

Milano 2023, 3 April

**FONDAZIONE ELPIS PRESENTS 'CHÌ GHE PÙ NISSUN!'**  
**WITH WORKS BY BEKHBAATAR ENKHTUR, MARTINA MELILLI, MATTEO PIZZOLANTE, AGNESE SPOLVERINI**  
**IN COLLABORATION WITH RAMDOM**

**4 APRIL - 23 JULY 2023**  
**OPENING: TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2023, H 12-19**

**VIA LAMARMORA 26, MILANO**

From Tuesday 4 April to Sunday 23 July 2023 in its new Milan venue, **the Fondazione Elpis** presents the exhibition *Chì ghe pù Nissun!* ('There's Nobody Here Anymore!'), featuring works by **Bekhbaatar Enkhtur**, **Martina Melilli**, **Matteo Pizzolante** and **Agnese Spolverini**, staged in collaboration with **Ramdom**: a cultural association active in Puglia since 2011.

*Chì ghe pù Nissun!* brings together the research and experimentation of **four artists** each with different backgrounds, training and practices: Bekhbaatar Enkhtur (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 1994), Martina Melilli (Padua, 1987), Matteo Pizzolante (Tricase, 1989) and Agnese Spolverini (Viterbo, 1994). Brought together thanks to their having participated in the residency programme **A Sud di Marte** – promoted by Ramdom in collaboration with Fondazione Elpis at the KORA – Centro del Contemporaneo spaces in Castrignano de' Greci (Lecce) – the artists bring to Milan a reinterpretation of this **research and production experience**, broadening and extending a **reflection on the concept of the Italian 'Meridione'** (South) and all its geographical, historical and socio-anthropological implications, while drawing on the dichotomous relationship between city and province as well as the production and consumption models they historically represent.

The **title of the exhibition** – *Chì ghe pù Nissun!* – takes its cue from an exclamation pronounced in Milanese dialect by the owner of a historic shop in Via Orti during a conversation about the changes and transformations in the neighbourhood. A phrase that might be uttered in the heart of Milan as well as in villages in southern Italy – with different and in some ways opposite motivations – and which underlines a parallelism between the changes taking place both in rural areas and in the heart of the urban fabric, highlighting the global character that such changes are taking on nowadays.

*A Sud di Marte* - title of the residency from which the exhibition originates - evokes the vision of a remote destination, a South that is a place of revelation, of experimentation with a new methodology and a different approach to artistic practice that starts from a broader reflection on the territory. *Chì ghe pù Nissun!* stems from the artists' own experience in Castrignano de' Greci and evolves through confrontation with a radically different context, that of a district undergoing a complete transformation within a large urban centre.

The narrative that emerges from these four voices evokes a complex and multiform spectrum, a polyphony of gazes and approaches that are very different from each other despite having passed through the same context. In this diversity of practices, the exhibition finds the key to constructing a narrative that, starting from the places of residence, reaches as far as the centre of Milan to give shape to new suggestions and new perspectives.

After exploring the contemporary art scene in South Asia with *HAZE. Contemporary Art From South Asia* – the inaugural exhibition of the Milanese venue – with *Chì ghe pù Nissun!* the Fondazione Elpis thus presents an unprecedented project involving four emerging artists active in Italy. This is to give continuity to the mandate and line of research underpinning its projects: to support, promote and enhance the work of talented young artists by creating new opportunities for growth and visibility.

*Chì ghe pù Nissun!* also provides the chance to continue the investigation into the evolution of expressive languages beyond the traditional art circuits and in the development of **alternative scenes** emerging around minor centres and cultural associations. This is a line of research that the Fondazione Elpis has been pursuing since 2020 with the project *Una Boccata d'Arte*, right across Italy.

## **INSTALLATIONS**

### **Bekhbaatar Enkhtur**

#### ***Fountain, 2023***

Beeswax, modified trumpet, plastic and copper pipe

Dimensions according to the spatial context

Bekhbaatar Enkhtur's reflection on territory can only begin with his country of origin, Mongolia, whose culture and iconography play a central role in the artist's work. During his residency in Castrignano de' Greci, he drew inspiration from the earliest western travellers, the explorers from the "known" world to the distant "Orient", to the edges of what was then unknown, recounting its wonders and traditions. Enkhtur's work is therefore modulated according to the notes of travel and discovery. *Fountain* is a sculpture inspired by the stories of Flemish missionary William de Rubruck, who between 1253 and 1255 travelled as far as the Khan's

palace in Karakorum. Here, according to de Rubruck's account, travellers were welcomed into a garden where at the centre there was a large fountain, described as "the silver tree", decorated with cherubs, trumpets, lions and snakes, from whose mouths flowed wine, milk, rice liquor and a drink based on honey. Such a device, much more than just an ornamental sculpture, was used to distribute intoxicating beverages, and to entertain guests at feasts or audiences. *Fountain* presents the same theatrical combination of forms and elements, distributed over two floors of the Fondazione. Just as the fountain in the courtyard of the Karakorum palace welcomed travellers, traders and diplomats, Enkhtur's work invites visitors to lose themselves in its sinuous forms and to help themselves to the wine flowing from its spouts. Enkhtur's work thus reveals another approach to space and territory, no longer physical, neither mystical nor biographical, but imaginative.

### **Martina Melilli**

#### ***Ghostly Matters, 2023***

7 fine art print photos mounted on aluminium, wooden shelf, books, phosphorescent paint

Dimensions according to the spatial context

Martina Melilli develops field research by borrowing techniques and approaches from the world of documentary filmmaking and anthropology. During her stay in Salento, she explored the mystical interpretations linked to the concept of *controra*, a time of day corresponding to the early hours of the afternoon, the hottest hours, when human activities fade into torpor, time slows down and is charged with suggestions, legends, ghosts and spirits. Adopting the same approach, the artist launched an investigation into the memory of the former laundry that houses Fondazione Elpis, with the people and stories that inhabited it and built its identity. It has been possible to reconstruct only very little of what took place at number 25 in Via Orti, and what has been achieved is due to the testimonies of the historical inhabitants and the owners of the workshops in the neighbourhood, the only people who still preserve the memory of this space. This is the case of Signor (Mr.) Ercole, born in 1940, whose stories also provided the exhibition's title, *Chì ghe pù Nissun!*. In order to fill in the gaps in what their memories cannot recall, the artist relied on a medium, Cristina Pasqualini, and a metaphonist, Antonio Fois, to reveal the stratified memory of this place by digging into its "other" historical dimensions.

To symbolise this parallel quest, three phrases emerge from some of the walls. They are quotations taken from the founding texts of the spiritist discipline and beyond, evoking the idea of tangibility and contact with other dimensions. Some of these texts can be consulted in the exhibition space and constitute a small library. The photographic composition on the ground floor portrays a ghost walking on the boundary between light and shadow in the streets of Castrignano de' Greci, during *controra*. If, as Avery Gordon writes, "behind every spectre there is a wound to be healed", the artist wonders whether this wound might also apply to a place.

## **Matteo Pizzolante**

### ***Aurora, 2023***

Doors, decals, objects in resin and pigment  
Dimensions according to the spatial context

Matteo Pizzolante delves into the memory of the territory through a work that takes on biographical overtones. Originally from Salento, during his residency in Castrignano de' Greci the artist decided to explore the family's legacy of stories and tales and investigate the case of a hotel that belonged to his grandfather. Starting from the accounts of some relatives, the Hotel Aurora, abandoned since the early 1990s, was reconstructed using 3D modelling software from which the artist obtained images that he then printed in cyanotype on some doors. The hotel thus becomes the start of a process of personal and collective analysis that mirrors the historical and social dynamics of a territory.

On display in the former laundry, Pizzolante interacts with the building's structural elements by inserting sculptural objects and thus placing the hotel's reconstructed environment into communication with the space that hosts it. The installation was completed by the discovery of a hotel of the same name in Milan, where Pizzolante spent a night, transforming his room into an artist's studio for those hours. Here, with the strange feeling of being a tourist in his own city, he chose some objects, such as door handles and key rings, and made casts of them, which he then integrated into the narrative flow of his work. The same objects were inserted into decals made by the artist to create new images, in which the atmospheres of the two hotels interact as if in a double-exposure photo. *Aurora* therefore takes the form of a sort of design of memory, in which software usually used to create images referring to future living situations is in this case used to reconstruct a past made of memories.

## **Agnese Spolverini**

### ***Insedimento, 2023***

Wood, textile print, sound installation  
Dimensions according to the spatial context

For Agnese Spolverini, the observation of the geographies of living is given the concrete form of the materials that shape the landscape. In Spolverini's work, the relationship with the territory becomes physical. It is the stone that becomes the body: on the one hand the white, smooth and polished Lecce stone, on the other the porous, dark, volcanic tuff. She encountered the former, previously unknown to her, during her residency in Apulia, while the latter is typical of the artist's homeland, Tuscany. The first is hard, perfect for building in height, the second is friable, and it encourages one, through its very nature, to dig deep down. Two different yet closely-related geological types. Both, in fact, evoke the idea of decentralised living with all the consequences that this implies, such as the need to find a balance between protecting the territory and opening up to the outside world. In *Insedimento* (Settlement), the work presented in the exhibition, the

image of a tuff wall is printed onto fabric to form a cylindrical membrane, a permeable and traversable container. Inside, one can listen to a poetic composition created by the artist, inspired by personal experiences and at the same time by theoretical texts and essays such as “*Riabitare l’Italia*” (re-inhabiting Italy) that address the idea of living far from the centre, in an ecosystem in contact with nature. Spolverini’s work does not seek to provide answers, but rather to question established visions of living through the combination of direct experience and contributions from scholars.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Bekhbaatar Enkhtur** (1994, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Bekhbaatar Enkhtur studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna. He has been artist-in-residence at KORA-Centro del Contemporaneo, Castrignano De’ Greci (Lecce), Mambo, Bologna, at Manifattura Tabacchi, Florence, at Fondazione Lanfranco Baldi, Pelago and at Dolomiti Contemporanee, Borca di Cadore. He has exhibited in galleries, non-profit spaces and institutions. Recent exhibitions include solo shows: *Imagining for Real* curated by Enrico Camprini, galleria Matèria, Roma, 2023; *Oasis*, curated by Ramdom in collaboration with Fondazione Elpis, 2022; *Fuocherello*, Fonderia de Carli, Volvera TO; *Cambio della guardia, Localedue*, Bologna, 2021; *Tsam*, Marktstudio, Bologna, 2021; *Zuult (Una Boccata d’arte)*, Borgo Val Belluna, 2020. Collectives exhibitions: *An Ocean Standing*, galleria Lc queisser, Tbilisi, 2022; *Il rituale del serpente*, Ex Convento di San Francesco, Bagnacavallo, 2021; *Room 114 XY*, Car Drde, Bologna, 2019; *La pratica quotidiana*, Oratorio di San Sebastiano, Forlì, 2019; *Un anno lungo un giorno*, Centro Pecci, Prato, 2019; *Tragitti divaganti*, P420, Bologna, 2018.

### **Martina Melilli** (1987, Piove di Sacco, Padova)

Martina Melilli is a multidisciplinary artist, filmmaker and cultural organiser. Her work is processual and research-oriented in nature, inspired by an anthropological and documentary approach, often in dialogue with archival practices. She explores socio-political issues by addressing the notions of memory, history, individual and collective imagery and imagination as starting points for an investigation that aims to imagine new possible and desirable futures. Melilli holds an MA in Visual Arts from the IUAV University of Venice (I) and studied documentary and experimental cinema at the Luca School of Arts, Brussels (BE). In Brussels, in 2015, Melilli is part of the post-academic studies platform SIC Sound Image Culture. In 2017 she is the winner of *Artevisione*. In 2018 she is part of *VISIO - European Identities: New Geographies in Artists Film and Video* curated by Leonardo Bigazzi. Her first creative documentary *My home, in Libya* has its world premiere at the Locarno festival in 2018. His work has been widely presented in major film festivals (LocarnoFF, RotterdamIFF, ChicagoFF, DokLeipzig, ...) and contemporary art institutions (Palazzo Strozzi Florence, Museo del Novecento Milan, PAC Milan, ...), and produced with the support of Mibact, Solinas Development Grant, ZDF/ARTE and RAI Cinema among others. From 2020 she collaborates with the association Nuovo

Cineforum Rovereto with which she curates the multidisciplinary festival *Osvaldo* and from 2022 the review *Altri Quadri. Artisti e immagini in movimento* (Other Paintings. Artists and moving images) for the Mart - Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto. In 2022 she is selected for Berlinale Talents. Martina Melilli leads workshops, lectures and talks at numerous Italian and international institutions.

**Matteo Pizzolante** (1989, Tricase, Lecce)

Matteo Pizzolante graduated in Building Engineering in 2012, and subsequently enrolled in the Two-year Sculpture Course at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts under the guidance of Vittorio Corsini. He completed his studies in Germany at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Dresden with Wilhelm Mundt and Carsten Nicolai. He participated in several exhibitions in Italy and is the winner of the Jaguar project promoted by Artissima and Jaguar. During the dissemination of COVID-19 Pizzolante was involved in several digital projects, including 30 Artists X 30 Days called by Fondazione Pini and Pensiero Vuoto realised by Galleria Renata Fabbri, Milan. Recent projects and participations include: *La linea che di divide dal domani* at FuturDome curated by Atto Belloli Ardessi; GAM, Turin; Vistamarestudio, Milan; Jaguar Artissima, Milan; Brindisi Centrale solo exhibition at Le Case d'Arte, curated by Pasquale Leccese; Artissima Experimental Academy VOL. III led by the Iranian artist Setareh Shahbazi, Artissima, Turin; BienNolo, Milan; BOCs Art, Cosenza; Passion for the path of art, Galleria Cardi, Milan; *È il corpo che decide*, a project by Marcello Maloberti promoted by Museo del Novecento, Milan and Fondazione Furla; Pizzolante is also the winner of the Vanni Autofocus10 International Prize and participates in the Q-Rated project, Ricerche sensibili, promoted by La Quadriennale, Rome.

**Agnese Spolverini** (1994, Viterbo)

Agnese Spolverini lives and works in Viterbo. She studied Painting and Visual Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Urbino. Her research is formalised in an installation practice that crosses different languages. She uses intimacy as a tool to connect with widespread social issues ranging from the theme of work to environmental issues and reflecting on how technologies impact on our emotions and cognition. In 2021 she took part in several exhibitions, including *Pillows like Pillars* curated by Stefano Volpato at Barriera; *Badly Buried* at Palazzo Re Rebaudengo curated by J. Barget, N. Cuguoğlu, A. Sarmiento; *Porta Portese*, curated by Gaia Bobò at SPAZIOMENSA. She took part in *Prospettive* (Prospectives), a residency in Calderara di Reno curated by Adiacenze and in Una Boccata d'Arte, by Fondazione Elpis, in collaboration with Galleria Continua, in Abruzzo. In 2022 she exhibited at Una Vetrina, she was at Kora for *A Sud di Marte*, a residency in collaboration with Fondazione Elpis, where she presented *La festa dei corpi feriti* (The Feast of Wounded Bodies), curated by Random, and took part in Traffic festival and Every Food is a Landscape curated by Marco Trulli and promoted by Bjcem, at the Polo del '900 in Turin.

## **FONDAZIONE ELPIS**

Founded in 2020 by Marina Nissim, entrepreneur and collector, the core of Fondazione Elpis' mission is the support of young artists. The Fondazione pursues its objectives through the production of exhibitions, residencies, educational activities and projects all over the country. With the aim of involving different audiences and exploring geographical areas outside traditional art circuits, Fondazione Elpis unites worlds that are only apparently distant by intercepting the evolution of expressive languages. The decision to open a new headquarters in Milan – in October 2022 – stems from the projects and collaborations activated in recent years on a national scale. The Fondazione has thus consolidated an ever-widening network, implementing new models of participation and cultural fruition. One example is *Una Boccata d'Arte*, the contemporary art project that has reached its fourth edition in 2023, organised in collaboration with Galleria Continua and with the participation of Threes. A nationwide project that involves 20 artists each year in the creation of site-specific installations that can be visited for the entire summer in 20 Italian villages, one for each region.

## **RAMDOM**

Ramdom is an Association for Social Promotion (*Associazione di Promozione Sociale*, APS), founded in 2011, working on cultural and artistic production, based in Castrignano de' Greci in the province of Lecce. Its goal is to promote contemporary art projects with an international dimension, interacting with the territories in which it operates. Over the past seven years, its activities have included exhibitions, the production of public art, residencies and workshops. KORA, which has been its operational base since May 2021, houses a media library dedicated to the production and research performed by artists over the last ten years, and a fund specialising in contemporary art, public art and cultural policy.

## **INFORMATION**

### ***Chì ghe pù Nissun!***

An exhibition by **Bekhbaatar Enkhtur, Martina Melilli, Matteo Pizzolante and Agnese Spolverini**

In collaboration with Random

4 April to 23 July 2023

Opening: Tuesday 4 April 2023, h 12-19pm

Opening hours: Thursday to Sunday, h 12-19pm

Special openings: Tuesday 4, Wednesday 5, Wednesday 12 April

Closed Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 April

Free entrance

Fondazione Elpis

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How to get there: MM3 Crocetta; Tram line 16 (stop Via A. Lamarmora)

Accessibility: the spaces are accessible to the disabled; the three exhibition floors are connected by a lift.

## **PRESS CONTACTS**

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