

DISCIPULA

Founded by M.F.G. Paltrinieri, Mirko Smerdel and Tommaso Tanini in 2013, Discipula is a collaborative research platform operating in the fields of visual culture and art.

Adopting various strategies and with a particular focus on the forms and methods of narration, Discipula works delve into the interaction between image and text, fact and fiction in order to investigate the construction and negotiation of meaning.

As a means through which to present art projects outside more conventional and institutional spaces, Discipula members are committed to publishing and distributing their works as limited edition books and other printed works through Discipula Editions.

Projects / Editions

EFFICACY TESTING STREAM

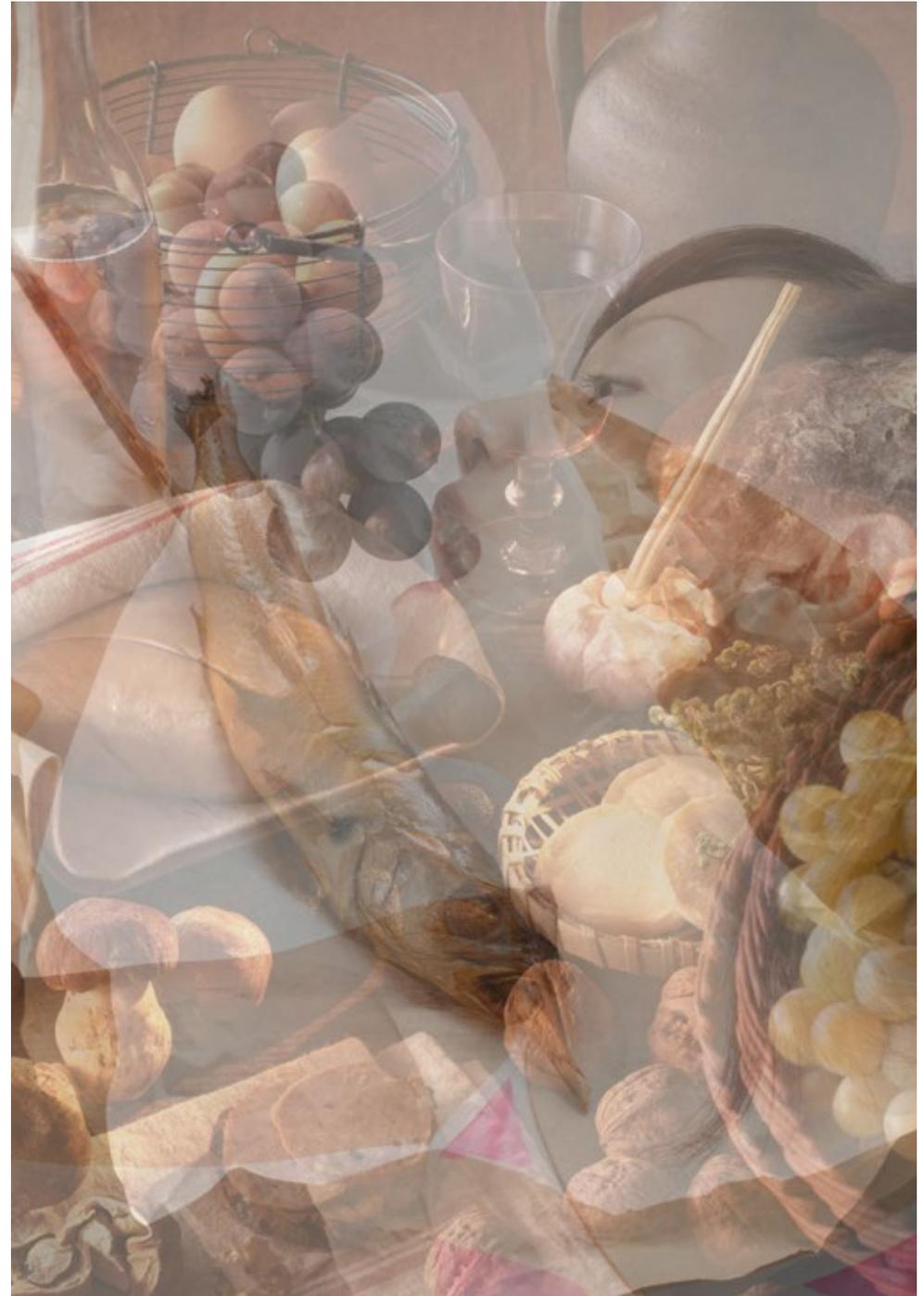
MFG PALTRINIERI - MIRKO SMERDEL - TOMMASO TANINI

Consisting of a video installation accompanied by a series of digital prints on PET, Efficacy Testing Stream stems from an appropriative gesture: a series of food stock images purchased on eBay are mounted as a single magmatic flow in which the layering of visual levels removes the neatness and, as a result, the effectiveness of the photographs.

Created to sell edibles, the images, now on the verge of illegibility, become a disturbing visual backdrop for a voice-over that, simulating hypnosis techniques, delivers a long list of articles and essays on ethic and political issues related to food.

By subverting the mechanisms that regulate the elements of communication in advertising, Discipula upset its function, turning the installation into an open invitation to information-gathering and conscious food consumption, seen as a cultural and political element in human life, as well as its nourishment.

(Francesca Lazzarini, 2015)



For more info about the project:
<http://discipulaeditions.com/project/efficacy-testing-stream/>



Video still

EFFICACY TESTING STREAM: INSTALLATION

For more info about the installation:

<http://discipulaeditions.com/project/efficacy-testing-stream/>



Installation view: retro-projection on latex film



Inkjet prints on transparent paper (pictorico), series of 5, cm 40 x 50



Installation view



UV prints on PET film, series of 2, cm 120 x 200

THE DEAD COMMERCIALS

MIRKO SMERDEL

On Wednesday the 4th of May 2011 on the walkside of via Schievano in Milan, near "Schievano-Bilbao" bus stop n°47, a 35 mm film was found, unrolled and abandoned. The film has been recovered and restored, then scanned. Inside, it is possible to find six commercials of different products: Lega del filo d'oro, Lipton Tea Time, Diffusionetessile, Foxy Mega, Tantum Angelini, Groupama.

If we look at each single photogram, isolated from the narrative flow, the perception of these commercials radically changes and disturbing and almost grotesque new features seem to appear.

Stripped of their primary function - that is, building desire to induce consumption - the film clips form on the gallery's wall the sentence "The more voices there are, the more spin there is", taken from the script of the film "Diary of the Dead", in which the director George A. Romero reflects on the role of the media within society through the clichés of horror movies.

Uttered by the male lead, who is seen collecting stories on how to survive the zombie epidemic, as the entire mainstream communication circuit has crashed down, those same words displayed inside the gallery seem to outline an ironic parallelism between consumers and the living dead, suggesting once again that the hope for salvation lies in an active and direct awakening of consciousness on the part of ordinary people.



For more info about the project:
<http://discipulaeditions.com/project/the-dead-commercials/>



Installation view: original found film mounted on wall, variable dimensions

JUST LIKE ARCADIA

MFG PALTRINIERI - MIRKO SMERDEL - TOMMASO TANINI

Garden Bridge, is a planned pedestrian bridge over the River Thames in London, England. Conceived by the actress Joanna Lumley in 1998 and designed by Thomas Heatherwick, on a commission from Transport for London, it is planned to feature trees and gardens.

The bridge is planned to be 367 metres long and 30 metres across at its widest point, and it would run in the city centre from near Temple station to near the Southbank Centre. It would feature indigenous river edge trees, shrubs, and wildflowers.

As of July 2014, the cost of the bridge has risen to £175 million, with £30m pledged by Mayor of London Boris Johnson and £30m pledged by HM Treasury. The full planning application for the project was submitted on 30 May 2014. In December 2014 Boris Johnson approved the scheme to build the bridge, with construction expected to start in 2015. The bridge will be completed by 2018.

Various criticisms of the project have been raised. In November 2014, it emerged that the bridge would not be able to be used by groups of 8 people or more; cyclists; or accessed between midnight and 6am. Despite originally being a privately funded project, a total of £60m of the estimated £175m cost will be paid for by the government.

Architectural rendering, is the art of creating two-dimensional images or animations showing the attributes of a proposed architectural design. Renderings encapsulate the world as envisioned by architects, a synthesis of the real and the imagined ideal. Free of the burden of realism attached to photography, the render sits somewhere between reality and fiction. A visual representation, this image is the public persona of how the building wants to be portrayed rather than the reality of how it exists.

JPEG (seen most often with the .jpg or .jpeg filename extension) is a commonly used method of lossy compression for digital images. The degree of compression can be adjusted, allowing a selectable tradeoff between storage size and image quality.

Arcadia: Proses and Verses is a pastoral poem written in 1598 by the Spanish playwright and poet Lope de Vega

Arcadia refers to a vision of pastoralism and harmony with nature. The term is derived from the Greek province of the same name which dates to antiquity; the province's mountainous topography and sparse population of pastoralists later caused the word Arcadia to develop into a poetic byword for an idyllic vision of unspoiled wilderness. Arcadia is associated with bountiful natural splendor, harmony, and is often inhabited by shepherds. Commonly thought of as being in line with Utopian ideals, Arcadia differs from that tradition in that it is more often specifically regarded as unattainable.



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Does not the pleasantness of this place carry in itself sufficient reward for any time lost in it, or for any such danger that might ensue? Do you not see how everything conspires together to make this place a heavenly dwelling?

Do you not see the grass, how in color they excel the emeralds [...]? Do not these stately trees seem to maintain their flourishing old age, with the only happiness of their seat being clothed with a continual spring, because no beauty here should ever fade?

Doth not the air breathe health which the birds (both delightful both to the ear and eye) do daily solemnize with the sweet consent of their voices? Is not every echo here a perfect music?

And these fresh and delightful brooks, how slowly they slide away, as, loath to leave the company of so many things united in perfection, and with how sweet a murmur they lament their forced departure.

Certainly, certainly, cousin, it must needs be, that some goddess this desert belongs unto, who is the soul of this soil, for neither is any less than a goddess worthy to be shrined in such a heap of pleasures, nor any less than a goddess could have made it so perfect a model of the heavenly dwellings.

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H. SAID HE LOVED US

TOMMASO TANINI

H. said he loved us' draws upon the story of GDR and the German Ministry for State Security (STASI) to investigate the feelings of fear and oppression caused by living in a state of constant suspicion and diffidence. The result of 3 years of work, H. Said He Loved Us combines and overlay archival and documentary research with a personal and subjective photographic investigation inspired by the book "L'Uomo è Forte" written by the Italian writer Corrado Alvaro in 1938, a ferocious critique of totalitarianism and its abuses of paranoia and instilled fear to control the masses.

Along with portraits of victims of the Stasi (all betrayed by people they trusted and loved: family members and friends), images of East Germany cityscapes and anonymous interiors generate an unresolved tension between the act of spying and being spied upon. These pictures, partly cinematic and partly forensic, resonate with the sense of unease that pervades Alvaro's book while creating a sinister background for the documentary material collected by Tanini during his investigation.

Combining the factual and the fictional, the personal and the historical, 'H. said he loved us' defines a space where to focus on the analysis of feelings and emotions related to an event rather than the event itself.

"H. said he loved us" is the recipient of 2014 Premio Pesaresi for Contemporary Photography (<http://sifest.net/awards/premio-marco-pesaresi-2/>).



Zentralbild/Krisch/-Stehr 11/21
31.8.1964

15 Jahre DDR

Bezirk Neubrandenburg : Dreißiggeschossiger Wohnblock

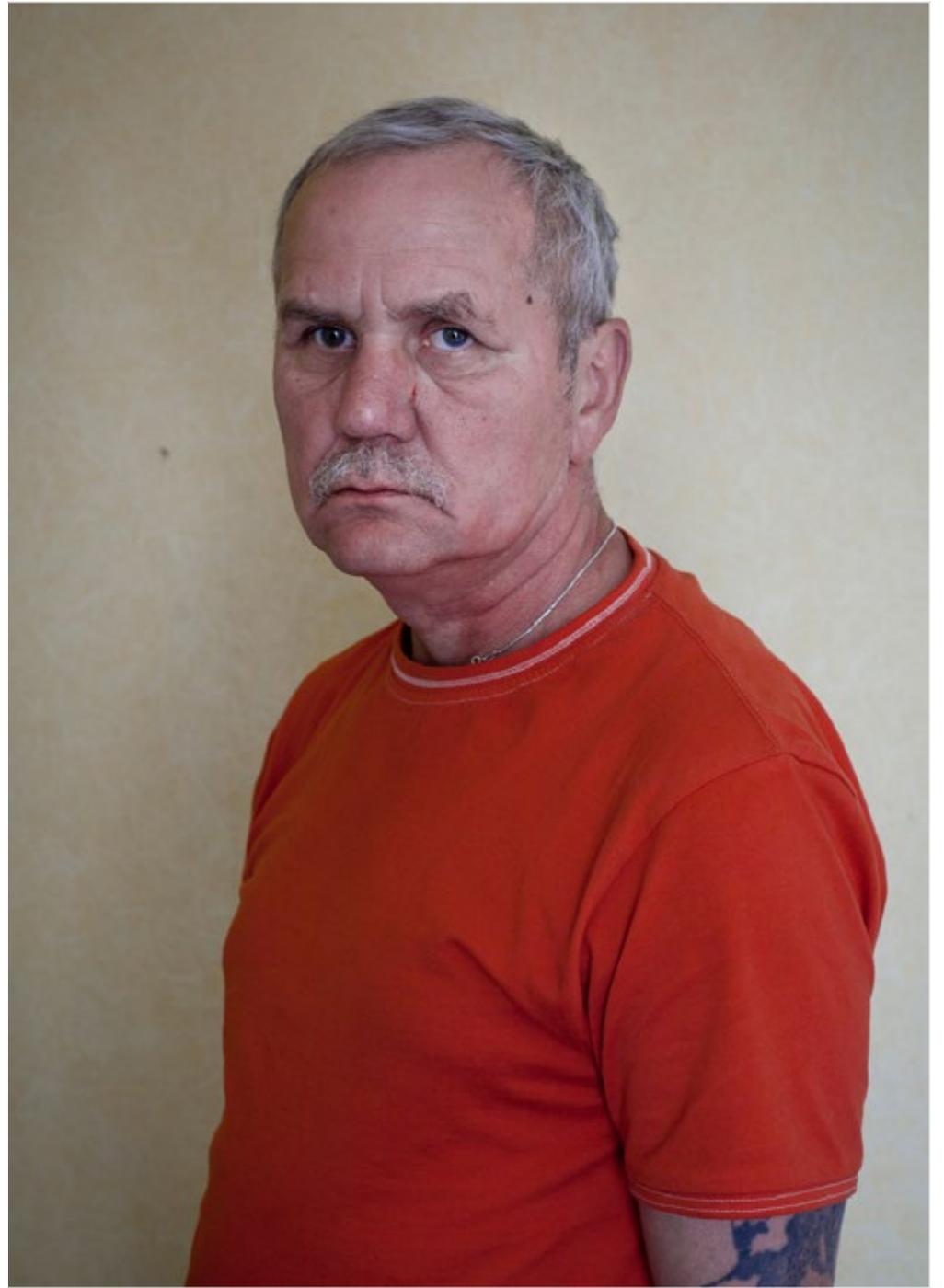
Kreist. Abteilung Groß Kamenow

Ein dreißiggeschossiger Wohnblock (unten Bild zeigt ihn noch im Bau befindlich) wird in der Gemeinde Groß Kamenow im Kreis Neubrandenburg zum 15. Jahrestag der DDR das festliche Bild des De-fen-Kühnen. In der modernen Groß-Industrie sind werden gegenwärtig 32 Wohnungen montiert und noch vor Ablauf des Jubiläumjahres der Kreist. bezugsfertig sein. 3200 neue Wohnungen entstehen in diesem Jahr in Bezirk Neubrandenburg auf dem Lande. Bereits 1963 wurden 60 Prozent aller neuen Wohnungen in den Dörfern gebaut.

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For more info about the publication:
<http://www.discipulaeditions.com/shop/h-said-loved-us>





H. SAID HE LOVED US: INSTALLATION

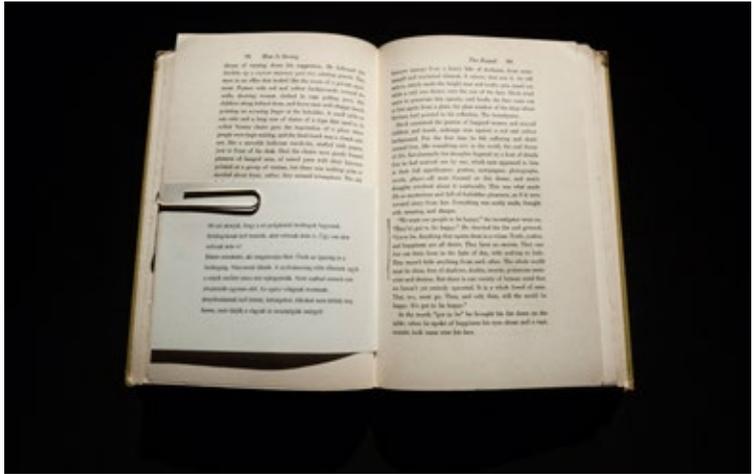
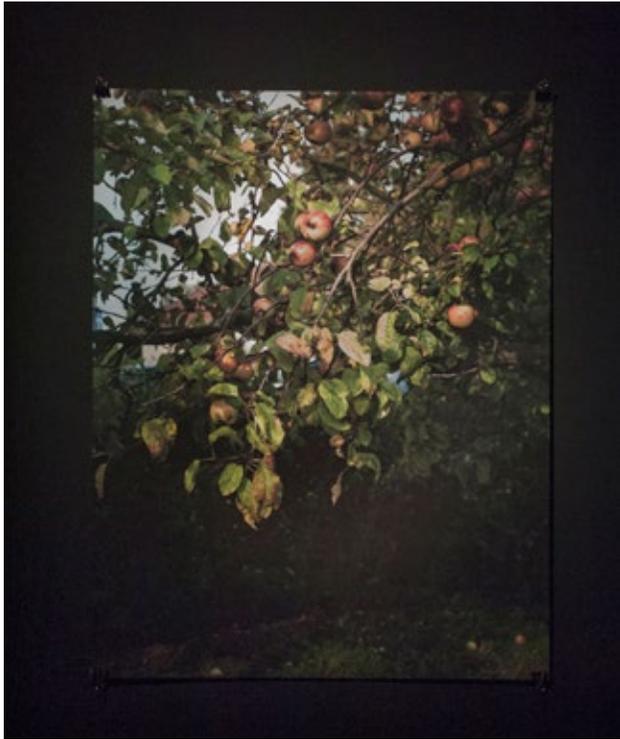
For more info about the installation:

<http://discipulaeditions.com/project/h-said-loved-us-installation-module-1/>





Installation view: Format Festival, Derby, UK



Installation view: Mélycsarnok, Budapest, Hungary

THE LOOKING GAME

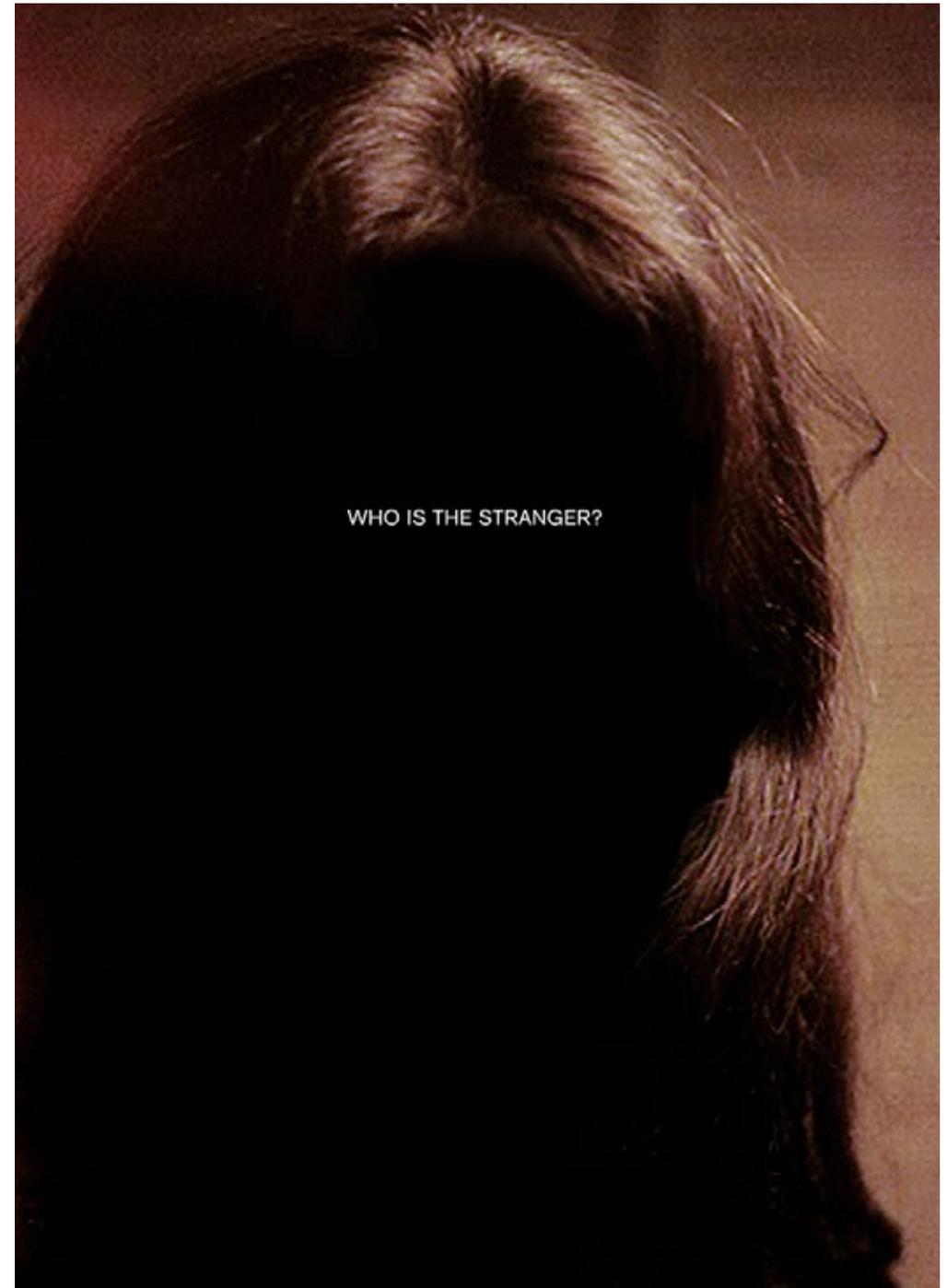
MFG PALTRINIERI - MIRKO SMERDEL

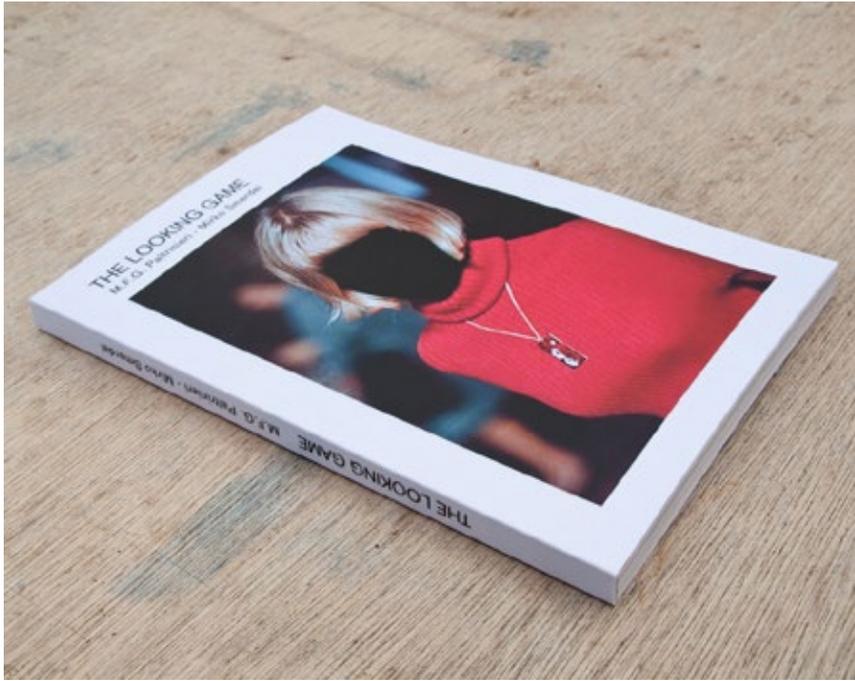
The Looking Game is a project exploring the archive of pictures taken by Rodney Alcala, serial killer and amateur photographer, active between the late 60s and the 70s and imprisoned in Death Row since 1980.

The work takes as its starting point the connection between Alcala's pictures and the alias he adopted while on the run from the police: John Berger, the same name as the famous British art critic and author of the groundbreaking TV documentary "Ways of Seeing". Only a coincidence or did Alcala know about John Berger?

Taking the form of publication and installation, the Looking Game sets up a dialogue between Berger's words and some of the images taken from Alcala's archive of pictures, calling into question the act of looking as well as the processes of production and consumption of photographic images.

For more info about the publication:
<http://www.discipulaeditions.com/shop/the-looking-game>





THE LOOKING GAME: INSTALLATION

For more info about the installation:

<http://www.discipulaeditions.com/project/uncategorized/tlg>





Inkjet prints, MDF, engraved acrylic, series of 14, cm 21 x 28



Inkjet prints, series of 4, cm 160 x 70



Engraved acrylic, series of 9, cm 50 x 70

WORK IN PROGRESS

PROMISE AREAS

MFG PALTRINIERI - MIRKO SMERDEL

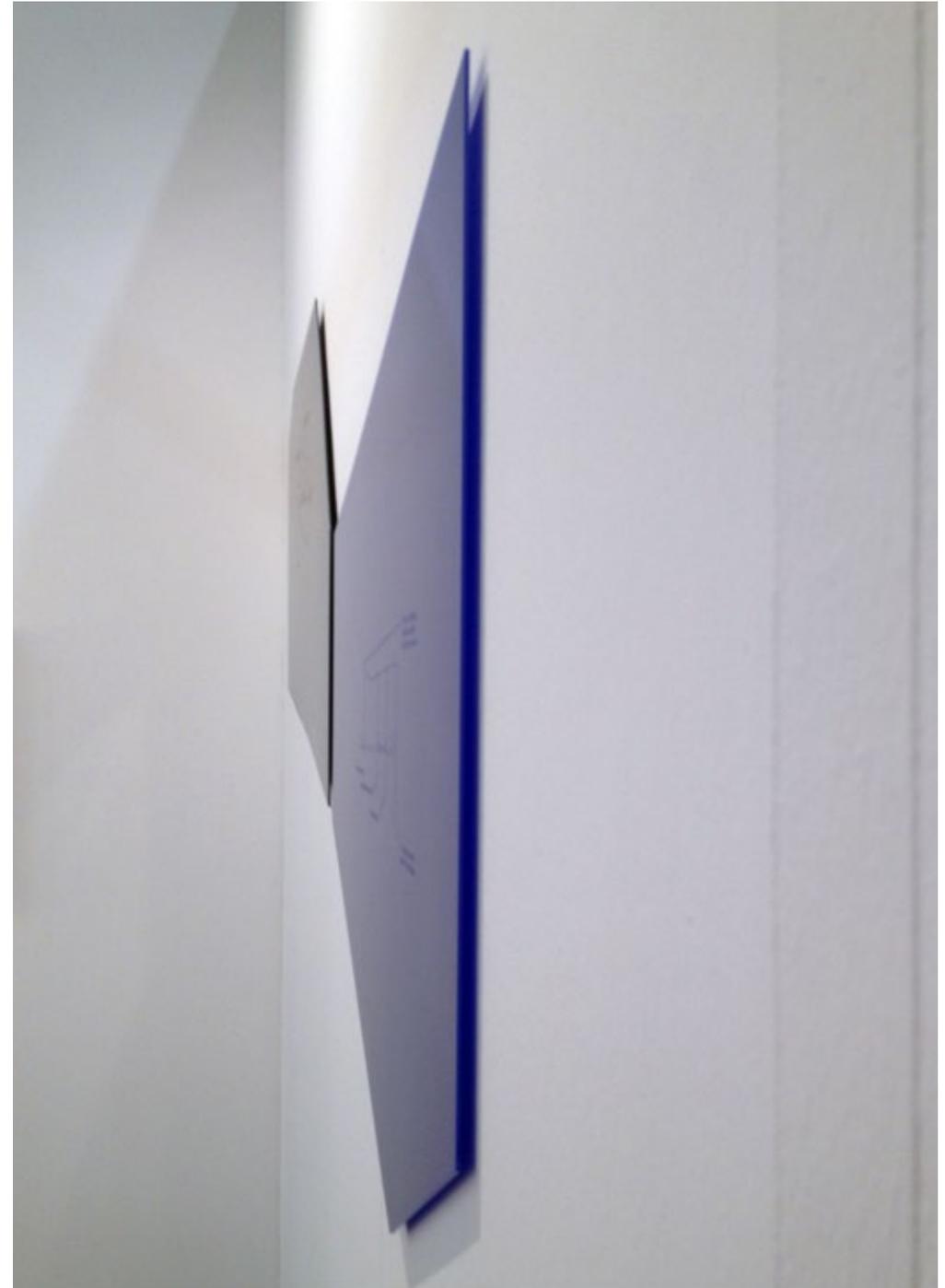
Promise Areas is a new chapter in Discipula's exploration of the relationship between images and systems of power. At the centre of this series lies the exploration of renderings as a means for the transmission of a neoliberal and capitalist vision and ideology.

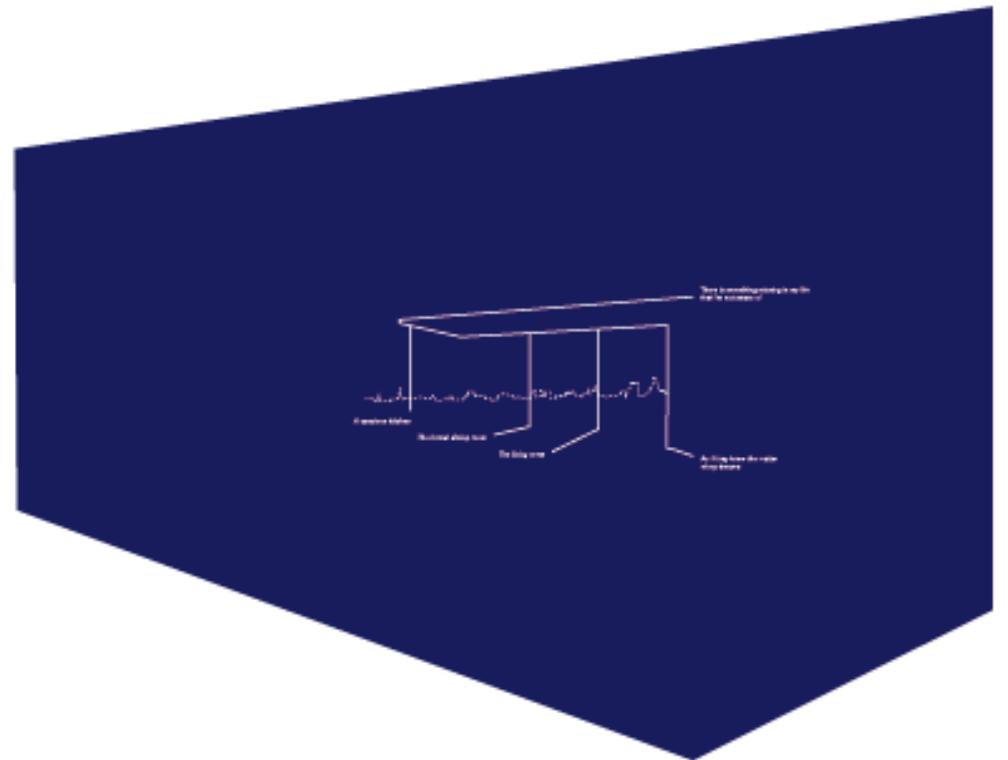
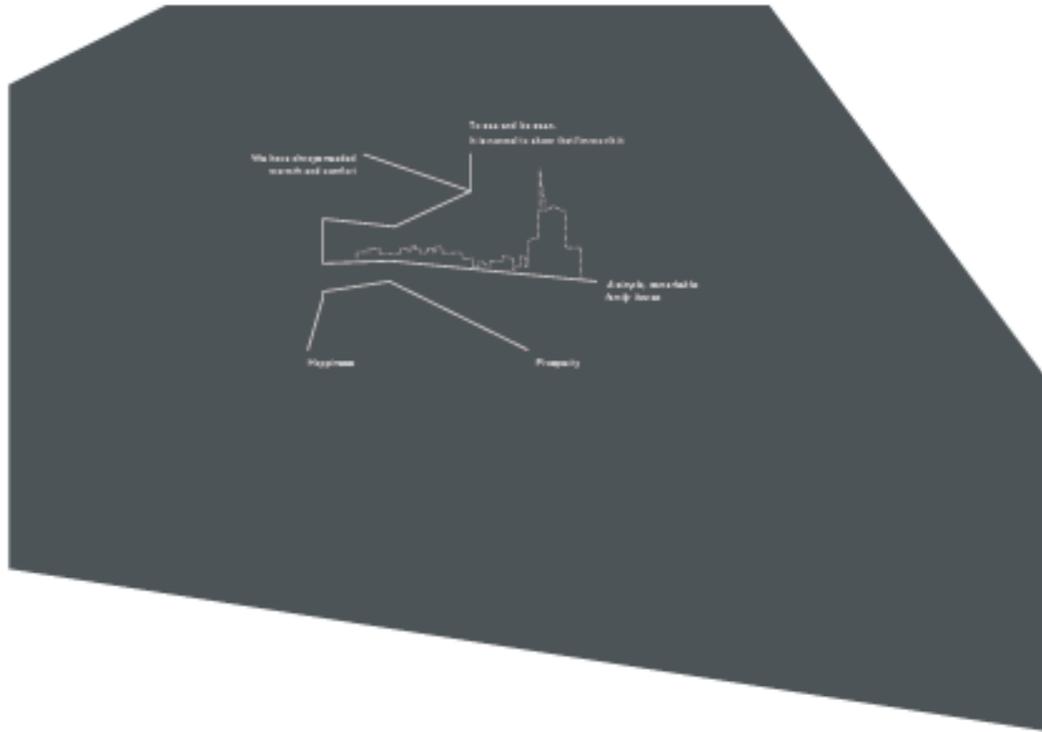
Starting from the example of London, a city in which power seems to be more and more in the hands of property developers and investors, we selected a series of renderings of luxury flats under construction in global cities such as New York, Paris, Dubai, Los Angeles and Milano.

From these renderings we then created minimal layouts that we transformed into diagrams in which found texts taken from estate agents' websites (and representative of this business language) interact with original texts written by Discipula.

Drawing inspiration from minimalism, design and concrete poetry, "Promise Areas" defines and explores enigmatic psychological spaces, areas of inner tension between human needs, desire and ostentation that the original renders seem to invoke.

Installation view (detail)





Engraved acrylic, variable sizes.

EYES DISOBEY ME

MFG PALTRINIERI - MIRKO SMERDEL

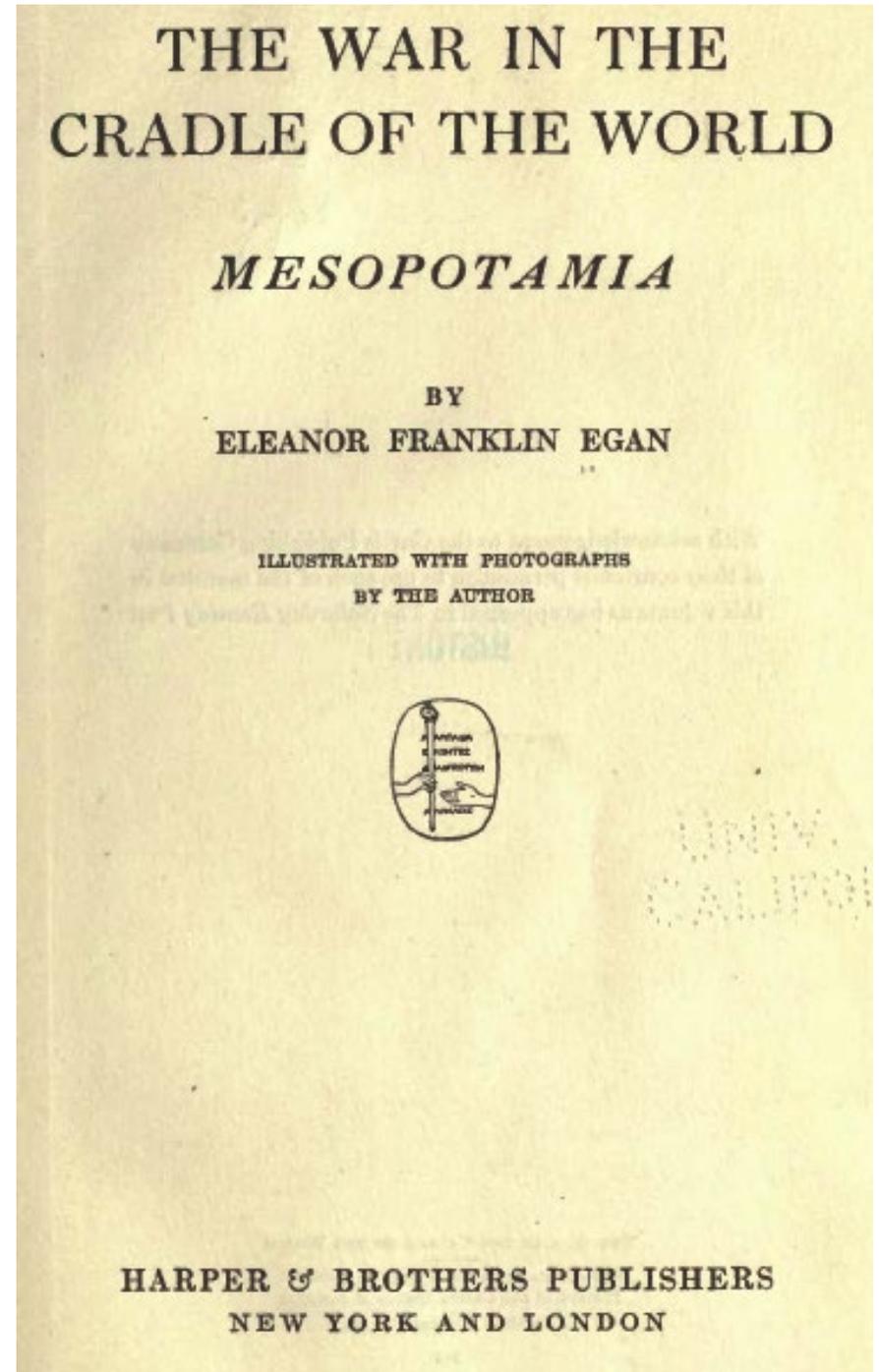
Eyes Disobey Me is a video installation project centred around a video downloaded from a peer-to-peer software and filmed by anonymous Italian soldier in Nasiriyya during the second war in Iraq. The name of the file at the time of the download was: "Video amatoriale girato interamente da truppe italiane in Iraq" ("Amateur video filmed by Italian troops in Iraq") and it was dated August 2004. At that time in Nassiriya the Italian army was involved in the so called "battle of the bridges" for the control of the city's most important infrastructures. What is peculiar about this video is that, although shot in the trenches, for the most of the time nothing seems to happen.

All you can see is just a desolated landscape filled with ruins illuminated by a light that creates an almost dreamlike atmosphere. The enemy is nothing but a perceived presence, invisible but tangible. Few people appear in the video, they are all Italian soldiers who talk and move in front of the camera but they never take centre stage. They seem more like spectators, trapped in an endless wait. The landscape is the real protagonists of the video, and the way it is filmed seems to highlight and reflect the curiosity mixed with fear of the occupying soldiers: invaders but, above all, strangers in an unknown land.

Focusing our attention on war landscapes in art and literature, we came across a book that describes, almost a century ago, in 1916, the same landscape depicted in the found video. The book is "The War in the Cradle of the World" by Eleanor Franklyn Egan, the first woman war reporter in history, and it is a reportage of the English campaign in Iraq during the First World War.

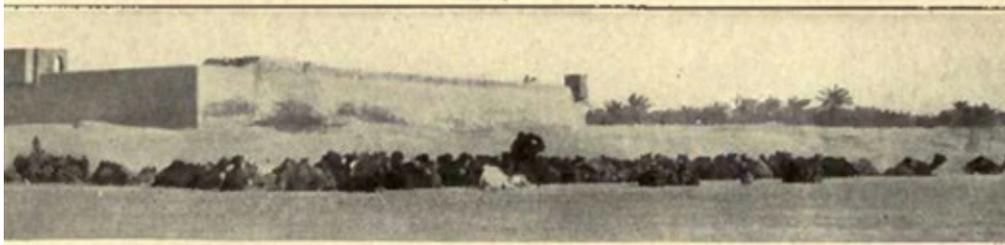
Inspired by such a strong connection, we decided to develop a visual study that could bridge past, present and future of the Iraqi landscape. Wondering what could better represent the struggles of a country trying to rise after decades of war, we opted for images and rendering of its architectural reconstruction, an idealised vision of tomorrow's Iraq.

The interaction between these three different takes on the Iraqi landscape represents the conceptual core of Eyes Disobey Me. With the same background to connect narratives historically far from each other, "Eyes Disobey Me" intends to tell the story of a tortured country while questioning the notion of war landscape.





Video still



THE ANCIENT FORTRESS OUTSIDE THE ZOBIRI GATE, AT MASRA (UPPER PICTURE)
THE ARAB GUN-DANCE AT THE PALACE OF SHEIKH IBRAHIM (LOWER PICTURE)
Note the long line of casels shown in the upper picture.



Comparison between stills from the original video and images from Egan's book

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 H. Said He Loved Us (Tommaso Tanini) – Spazio Labò, Bologna, Italy
- 2015 H. Said He Loved Us (Tommaso Tanini) – Sifest, Savignano Sul Rubicone (FC), Italy
- 2015 STREAM CONTROL RESISTANCE - MLZ Art Dep Gallery, Trieste, Italy
- 2015 The Looking Game (MFG Paltrinieri / Mirko Smerdel) - Format Festival, Derby, UK
- 2015 H. Said He Loved Us (Tommaso Tanini) - Format Festival, Derby, UK
- 2014 H. Said He Loved Us (Tommaso Tanini) - Kunsthalle Mélycsarnok, Budapest, Hungary
- 2014 The Looking Game (MFG Paltrinieri / Mirko Smerdel) - Jarach Gallery, Venice, Italy
- 2013 The Looking Game (MFG Paltrinieri / Mirko Smerdel) - RED Gallery, London, UK

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2015 NIDA International Art Photography Symposium, Nida, Lithuania
- 2015 Boundaries – Galerija Klovićevi Dvori, Organ Vida Festival, Zagreb, Croatia
- 2015 ArTS, Piazza dell'Arte Pubblica, Trieste, Italy
- 2014 Truths, Facts, Fictions, Lies - Photolreland, Dublin, IE
- 2014 The Italian Photobook - Sifest, Savignano Sul Rubicone (FC), Italy
- 2014 Photobookshow - Tokyo Institute of Photography, Tokyo, Japan
- 2013 Dall'archivio al libro - Sifest, Savignano Sul Rubicone (FC), Italy

PRIZES

- 2015 Lucie Awards – Book Publisher of the Year Limited (Nominee)
- 2015 Le Prix du Livre de Les Rencontres d'Arles, Author Book Award (Tommaso Tanini – H.shlu)
- 2015 Premio Marco Bastianelli for the best Italian self published photobook (Tommaso Tanini - H. Said He Loved Us)
- 2015 Vevey International Photography Award (Shortlisted)
- 2014 Premio Marco Pesaresi per la fotografia contemporanea (Tommaso Tanini - H. Said He Loved Us)
- 2014 GD4PhotoArt (Shortlisted)

PUBLICATIONS

Lazzarini, F. (2015) “La responsabilità delle immagini come operazioni” in AA. VV. ‘Generazione Critica: La fotografia in Europa dopo le grandi scuole’. Danilo Montanari Editore, Ravenna.