

PRESS RELEASE***L'Undicesima Casa (The Eleventh House)***

Exhibition of works by the winning artists of the first edition of the Paul Thorel Prize

Clusterduck (collective of Tommaso Cappelletti, Silvia Dal Dosso, Francesca Del Bono, Arianna Magrini and Noel Nicolaus), **Jim C. Nedd** and **Lina Pallotta**

Gallerie d'Italia - Naples, Intesa Sanpaolo Museum

9 March 2024 – 5 May 2024

curated by Sara Dolfi Agostini

IMAGES AT THE FOLLOWING LINK

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/32xpxeuyfcehy32m10dck/h?rlkey=2rnq4bg95mzrc47h0jaafesm4&dl=0>

Naples, 8 March 2024 - At Gallerie d'Italia - Naples, an Intesa Sanpaolo museum, the exhibition ***L'undicesima casa*** opens from 9 March to 5 May 2024. The exhibition presents the works of the **winning artists** of the **first edition** of the **Paul Thorel Prize**, conceived and organised by the **Paul Thorel Foundation** in collaboration with Gallerie d'Italia to support Italian talent in the field of contemporary art.

The winners **Clusterduck** (a collective of **Tommaso Cappelletti, Silvia Dal Dosso, Francesca Del Bono, Arianna Magrini, Noel Nicolaus**), **Jim C. Nedd** and **Lina Pallotta** were selected by a committee of expert art critics and contemporary art curators made up by **Caterina Avataneo, Lorenzo Gigotti, Elisa Medde** and **Valentina Tanni** and a jury including **Antonio Carloni, Sara Dolfi Agostini** and **Luigi Fassi**, chaired by **Guido Costa**, President of the Paul Thorel Foundation.

Michele Coppola, Executive Director for Art, Culture and Historical Heritage of Intesa Sanpaolo, stated: *"We welcome to the Gallerie d'Italia in Naples an initiative realised with the Paul Thorel Foundation, with which we share important issues such as the support of talent and creativity, the commissioning of new projects, and the appreciation and curiosity for the most up-to-date expressions of art. L'Undicesima Casa also confirms our focus on the role of photography and the digital world in narrating the present, in full harmony with the work we do in the museum in Turin's Piazza San Carlo, in continuous dialogue with the other Gallerie d'Italia venues. I believe that the beauty of the spaces in Via Toledo allows the full appreciation of the three winning artists and their original and engaging works."*

The Paul Thorel Prize, created to be an observatory on the Italian creative scene and to explore digital arts, identifies photography as its research language and consists of a one-month residency in the Foundation's spaces in Naples, in partnership with Gallerie d'Italia, to allow for the realisation of an unpublished artistic production.

The works on display, created during the residency by the winners of the first edition, are exhibited for the first time thanks to the project curated by Sara Dolfi Agostini, named after 'the eleventh house', which in astrology is the house of friendships, the strength of the collective, and the ability to make a difference in social life.

The itinerary begins with the works of Lina Pallotta, trained at the International Center of Photography in New York. She uses photography to tell stories of redemption, emancipation and social justice, aimed at breaking down the wall of exclusion imposed by anti-progressive visions of society.

Pallotta immersed herself in the daily life of Neapolitan femminielli, to create a collection of portraits and moments of intimacy and struggle for civil rights, under the guidance of Loredana Rossi, Vice-President of ATN - Associazione Transessuale Napoli (Naples Transgender Association).

This is followed by the visions of Jim C. Nedd - suspended between dream and crude reality - who photographed a group of young Neapolitans, a social body, in a spontaneous act of communion with a primal nature.

Jim C. Nedd is the founder of the experimental group Primitive Art together with Matteo Pit; photographer and director in advertising and editorial projects, he was a team member of Pierpaolo Ferrari and Maurizio Cattelan's *Toilet Paper Magazine* (2015-2020).

His photographs are able to build bridges between seemingly distant scales, bringing together different geographies, ecstatic celebratory crowds and episodes of personal life.

Finally, Clusterduck, which works at the crossroads of research, design and transmediality, reconstructs the icons, symbols and instances of Internet subcultures from the era of forums and static pages, to the era of social media and hyper-sharing controlled by Silicon Valley corporations and autocratic governments, in search of freedom and meaning.

On Friday 8 March from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., a free preview of the exhibition will be held for the public.

THE ARTISTS

Clusterduck is an interdisciplinary collective working at the crossroads of research, design and transmediality, focusing on the processes and actors involved in the participatory creation of digital content and its circulation on the Internet.

At the centre of this work is the redefinition of the status of the image in the information society, and in particular the mapping of *meme* culture - an alienating and ever-expanding digital universe of images, videos and textual codes, which narrates the identity, belonging and communication methods of the people of the Net.

With *#MEMEPROPAGANDA* (2018-2020), Clusterduck explored the impact of *memes* on contemporary aesthetics and politics. While with *#MEMERSFORFUTURE* (2020-2023), it investigated the role of memetics in the global movement for climate justice. *Meme Manifesto* (2021-2024), on the other hand, was designed to explore the hidden meanings and communicative potential of memetic symbolism.

The *Deep Fried Feels* art project focuses on seven sentiments chosen from among those most shared on the web and in digital space in recent years. In internet jargon they are called 'feels' and are perhaps one of the last human footholds in an increasingly complex and opaque virtual reality, where the proliferation of *social* platforms, programmes augmented by the use of artificial intelligence, BOTS, global surveillance tools, *fake news* and ideological propaganda have reduced users' space for action and freedom. Each *feel* is represented by a character from memetic culture, a 'poor', low-resolution image that has undergone digital *editing* techniques inspired by the aesthetics of so-called 'fried *memes*'.

These are surreal and synaesthetic images, uploaded, exchanged and degraded to the point of becoming the unintentional paradigm of a subversive and politicised community that resists the capitalist dynamics of the network.

The seven icons of memetic folklore are set in the era of *social* platforms and hyper-sharing (2008-2018), where *memes* were used to communicate specific sentiments. Each of them was then associated with a highly symbolic detail and two images, corresponding to other internet eras known to the artists, all of them *millennials*.

On the one hand, the current era of the Stack (from 2019), in which competing infrastructures, generative intelligence and metaverses risk damaging the aggregating power of the cultural and aesthetic codes of the internet. On the other, the *Web 1.0* era (1989-2005) - the origin of everything and 'paradise lost' - represented by *dithering* and pixels exploding on the screen: a period of magic and discovery, of static pages and slow connections, of forums, *chats* and anonymity, where it still seemed possible to escape the proprietary and authoritarian logic of today's internet.

Jim C. Nedd creates interactions between distant worlds, bringing together in the same image different geographies and cultures - Caribbean Colombia and Italy, new and old world - but also distinct ways of seeing, feeling and perceiving life stories.

His research leads him to filter personal and collective experiences, oral tales and popular culture through which he offers a critical look at society, at the intercultural dynamics of the migration phenomenon that has affected him personally, and in general, at the individual body and the social fabric around it.

His works - photographs, videos, slide shows - illustrate glimpses of everyday life, moments of sharing or social affirmation, often the ecstasy of a party or musical event.

Amidst multi-sensory drifts, twilight and colour contrasts, Nedd inserts people, fluids and discrete objects; references to an ordinary world, to a space laden with symbolism where traces of identity can be found. A porous and changing reality emerges, of little importance whether the subject of a *performance* or a spontaneous ritual.

The artist does not share contextual information, preferring to tread the border between neo-realism and narrative speculation. His photographic images, while immersed in dreamlike, almost magical atmospheres, are strongly anchored in reality: icons of a social and cultural resistance to the systemic mechanisms of urban gentrification, themselves grafts of migratory stories.

In *The Stream - Take 2* and *The Stream - Take 3*, Jim C. Nedd offers a *re-enactment* of a pictorial work, the triptych *The Stream* by the Belgian Symbolist artist Léon Frédéric, created in 1890-1899. The famous and controversial painting expresses the osmosis between human and natural typical of the canonical genre of bathers, yet the naked bodies are childlike and the chaotic action leaves room for deeper, existential reflection.

In Nedd's contemporary interpretation, a group of young Neapolitans recruited through *street casting* face the imposing Conca della Campania waterfall, no longer a landscape and setting, but a sentient subject on a par with their social bodies, exposed to a confrontation with the history of art and an extreme and unprecedented experience. The body, fragmented and contaminated by extraneous elements such as a dental appliance and stitches, returns in *Fernandino* and *La Sottile Linea Partenopea* respectively, two accidental works created during the residency in Naples, which more explicitly enter territories on the borderline between collision routes with reality and the tangible possibility of a cathartic experience. The representation of the collective comes up again, however, in *Costo Adicional*, a metropolitan elsewhere where a wall of identical air conditioners arranged in a grid seems to metaphorically contrast with the frenetic bodies of young Neapolitans.

Lina Pallotta moved to the United States in the late 1980s to train at the International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York in photojournalism and documentary photography. It was there that she starts an intimate and poetic work portraying friends, colleagues, poets and performers for over twenty years. She then returned to Italy, to Rome, where she continued her work as an artist, documentary filmmaker and academic, and where she still lives today. Pallotta's methodology is to move outside the institutional narratives pursued by *mass media*, in search of private stories and psycho-geographical spaces in which glimpses of lived life merge with meanings of a socio-cultural matrix, outside *clichés* and stereotypes. In her images we see a complicity between author and subject, an empathic alliance based on a project of redemption, emancipation and social justice, aimed at breaking down the wall of exclusion imposed by anti-progressive visions of society. Her first solo exhibition in an Italian public institution, *Volevo vedermi negli occhi (I wanted to see myself in the eyes)* at the Centro Pecci in Prato in 2023, was a portrait of trans activist Porpora Marcasciano, in which Pallotta presented thirty years of friendship and political militancy.

The photographic works on display are part of a collaborative project with Loredana Rossi, which began in 2011 and grew out of a mutual friendship with Marcasciano. Rossi is founder and vice-president of ATN - Associazione Transessuale Napoli, a non-governmental organisation that protects the rights, health and dignity of transgender people from all forms of discrimination and violence, providing support in the process of transition and sex change. During the residency, Pallotta immersed herself in the everyday life of Rossi and the community of transgender and femminielli people of different generations who found in her a point of reference and a source of inspiration in their journey of exploration and search for their gender identity. In a spontaneous way, the project arrived in the spaces of the Paul Thorel Foundation, where the artist created her first studio portraits and ventured into the field of colour for the first time, to emphasise the many signs

of an identity quest that embraces every aspect of a person's life. In *Voce 'e stommache*, Pallotta transfers a selection of photographs onto a mirrored surface that reflects the plurality of stories of the Neapolitan trans community in a diary style, while containing the bodies of the visitors. In an attempt to shorten the distance between life and narrative, the artist chooses to share a sociality marked by discrete moments - from make-up to shopping, from aperitifs to events - punctuated by gestures of peace, smiles, hugs and a widespread sense of sisterhood.

INFORMATION:

Title

L'UNDICESIMA CASA (THE ELEVENTH HOUSE)

Lina Pallotta, Clusterduck (Tommaso Cappelletti, Silvia Dal Dosso, Francesca Del Bono, Arianna Magrini and Noel Nicolaus) and Jim C. Nedd

Location

Gallerie d'Italia - Naples, Intesa Sanpaolo Museum
Via Toledo 177, 80134 Naples

Opening times

Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m

Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m

Closed on Mondays - last entry one hour before closing time

Tickets

full price €7, reduced €4

Free for members, schools, children under 18, Intesa Sanpaolo Group customers.

Information and bookings

<http://www.gallerieditalia.com>

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Paul Thorel Foundation

With the great city of Naples as its head office, accompanied by satellite offices in Panarea and Hydra, the Paul Thorel Foundation is deeply rooted in the Mediterranean basin. It is an artistic development platform that reinforces the focus on the creative potential of the Mediterranean, and especially on contemporary photographic research with a *focus* on new technologies and aesthetic languages, in response to the pioneering research of Paul Thorel (1956-2020).

The Foundation began its first public activities in autumn 2022 with the launch of the Paul Thorel Prize, a residency project for Italian artists in collaboration with Intesa Sanpaolo Gallerie d'Italia. In September 2023, one year later, the Foundation opened an exhibition space for the art public at the Studio/Archive's historic location at Via Vittorio Imbriani 48, Naples. The exhibitions, curated by Sara Dolfi Agostini, are part of an exhibition cycle designed to offer a shared reinterpretation of the archive of Paul Thorel, the French-Italian artist and pioneer of the electronic image, pending the publication of the catalogue raisonné dedicated to him. The works of Italian and international artists exhibited alongside Paul Thorel's work are part of the artist's collection of contemporary art, which is now managed by the Foundation.

News: www.fondazionepaulthorel.com
Instagram: Paul Thorel Foundation Naples

Press information

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About Intesa Sanpaolo

Intesa Sanpaolo is Italy's leading banking group – serving families, businesses and the real economy – with a significant international presence. Intesa Sanpaolo's distinctive business model makes it a European leader in Wealth Management, Protection & Advisory, highly focused on digital and fintech, in particular with Isybank, the Group's digital bank. An efficient and resilient Bank, it benefits from its wholly-owned product factories in asset management and insurance. The Group's strong ESG commitment includes providing €115 billion in impact lending by 2025 to communities and for the green transition, and €500 million in contributions to support people most in need, positioning Intesa Sanpaolo as a world leader in terms of social impact. Intesa Sanpaolo is committed to Net Zero by 2030 for its own emissions and by 2050 for its loan and investment portfolios. An engaged patron of Italian culture, Intesa Sanpaolo has created its own network of museums, the Gallerie d'Italia, to host the bank's artistic heritage and as a venue for prestigious cultural projects.

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