article of the Italian Costitution.

Italy rejects war as an instrument of aggression against the freedom of other peoples and as a means for the settlement of international disputes. Italy agrees, on conditions of equality with other States, to the limitations of sovereignty that may be necessary to a world order ensuring peace and justice among the Nations. Italy promotes and encourages international organizations furthering such ends.

The ancient silk way started from Venice and connected Occident to Orient creating an exchange of ideas and cultures.

Silk also reminds the Canut revolt in Lion in November 21st 1831 witch was one of the first social revolt after the industrial revolution.









Rischi minori, 2011, exhibition view, Fondazione Giuliani, Roma

Lesser risks
Stefano Chiodi

Work clothes, jumpsuits, pants, simple tank tops, overalls, jackets and shirts, hanging on a slender, sharp-ended rod a few centimeters from the wall, folded over like garments waiting to be put away. Blue, white, washed-out green, a few with faded labels, all worn, grubby, patched. From close up, we note that they are sealed in a layer of latex, transformed into rubbery objects, slightly tacky to the touch, their creases stiffened, unusable. Hung end-to-end at different heights, grouped two or three together or alone, in the capacious white-and-gray space, they look to me like gatecrashers trying to give themselves airs. This impulse to take materials – objects or images alike – to extremes, to make them bend in opposite directions simultaneously, forcing them to no longer be what they were and exposing their refusal to accept what they have become, is characteristic of Giulia Piscitelli's work, of her invariable tendency to project a moral nature onto things, and in turn assimilate something of their mineral hardness, their indifferent extraneousness to human destiny. Objects and images, with all of their symbolic density, thus become funerary masks as well, casts of a reality that has vanished or been blown away, disquiet-

ting shadows that compel the viewer to knock wood, to keep his distance. Such is the case of the wool mattress and the old car luggage rack – relics of a 1960s Italy poised between economic boom and pre-industrial world – covered with silver leaf and transformed into strange ex votos, gleaming mirrors meant to hold memories (Portabagagli; Materasso argento). Or the old, forlorn wooden chair, another fragment of domestic life, bearing an iron scale weight tied to one of its legs, the equivalent of an interior paralysis, a remorse that does not want to be alleviated (Personal Belongings).

In the case of the clothes, however, GP seems to involuntarily overstate the contrast between their everyday banality and the treatment to which they are subjected – she embalms them like illustrious remains in a shrine, or like rare samples of extinct species; she tends to them, almost nurtures them, but also challenges them, mocking their ill-concealed ambition to change their nature, asking them: Who do you think you are? But the question is also a serious, and an important, one, because after all, whose remnants are these? Perhaps their owners simply stopped using them, or perhaps the clothes themselves got tired of the same old life passed in streets, construction sites and machine shops, and preferred another condition, another space, into which we are invited



Line, Do Not Cross
2010, painted iron, barricade tape, dimensions variable

to observe them, with our post-post-Duchampian eye, with a convalescent's gaze, pretending to see them and perhaps actually seeing them for the first time. As images, now, that were uniforms for bodies that worked, produced, resigned themselves and survived, that at least had hope. Protection against lesser risks, as the title ironically informs us – lesser in that they are not lethal, or perhaps it is better to say, because we must consider them as such, even though it may not actually be so (and perhaps because in the end, they are now lesser risks for us). Protection for economic and political bodies, above all, but bodies that are absent, vanished. Or rather, desiccated into allegories. Or perhaps just gone on a trip, in pursuit of some miraculous wealth to be obtained without effort, without work, by pushing the buttons of a slot machine, being mesmerized and transported by the hypnotic rhythms of muzak, of jingles, of cartoonish sound effects recorded and looped back in a sound installation (Atlantic City) presented in this same exhibition. For those with the perception to see it, a sort of imprint remains visible on the walls of the large exhibition room: it is the void under and around the clothes; the missing arms and legs and heads; the breath that no longer swells the cloth; the movement benumbed to the point of ceasing; the absent voices; the gazes lost in the blankness of the wall.

We might also imagine this “cemetery of uniforms and liveries” as a sort of procession in which living bodies are replaced by avatars, or placemarkers. As if to say “we were here.” And this phantom self, this anonymous and missing “I,” is a collective and collectively vanished self: the political self of work, its manifold identity, its modern vicissitudes, its postmodern eclipse. ‘Liberate the streets from dreams,’ went a song – would it be too much to assert that Lesser risks is the only allegory of the Fourth Estate we can allow ourselves? An allegory that offers a possibility: the artist's work and the impulse to explore its boundaries, questioning and challenging it, reintegrating differences and discontinuity and transforming them into a homogeneous fabric, an “indifferent” surface. In other words, an attempt to create a practicable passage between art history and the history of labor, a political and aesthetic connection that raises the issue of the dual nature of art as autonomous event and social happening, as symbolic potential unleashed in a signifier that creates a discontinuity, a break in the conti-

nuum of judgments, attitudes and meanings. In this sense, GP works on a plane – as the philosopher Jacques Rancière explained – where esthetics is a tangent to the common, that is, the distinctive element of the community, and to its perceptible order, of which it is actually an agent of transformation, opening and re-signification. The fact of being on exhibit thus retroacts on the clothes, revealing a different way of reading them, at least inasmuch as they infiltrate the iconic device: like the rags that Walter Benjamin recognized as the preferred material of the historian, here, clothing transformed into icon appears to us in an intimately contradictory light, as an acquiescent (albeit unfortunate) object, but also as rubbish, as polluting and unjustifiable waste.

These mummified clothes are political artworks not because they fight - if they even could - for a “lost cause,” but because they fail in their attempt to assert themselves, because they are thwarted in their pretensions to change their identity, because they are deprived from the start of the incredulity they demand from spectators, because their new aesthetic existence emphasizes, rather than smoothes over, the roughness of their signifier. And they are political because, in their new and more respectable condition, they do not divest themselves of their origins, but rather continue to point to an outside space; they do not disguise the contradiction between the sated appearance of the world to which they now pertain and the secret voracity that underlies it. Tears, darning, patches, labels, the everyday mishaps of clothes and their transubstantiation into the sphere of art make up the inframince landscape - as Marcel Duchamp would have called it – that unfolds within them: the imperceptible but decisive, infra-thin difference between a worn item of work clothing and the same item hung in an exhibition consecrates capitalism's perpetual movement towards self-realization, that state of “constant revolutionizing of its conditions of existence” as Slavoj Žižek wrote, of permanent production of excess, the result of which is a breakdown of forms of life that no layer of latex could ever impede. All that is solid dissolves into the ether, as we know. Lesser risks speaks of a change that touches our lives, a crisis not so much of visibility as of reality, and it does so while calling to mind the relationship/tension between social formations and formations of meaning, and to the hypnotic *mise en abyme* of merchandise, to the chain that aspires to everlastingness

but unwaveringly fulfills its potential for death.

While GP's work clothes allude to the vicissitudes of a body observed in the course of its social existence, in other cases simple cloth can refer to a more individual dimension, becoming a metaphor for skin in its dual role as a vital protective element and a reactive layer upon which the marks, imprints and abrasions resulting from contact with the outside world remain impressed. This cloth-skin is the material of the "tapestries" – as GP calls them – that have since 2000 been one of the most characteristic aspects of her production. "Bleach on fabric" reads their technical description, and in effect, painting here is more properly a de-coloring, a subtraction of color from the support to the point that, through gradual applications, an image blossoms within the fabric, as if in a reactive emulsion. Non-painting painting, a painting that works by subtraction, like a "developer" of images. Those that appear on the surfaces, often quite large, are shapes that are somehow familiar: outlines of fish, objects, animals pitifully squashed on the asphalt or found dried up on a beach, standing out against backgrounds of dense color (Pesce spada; Lucertola su strada; Sedia a sdraio, all from 2008). These images always contain a reference to the notion of imprint, of physical continuity, of index in the semiotic sense, enmeshed in a sort of painting that in turn seeks to go beyond the iconic dimension to become a trademark, an impression, almost as if to compete with the photographic process' power of impersonal objectivization, its value as a supposedly objective testimonial. This is what we see in the tapestry Molteni (2010), in which the outline of an enormously enlarged phial appears against a gaudy background of little red and black rhombuses: an ugly scarf expanded to the size of a mocking banner that sums up the perverse economic system of addiction (the illicitly-sold phial of Molteni morphine is the source of quite considerable profit) and the trauma of a generation decimated in the 1980s by consumption of an ambiguous and irresistible substance: the prescription drug as medicine and poison.

This normal, inevitable, mundane death, in codified or explicit forms, has been a constant presence in GP's work from the outset, as in her 1989 *Ur-Werk*, an untitled video originally shot in Super 8,



Rischi Minori

2010, latex coated work uniform, dimension variable

a long close-up of two hands washing a mud-encrusted skull under a jet of running water. A distressing, macabre, hermetic gesture in which the twenty-four-year-old artist made reference to the popular Neapolitan cult of anime pezzentelle (“little beggars’ souls”) – that is, the custom of “adopting” the anonymous skull of a neglected soul no one prays for – practiced for centuries in the hypogeum cemetery of Fontanelle alla Sanità. But the reference to an ancient, superstitious contiguity with death can also be read as a way of marking a new artistic territory and taking leave of another world, the neo-expressive temperament of the 1980s, of which the skull represents a sort of generic emblem about to be emptied of meaning. Washing is thus a gesture of both purification and objectivization, of detachment and of re-appropriation, a dual action in which the metaphorical force of the dominant reddish color (body, blood, destiny) is combined with the close-up shot in an amniotic image, a spectral birth in which the power of Thanatos invades the domestic sphere, and ultimately becomes even more unjustifiable and terrifying. Death as an emerging element in the everyday landscape resurfaces in GP’s career in a few cases marked by her characteristic black humor, as in one of her most published works, *Operaio* (2006), the photograph of a marble skull clad in a yellow construction worker’s helmet. An updated variation on a classic memento mori, the image combines the cynical efficacy of the pop icon, an oblique reference to Baroque tradition and a caustic observation on the contemporary social universe: this worker is now, truly and eternally, impervious to risks.

It is no coincidence that all of these works were conceived and realized in the home-studio in Bagnoli where GP has lived for many years, right across from the site of a large Italian iron-and-steel works, the Italsider plant, where the redemptory hopes and illusions of all of southern Italy were concentrated. Today, looking at the great void it left behind, one can only imagine the gigantic plant towering over a landscape dotted with historical references, ancient and modern visual and literary memories - Posillipo, the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Phlegraean Fields not far away –, a sort of condensation of Italian identity, its characteristic muddle, its progression through successi-

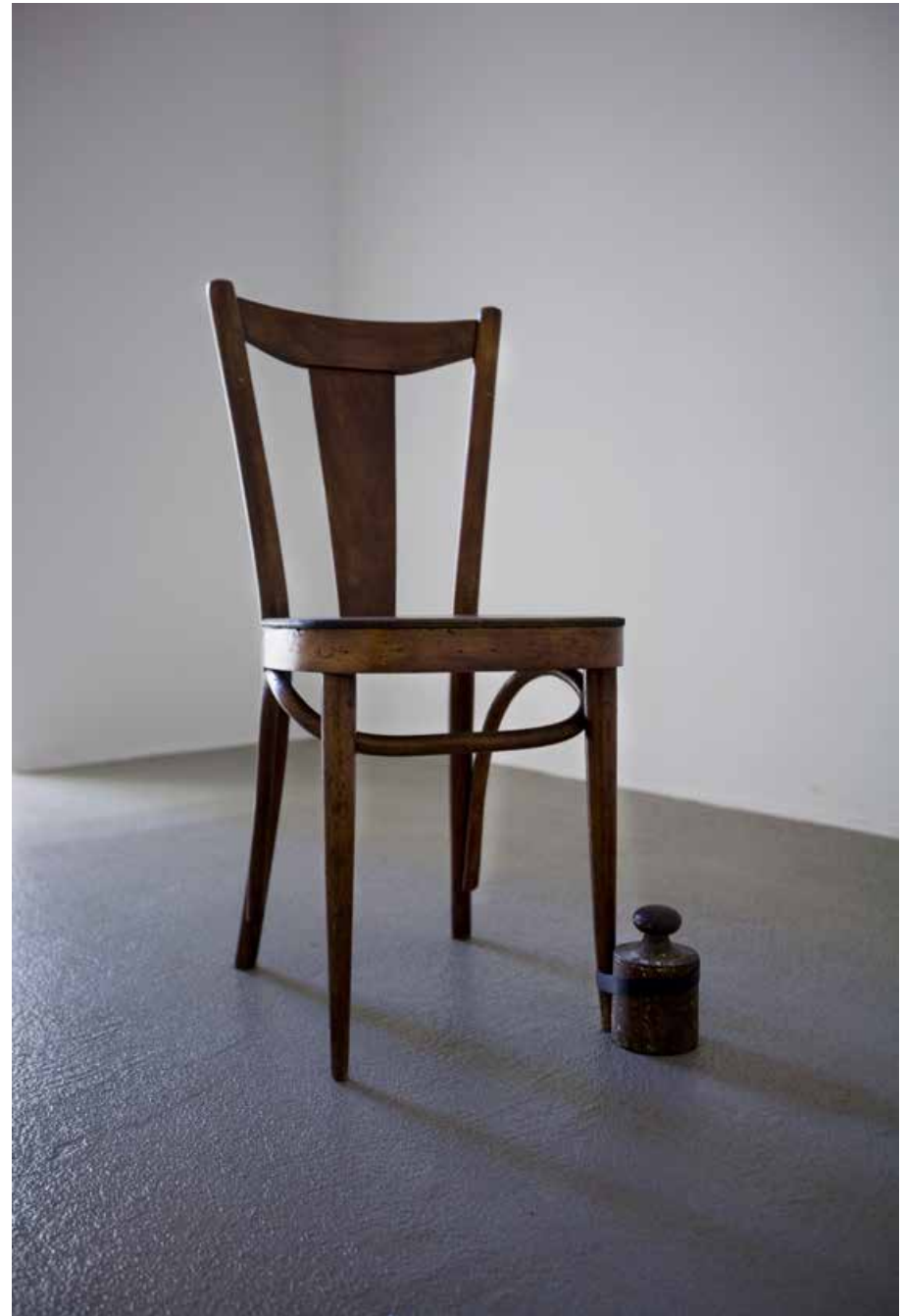


Rischi Minori

2010, latex coated work uniform, dimension variable

ve stratifications in which the memory of what came before is never completely erased. Surrounded by the amorphous sprawl of the generic city, the steelworks/Moloch was also a monument to an optimistic 19th-century idea of labor, the epicenter of a social experiment that was meant to spawn a sort of new man, the hero of a more just world, the citizen-worker who would drive the advancement of the entire South. Soot-blackened, the Italsider factory was still there in 1996, encumbering the background of a photograph entitled *Italsider Io pallone*, in which a figure appears – GP or her *Doppelgänger* – with her head wrapped in adhesive tape to the point of looking like some strange football, an obligatory icon of the only narrative that has withstood the waning of collective mythologies, for Naples and all of Italy. But the giant factory was destined to disappear: in another photograph, a female figure – GP once again – hides her identity beneath a Carnival-esque mask with the features of a tiger, a fantastical predator in search of an unlikely freedom in the nearby terrains vagues.

Biographical – or, we might say, environmental – fidelity to this now-barren epicenter of identity, to its historical and political evolution, is also a key to accessing GP's creative personality, her particular position in the art world, faithful to a non-negotiable identity and poetic autonomy, a basic distrust of any utilitarian optimism. In short, the idea that knowingly maintaining a certain distance allows her to move in little-explored regions, to maintain a long memory, to slowly accumulate thoughts, possibilities, signs from which to glean enlightenment. Storing up experiences and materials without worrying about immediately transforming them into distributable "goods" requires uncommon discipline; thanks to this long memory of hers, many of GP's works arrive serendipitously late for their appointment with the spectator, drawn from an archive of images, films and objects collected over a period of more than twenty years. The traces of this anachronistic progression - the coming-and-going among different periods it entails, the unexpected possible readings it allows – can be seen, for example, in the double datings of the works, or in the indications that accompany some of the videos, with



Personal Belongings

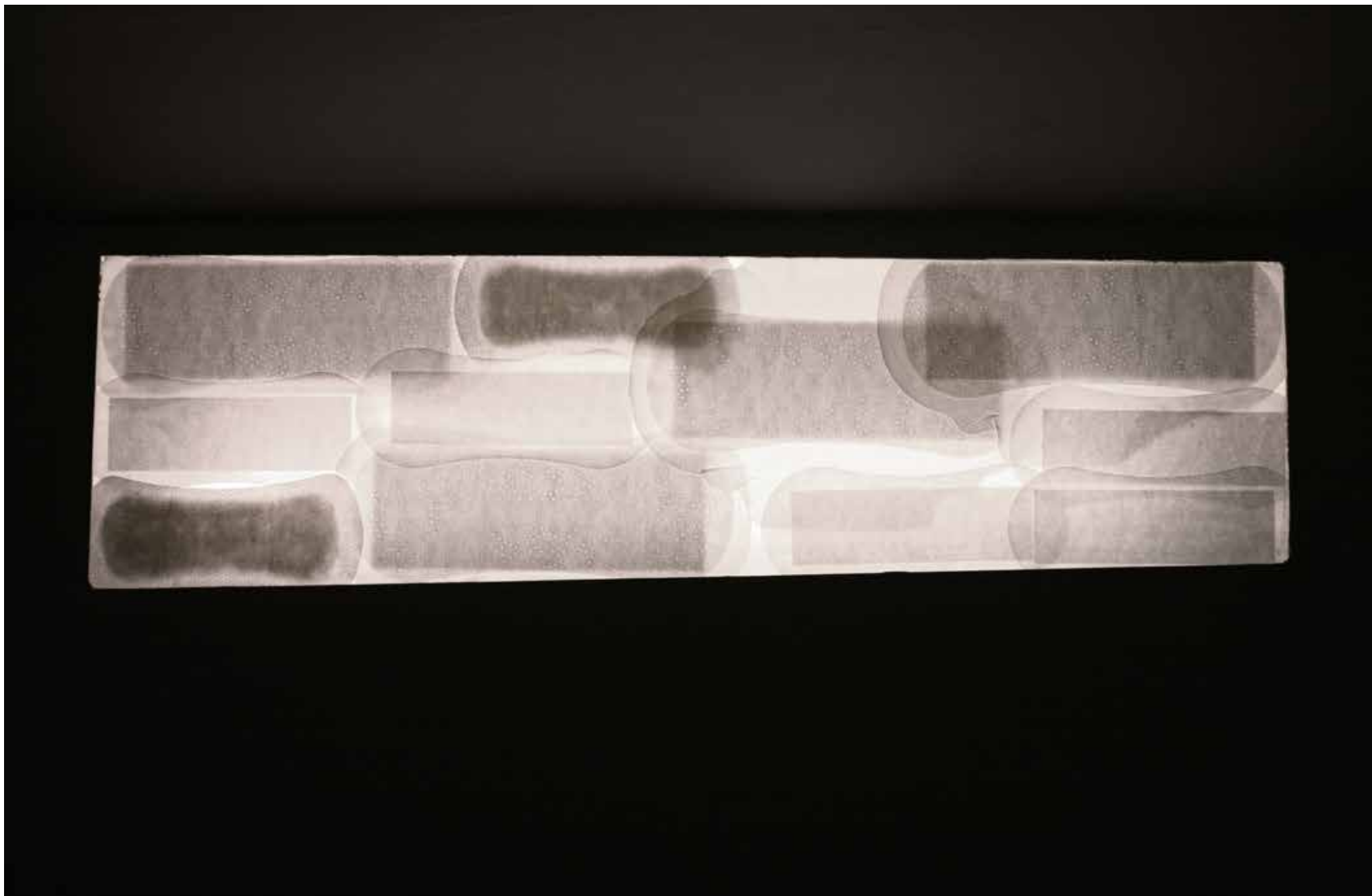
2010, wooden chair, balance scale weight, rubberband, 86x38x50 cm



Little Italy

2010, installation view, plexiglas, neon, sanitary napkins, dimensions variable

Rischè minori, 2011, exhibition view, Fondazione Giuliani, Roma



Little Italy
2010, plexiglas, neon, sanitary napkins, dimensions variable

the shooting date as well as that of the definitive version. In other cases the anachronism is inscribed in the work itself, in the questions it raises, as happens with an untitled 1997 video, a long POV shot in which a flashlight beam illuminates a closet stuffed with objects, books, clothes. We could call it a circumstantial portrait-by-clues: someone was there, lived there, and left. Or perhaps it is a crime scene, to be examined for clues, or rummaged through in an attempt to find something valuable to steal amid the chaos. Or a visual metaphor of a mnemonic process in which memories surface like incongruous wreckage, exhumed from the depths of oblivion. All stories and all questions are possible, because at the end of the day, GP seems to be saying, the presumption that we can grasp the meaning of what we see is as untenable as believing we can grasp ourselves. Effectively, in her work, knowing always coincides with experiencing something we didn't know we knew, with feeling ourselves unexpectedly jabbed by something that pops out from behind things, violating the reassuring surface of images and transforming them into insidious snares. Knowing ourselves is risky, because it implies a transformation, an aging, a paradoxical loss of identity. A shoe sole pierced by large nails (Scintilla) could be the emblem of this ambivalence: that which protects us also reveals our vulnerability, that which wounds us is also that which we can least do without.

An external observation point – an outsider's gaze - has marked GP's work since her formative years in Naples, during which an important influence was that of Giuseppe Desiato, one of the most singular and solitary artists of the generation that sprang into the limelight in the 1960s. A taste for improvisation, an interest in the anthropological landscape, the use of unusual and ephemeral materials and the knowingly eccentric positioning and radical rejection of the market practiced by Desiato all contributed to molding the sensibility of a young artist who observed the transformations of the contemporary art scene with lucidity and detachment, opportunely catching on to innovations – from the practice of deskilling to strategies of appropriation, from the ethnographic approach to the tongue-in-cheek deconstruction of modernist heroic mythologies. These components were embedded in an experi-

mentalism of Fluxus extraction (not coincidentally, another important figure during her formative years was the American Al Hansen, historic exponent of the movement, who invited her to show at the Cologne Ultimate Akademie in 1988), and grafted onto a conceptual and political component that GP shared with other artists in Italy in the early 1990s who, like her, were seeking to break down the boundaries among various media (video, photography, performance), injecting their work with heterogeneous or spurious elements (humor, sexuality, social criticism, documentation, etc.), from Marcello Maloberti to Vedovamazzei to Sisley Xhafa.

The cultivation of a creative autonomy that was also inevitably political was one of the motives behind the artist's 1992 founding, along with Pasquale Cassandro and Lorenzo Scotto di Luzio, Studio Aperto, which was for three years one of the most interesting independent spaces in Naples. The same spirit shaped her 1995-1997 collaboration with the underground magazine "Collant," edited by Argento Migliore, a non-conformist, unclassifiable artist and performer (he had worked with Living Theater in the 1970s) and founder of Galleria Volante, a mobile and virtual space created for and around art. In a 1995 photograph entitled *Artissima*, GP appears in the guise of a visitor to an art fair; in the background are "Collant" and "Flash Art" covers onto which she has systematically applied her Ricalchi ("Copies"), imprints created using acrylic paint to trace the outline of a penis on a sheet of transparent plastic, and then in turn utilized to make unauthorized colored figures on the walls of a stand. This repetitive gesture serves to objectivize the obscenity of the image, its derisive force with regard to the institutional space it has infiltrated, to explore the genetic link with the "thing" that produced it, and ultimately, to evoke contact with the living body and thus to stage (as we can see even more clearly in the 1996 photographic triptych *Pour Bataille*) a role-play with the male member, with its symbolic weight and its social meanings, filtered through key themes of feminist criticism (the male regime of the gaze, the sexualization of the image, the unconscious relationship between offer and possession that runs through it, etc.).

In another photograph from 1994, once again taken opposite the Italsider plant, the psychological, symbolic, sexual overlapping betwe-

en image and body is made even more explicit: with a sideways glance at whoever is observing from the other side of the camera, GP poses in t-shirt and bare legs in front of the enormous factory, holding in front of her a copy of “Collant” with the outline of a blue penis marked on the cover. Between the factory of social identity and the laboratory of artistic identity, the artist’s live body is interposed, a juncture between the two worlds to which she simultaneously belongs. The following year, in an untitled video that is probably her single work most in tune with feminist poetics – revisited with a critical spirit a generation later (possible references run from Adrian Piper’s 1970 performance *Catalysis IV* to Marina Abramović’s 1975 *Art must be beautiful*)- , GP appears from the back, standing in front of a mirror that reflects her face towards us. With a pair of scissors, she slowly cuts off her long ponytail, sticks it in her mouth, obsessively runs a lipstick back and forth over her lips, smears it over her face beneath the gaze of a painted female silhouette in the background, and then, lastly, wrenches the hair from her mouth and gives herself a final glance. It is an inexorable, violent, disturbing action in which phantom forces and symbolic roles face off in a sadistic-masochistic rite of passage; perhaps it is the traumatic and indispensable prelude to the creation of a new self-image, beyond the distinction of genre, or perhaps the perilous expurgation of an identity behind which lies an unsettling void.

This and other works (in addition to those already mentioned, the 1996 video

Furore, for example) allude to a process of self-awareness, therapy and even healing in which different aspects are involved – work, the body, sexual identity, memory, death -, all somehow linked to the need to make peace with the discordant forces that inhabit the Self. It is a project that aspires to decipher a central enigma – the subject, and in particular the artist-subject – following the lessening of dialectical tension between identity and persona. This is the framework for a 2009 cycle of works the title of which, *Protocollo*, recalls the progression of a sort of therapy, a cure repeated and prolonged over time, in which individual elements gain meaning and efficacy if practiced (and observed) jointly. Quando

inseguo la mia ombra (“When I follow my shadow”) is the title of the first work in the series, two yellow-paper notebook pages filled with a pencilled grid similar to one of those “fill-in” diagrams – exercises in applied laziness – found in puzzle magazines. And “yellow face! Yellow face!” is the simultaneously insolent and devout cry of the “relatives of the Saint,” the frenzied devotees of St. Gennaro who apostrophize him, inciting him to perform his miracle. “Yellow face” is the gilded silver visage of the Saint, and also the jaundiced complexion of the sick person for whom mercy is asked, the color of contagion, of quarantine. The color of poison. The pages correspond to two coded self-portraits, the “shadow” of the title; they bring to mind Arnulf Rainer’s blotted-out photos, with their aggressive tangles of black marks that take possession of disfigured faces.

Healing, recovering. We could say that throughout her career, GP has practiced a sort of unconventional medicine, convinced of her ability to remedy poisoning with poison, lack with loss. This power of inversion is strikingly perceptible in the other “stations” of *Protocollo*: a small black-and-white video projection (*Plessimetro*) in which the shapes of indistinct, ectoplasmic bodies try in vain to move in unison to a percussive rhythm; a Polaroid, many times enlarged, of the unsettling shape of a bald nape (*Sunshine*); an extreme close-up of a mass of hair (*Non ti riconoscevo per un pelo*); a black “tapestry” on which a mane of human or perhaps horse hair appears (*Tornado, il formidabile destriero di Zorro*). These works lend themselves to complementary readings: from the temporal point of view, the images suggest a progression, a transition from the past to the present; in experiential terms, they summon up layers of traumatic memories through a process of emotional liberation; on the figurative level, they visualize and relate the phases of transformation of physical symptoms (hair loss, changes in the body) through enigmatic signs; and finally, on the semiotic plane, they lie along an axis that moves from the iconic to the indexical, in an arrangement we see in other works as well. These components are woven together like elements of a plot, distinct but mutually necessary. Taken as a whole, they give the impression of a sort of re-sensitizing device, a mental machine fueled by trauma that works according to a logic of establishing a distance from the painful experience but still maintaining a contact with it, implicating



Italsider Io Pallone
1996, lambda print on aluminium, 80 x 120 cm



Untitled '95
1995, Video 8 transferred on DVD video, sound, 8'19"

an inevitable drift from the world of signs into that of the psyche, and vice-versa.

But can art still serve the function of a therapy for the world? Hasn't that ambition been definitively discredited? Was its metaphysical hubris not played out in the end? Today more than ever, the artist seems a contradictory figure, faced with an impossible challenge: that of remaining faithful to her own nucleus of authenticity and accepting the contradictions generated by her singular testimony, at the risk of finding herself compromised from the outset, irrelevant, destined at best to add to the supply of esthetic merchandise available on the market. Moreover, in our era, artists who were once heroes are reduced to puppets, pets, paraphernalia, as Michele Dantini wrote, and art, like the rest of cultural "production", lives in a shared trans-esthetic condition, to use Jean Baudrillard's term – that is, a condition based on the estheticization of public/social life and the fetishization ad infinitum of objects and behaviors, the paradoxical fulfillment and liquidation of the promise of the avant-garde. In the context of our spectacularized society, art embodies an intractable ambivalence: it is both a potentially disuniting force (with the singularity of the works) and a hinge-pin of the "system" (with their systematic monetization), a factor of crisis and a stanchion.

A group of GP's recent works focalizes the testimonial power art can exercise in a milieu that seems to accept it only if it is preventatively rendered inoffensive, sanitized of the critical force that its signifier or its style possesses with regard to representations and the dominant imagery. A singular force, in the sense of unusual and individual, irreducible and intransitive, that becomes the means through which an unforeseen capacity for resistance can emerge, against all odds. In the installation *Little Italy* (2010), we enter a small space lit by two neon ceiling lights onto which – as is common practice in women's prisons – sanitary napkins have been applied to block the too-strong light, left on day and night; this is a form of opposition that manages to come up with inventive solutions, to divert materials and object, adapting them to new needs. It's a survival strategy designed to thwart control, a form of impertinence, of creative insubordination in the face of authority, carried out by

kynical subjects – as Peter Sloterdijk would call them – who choose not to submit, inventing strategies to defy the unvarying, established uniformity of the mechanisms of power. Another reference to prisons, cages, constraints and rules that must not be broken is in the installation *Line, Do Not Cross* (2010), two azure-painted old iron bedsteads mounted vertically on a wall. Stretched between them are strips of yellow plastic of the type used by police in the U.S. to isolate a crime scene, the "uncontaminated" space of the investigation, a virtual place in which we also recognize – once the original horizontality of sleep and death has been flipped 180 degrees to the verticality of erectness, of wakefulness, of reasoning – the actual dimension of the image. The body missing from that bed is an iconic one – perhaps, by extension, the body of art itself, fragile and absurd, and mortal like all other bodies, despite its presumption of endurance. A body that has vanished, dissolved, but is still strangely present there in that yellow-enclosed void.

And as this vertical, off-kilter bed also resembles a cage with sawed-off bars, so the Neapolitan windows on which GP records the passage of light, reflections, glass and curtains are like cages as well, transformed into colored planes, pseudo-abstract compositions. Cages for whoever lives behind those windows. Cages for ghosts. And cages ready to host any other exemplar of her imaginary fauna, like the brazen, curious tiger we saw poised to spring on the suburban steppes of Bagnoli. We find the tiger again in another photograph, sleeping stretched out on a strange flower-dotted lawn at the sea's edge, a magical and illusory place – in Gaiola, on the Posillipo headland in the gulf of Naples, but also "in gaiola", that is, in a jail or cage. An extraordinarily prophetic image: in a final metamorphosis, the tiger – a "real" tiger this time, filmed at the Naples zoo – is shown in a video projection now definitively a prisoner, captured on film in the obsessive pacing of a tragic and marvelous beast, maddened by solitude behind bars. Is there no hope, no future for her? In all honesty, no. How could we imagine her free again? In what jungle or natural setting could she find shelter? A rather more fortunate subject is the duck we see in the video *Unter den Linden* standing on one leg like a yogi in the rain, imperturbably listening to the incomprehensible babbling of a drunk. Perhaps he has something interesting to say;

perhaps he is revealing the meaning of all things, or announcing their imminent end. But the voice hesitates and dies away in the buzz of street noise. Just then, the green and gray bird takes flight – a beat of its wings, and it's already gone. This strange parable has no moral to offer, no explanation or ulterior meaning, except perhaps to confirm the absurdity of life, its paralyzed omniscience; the world as a puddle we must balance in precariously, as long as we can. Again, here is the paradox of art: it teaches us to evade, and at the same time shows us that escaping reality is in any case impossible.

Readings

Jean Baudrillard, *La Transparence du mal. Essai sur les phénomènes extrêmes*, Galilée, Paris 1990.

Gilda Policastro, *Il farmaco*, Fandango, Roma 2010

Jacques Rancière, *Le spectateur émancipé*, La Fabrique éditions, Paris 2008

Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague Of Fantasies (Wo Es War)*, Verso, London-New York 1996



Molteni

2010, bleach on cloth, 358 x 130 cm



Beige

Fondazione Morra Greco
Napoli, 2010

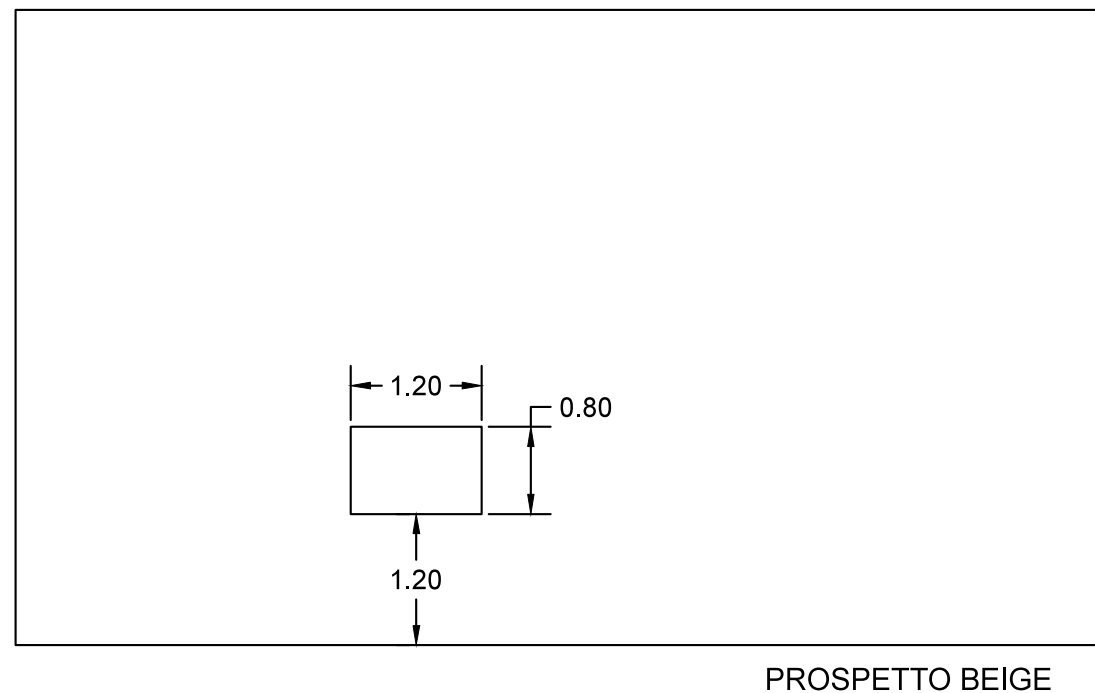
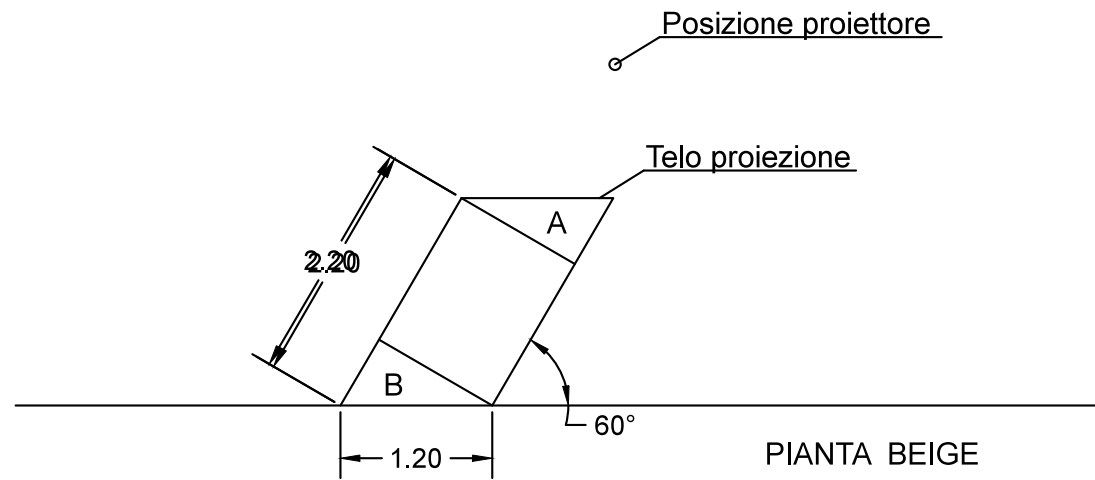
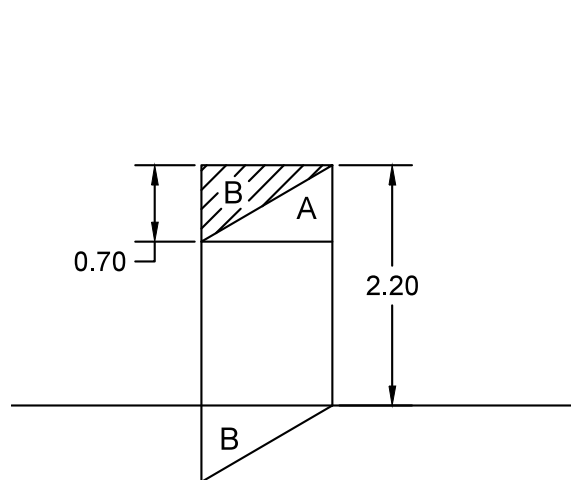
Beige (2001-2010), by Giulia Piscitelli, is the film of a film: the artist finds a black-and-white film, watches it through an old hand-operated Moviola and films it again. As it is often the case with Giulia Piscitelli's works, *Beige* - installed in the basement of Fondazione - also bears a double date since it consists of the reworking of an old found film. The film features two women of different ages, but neither their identities nor the relationship existing between them will be revealed. The images unfold, more or less clear and blurred, at an irregular, almost weary pace, accompanied by the background noise of the crank. The basement of Fondazione also features the installation *Idem* (2010): a cluster hanging from the ceiling, made up of big leaves trimmed from a twenty-year-old agave located in the Naples zoo, a place that Giulia Piscitelli visits regularly and where she spends a lot of time. The leaves are covered with inscriptions carved by the visitors of the zoo. Most of them are messages of a love that aims to be eternal but whose promise will have to deal with the

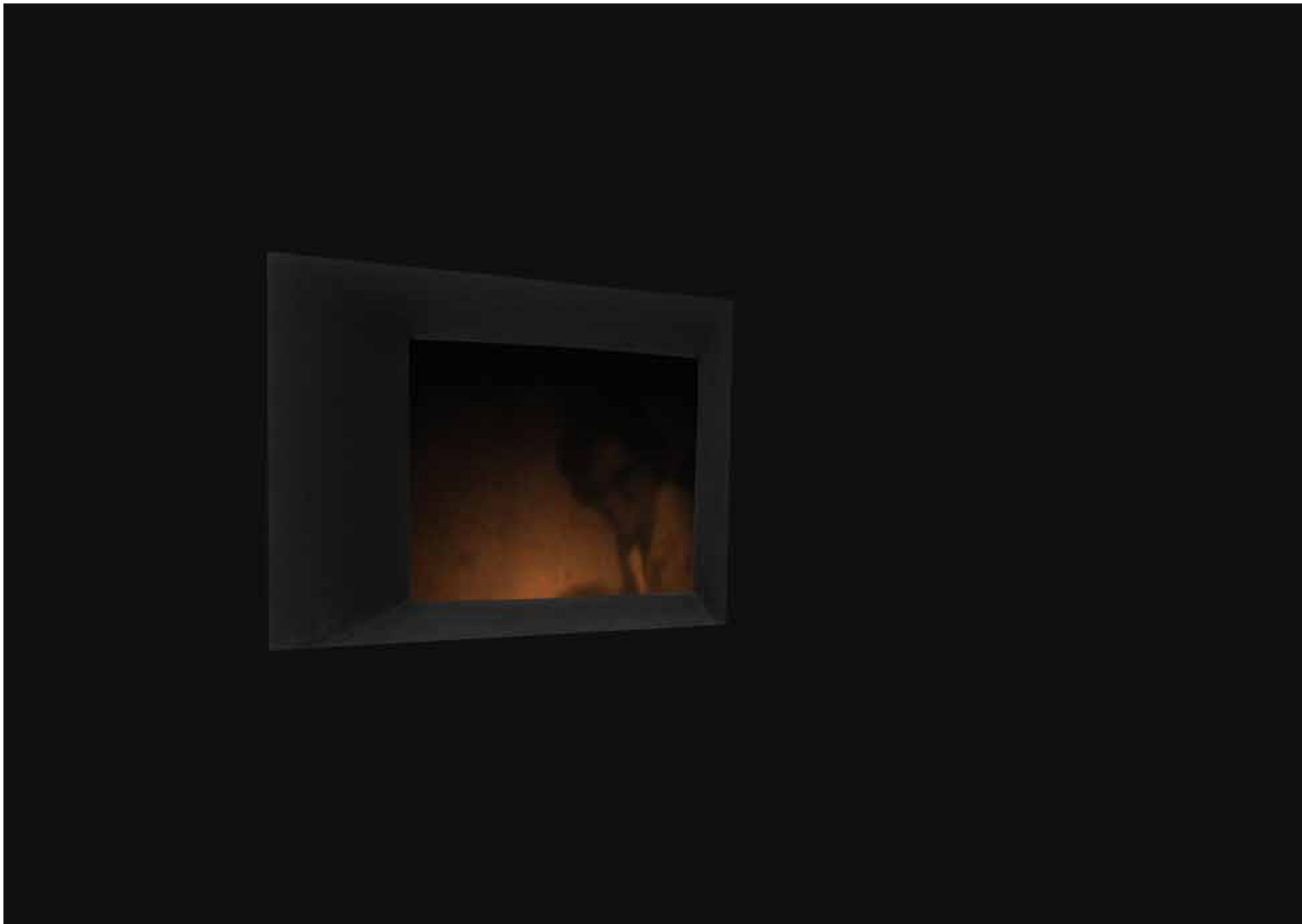
I HAVE SOME TIME TO SPEND WITH YOU
2010, n°80 slide show

transient life of the plant. I have some time to spend with you (2010), on view upstairs, is the screening of 80 slides, dating from 1955, which were found several years ago nearby the United States embassy in Naples. The slides depict travel photographs taken in Detroit and its surroundings, an itinerary that traces an ideal of democracy, productivity and wellbeing: Ford and the thriving car industry, an electoral campaign, the crossing of landscapes. They are mostly images depicting situations of wellbeing, except for a few of them which are a bit less reassuring, such as the image of an empty swimming pool. The works on display, with different characters and different forms, make up a selection of images connected with the changeability of reality, with the evanescence and the passing of time. Each of them asserts the transience of love, of relationships and of wellbeing, as well as challenging absolute truths. Beige, which is rather a nuance than a colour, is the thread that binds them together.



I HAVE SOME TIME TO SPEND WITH YOU
2010, n°80 slide show





Beige

2001-2010, DVD audio-video installation, 6' loop

Beige, 2010, exhibition view, Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples, Italy



IDEM

2010, Agave leaves, dimensions variable

Beige, 2010, exhibition view, Fondazione Morra Greco, Naples, Italy



IDEM
2010, Agave leaves, dimensions variable (particular)



Untitled_02, 297 x 146 cm, *Network*, 292 x 132 cm, *Untitled_03*, 291 x 147 cm, 2010 bleach on cloth
Strange Comfort (Afforded by the profession), 2010, exhibition view Kunstalle Basel

Strange Comfort

(Afforded by the Profession)

group exhibition curated by Adam Szymczyk and Salvatore Lacagnina

13.06. – 22. 08. 2010

Kunstahalle Basel

Giulia Piscitelli's attention-and her art practice- is generally focused on the quotidian. The Italian artist is interested in those objects, materials, subjects and situations that one generally encounter in his or her everyday life, and that have a relationship with private experience rather than representing an abstract idea of the "ordinary". Her found objects or the subjects of her films and photographs are often things, places or people that have been abandoned, become derelict, been thrown away or are in some manner part of an "ecological" disposal process. After accumulating this detritus which might take the form of old graffiti, discarded ladders, sofas found in the street, an abandoned mattress, an old Italian 100 lire coin, or the burnt motor of the artist's car-she waits several years, after which the pieces finally become artworks.

At Kunsthalle Basel, Piscitelli presents an assortment of works, including a new series of "tapestries", as she defines them. For these pieces, the artist has painted textiles with distinct images using only bleach, which discolors the fabric and creates a distinct outcropping of patterns or forms as the artist sees fit. The process is fraught with change, however, as each textile absorbs the chemical in a different way. If the bleach is used incorrectly, it leaves no evidence or simply burns the fabric. Used correctly, however, the bleach creates the forms that Piscitelli seeks; in the case of the works on view at the Kunsthalle, these include an industrial scale, an outdoor lounge chair and a wheelbarrow. Since the images are traced in white against the dark textiles, they have the spectral quality of photograms, nearly glowing against the walls on which they are hung. Or as the artist herself has said: "Each textile has its own life".





NA U84848
2000, lambda print on aluminium, 100 x 138 cm



Rosa Florio 1M
1995-2010, DVD Video 8 transferred to dvd, sound, 10'33"



Strange Comfort (Afforded by the profession), 2010, exhibition view Kunstalle Basel



Untagged

2010, 36 brass plates, canceled with a grinder, 9 × 16 cm each



Protocollo, 2009, exhibition view, galleria Fonti, Napoli

ARTFORUM

Galleria Fonti
Naples
May 14–July 31

The title of Giulia Piscitelli's second solo exhibition at this gallery is "Protocollo" (Protocol); fittingly, the works in the show refer to etiquette, conventions, and detailed plans. As with most of Piscitelli's work, the atmosphere is gloomy. In the grainy video *Plessimetro* (Pleximeter; all works 2009), men appear busily engaged in rhythmic movements that contrast with the background sounds of a bouncing ball. Drawings titled *Quando inseguo la mia ombra* (When I Follow My Shadow) stress the irony, dull anxiety, and missed encounters that permeate the exhibition, as does the smirk hidden behind a pile of scanned hair in *Non ti riconoscevo per un pelo* (I Didn't Recognize You by a Hair), which references an idiomatic Italian phrase. In Piscitelli's practice, time is important, particularly the time in which the pieces are created and the time required to make them. Her works also emerge instinctively, particularly those that are made with bleach and old fabrics, such as *Tornado* (*il formidabile destriero di Zorro*) (Tornado [Zorro's Extraordinary Steed]). Through small gestures, the artist reveals solitude and fatigue, both of which are underscored by pressing existentialism.

Translated from Italian by Marguerite Shore.

— Francesca Boenzi



Tornado (il formidabile destriero di Zorro)
2009, bleach on cloth, 290 x 140 cm



Non ti riconoscevo per un pelo
2009, lambda print on aluminium, 53 x 50 cm



Sunshine
2009, lambda print on aluminium, 110 x 90 cm



Quando inseguo la mia ombra (1-2)
2009, graphite on paper, 30 x 21 cm each



Plessimetro
2009, DVD, video installation, 18' loop



Operaio
2006, lambda print on aluminium, 32 x 24 cm

BAROCK, Museo MADRE, Napoli, 2009

In the framework of the events organized by the Campania Region to celebrate the Baroque culture, the Councillorship for Cultural Heritage has endorsed the proposal of the MADRE Museum to mount a big collective exhibition titled BAROCK – Art, Science, Faith and Technology in the Contemporary Age, which will run from December 12th to April 5th.

This exhibition, curated by Eduardo Cicelyn and Mario Codognato, explores the similitudes between the cultural themes that are representative of the beginning of the new century and those that made the visual imagination of the Baroque Age so powerful and grandiose. Barock investigates issues that permeated the XVII century and are still distinctive of our time, showing how the typical themes of the Baroque culture of the 17th century have been revived by contemporary artists. The revolutionary scientific and technological discoveries that day after day challenge established certainties and habits; the great religious zeal that led to the fundamentalism, the obscurantism and to clashes between civilizations which produced unprecedented slaughters: the disorientation of contemporary imagination then appears to be caused by ideological conflicts and tragic experiences for issues that are not very different from those that shaped the century of Galileo Galilei and of the Counter-Reformation.

The most obvious similitude between the artists featured in the exhibition and the Baroque Masters lies in the “sensational” images they use, images that aim at striking the senses, at being extreme in their violence, in their sensuality, in their frankness, that do not fit in any category and escape definition. It’s just as if art, today like in the XVII century, should push itself farther and farther in order to reinvent a world that has become more uncertain about its various, contradictory and often awful representations. On one side Barock explores the current situation of visual arts in the perspective of a new “sensationalism” that has its formal and conceptual roots in the 17th-century code, while on the other it casts the doubt, through the opposite thesis – in pure Baroque style! – that it is no longer useful nor possible to believe that you can experience such a thing as a work of art as an object offered to our senses and consequently to our ability to reason in a moral or sentimental way. In other words the aim is to create a conceptual line by which the artist can challenge the artificial realism of technologies and propose another type of realism imbued with highly imaginative perspectives, by means of allegoric tools capable of revealing the powerlessness of conventional cultural forms and affirming the (Baroque) possibility to understand the world and change it, by broadening its sensorial and perceptive borders.

The exhibition will feature 28 artists: Adel Abdessemed, Micol Assaël, Matthew Barney, Domenico Bianchi, Bianco – Valente, Antonio Biasiucci, Keren Cytter, Mircea Cantor, Maurizio Cattelan, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Claire Fontaine, Lara Favaretto, Gilbert & George, Douglas Gordon, Mona Hatoum, Damien Hirst, Anish Kapoor, Jeff Koons, Jannis Kounellis, Shirin Neshat, Carsten Nicolai, ORLAN, Philippe Parreno, Giulia Piscitelli, Michal Rovner, Cindy Sherman, Jeff Wall, Sislej Xhafa.



When things cast no shadow, 2008, exhibition view, 5th Berlin Biennial for Contemporary Art, Berlin

KW Institute for contemporary art
5th Berlin Biennial, 2008
When things cast no shadow
curated by Adam Szymczyk and Elena Filipovic

It is above all the human, in all its complexity, fragility, and absurdity, that Giulia Piscitelli engages with. Her artwork contains somethings very personal, often revealing those peculiar aspect of a human being that are generally neglected. It becomes a universal illustration and an observation of what humans do, what they are, and what they leave behind.

In the video *Untitled'89*, one witnesses the washing of a skull. The scene is obscured through a blurred camera lens, changing angles, and dimmed light. Associations of memento mori and religious rituals come to mind-but the cleansing procedure takes place in the artist's bathtub, as if this was a typical, daily activity that considers the trace of a human being something familiar. At the same time, there is a sense of oddity to it and, through this, the wit inherent in Piscitelli's whole body of work becomes apparent. Her photograph *Tigre in Gaiola* shows the scene of a "tiger" sleeping on a meadow at a place called La Gaiola, with a miraculous view of a Gulf of Naples in the background. But the tiger is non a tiger. It is the artist wearing a tiger mask. The enchanted landscape is interrupted by a "real" person, a scene that could seem like merely a staged fairy tale, were it not a perfect example of the way Piscitelli's photographic and video works trouble jaded sensibilities by offering a vision of the world at once touchingly plain and disarmingly strange.

For her new film *Unter den Linden*, Piscitelli documented encounters that took place during her brief spell in Berlin, shedding light onto unknown stories of the everyday. In the video, we observe a lonely, soaked, "one-legged" duck standing in the puddle of a park. We expect the sound of splashing but instead hear two drunken people insulting each other. The juxtaposition of image and sound appear unrelated and absurd, but they do exist and exemplify an integral-even if minor-aspect of life. Piscitelli has kept her acute sense for singling out situations that retain a bit of the momentary magic and cruelty of the everyday.

Text by Stephanie Von Spreter



Artissima
1995, lambda print on forex, 30 x 45 cm



Ape
1987/2008, mixed media, 10 x 19 x 12 cm



Tigre in Gaiola
2002, lambda print on aluminium, 90 x 90 cm



Tigre
2005, acrylic on plastic, 33 x 31cm



Untitled '89
1989, DVD, Super 8 transferred to dvd, sound, 3'22"



Unter den Linden
2008, DVD video audio, 5' 34"



Rodolfo centodue
2002, DVD video sound, 18' 32"

On the occasion of the exhibition *50 Moons of Saturn*, by explicit request of the curator, the Neapolitan artist presents *Rodolfo centodieci* (Rodolfo 102), 2002.

Shot in 2000, two years before being edited, soon after the death of 102-year-old Rodolfo, the protagonist, the work is a full shooting of the old man's lunch, without interruptions or editing interventions on the filmed material. The old man shows concentration but apparently lacks an object, and performs the mechanical act of consuming the meal in his dish, alternating the savage gesture of tearing the food to pieces with a state of complete devitalization. The man is seen in a three-quarter view, against the background of a council house interior, a cupboard, and the soundtrack of Federico Fellini's film *La dolce vita* (1960).

Rodolfo performs his cannibal act fluidly, seconding the passing of time, whereas the artist, after putting down her camera on the table-as Piscitelli herself recounts-, joins him, consuming her lunch off-screen.

Living death seems to be the undisputed subject of this work-death delivered from its time and poeticized by the voice of Marcello Mastroianni, who, encouraging the listener to buy island and love, exclaims: "We disgruntled have become so few".

Giulia Piscitelli carries out her job with a mythological sense of poetry: by attributing a symbolical rituality to an everyday gesture, she transposes the man's action into the domain of fantastic and religious narration and, triggering a mechanism that revives archaic meanings and restores life's existential intensity, she turns Rodolfo into a mythical figure. This melancholic episode drowns into its own abyss, awakening a *primoedial* essentiality, a severity apparently derived from the authentic image the artist sets her eyes upon every day-the Gulf of Naples, the crystal air and the volcano, which is nothing but another devouring, through which-in the words of Calvino- we imagine, along with the artist, "the sensation of his teeth on the palate, bathing me in saliva, then pushing me under the tip of his canines (...), in order to propagate myself in the body of the other, in a mutual, complete relationship that sucked us in and overwhelmed us."

Text by M. Vecellio, catalog: *50 Moons of Saturns*, T2, curated by Daniel Birnbaum, 2008



Bandiera PAC
2003, nylon, 100 x 90 cm



PAC
2003, DVD video sound, 16'30"

The uneasiness of daily life

How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell, striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

William Shakespeare

Re Lear

“Something is hanging over us. And it looks like it is a cataclysm. A slow silent explosion. A “thunderstorm” fit to be called such”. It is difficult to find clearer words to describe those times. Although from those times has past, not unharmed, more than a decade. The author of these words, from his *L'occhio della pittura* (The eye of painting) (1995), is Emilio Tadini, eclectic artist with a watchful eye, who facing *The Bathers* by Cézanne, reads their every stroke, every shade, finding into the common vibrance of the color of the bodies and the landscape the sign of a nature on the verge of disruption. If we take a look at our Earth today, it appears more like a garden devoid of its own delights and only able to grow infesting weeds suffocating with their roots all the vital lymph in it. We are living the vertigo of an Arcadia turned into tragedy.

It is the metaphor of the city of Medea, ready to devour its offspring. But the nostalgia of the arcadian canon is only to take refuge into a blind memory. And so we forget that maybe Medea is more of a victim than an assassin, and that the flames devouring its offspring are fueled by a hate which is more received than given. Love, destruction, passion, corruption are elements constituting an always more complex reality. They are a weft which is sometimes difficult to follow. They belong to a present that presses itself on our eyes until we are hurt. The flames surround us and we hold our breath, we would like to close our eyes, run away or throw everything into it like in a universal auto-da-fé. But there is no salvation in oblivion, there can be no catharsis in the escape.

And maybe not even in art.

But art can shape out even a catastrophe. Show the repressed that produces it. There is a deep sleep of the political sense generating monsters which sometimes only the poetic reason can decipher. Art, emancipated from the mere representation of the real, remains tied to it through a free bond. Art thinks by images. The abstract thought builds categories, “drawings of the mind”. Idea, image; a common etymology, a sole root.

But in the art the image can't be mere mimesis, the platonic idea shadow of reality.

As Nancy writes, “it is just of this fundamental character of the image that we should take an interest in: not in the mimetic character or that which the doxa attributes to the term of “image”, but in the fact that, even if mimetic, the image has in any case to be valued in itself and for itself, otherwise it is only a shadow or a reflection and not an image” (Jean-Luc Nancy, *Three essays on image*, 2002). The fact is that an image cannot have a name, be Untitled, but can't not have a voice. The armchairs of the quiet



Without courtesy
1995/2008, lambda print on aluminium, 150 x 245 cm

bourgeois interior pierced by a steel hook that Giulia Piscitelli delivers to us talk about a daily survival that can't be helped even if protected by the heavy walls of the doxa, maybe also plastered with the dull white of the mediatic hypnosis. These unfit seats show off the impossibility to find in the old maritime city the ancient inactivity posture after that Poseidon, the "shaker of the Earth", has thrown it into the netherworld. Nancy again, "every image is a monstrosity, to use a word that in various languages designates what in Italian is called ostensorio". The ostensorio, what in the catholic liturgy keeps the Corpus Domini in order for it to be shown, ostentated, on the altar. And it is an altar that is shown in Oltremare (Overseas).

A real altar that, altered and shaken in its dark original site, is ex-posed by the artist to the glare of the contrast with the purity of rational forms of a post-palladian chapel. A radical ostentation, where there are no suns irradiating their light, nor Ecce Homo promising suffering and redemption, but only a canvas covered by a base layer of clotted red that, in the artist's words, "empties a void never filled before" fruit of the loin of an eternal corruption. The art has to look then, and show, and show itself, and let see. When in the ten minutes of Todos I see the story of a life running by not as a synthesis, not anthologized, but expressed in its essence. And in that life I really see the metaphor of a research of a new impossible Arcadia. The man gathers "useful" scraps amongst mountains of urban waste, discerns among the waste those elements that allow him to rebuild a mechanism already broken.

Poseidon is the son the god Cronos.

To reorder the fragments of infinite clocks is like chasing the eternal desire to bring order into chaos. The will to bring back into the cycle, to "recycle" the mechanisms of a lost time. But if chasing the moments exposes ourselves to the risk of looking back and become salt statues, there is a force in that implacable ringing of alarms that appears as a rejection, refusal, of a time in which the technology holds as a hostage the life it was called to emancipate.

"Fate presto" is an apparently meaningless cry.

In reality it is a call. An exposition. A roll-call. A gathering together that maybe won't solve anything, but can show a lot. We are still, and always, sons and contemporaries of Pasolini.

Sons of the intellectual who knows, who denounces, who even if "hasn't got any proof, any clue" can't give up the action. He knows who did it, and even if he can't proceed juridically, he nominates it in front of the courtroom of reason.

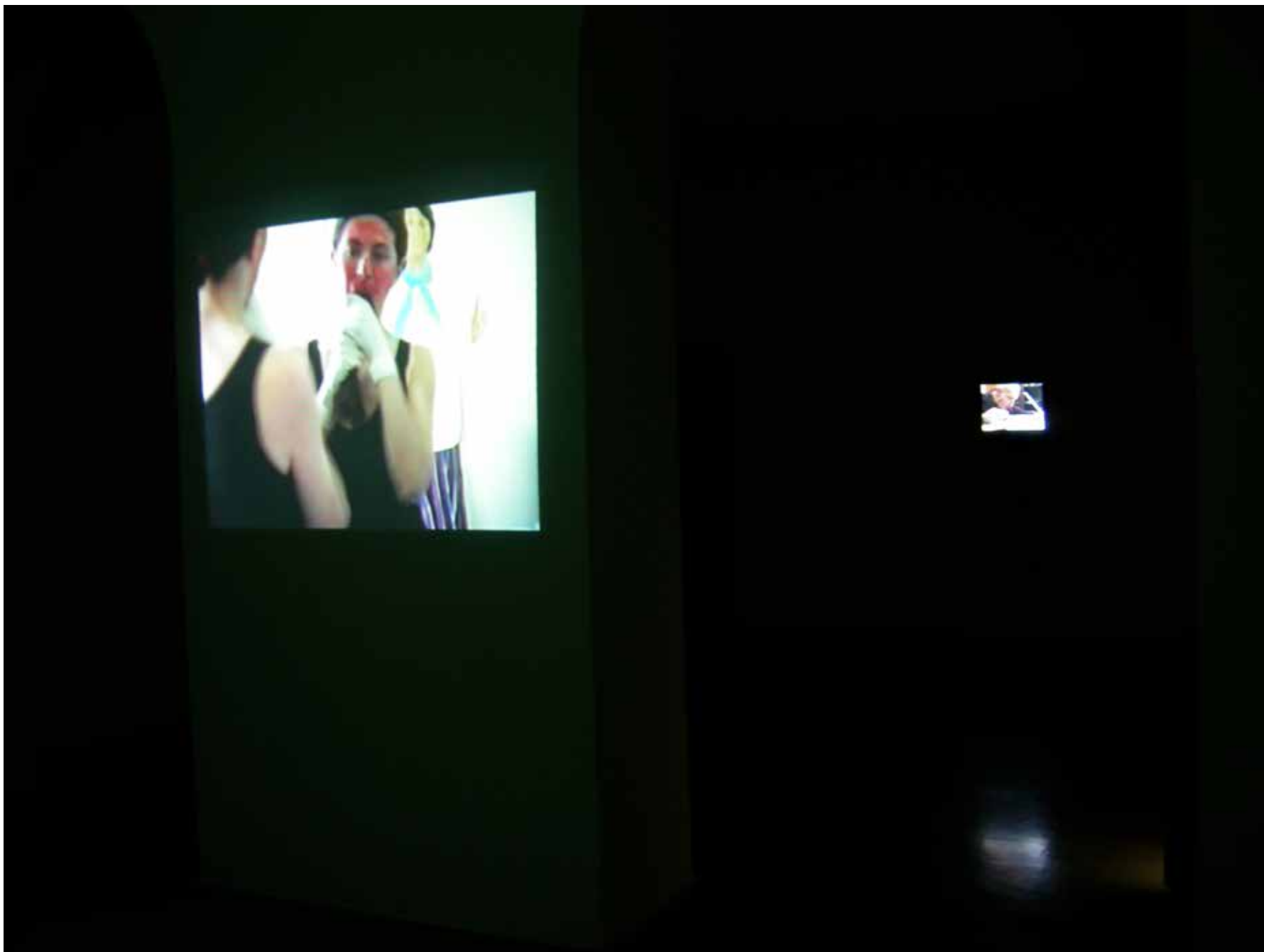
Art in its freedom can help us with this.

If the violence "distorts what it violates, plunders it, massacres it" (Nancy), art in its being a distorted reconstruction of nature, can help us retrieve the lost face of the only world we belong to.

Text by Giuseppe Fonseca, 2008, Fate Presto



Todos
2008, DVD video sound, 10'



Selected video works 1989-2002, 2006, exhibition view, Galleria Fonti, Naples



Untitled '97
1997, Video 8 transferred on DVD video, sound, 2'26"



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