

LA PASSIONE

A project by Marianne Heier

INHOUSE EXHIBITION
16 October — 29 December 2024

“La Passione” is a research-based exhibition project about Italian radical feminism and its close relationship with the world of photography. An intergenerational and transhistorical overview, it aims to shed light on contemporary issues of biased gender norms and current resurging fascisms to address structural violence and the need for overturning given representations today.

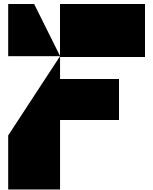
With works by Pippa Bacca, Bingöl Elmas, Betty Bee, Tomaso Binga, Lisetta Carmi, Marcella Campagnano, Agnese De Donato, Gruppo del Mercoledì (Diane Bond, Bundi Alberti, Paola Mattioli, Silvia Truppi), Lucia Marcucci, Alessandra Spranzi, Ottonella Mocellin, Chiara Fumai, Silvia Giambrone, and documentation originating from the work of Gina Pane.

16 October — 29 December 2024
Wednesday to Sunday, 12:00 – 17:00

For updates on bank holiday opening hours, please visit Fotogalleriet's website

@fotogalleriet_oslo
www.fotogalleriet.no

Møllergata 34
N – 0179 Oslo



INDEX

FOREWORD 03

Antonio Cataldo, Miki Gebrelul and Lara Okafor
Curatorial Advisors

LA PASSIONE 06

Script for the inaugural performance held
on 16 October 2024 at Fotogalleriet
Marianne Heier

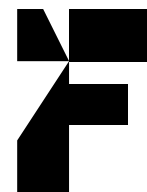
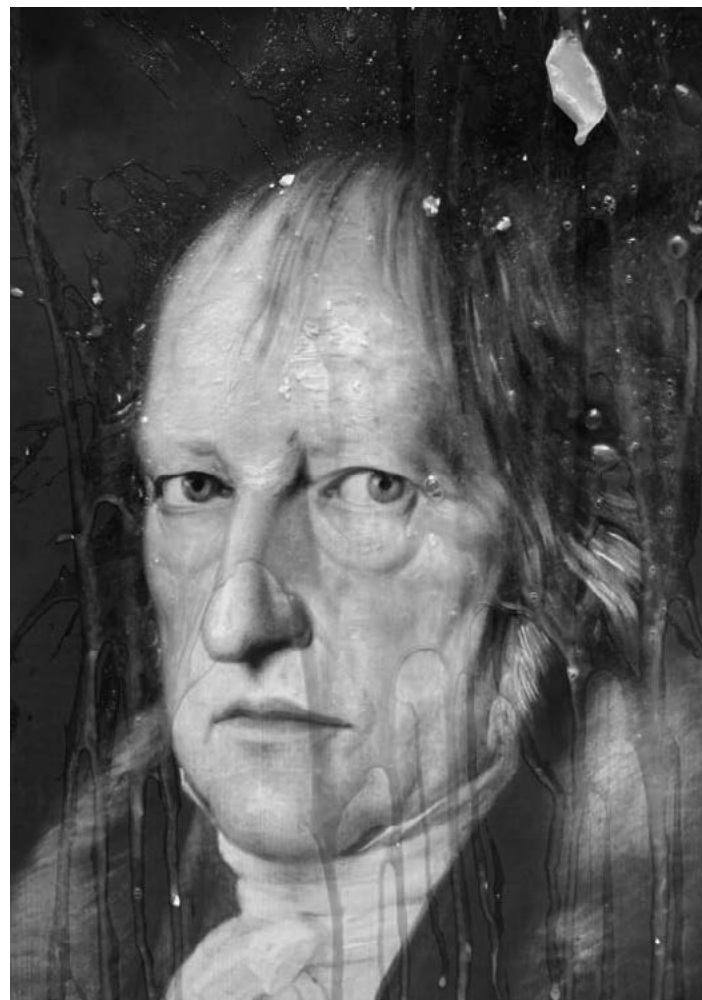
BIOGRAPHIES OF ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION, AND CHECKLIST OF THE ARTWORKS 12

THE CRITIC WHO SPIT ON HEGEL 28 Marianne Heier

LA PASSIONE

A project by Marianne Heier

INHOUSE EXHIBITION
16 October — 29 December 2024



FOREWORD

Antonio Cataldo, Miki Gebrelul and Lara Okafor
Curatorial Advisors

La Passione is a research-based exhibition project that stems from several years of conversations between Fotogalleriet and Marianne Heier about Italian radical feminism and its special, close relationship with art photography. Consisting of an intergenerational and transhistorical overview—archival documentation, artworks, notes and other material—this unique presentation aims to shed light on cogent contemporary issues of biased genders norms and current resurging fascisms, in Italy and abroad, to address continued structural violence and where we decide to stand today.

Whereas Marianne Heier's previous projects have mainly referred to art history of different historical periods mostly in its Western inceptions, with *La Passione* she is entering in dialogue with feminist works from the 1970s and 1980s, up until today. Even though many of these works and artists have been at the center of Heier's formation as an artist in the late 1990s during her years at the Accademia di Brera in Milan, and in other moments of her life and artistic research, affecting her and several generations of artists for their transgressional and innovative forms, it is surprising how relatively little space art canonical narration continues to hold for them. Their message endures the outmost relevance, as unfortunately world's events seem to demonstrate as conventional thinking folds back into normalized everyday violence. For this project, where photography is at the center of the feminist revolution of those years, Heier continues the imaginative role she developed in previous performative projects by acting as a guide of sorts, a messenger, or a ventriloquist, by collating material to form soft storytelling usually prevented by cemented museum presentations. She invokes history to push the present to unfold in an imaginative and more solidarist future.

The project's overall aim is to present a demand for freedom illuminated by the feminism of the last decades and honor the flow of conscious and unconscious cultural channels—formal and informal—across time and place, even when it is in opposition to both the canonical art history and the interests of the market; to demonstrate also how certain feminist ideas filtered from the South to the North and vice versa; how revolution cannot be contained in artificial borders and change is always in the air, if we could only catch it.

The relationship between feminist theory and artistic practice is unusually close in Italy, and the transition between the two is often blurred. It moves in the cracks left opened by artistic and societal rebellions and alliances in the Italian society, while finding its own peculiarity and unique history formation, and a legacy reaching us to this day. Photography became an important tool for oppressed groups in the post war period. Collective actions, performance, rioting, and pamphletting, go hand in hand with the intrinsically nomadic photo-based formats in a field where financial resources are scarce, political pressure is great and the patriarchal artistic genius holds the space and the budgets of museums, often occupied by painting and sculpture only. Collages, screen prints, photocopies, are and imprints for critical analysis and subversive visual culture, entering and appropriating the language of media, advertising and even fashion. The photographic medium's reproducibility and economic accessibility makes it particularly suitable for presenting and distributing information and documentation to wide audiences, within, but mostly outside, the designated spaces of art, and for charting the unexpected, reimaging public space and act in a guerrilla style method. The effigy of photography has played a central role in the historical spreading and progression of feminism, and therefore Fotogalleriet is an ideal venue for such a project to continue to live its presentness, and to anticipate what remains to be done, and the yet to be accepted.

On the occasion of the exhibition, Heier has prepared a number of performances for the physical and other spaces, at Fotogalleriet and in other institutions, sites known and unknown. For the opening she will present a new performance to celebrate the quest for freedom and the need for reformulating language. The performance text is reproduced in this publication. Heier is directly and indirectly also paying tribute to the work of Carla Lonzi (b.1931–d.1982), an art critic and activist, who championed Arte Povera and challenged patriarchal notions of art before leaving art behind and dedicate herself completely to different forms of social pedagogy and empowering the consciousness of the self which had been denied to a number of subjects because of how law had registered them. As Lonzi's and her fellow feminist companions supported the abrogation of a number of fascist laws, including the indulgence on the Crime of passion and The Rocco Code, we cannot but cohabituate with her in this necessary work.

The exhibition, therefore, is an invitation to continue to strive for emancipation by sharing the reverberations of the feminist motto of the time; "the personal is political!"

04

*Backwards flow streams of holy rivers and justice,
and all things are being turned back.
For men's counsels are deceitful, and the pledge
taken in the god's name is no longer firmly fixed.
New tales will give glory to my life,
honor is coming to the female of the species;
discordant rumors will let women go.*

Euripides, Medea, line 410 (chorus), 431 BCE

LA PASSIONE

Script for the inaugural performance held on 16 October 2024 at Fotogalleriet
Marianne Heier

If you google *passione* in Italian, you will first be informed that it is grammatically a feminine noun. Then two definitions are offered:

— Physical or spiritual suffering: in the first sense it survives only with reference to the sacrifice of Christ and that of the first martyrs of the Christian faith; in the second it is associated with the idea of a deep and tormenting affliction.

— A moment or motif in emotional life characterized by a state of violent and persistent emotion, especially when it can be traced back to an erotic-sentimental sphere or in contrast with the demands of rationality and objectivity.

Both of these definitions point to a great drama; one that plays out in culture, society, politics and religion, and which spans millennia. An area beyond good and evil, where pleasure and pain overlap and become two sides of the same thing. *Passione* is desire and death, joy and horror, the extreme of the human experience, typically represented through the chiaroscuro of the Baroque or the pathos of antiquity. *Passione* is the moth drawn to the flame, again and again.

Carla Lonzi writes: *Feminism is the discovery and implementation of the birth of the individual components of a species subjugated by the myth of self-realization through sexual union with the species in power.*¹

There are spirits among us, a long line, reaching back through time as far as we can see. Cristine de Pizan, Moderata Fonte, Lucrezia Marinelli, Artemisia Gentileschi, Arcangela Tarabotti, Olympe de Gouges and all the others. A river running through history and culture, a choir of voices, a tradition, a relay. A struggle, a burden, a community, a hope, a rope. A stone in the shoe, a pain in the ass, a coven. Bitches, bitches, bitches. A city of ladies.

*I smacked you a little with a flat hand.*²
In bed with the enemy.

¹ Carla Lonzi, *Sputiamo su Hegel. La donna clitoridean e la donna vaginale*, Gammalibri, 1973, p. 122

² Marius Borg Høiby in phonecall to his girlfriend on 4 August 2024 after abusing her, <https://www.vg.no/stories/304300/nye-lydoptak-jeg-slo-deg-litt-med-flat-hand>

MAUSOLEUM

The word mausoleum comes from the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, located in present-day Turkey. Built as a burial monument for King Mausolus by his wife and biological sister Artemisia II of Caria (b. ca. 350 BCE), and one of the seven wonders of the world. When Mausolus died, Artemisia mixed his ashes with water and drank him up, thereby incorporating the king's masculinity into her female body. She then took over the king's throne and continued to rule alone until she finally withered away and died of grief two years later. Queen Artemisia was herself put to rest in the Mausoleum she had raised for the king. His body in her body, buried inside each other in the mausoleum like Chinese boxes or matryoshkas: Queen Artemisia II of Caria was the king's first mausoleum.



On 3 November, 2020, while the United States was going to the polls, a large oblong nodule was surgically removed from my throat. It had grown around the nerves of my vocal cords, enveloping them completely. From inside myself I had cultivated a phallus and let it swallow my voice. A negative child in an alternative womb or an extra, missing organ. I lived with it. Spoke through it. It grew out of me and into me. Something else, which pressed on the trachea, trying, maybe, to take over. A colonizer. Or a completion? Before the operation I signed a declaration stating my awareness that my intruder might take my voice with it forever, it was not certain that it would let go so easily. When I woke up from the anesthesia, Trump had lost the election, and I had a new mouth between my body and my head.



I am mine.
 This is my hand.
 I can move it.
 Blood gushes through it.
 The sun is still high in the sky.
 And we... we are playing chess
 with death.³

A philosopher, one in the endless
 line of wise men, once said:
 The man *has* the phallus.
 The woman *is* the phallus.
 What did he mean by that?
 Can a muse be an artist? Perfect
 Galatea certainly must secretly
 have despised her maker
 Pygmalion? And why are none of
 the muses male?

The male body does not offer itself as a metaphor. It does not refer to anything outside itself, is not an image of anything other than itself. These are not anecdotes. They are metaphors. As I am myself. And you. And you. And you. But not you. They say I lack the capacity for abstraction. Metaphors often do. Can I even say I?

The male body *is* by virtue of itself, points to itself, describes itself. It *holds* the phallus, the pen, the brush, the right to name the whole world. The male body is not hollow, it is filled with a living inside, an active self, a will. Rather, it overflows, needs more space, presses into other bodies, acts through them. King Mausolus moved into Queen Artemisia and continued to rule from inside her female body.

The secret space
 That you'd so like to own
 Where you'd so like to return

Mohini, Lilith, Scylla, I am the negative, the Sphinx, I am the lioness with the head of Hat-shepsut, alabaster body, claws dug into the sand, asking questions without meaning, speaking in riddles, tearing your heart out, saying NO but meaning YES. Never alone, always in company of my own image. When I walk, I am the image of a walking body, when I weep I am sorrow. I, I, I, makes no sense except as an echo, I send it back where it came from. I live of reflected light. Half the world is always dark.

A subordinate body. An object to the subject.
 The subject has its own voice. The object is spoken for.
 You ARE your voice. I AM my voice.
 I hear they think I'm loud.

"It was ANGER that did write it" wrote Jane Anger as an introduction to her *Protection for Women* from 1589.

DEATH

Magician and silversmith P. T. Selbit first presented his newly invented trick *To Saw a Woman in Two* in London on 17 January 1921. A scantily clad female assistant was placed in a coffin and tied around the wrists, neck and ankles before the lid was put on and Selbit proceeded to saw the coffin across the middle with the woman inside. It took a very long time. A shocked audience gasped in surprise when the coffin was finally opened and the assistant, still bound around the neck, wrists and ankles, was found to be unharmed.

TADAH! SPECTACULAR!

The trick became a huge success. Selbit became a rich man. With this trick, he introduced the figure of *beautiful, young, female, assistant subjected to torture and mutilation* into the tradition of illusion and stage magic, thus almost accidentally stumbling upon a gold mine.

The audience couldn't get enough. And Selbit knew how to make the most of the opportunity: Black-faced, wearing an 'Egyptian costume' and with the stage name Joad Heteb, he also performed the tricks *Crushing a Lady*, *Stretching a Lady* and *Spikes Penetration*. The image of



a scantily clad, defenseless woman completely subjected to male power and control was an irresistible, sexy and cheeky response to the suffragettes', insistent, irritating work for women's suffrage and authority over their own bodies and their own lives taking place at the same time. Selbit understood this connection. He offered a penniless, unemployed Christabel Pankhurst, daughter of the leading suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst and one of the movement's foremost strategists, £20 a week to act as an assistant in his show. Christabel Pankhurst politely declined. No thank you.

This is Frances White's wedding photo. Before she married, Frances White worked as an assistant to her magician father Francis White. One of the tricks they performed was the 'Selbit's Saw a Lady in Two' trick. The original caption for this photograph is: "Mr. White saws his daughter in half—for the last time—after her wedding this morning. The bridegroom looks on..."

Hey little sister, what have you done
 Hey little sister, who's the only one
 Hey little sister, who's your superman
 Hey little sister, who's the one you want
 Hey little sister, shotgun
 It's a nice day to start again
 It's a nice day for a white wedding⁴



What was Aphrodite of Knidos afraid of?

Edgar Allan Poe wrote: "...the death then of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world..."⁵ Dickens describes his heroine Florence Dombey as possessing an otherworldly serenity characteristic of the dead. Angels of the home, mysterious, enduring, self-effacing beings, halfway over to the other side. Life without history, death-in-life. Closed and open at the same time, without will, subject, porous.

The stream of dead women in our stories, in our books, on our screens, in our newspapers. Every single day, every single hour, every single minute. Despite being technically and physically very demanding, the role of "dead young woman" is rarely acknowledged in the credits.

To lie completely still, without a single twitch in a single muscle. Lifeless, passive, lifted and turned, pulled and dragged, opened and closed, a form that can only receive. An average, trained actor can take about 15 seconds. A few, such as Jodie Foster, apparently may manage up to 30. Contrary to what you might believe, the trick is to empty one's lungs completely of air. That makes it easier to resist the temptation to breathe.

⁴ Billy Idol, *White Wedding*, from album *Billy Idol*, Chrysalis Records, 1982
⁵ <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69390/the-philosophy-of-composition>



Emmeline Pankhurst, Christabel Pankhurst's formidable suffragette mother said, in a famous speech from 1913: "We are showing them that government does not rest upon force at all: it rests upon consent. Not by the forces of civil war can you govern the very weakest woman. You can kill that woman, but she escapes you then; you cannot govern her. No power on earth can govern a human being, however feeble, who withholds his or her consent."⁶
 But is that really true?

Our house is full of ghosts.
 Here we are. Here I am.
 How does it feel?

I salute you MEDUSA, MEDEA, PENELOPE, LADY MACBETH, NORA HELMER.
 I salute you AGNESE, ALESSANDRA, BETTY, BIANCA, BINGÖL, CHIARA,
 GINA, PIPPA, LISETTA, MARCELLA, OTTONELLA, SILVIA, STEPHANIE.

GRAZIE.

This text quotes previous performances: O (performed at Stavanger Kunstmuseum in 2017), Negative Space (performed at Femidomen in 2021), and Lost Light (performed at Heirloom Center for Art and Archives in 2022); all by Marianne Heier.

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2007/apr/27/greatspeeches>

Pippa Bacca

(Giuseppina
Pasqualino di Marineo,
b.1974—d.2008)



Pippa Bacca's most famous work, the performance project *Brides on Tour*, is typical of her radical, utopian approach to art, life, and the world. But the work is also her most tragic one as the price was her life. In 2008, she and artist Silvia Moro left Milan to hitchhike all the way to Jerusalem dressed in white wedding dresses. The project was an exploration of the possibility of peace in a politically troubled area; the artists themselves referred to it as "a marriage between different peoples and nations." The journey was to travel through eleven nation states, several of which affected by war and unrest; it was based solely on the trust, kindness and generosity of other people. Bacca disappeared on 31 March 2008 in Turkey, and was later found in Gebze, raped and killed by one of the drivers. The incident shocked the public both in Italy and Turkey and forms the basis for Bingöl Elmas' work in the exhibition (see separate presentation).

Pippa Bacca's work, no matter her medium of choice, was rooted in a deep trust and love for others. A longing for close, true relationships and the belief in their transformative power permeate her work, treated with whimsical, humorous, and theatrical precision. Her best-known works are performative, in addition to the use of photography and collage. A recurrent motif is transformation and movement, both concrete and metaphorical, and the main focus of her production revolves around themes such as motherhood,

love and femininity. In *La Passione* she is represented with *Viaggio*, photographic cut-outs where the silhouettes of various means of transportation are shaped and cut out from the photographs of relatives, friends or strangers who have offered her a ride in her various wanderings. Rejected by a man she was in love with she produced 1,500 buttons with the text *I'm in love with Pippa Bacca, ask me why* and distributed them in Milan's art community in the hope that he would see them and give her a second chance. Today, these pins are worn as a memorial to Pippa Bacca and to raise awareness against gender-based violence.

Betty Bee is an artist and a performer. The theatrical representation of herself is the constant in her artistic-existential journey of provocation, play and display of her own body and obsessions. Her work ranges from documentary photography to video art, from installations to drawing and painting. She creates work of great delicacy and expressive power; she stars in extemporaneous performances in public spaces described as a form of political protest. She displays her imposing physicality as a tool to confuse, inspire reflection and question gender identities. The artist often plays with the ambiguity of physical appearance to deliberately confound these given binary categories. She diffuses the line between fiction and reality, creating dreamlike settings for addressing profound emotions and discomforts.

Work in the exhibition:

Senza titolo (from the series *Viaggio*), 2000 - 2002

Medium: Framed cut photographs
Dimensions: Each 22 x 32 cm

From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Betty Bee

(Elisabetta Leonetti,
b.1963)



Work in the exhibition:

Leonardo (from the series
Adescamenti), 1994

Medium:
chromogenic print
Dimensions: 40×29,5 cm.
From the Collezione
Donata Pizzi

Bamby (from the series
Adescamenti), 1994

Medium:
chromogenic print
Dimensions: 29,5×40 cm.
From the Collezione
Donata Pizzi

Miss Banana Yogurt
(from the series

Adescamenti), 1994

Medium:
chromogenic print
Dimensions:
29,5×40 cm.
From the Collezione
Donata Pizzi

Untitled

Artist book
Dimensions: 24,5×28,5
From the Collezione
Donata Pizzi

Betty Bee's work in *La Passione* consists of three staged portraits as a so-called *femminiello*, a people embodying a third gender in traditional Neapolitan culture. The *femminiello* is rooted in a tradition that stretches back thousands of years in the Mediterranean area, modulating between the masculine and the feminine, contrasting normative gender structures otherwise overwhelmingly dominant in Italian culture. The *femminiello* is part of the Neapolitan extended families' structures, often as a caretaker of infants. Their presence in a home is considered a sign of good luck.

Tomaso Binga

(Bianca Pucciarelli
Menna, b.1931)



A leading figure of the verbo-visual poetry movement, Tomaso Binga, whose registered name at birth is Bianca Pucciarelli Menna, is known for her poetry, expressed both in writing and through sound, images and performances. Her work in *La Passione*, a double self-portrait as both bride and groom documenting the performance *Oggi spose* from 1977, is a renown feminist symbol. During this performance she created for herself the male name and identity Tomaso Binga (inspired by futurist poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti) as a protest against the inequalities she saw as typical of the man-woman relationship both in society in general and in the world of art and culture. *Oggi spose* highlights, even mocks, the visual codes connected to the power distribution in binary, heterosexual relationships: the woman/bride is portrayed in a white dress, a sweet, dreamy expression on her slightly downward-tilted face; while the man/groom poses with a serious, almost stern expression, heroically looking down at the camera while surrounded by objects connected to the sphere of intellectual work. In the invitation to the performance, the traditional wording "today spouses" is replaced with the feminine "today brides", pointing at the implicit, structural sexism in the Italian language, where grammatically the masculine always prevails over the feminine in the plural form. Language is a constant field of interest for Tomaso Binga. The theme of identity and its various expressions, codes, masks and disguises occurs throughout her work, consistently (but always ambiguously) presented under her male pseudonym.

Work in the exhibition:

Oggi spose, 1977
Medium: Wallpaper
from digital file (2024)
Dimensions:
456×311 cm.
From the Collezione
Donata Pizzi

Marcella Campagnano

(b.1941)

Work in the exhibition:

Valeria (from the series *L'invenzione del femminile, REGALITÀ*), 1983
Medium: Gelatin silver print, cardboard
Dimensions: 21,7×14,5 cm
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Daniela (from the series *L'invenzione del femminile, REGALITÀ*), 1983
Medium: Gelatin silver print, cardboard
Dimensions: 21,7×14,5 cm
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Marcella (from the series *L'invenzione del femminile, REGALITÀ*), 1983
Medium: Gelatin silver print, cardboard
Dimensions: 21,7×14,5 cm
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Donne IMMAGINI, 1976
Book
Publisher: Moizzi Editore
Dimensions: 21×24 cm
Pages: 75
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi



works of the feminist movement, three of which, all part of the series *Regalità (Regality)*, are included in *La Passione*.

Typical of Campagnano's work is the playful, spontaneous approach to her photographic explorations, undertaken together with her artist friends in her home. The topic of these series of staged portraits is representation and the construction of subjectivity in a visual vocabulary of roles. Each woman in the *Regalità* series interprets an imaginary royal figure, wearing what appears to be luxurious, princely costumes as signs of power and privilege and posing with attitudes and postures copied from traditional Western historical portraiture of the rich and the powerful. In reality, the costumes are all made of recycled, domestic materials such as curtains, pillowcases and pieces of cardboard by Campagnano and her friends. Contrasting the idea of the male genius, these images are the result of a collective creative process between a group of women playfully looking at each other and deconstructing the traditional Western codes of power.

Part of the feminist collective of Via Cherubini in Milan and trained as a painter, Marcella Campagnano abandoned the medium of painting as she found it hopelessly dominated by men, leaving little space and opportunity for women. Turning to photography, she produced some of the most well-known iconic

Lisetta Carmi

(b.1924—d.2022)

Lisetta Carmi was born into a middle-class Jewish family in Genoa. Provoked by the neo-fascist and reactionary uprisings of the 1960s, Carmi became active in leftist protest movements and gave up a career as a successful concert pianist in favor of photography. The camera became a political tool for Carmi, and her carefully observed, extremely precise pictures of patriarchal society have been widely published both in Italy and internationally.



Work in the exhibition:

I Travestiti (series), 1965
Medium: Ink jet print (2017)
Dimensions: 40×30 cm., 40×30 cm., 30×50 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

I Travestiti, 1972
Book
Publisher: Essedi Editrice
Dimensions: 24,5×32 cm.
Pages: 150
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

On New Year's Eve in 1965, Carmi met and photographed a group of transgender people living and working on the Via del Campo, Genoa's red-light district. This encounter was the beginning of a seven-year long relationship with the people living there and led to the publication of the controversial book *I Travestiti* (1972), a collection of all Carmi's portraits during the period. Carmi became close with these women and moved to Via del Campo to share their daily life. With the affectionate eye of a friend, she depicted sex work from a new perspective; that of the women themselves. The portraits in the series *I Travestiti* are a sensitive, loving and respectful meditation on gender identity,

on longing, desire, beauty, sadness and exclusion. In the context of the Catholic, conservative Italian culture, questions surrounding gender identity were (and still are) taboo. For Carmi, herself a cis woman, the series of *I Travestiti* was also an investigation of the experience of being a woman in a deeply misogynistic culture. The focus on labor in marginalized communities, in this case sex work in the trans community, is typical for Carmi's deeply humanist oeuvre, where issues of labour, class and gender are recurrent. As exemplified by the three portraits included in *La Passione*, her work is not a photo-anthropological study, but a standing in solidarity with friends, actively creating their own images.

Agnese De Donato

(b.1927—d.2017)



Agnese De Donato trained as a lawyer and worked as a journalist before dedicating herself to photography in 1968. Her famous photo from 1970, *Donne non si nasce, si diventa* (One is not born, but becomes, a woman)—here included as a large-scale wallpaper—borrows its title from Simone de Beauvoir’s famous quote and has repeatedly been used as an iconic image for the Italian feminist struggles. In

the foreground a young woman strides proudly forward, her shirt open to reveal the absence of a bra. She raises her right arm, clenched fist, her mouth open, shouting. This highly contrasted image is superimposed on a larger, softer photo of another young woman, wearing a romantic, white dress and a floral crown, smiling seductively at the camera. The two contrasting images illustrate a central issue in feminist struggles: that of female agency and self-determination. Founder and director of the bookshop-gallery Il Ferro di cavallo, a meeting place frequented by visual artists and intellectuals such as Maraini, Levi, Moravia, Pasolini, Fioroni, Burri, Afro, Sanguineti, Pound, she was already an important figure in the cultural life of Rome when, in 1973, she started working as editor, cover designer and photographer for the feminist magazine *Effe*, founded together with other female journalists. The four-color pictures of a scantily clad young male actor posing sensually as a model in front of the classically inspired marble statues at the fascist Stadio dei Marmi mirror the many images of similarly scantily clad women posing on other magazine covers in an effective exemplification of the gendered gaze of fashion photography. They were used as cover proofs for the first issue of the magazine with the provocative title *Chi era costui? Assolutamente nessuno* (Who was this guy? Absolutely no one).

Work in the exhibition:

Donne non si nasce, si diventa, 1970
Medium: Wallpaper from digital file (2024)
Dimensions: 287×311 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Chi era costui? Assolutamente nessuno (Who was that guy? Absolutely no-one) (1973)
Medium: 4 No. 0 magazine EFFE cover proof ink-jet prints, 2015
Dimensions: 30×24 cm ea.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Bingöl Elmas

(b.1976)



Bingöl Elmas was born in 1976 in Erzurum, Turkey. She is a director and writer, known for *Komsu Komsu! Huu!* (2015), *My Letter to Pippa* (2010) and *Playing House Evcilik* (2012). For *My Letter to Pippa*, Elmas dons a black wedding dress and takes up the journey where Pippa Bacca’s journey ended (see above), following her planned route through Turkey until the Syrian border, hitchhiking alone in the same way Bacca had planned to do. Documenting her journey and the various meetings and situations along the way, her film is both a homage to Pippa Bacca and a study of the conditions imposed upon female bodies under patriarchal regimes. Equal part sorrow and fury, the resulting film is both a meditation on courage, trust and solidarity and important political statement on the violent consequences of toxic masculinity. As Elmas states: “[...] states of masculinity are discussed as well as the reality of being a woman in Turkey [...]. This is a movie about existing as a woman in a truck or on a highway without being harassed or raped.”

Work in the exhibition:
My Letter to Pippa (2010)
Medium: film
Duration: 60 min.
Courtesy the Artist

Chiara Fumai

(b.1978—d.2017)

Always refusing to be victimized, minoritized or diminished as female artist, Chiara Fumai adopted the vocabulary of threat, offence, revolt, violence, vandalism and boredom to produce uncomfortable situations, collages, environments and actions in open opposition to the dominant discourses of Western patriarchy. Playing an ironical game of true fiction which appropriates the techniques of remixing and channeling, Chiara Fumai's performative works (or, as she



Work in the exhibition:

Shut Up, Actually Talk, 2012 – 2013

Medium: single-channel video, color, sound

Duration: 10'31"

From the Chiara Fumai Archive

words of Carla Lonzi's *Second second Manifesto of Rivolta Femminile* channeled through the body of nineteenth century Circassian beauty and sideshow freak Zulumma Agra. Fumai's voice can be heard throughout the gallery, a spectral presence both of the artist herself, Lonzi and Agra at once.

herself called them, un-works) evoke female figures who, with their courage and anger, marked human history just before being excluded. Among them Carla Lonzi, the bearded lady Annie Jones and Circassian beauty Zulumma Agra, German terrorist Ulrike Meinhof, illiterate medium Eusapia Palladino and philosopher Rosa Luxemburg. Her peculiar gallery of portraits also included a few male presences like the illusionist Harry Houdini.

Fumai's strong interest in the spiritual, the occult and the esoteric runs through her whole oeuvre. In *La Passione* she is represented with the video *Shut Up, Actually Talk*, first presented for dOCUMENTA (13) in 2012. This work sees the

Silvia Giambrone

(b.1981)

With a practice that encompasses performance, installation, photography, sculpture and sound, Silvia Giambrone explores contemporary body politics, with a particular focus on violence perpetrated against women, both physical and psychological. Directly influenced by Carla Lonzi, Giambrone digs into the shrouded arena of violence, attempting to understand and unearth humanity's tendency towards brutality while simultaneously calling into question its domestication and normalization.



The video *Everyday Dicks* is a provocative work that triggers a wide reflection upon the power of pornographic images in our society inviting us, the audience, to carefully consider the big impact they have on the reality we live in. The work is based on Giambrone's own experience as a victim of a stalker.

The artist says: "Receiving a 'dick pic' is not considered much these days. It happens every day to many people (women and men) and it seems it has almost become a social phenomenon that is not even considered outrageous anymore as we are so domesticated to pornography that we tend to forget it is actually harassment we are talking about. The stalker I had for more than a year, sent me 46 videos of himself masturbating and wrote horribly gross things to me. When telling people about it I realized just a few of them took what was happening seriously. Most of them joked about it like it wasn't a serious matter. To change that I've decided to ask some intellectuals and writers I highly appreciate to write a short text about my stalker's videos as if he was a visual artist and that was his body of works. I think that using this conceptual détournement will paradoxically lead to approaching the dick pic as something to be considered more carefully and to better ponder the cultural and relational implications, and the impact it has on people's reality."

Work in the exhibition:

Everyday Dicks, 2023

Medium:

video 16/9, stereo

Duration: 15'

Produced by Padiglione

Arte Contemporanea, Milan.

Courtesy the Artist

Gruppo del mercoledì

(1974—1978)



Gruppo del mercoledì (The Wednesday Group) was formed in 1974 by Diane Bond, Bundi Alberti, Mercedes Cuman, Paola Mattioli, Adriana Monti, Esperanza Núñez and Silvia Truppi. The group chose photography as the medium to explore the connections between the body and female identity, using it as a tool for exploring and critiquing the models of representation of the time.

Work in the exhibition:

Ci vediamo mercoledì. Gli altri giorni ci immaginiamo, 1978
Medium: 4 framed maquettes, Gelatin silver print
Dimensions: 36,5 × 51 cm ea.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi
Ci vediamo mercoledì. Gli altri giorni ci immaginiamo, 1978
Book Publisher: Mazzotta Editore
Dimensions: 21,5 × 29 cm
Pages: 95
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

The artists met on Wednesday evenings to collectively and critically discuss their work; thus, one would participate in the work of another, giving life to a personal and professional exchange.

The experience, closely connected to Rivolta femminile's method Autocoscienza (self-consciousness building), is recounted in the photobook *Ci vediamo mercoledì. Gli altri giorni ci immaginiamo*, (See you on Wednesday. The other days we'll imagine each other) published by Mazzotta in 1978. The book contains a selection of the artists' works—individual and as a group—that deals with the theme of the body, subjectivity, masks, the double, sisterhood, gender inequality and a quest for freedom from the gendered stereotypes of the dominant culture.

Lucia Marcucci

(b.1933)



Lucia Marcucci is one of the main exponents of Italian visual poetry. She analyses the mutation of language and its ambiguity in collages combining words and images borrowed from the world of mass media. Her work denounces the commodification of the female image and reveals the contradictions and ambiguities of culture and politics, as they are expressed and enforced through the language of mass media. Branching poetry, drawing, sculpture, theatre, performance, photography and more, her work is characterized by energetic creativity, combined with a strong sense of playful, critical irony and a very sharp eye for sociopolitical and linguistic codes. She cheekily plays with roles and meaning, often starting out explicitly from the codes describing and controlling female experiences and identities. Double meanings, mixed messages, ambiguous metaphors and veiled truths appearing through cracks in the Italian language are central tools and elements in her work. The photographs in *La Passione*, all taken during a trip from Rome to Naples with a group of fellow visual poets in 1965 and titled *Pin Up*, are typical of her production. They are also an early example of outspoken feminist positions in Italian art, as is evident in the ironic representation of the *Ragazza Squillo* (Call girl): a young woman dressed in all her professional-looking finery holds up the (at the time) ubiquitous metal telephone sign with its rotating wheel. From the same series are *La regina di Saba* (The Queen of Sheba) and *Essa Extra*.

Work in the exhibition:

Pin Up. Ragazza squillo, 1965
Medium: Lambda print (2016)
Dimensions: 42,8 × 30 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Pin Up. Regina di Saba, 1965
Medium: Lambda print (2016)
Dimensions: 42,8 × 30 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Pin Up. Essa Extra, 1965
Medium: Lambda print (2016)
Dimensions: 42,8 × 30 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Courtesy Frittelli arte contemporanea

Ottonella Mocellin

(b.1966)

Mocellin's work is tightly interwoven with her personal life. She works partly as an individual artist and partly in a duo with her partner Nicola Pellegrini, drawing inspiration from personal relations and shared experiences in a practice that blurs the lines between the personal and intimate on the one side, and the artistic and professional on the other. Through performances, photography, installations, and videos in which she is both actress and director, she addresses conflict, emotionality, dialogue, and incommunicability in romantic and family relationship with special attention to gendered roles and family structures.



Storia d'Italia from 1988 is therefore a typical example of Mocellin's artistic strategy, poetically showcasing the topics at the core of her practice. The video refers to the true story of Italia Pasini, Mocellin's great-grandmother, a schoolteacher who became pregnant at the

beginning of the last century after an affair with a man who abandoned her. Italia decided to give up the role of mother to take on that of aunt in order to secure a future for her daughter, who was raised by her paternal grandparents. Italia Pasini's true identity was kept a family secret, only revealed to Mocellin upon the death of her grandmother Maria Mocellin (Italia's daughter). In the video we see Ottonella Mocellin as a child playing on the seashore in a super 8 film shot by her grandmother Maria, found by the artist in Maria's house after her death. The whispered voice over, read by the artist, tells the story of Italia. Typical for Mocellin's work, a fragment of collective history emerges from a personal and autobiographical story that reflects gender issues and social roles in the recent past.

Work in the exhibition:
Storia d'Italia (1998)
 Medium: video
 Duration: 2'49"
 Courtesy the Artist

Gina Pane

(b.1939—d.1990)

Pane is mostly known for her "azioni" (actions) pieces, in which she would perform a strategic set of actions upon herself, oftentimes requiring high levels of physical endurance and tolerance for pain. The visual language of the ritual was very important to Pane, and she executed her highly symbolic and meticulously staged performances with an extreme attention to detail, effectively inviting the audience to resonate with the feelings she was going through, igniting empathy and relative emotionality. Her own body was the canvas on which she expressed communal concerns surrounding sexuality, spirituality, gender, politics, feminism, the environment, and suffering.

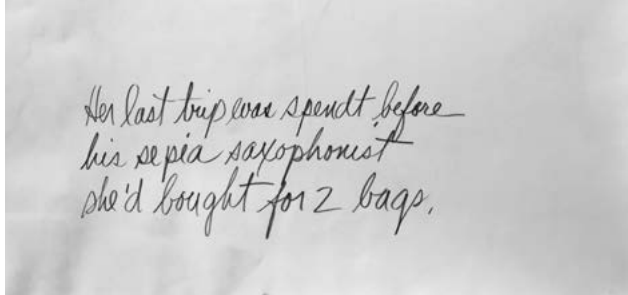
The framed document in *La Passione* does not qualify as a work by Pane but is included in the exhibition as a kind of relic, echoing Gina Pane's interest for the religious, the spiritual and the ritual, and acknowledging her importance within the context of Italian feminist art. It is a small black and white silver test print, bought on e-bay and probably originating from Pane's studio as a photographic copy sent for instructing the mounting of an exhibition. On the front of the picture are three documentation photos of her seminal performance *Je* from 1972, on the back of the picture is a detailed, handwritten description of the work.

In *Je* Pane positioned herself on the window-ledge of a second-floor apartment situated above a café overlooking a square in Bruges. She turned her back towards the square and the audience, looking instead through the glass to the apartment within, where a family of four went about their usual, private, domestic activities: eating dinner, talking, playing a game, and generally ignoring the face at the window. Precariously and dangerously positioned on the windowsill, Pane took polaroid pictures of the family inside the apartment and let the pictures fall down to the audience underneath her, while sometimes pausing to read short texts on the relationship between the self and the other, the free and the unfree. As Pane stated herself: "In placing my body on the window's parapet between two zones, one private, one public, I had the power of transposition that shattered the limits of individuality so that 'I' could share with the 'Other'."

Stephanie Oursler

(b.1938—d.2018)

A pioneer of the American feminist movement and a Black Panther activist in 1966-67, American artist Stephanie Oursler emigrated from New York to Rome in the early 1970s. She joined the Collettivo di Rivolta Femminile with Accardi, Lonzi and Banotti, and contributed to the foundation of the Cooperativa Beato Angelico, the first self-managed space for women artists in Rome.



Work in the exhibition:
... her last trip, 1976
Medium: silver gelatin print
Dimensions: 60 × 50 cm.
From the Collezione Donata Pizzi

Un'album di violenza (1975)
Photobook
Publisher: Edizioni delle donne
Dimensions: 33 × 23,5 cm.
Private collection

is also a copy of her publication *Un'album di violenza* (An Album of Violence), published by Edizione delle donne in 1975. The book collects hundreds of clippings from the Rome newspaper *Paese Sera* describing violence, often deadly, against women in that same year. Oursler writes as an introduction to this overwhelming collection of squalor, fear and despair: "At night history is not progressive. Men are momentary accidental noisy squatters in the universe. Women are, at least, quietly invisible... In clear mornings of habitual sanity, one reads the newspaper and reason eclipses the moon. There are women worthy of attention, eloquent in their man-given power to die."

Reflected in her work are both ideas that were circulating in the late 1960s in New York, and influences of the feminism from the early 1970s in Rome. Typical for these contexts, the introspection of the female subject in patriarchal society is for Oursler the foundation of both her political work and her artistic practice.

Stephanie Oursler's work in *La Passione* is part of a series characterized by blurred and superimposed images with comments handwritten by the author that allude to the poetics and the drama of the female world. A recurring topic in her work is patriarchal violence, and included in the exhibition

Alessandra Spranzi

(b.1962)

The artistic research of Alessandra Spranzi relates to photography, with photographic staging, the reuse of images of her own or taken by others, collage and "photographs of photographs." Her work reveals a taste for humble materials, everyday situations, domestic settings, neglected and obsolete objects, handiwork, and its gestures. Through appropriations and even minimal manipulations, Spranzi questions the mystery of existence and the fundamental forces that determine our fate, as well as that of the objects and spaces that surround us.



La donna barbata (The bearded woman) is part of a series of thirty black-and-white portraits of a woman at ease in meeting the gaze of the camera despite her uniqueness. She leans against a pole while she turns her back to a plowed field, appears behind a flowering bush, sits at a table in the morning.

It seems that the bearded woman knows how to stay in the *between*, as if her awareness and serenity derives precisely from her being different. The bearded woman's image presented itself to the artist as a condition of claimed extraneousness: it would be enough to shave to get back to normality. But what do we lose of ourselves by withdrawing from our untamed side? Or, in Spranzi's own words: "There is no sadness in the bearded woman, but rather a wild, pervasive quietness, a restless quietness, sometimes a melancholy mixed with peace. The bearded woman goes through her fields, goes along her paths; she is alone in the silence, far from the humming, far from the wasted smiles. She recognizes what is far and what is near, the seasons which come and go, the shadows of the evening. She knows that to be in this world means defying it, prodding it, provoking it. It means choosing to remain in it."

Work in the exhibition:
La donna barbata (part of series of 30 portraits, all titled *La donna barbata*), 2000
Medium: Silver salt print
Dimensions: 26 × 38 cm.
Private collection

THE CRITIC WHO SPIT ON HEGEL

Marianne Heier

In July 1970, a radical feminist manifesto signed Rivolta Femminile (Women's Revolt) appears in Italian cities, authored by art critic Carla Lonzi, together with visual artist Carla Accardi and writer Elvira Banotti. The manifesto goes much further than Norwegian feminism has ever dared, and the text still reads as edgy today as more than fifty years ago. It is not about equal pay and division of labor in the home, but about rejecting the nuclear family and marriage entirely. No quotas for women in positions of power, but a redefinition of power itself. Culture as a whole, built around the interests of the patriarchy, must be abandoned in favor of new creative expressions. "We spit on Hegel," they write. Hegel, with his view of woman as naturally subordinate to man, is seen as the incarnation of the Western philosophical tradition, and Rivolta Femminile make it clear that they are not interested in negotiating with thousands of years of misogynistic philosophy. The fact that Italy recognizes the right to divorce, and self-determined abortion is largely the result of the Rivolta Femminile and the circles around them.

In May this year, the news came that the Carla Lonzi archive donated to the National Gallery in Rome (GNAMC), where it has been deposited since 2018, would no longer be in the care of the museum. An ongoing work to digitize the extensive material was interrupted three years ahead of schedule despite great international interest and sponsorship funds from Google. The decision came as a result of a change of directorship, and it is difficult not to see it as ideologically motivated. In Italy the wind currently blows from the far right, and it hits the women hard. Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni won the 2022 election under the traditional Italian fascist slogan *God, Fatherland, and Family*. In June, 46 years after Law 194 affirmed the right to self-determined abortion, she deleted a paragraph about this right, as well as the support for the LHGBT+ population from a joint declaration during a G7 meeting. In April, she got approval for anti-abortionists to be able to contact women about to terminate a pregnancy to "inform them about other options." Conscientious objection to abortion is so widely practiced among the country's health personnel that women in several areas in practice do not have access to medical assistance if they wish to terminate their pregnancy. Of the 120 feminicides in 2023, 64 women were victims of domestic violence from a partner. The figures for

28

rape and sexual violence show an increase of 35% from 2020, and in addition there are conditions such as forced marriage, attacks with acid, stalking and revenge porn. Part of this neo-fascist, misogynistic wave is the erasure of the traces of feminist struggle from Italian history.

Despite its original history, Italian feminism and Rivolta Femminile are little known outside the country's borders, and its central texts have never been translated into any Nordic languages. One of the many distinctive features of the movement is its origins in the visual arts. When Carla Lonzi decided to abandon the role of art critic in order to dedicate her time fully to feminist theory and activism in 1970, she was a household name in the art field. She had written extensively on her contemporaries both for newspapers, institutions and publications, and had an international network. Her decision followed the publication of the seminal *Autoritratto* (Self-Portrait), a transcription of conversations with defining Italian artists throughout the 1960s, illustrated with images based on free poetic association. Years of experiments with the art critic format and increasingly frustrated attempts at reforming art criticism eventually led to her departure and the conclusion that the role of the critic is inextricably and irredeemably linked to patriarchal power. However, art and aesthetics remained a central problem in her further work: Can feminists be artists without betraying their cause if the art field as a whole is built on the idea of the male genius? Can the oppressed speak the truth if the language is owned by the oppressor?

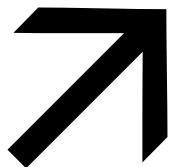
For the Italian artists associated with the feminist movement, the transition between feminist theory, activism and artistic practice was blurred. Financial resources were scarce, and techniques such as collage, screen printing and photocopying became important tools for critical analysis of visual culture such as advertising and fashion. Many of these artists went largely unnoticed by the art institutions, with the movement generally receiving serious attention from the art institutions only in recent years. For many, sadly the recognition comes too late for them to experience it themselves.

It is through art that Carla Lonzi indirectly finds her way to Norway. The National Museum in Oslo, practically building its contemporary collection around Arte Povera, an influential northern Italian art movement from the 1960s and 1970s that focused on everyday materials and processes rather than traditional techniques, credits art historian Germano Celant for the movement's definition. Carla Lonzi worked closely with the Arte Povera artists for many years before her departure from art, and her obvious influence on their work is no secret. A tip for the National Museum in Oslo, if they have the capacity to do more than manage the assets of the super-rich, private sponsors with bank accounts in tax havens, could therefore be to investigate the concrete

connections between Italian feminism and central parts of their own collection. For what do the artists Gilberto Zorio, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Giovanni Anselmo, Pier Paolo Calzolari, Jannis Kounellis, Giulio Paolini, Giuseppe Penone and Mario Merz have in common, apart from being represented in the collection of the National Museum? They are men. Where are the traces of the women's work, and what did it look like?

References to Carla Lonzi can be found in feminist writers such as Elena Ferrante, Silvia Federici and Catherine Malabou, and translations of Rivolta Femminile's publications are on the shelves in several countries. Nevertheless, it is largely visual artists, particularly those with a performative orientation, who have kept her legacy alive. The internationally best-known example is perhaps the work of Chiara Fumai, often directly based on Lonzi's texts, but traces of Rivolta Femminile's strategies can also be found in works by Norwegian artists such as Marthe Ramm Fortun and Marie Gurine Askeland. Art moves as much through informal, underground networks as it does through commercial and institutional channels. It is to be hoped that the museums, both here at home and elsewhere in the world, will be able to hold their own against the increasing political instrumentalization of the art institutions. At a time when hard-fought rights are at stake in more and more places, Carla Lonzi's archive is of international interest and must be protected. This is an essential narrative about European art, politics and the avant-garde. That's what museums are supposed to take care of, isn't it?





If you want to visit with a group and have a guided tour, contact Lisa Andrine Bernhoft-Sjødin at post@fotogalleriet.no

32

For international press inquiries, please get in touch with Arash Shahali at presse@fotogalleriet.no

“La Passione”
A project by Marianne Heier

© 2024, Fotogalleriet Oslo,
the artist and authors

Staff

Nkule Mabaso

Director

Miki Gebrelul

Curator and Head of
Exhibitions

Lisa Andrine Bernhoft-Sjødin

Head of Mediation and
Communications

Randi Midthun

Mediator and Digital

Advisor

Finlay J. Hall

Art Handler and Technician

Lara Okafor

Curatorial Fellow 2024/25

Arash Shahali

Communications Advisor

Bassel Anis Hatoum

Curator, Claiming Space

Linda Chen

Accountant

Julie Hrnčirova and Jan Khür

In-House Photographers

Artist Marianne Heier extends her gratitude to Arts and Culture Norway for supporting the production of her work in view of the exhibition. Thank you to Donata Pizzi, Alessandra

Capodacqua, Battista Lena, Laura Iamurri, Lars Holm-Hansen and Existenz forlag, Raffaella Giampaola, Camilla Chams, Giorgina Bertolino, Francesca Comisso, Ferdinando Mazzitelli, Claudia Durastanti and Silvia Bellingeri at La Nave di Tesero for generous, insightful and inspiring help in the development of the project. Irma and Ellinor for help with the posters. Marie Gurine Askeland, Vilde von Krogh and Madeleine Park for fabulousness, trust and friendship.

Fotogalleriet

Møllergata 34

N-0179 Oslo

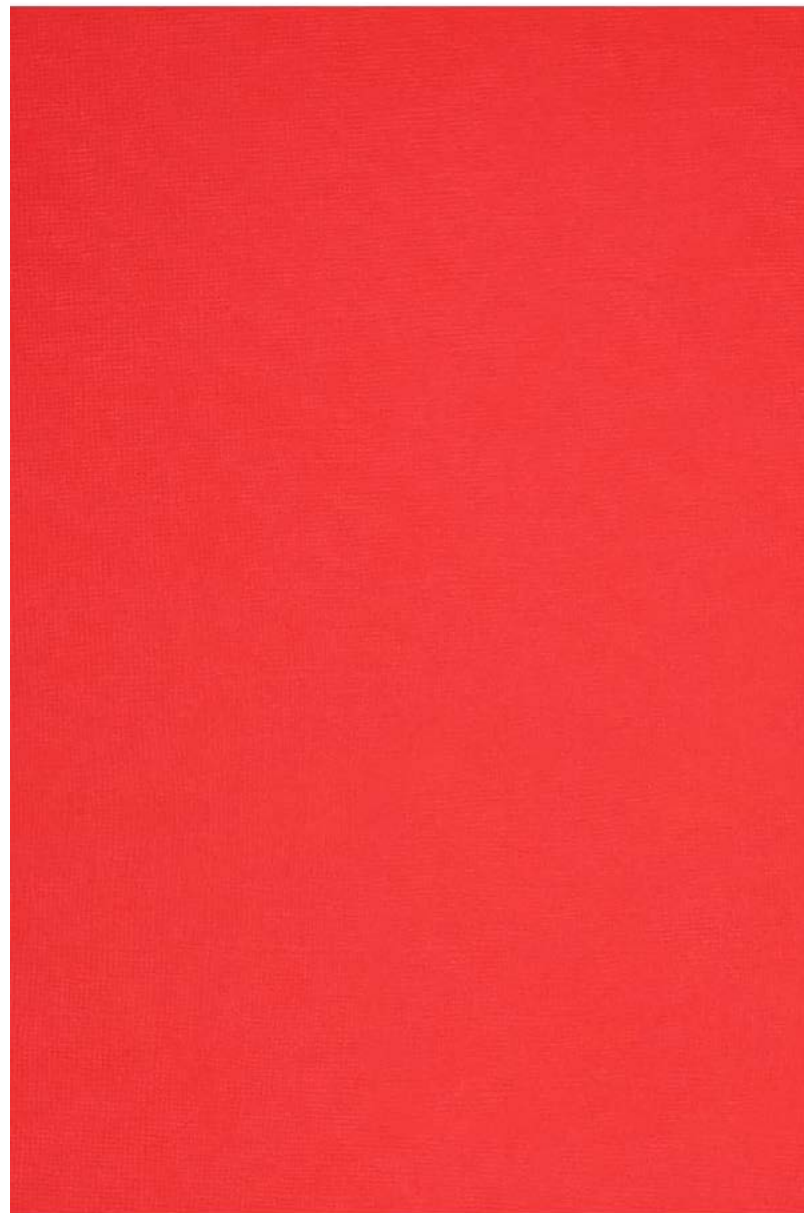
www.fotogalleriet.no

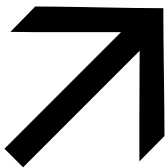
post@fotogalleriet.no

Design: David Robayo, Paris

Printed in Norway

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, electronic, photocopying or otherwise, without permission.





If you want to visit with a group and have a guided tour, contact Lisa Andrine Bernhoft-Sjødin at post@fotogalleriet.no

32

For international press inquiries, please get in touch with Arash Shahali at presse@fotogalleriet.no

Founded in 1977, Fotogalleriet remains the only kunsthalle in Norway focusing on photographic art, and the Nordic countries' oldest kunsthalle dedicated solely to photography as a critical artistic practice. Fotogalleriet is concerned with problematizing visual culture and contributing to crucial discourses around image production. At the core of its mandate, Fotogalleriet works for a more balanced representation in the art field and society through collaboration with central, socially engaged organizations. A public foundation in Oslo city center, it receives its principal funding from The Norwegian Royal Ministry of Culture and Equality, the Norwegian Photographic Fund, and the Oslo Municipality.

The exhibition presents for the first time in Norway a large selection of works coming from the unique photographic collection of Collezione Donata Pizzi; additional works are on loan from the Chiara Fumai archive, and Marco Vaglieri. In addition, we would like to thank individual artists Ottonella Mocellin, Silvia Giambrone and Bingöl Elmas for giving permission to present their work within the exhibition, and curator Milovan Farronato.

We are very grateful for their generosity and collaboration.



Kulturdepartementet



Oslo

We also acknowledge the kind support of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Oslo.

