

Giuseppe Stampone

Selected works

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Giuseppe Stampone
Born in Clusse (France), 1974
Works and lives between Teramo, Bruxelles and Roma

Since 2013 Giuseppe Stampone is an associate member of The American Academy in Rome, in the same year he was invited to carry out an artistic residency at the Young Eun Museum of Contemporary Art (YMCA) in Gwangju, South Korea, since 2017 he is an associate member of the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in New York. In 2020, he is the first Italian fellow of the residency at Villa Romana in Florence.

His works have been exhibited in several international art festivals, museums and foundations including: Seoul Architecture Biennial, South Korea (2017); Ostend Triennial, Belgium (2017); 56th Venice International Art Biennale, Italy (2015); Kochi-Muziris Biennial, Kerala, India (2012); 11th Havana Biennial, Cuba (2012); Liverpool Biennial, UK (2010); 14th and 15th Quadriennale di Roma, Italy (2004-2008); Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum, Boston, USA (2016); Kunsthalle Museum of Art, Gwangju, South Korea; Wilfredo Lam Contemporary Art Center, Havana, Cuba; MAXXI - Museo Nazionale delle Arti del 21mo Secolo, Rome, Italy; MACRO - Museo dell'Arte Contemporanea, Rome, Italy; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy; GAMEC - Galleria D'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo, Italy.

Works by Giuseppe Stampone are held in several foundations and public collections including: Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; MAXXI Museum, Rome, Italy; Kochi-Muziris Biennial Foundation, Kerala, India; Sidney Biennial Foundation, Australia; Quadriennale di Roma Foundation, Italy; MACRO Museum of Contemporary Art, Rome, Italy; Phelan Foundation, New York, United States; GAMEC Museum, Bergamo, Italy; Wilfredo LAM Museum of Contemporary Art, Havana, Cuba; Birbragher Foundation, Bogota, Colombia; La Farnesina Collection, Rome, Italy; La Gaia Foundation, Busca, Italy; Museo di Arte Contemporanea L. Pecci, Prato, Italy.

Among many curators, he has worked with Yongwoo Lee, Angelica Stepken, Shwetal Patel, Bose Krishnamachari, Peter Benson Miller, Derrick De Kerckhove, Hae-Won Shin, Giacinto Di Pietrantonio, Eugenio Viola, Alia Swastika, Joanna De Vos, Mark Robbins, Asher Remy Toledo, Robert Storr, Jorge Fernandez Torres, Manon Slome, Carlo Chenis, Marco Scotini, Maurizio Bortolotti, Adriana Rispoli, Umberto Palestini, Alberto Abruzzese, Marco Senaldi, Marco Tonelli, Luisa Valeriani, Franco Speroni, Antonello Tolve, Lea Mattarella, Teresa Macrì, Raffaele Gavarro, Mirta D'Argenzio, Julia Draganovic, Paola Ugolini, Lorenzo Madaro, Lucrezia Longobardi, Pietro Gaglianò, Bruno Corà, Piero Tomassoni, Italo Tomassoni, Lorenzo Canova, Valentino Catricalà, Marisa Vescovo, Mariano Apa, Laura Cherubini, Luca Massimo Barbero, Elena Forin, Giuseppe Armogida.

Information, the revisitation of visual and verbal languages of history, of pedagogical and collaborative conjugations, Stampone summarizes the images and the processes in his artwork, which is the visible synthesis, the formal precipitate, in which time, space and relation are found. The main themes of the author's research are pedagogical activity as a way to formalize artworks, the connection with art history, and the relationship with other artists. Stampone explores these three subject matters, overlapping them and always posing new questions about the role of the artist in the contemporary world.

The artist's recent production focuses on the reinterpretation of masterpieces from European art history: just like altar pieces, within a secular universe and painfully yet clearly sensitive to the humanitarian emergencies of our times, the works reinterpret famous paintings such as "Mocking of Christ" by Fra Angelico, "Abduction of Europa" by Rembrandt, or "The Painter's Studio" by Gustave Courbet. In this mighty agony, Stampone measures himself with the need to reconnect the so-called Western civility to his responsibilities, and opens to a critical reflection on the position of art compared to the spheres of power, both in the present and in the past.

"The Abduction of Europe" is the chronicle of an ongoing act of self-cannibalism: a flight from personal and collective responsibilities based on the destruction of memory. Stampone creates a series of works that reconnect to the origin of things and their consequences. Like scattered tesserae, the many tiles compose a background that is a declaration regarding firstly his role as citizen, then as an artist, and, lastly, as an individual. It is important to remember that artists are not invested with any special exemption, nor are they gifted with superhuman talents or abilities. The author's focus on his own work reinforces this absolute dedication to time and history, as well as a certain responsibility towards one's work and of the same. Indeed, at first, there was a journey, a lacerating and forced journey, a symbolic form of the uninterrupted migration of humanity to lands that is unavoidable for all of us (even for Giuseppe Stampone, the child of emigrant parents and who is constantly in transit). In his rendition of Rembrandt's work, Stampone maintains the geometry of the 17th century composition, but chooses to subtract Europa from her captor. There is nothing to be seen on the coast from where the two characters depart, no handmaidens or any other symbol that could indicate a possible return to her homeland. In his Rembrandt-like background, the image of Titus veering in the port of Flanders has been substituted with the skyline of a modern European city; the original dimension of the painting has been almost doubled, alluding to the different entity of the migratory phenomenon today. The petroleum-like sea, both opaque and waveless hinders Europa in her voyage, declaring that she was no longer being abducted but was fleeing. This lake of pitch absorbs all hope, as if no safe haven or destination exists.

An exercise of connection, a vocation to dialogue and to plurality are featured also in other projects, which imply the involvement of other authors. "Architecture of Intelligence" is a cycle realized in collaboration with international artists such as Ugo La Pietra, Stefano Arienti, Jota Castro, and the group Madeinfilandia; the latter is a focus on the pedagogical capacity of art. The work develops starting from the constant research of the space of visual perception, introducing the topics of communication as a hegemonic tool, the rhetoric of power, and the

destabilizing capacity of the fragmentation of language. What guides the aesthetic of the Architecture of Intelligence is first and foremost a physical and sensory element: the space in which the work originally took shape coincides with the context the work refers to (in the figurative modes used for its expression). The artist conceives this work as a synthesis of a relational condition deeply connected to the contextual components of all human variables – creative and moral – that intersect at a given moment in a precise place.

Architecture of Intelligence is the definition of a process rather than the title of a work, and this process (in its freedom and its demand for an expansion of its own confines) is the encounter with other authors. The narration stemming from Architecture of Intelligence distances itself from hegemonic narratives, which, by definition, tend to simplify, assimilate pre-existing models and schematise relationships. The trust Stampone's work declares in autonomy of thought, communities and the connections that make them intelligent is expressed in the educational function attributed to art and the transformations it produces, navigating through multiple dialogues - where "dialogue" is understood in its etymological sense of words, considering both their spoken form as well as the space between them - as it moves towards the construction of commonality.

«The work is never alone, it is always a relationship.
To begin with: at least a relationship with another work of art.
A single work in the world would not even be understood as a human production,
but rather viewed with reverence or horror, as magic, as a taboo,
as the work of God or the sorcerer; not of man».

Roberto Longhi, *Proposte per una critica d'arte*, in *Paragone*, n. 1, 1950.

Giuseppe Stampone, the new ethics of images

Lorenzo Madaro

Giuseppe Stampone considers the history of art - indeed, the history of images - a wide open archive which should be investigated with awareness, by passing through eras and styles while incorporating history and stories within one's own imaginary, visual obsessions and conceptual relationships within specific artworks and certain artists. It is by drawing from an ample repertoire of images, that he carries out actions of extreme awareness: on the one hand he knows well that certain icons are continuously alive, thus they cannot fail to be recovered from his artist's gaze as they still hold active values; on the other hand, he re-reads them, changing some details of the building of the compositions, updating them with new bodies, new crucial details for a substantial understanding of his thought. He is therefore interested in thinking about a kind of art capable of structuring a reflection's path on the present, allowing thought to pass through global images that belong directly to us, by training but also by distraction. To dilate time, of doing and observation: this is another essential paradigm that emerges distinctly in this personal exhibition through a reasoned selection of recent works created with BIC pen on prepared wood and on paper. In the ultimate era of what is sudden, Stampone instead brings us back to a dilated time, that of the dimension of doing with a deliberately artisan inspiration that rejects the imposed time and also obsessively focuses on what is necessarily enormous and evident. On the contrary, the artist, through his veiling of traces, brings us back to the intimacy of a work capable of being pregnant in its intimate being, deliberately reduced, in an absolute concentrate of both rigor and vision, which is the same that we breathe when we observe those painted small wooden boards of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, conceived for private devotion or for nomadic needs. Inscrutable details, quotes, iconographic connections: even these addends of Stampone's work require long digestion and restitution times.

Nomadic is also Stampone, first and foremost for his ability to range from sacred images to the history of painting, as happens with the San Girolamo in the studio by Antonello Da Messina (1474-1475 ca.) or with the Wanderer above the sea of fog by Caspar David Friedrich, to icons of the twentieth century, from Fidel Castro to many others: all of them live the prepared woods and papers, together with the Afghan women, the wanderer young children who observe, amazed, the metropolis, and even the reinterpretation of Giorgione's The Tempest, which highlights the artist's commitment to the great theme of emigration. The sources are art history books, but also newspapers, magazines and of course the internet. In its own making - and even prior to the issues investigated -, Stampone's work is indeed political, because in that obsessive construction of images through the veils of the blue BIC, the artist defends his own self-sufficiency by developing his own time. Even when he focuses on the procedural and participatory matters, Stampone's commitment is consciously political, as happens with the Abbecedario of sixty letters conceived along with the children of the Ghetto of Rome: a unique, collective work, which validates the primary stages of reflection at the base of his mental and creative path: firstly, there is sociality, sharing. The latter is followed then by solitary, intimate, ritual and meditative work in the studio. The work returns to be invested with a timeless aura, precisely because it embraces so many ages, stories, images and a unique sensitivity, always dilated and in progress.

The land belongs to everyone, we must cross the limits.

Rossella Farinotti

To observe the rubble.

Two little boys hold their hands, they are bare-chested, and they stand on sharp mountains and look straight ahead. Towards the bottom stands a magnificent city where you can see modern buildings that recall the great contemporary metropolises. *Emigration Made* is the title of this work by Giuseppe Stampone: a hyper-realistic drawing on graph paper. A representation of a utopian aim of feeling good. These thin, elegant illustrations, made with BIC pen on pink graph paper, are light and meticulous. The stroke is different when compared to the other drawings by Giuseppe Stampone. Here, the line is lighter, thinner, the long and narrow buildings are blurred at their top, as if symbolic clouds were getting through to cut off some of their parts. Stampone has deleted some content, he has lightened it, or perhaps he has hidden it.

There is another version, *Alla ricerca del tempo perduto*, which is more defined and darker, made by the artist on the prepared wood always with the black BIC pen, which is his stylistic signature after all. The buildings are different, the children are fully dressed - this time they do have the t-shirts -, they are not bare-chested and they have white skin. However, the position is the same: they hold their hands, one is older than the other. The one on the left, perhaps the elder brother, protects the tiny figure on the right of the beneficiary of the drawing. Stampone forces the gaze to an almost cinematic vision: we see the subjects from behind, in the manner of the authorial incipit made by Luchino Visconti in *"Ossessione"*, which shows the protagonist only after a few minutes, by channeling the sight into a subjective angle that wants to be that of the protagonist of the story in whom the viewers identify themselves. It is like Orson Welles' voyeurism when he writes the screenplay, all personified by the camera lens, of Conrad's novel *"Heart of Darkness"*. Indeed, the viewer of the film becomes part of the narrative. In the same way, the observer of Stampone's works becomes the protagonist of his drawn stories. An interlocutor of episodes and scenarios that are forced into a narrow visual space, very dense with matters, historical-political-social episodes, autobiographical quotes, mythological characters of our culture, from the popular to the "noble" one of the history of art of the past. Here, the user sees the children from behind by taking on an active responsibility and a story that is not going so well. It is the Wanderer above the sea of fog of Friedrich (1818), but it is from the overturned eye of the witness who becomes the protagonist by scrutinizing the subject from behind and by becoming the creator of a common thought.

This narrative fragment drawn by Giuseppe Stampone has activated in me, since its first impact, a direct cross-reference to the memory of the first time I watched Rossellini's *"Paisà"* (1946). There is a scene where an American soldier, drunk and tired of the unfinished war, talks to a child whose shoes have just been stolen. They are both seated on the ruins of a neighborhood of Rome, a bombed city, already freed by the allies. There is nothing left in that context: you can see a tower, perhaps it is a bell tower of a church that the Nazis were unable to tear down.

The kid and the soldier do not speak the same language, but they understand each other. "The city is full of lights and music and it welcomes him with the smile of its most beautiful girls... no, that's not true. Who wants to go back home, paisà. I am a hero paisà, a hero. The dream is over paisà. I don't wanna go home".

The war has broken out.

The figure of Mussolini made with blue BIC pen is one of the works included within the itinerary of the exhibition. It is an important critical signal in a delicate historical moment. The Duce is portrayed by Stampone in a real and vivid way: he raises his right arm and points upwards with his finger, the expression on his face recalls the cry for power. The fabric of his uniform is almost tangible to the touch: it looks like heavy felt, the one typical of military uniforms. Stampone presents that gesture - the finger raised to the sky - which acts as a matrix and as a link to this body of works in which he creates portraits of famous people loosely based on his own cultural knowledge and on the history that he has studied: from Benito Mussolini, indeed, to Tina Turner, Michael Jackson and Diego Maradona, to whom he attributes the punch of strength and of victory, instead of the index finger. They are all actions of celebration, but also of a harmful power that re-emerges throughout history. Maybe because we never learn enough from the past. In his black and white, in blue and in pink, works, Stampone wraps episodes in ever-current space-time capsules. As a matter of fact, to work on the past means analyzing the present. In these

small tableaux vivants Stampone concentrates thoughts and reflections developed in the last few years of his research. Mussolini does not just point to the media war that the artist has so talked about since the mid-2000s, anticipating and criticizing the burnt potentialities and the problematic issues of a media that we have not yet learned well to manage. By looking now at some of his characters, the cross-reference to the wars that civilization has experienced becomes natural. Those studied on books at school, those seen on television and read in newspapers. The war that is around the corner of everyone's home nowadays. This is precisely the reason why that Mussolini who raises his arm as a sign of satisfied power elicits fear.

The sky belongs to everyone. The land does not.

"Why does the sky belong to everyone and the land does not?" Stampone asked himself in an exhibition at the Ciac - Italian Center of Contemporary Art in Foligno - created with Ugo La Pietra, in 2018. It is a current and burning question that recurs in the hours in which this text is taking shape. In the aforementioned exhibition and in its publication, the artist elaborates artistic strategies related to the concept of language - the archetype at the base of each of Stampone's works - analyzed under the most diverse and meticulous aspects. The war and its protagonists are shown and gutted through geographic maps, the flags of the countries of the world, the covers of international magazines - from the weekly "Time" to "The Economist" - and the abecedaries. This group of works, which originates from a letter of the alphabet that Stampone draws on the sides by placing a figure in the center, branches out into images and portraits that conceptually refer to subjects hailed from different fields. The fruition is often cheerful, the image to solve as a rebus also recalls historical beauties and myths, from Dante Alighieri to Michelangelo Pistoletto's Venus of the Rags, from the concept of "beauty" to the ambiguous "artist's shit" by Piero Manzoni, forefather of contemporary and conceptual art.

And then the drawings made by the children. How to explain to them that the land belongs to everyone, but it must be defended and cared for every day? How to tell them that even the sky today is chaotic and everyone wants it? The children look at us, but Stampone teaches that they are the ones who must be looked at. It is through the remarkable and laborious collective project Global Education (2004-2018), that the Abruzzese artist has created a "totem" - as Lucrezia Longobardi highlights - of images that are valid only in their own whole. As in a puzzle, if Stampone subtracts a single drawing made by the children involved in this great workshop project - which the artist developed together with Maria Crispal in the elementary schools of Lille, Rome, Seoul, Osijek, Częstochowa and Vicenza - the work is incomplete and its message therefore no longer valid. It is like a house under construction from which a piece is subtracted. It is no longer universal, but the point of view of the individual is in force. Which is weak to be able to fight.

An intimate room.

The attitude to go from the global to the individual reflects a further conceptual approach present in Stampone's work. The artist deals with universal and recognizable themes through stratifications of various eras and episodes - real or fictitious, lived or imagined -, always by using the medium of drawing or painting. Stampone has a great regard for past history: he treats it through a recognizable and precise style. These universal themes conceal a strongly intimistic thought and of latent loneliness. The characters drawn on the prepared woods are created and subsequently viewed as individual parts who, once seen as a whole, become formal elements of a global unicum. The small dimensions of the drawings already show the urgency of sheltering in a tiny place, in a well-kept corner. Like a disturbing alcove in the BIC on prepared wood work entitled Maria Crispal (2021) which restores a suspended time and a feeling of restlessness and necessary quiet. This time fragmented into episodes, each individually isolated and interrupted, is also visible in I love Bergamo (2020), which the artist chooses as a place to portray his young subjects - two children to whom an adult, probably Stampone himself who often portrays himself into the most different environments, is speaking - alongside the figure of Pasolini who is seated to the side. A tired, blindfolded intellectual who observes the scene together with the user. What does he want to convey? What message does he want to bring? Of this series, Maria Crispal in the studio (2021) also interrupts the vision for the first few minutes of fruition: here, the space that welcomes the subjects - two painters and a third person, perhaps an assistant - has a wider breath. The large room with an antique floor and two large windows through which light enters is reminiscent of the paintings famously made by the Flemings, from the domestic spaces of Vermeer, to the darker rooms of the convivial episodes painted by Caravaggio. Beams of light that cheer the context up, empty chairs and frames without images

on the walls. It is a setting shaped through light and shadows, it is indeed deprived of its own content. Stampone is hiding something while leaving us clues. We see him from behind, in a small size, as he is painting in another room while looking out of a grated window. He is the "Man with a Movie Camera" by Dziga Vertov. He is the witness who documents what is happening. But, once again, he does it without showing himself to his observer. All three subjects are in fact represented from behind. They do not want to be seen. Yet again, each work is a puzzle to solve.

Real people and false myths. The language of Stampone.

There is a cinematic sequence that recounts an important and negative historical character who, aesthetically speaking, has both a romantic and ironic output at the same time. Only cinema and visual art can exchange roles by playing between irony and drama with a subtle intelligence and poetry. In "The Great Dictator" (1940), Charlie Chaplin plays Adolph Hitler. The German chancellor, stereotyped and recognizable by his mustache - the same as the director who played Charlot - and by the Nazi uniform, plays softly with a large air-inflated globe that floats in space, just like a basketball handled by a child. However, that kid is an adult, namely Hitler, and that ball that goes up and down the room stands for the entire globe that is rearranged and ruined with a lightness that only a dictator can impress. It is the exact same accurate and meticulous lightness that Stampone takes up and overturns positively within his black drawings. To do so, he depicts the greatest villains of history: from Mao to Mussolini up to Hitler. The latter is in fact contextualized by the artist in an abecedary in relation to the letter "g". "G" stands for "game over". Gesture after gesture, stroke after stroke, Stampone draws the subjects, contexts, geographies, environments, the letters of the alphabet, temporal stratifications, ending up creating very dense fragments and micro-worlds. Moreover, he realizes narrative sequences, often developed through a dialogue between image, letter and word, in order to create a personal language made up of codes to be deciphered. The artist, always present as an alter ego of himself and as a witness of the past, has thus archived a whole ever changing imaginary, which is in a perpetual transition between what has been, but which has not been of service to us as an example from which to draw and learn, and a utopian future that seeks to mutate, to fix mistakes. All the steps that the artist has been taken up to now - from solo exhibitions to huge projects such as the one at the Cyber Park Architecture of Intelligence (2008); from the actions and the appearances at the Quadrennials, to the collaborations with realities such as the European Union - they all document an immeasurable media archive, both analogical and digital, from which Stampone draws every now and then, always showing something new which is undeniably linked and in dialogue with our history. Between irony and pain, Stampone has "remastered historical paintings" by involving gimmicks from a classical past - let's think about the references and quotes from the great masters of art history, such as the recovery from the perfect balance of Piero della Francesca, up to the political chaos by Géricault. Giuseppe Stampone uses only the BIC pen. It is a cheap medium that everyone uses and that remains indelible. Thanks to the pen and its obsessive and meticulous use, the artist has created intimate and small-format locations characterized by a perfect perspective. He has contextualized his subjects into a time that he tries to slow down, forcing the gaze of those who enjoy the work to observe every detail from different angles while freed from any judgment. The artist testifies his "origin of the world" that cyclically goes back and forth and stages some episodes by mixing imaginaries and critically re-appropriating its moment.

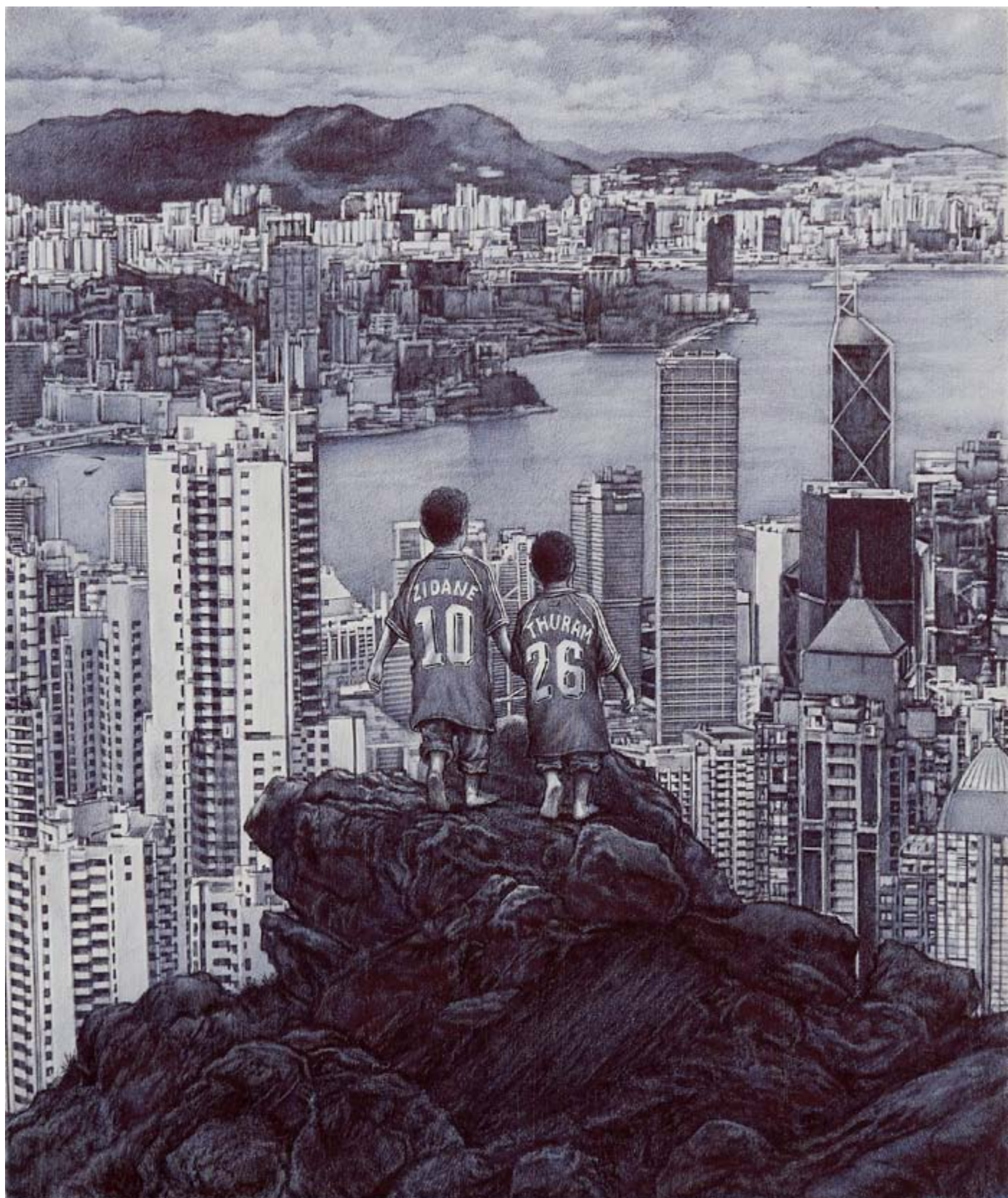


Sogno Americano

2022

Bic pen on prepared wood

35 x 30 cm



Emigration Made - Welcome to Montecarlo

2022

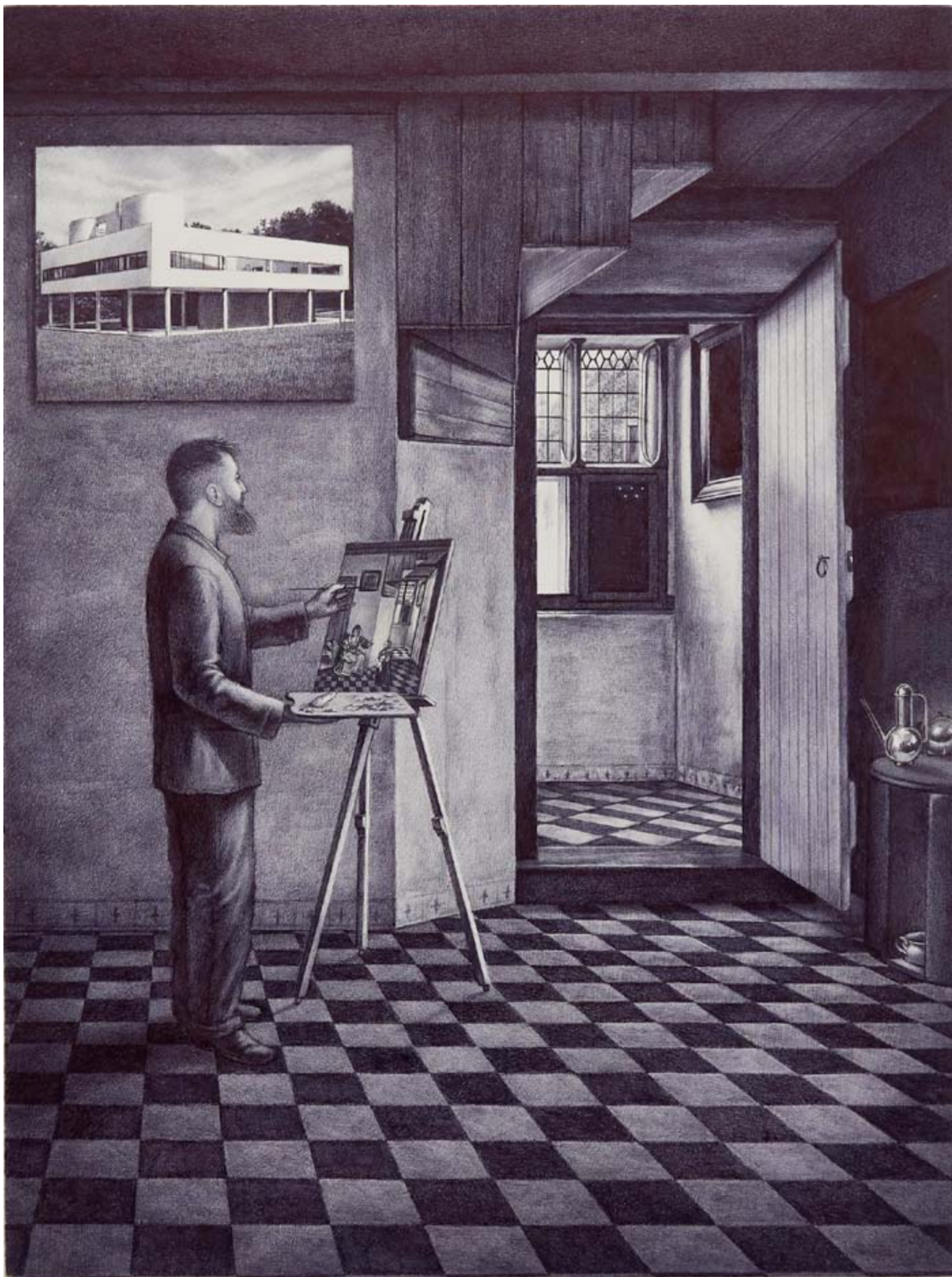
Bic pen on prepared wood

35 x 30 cm



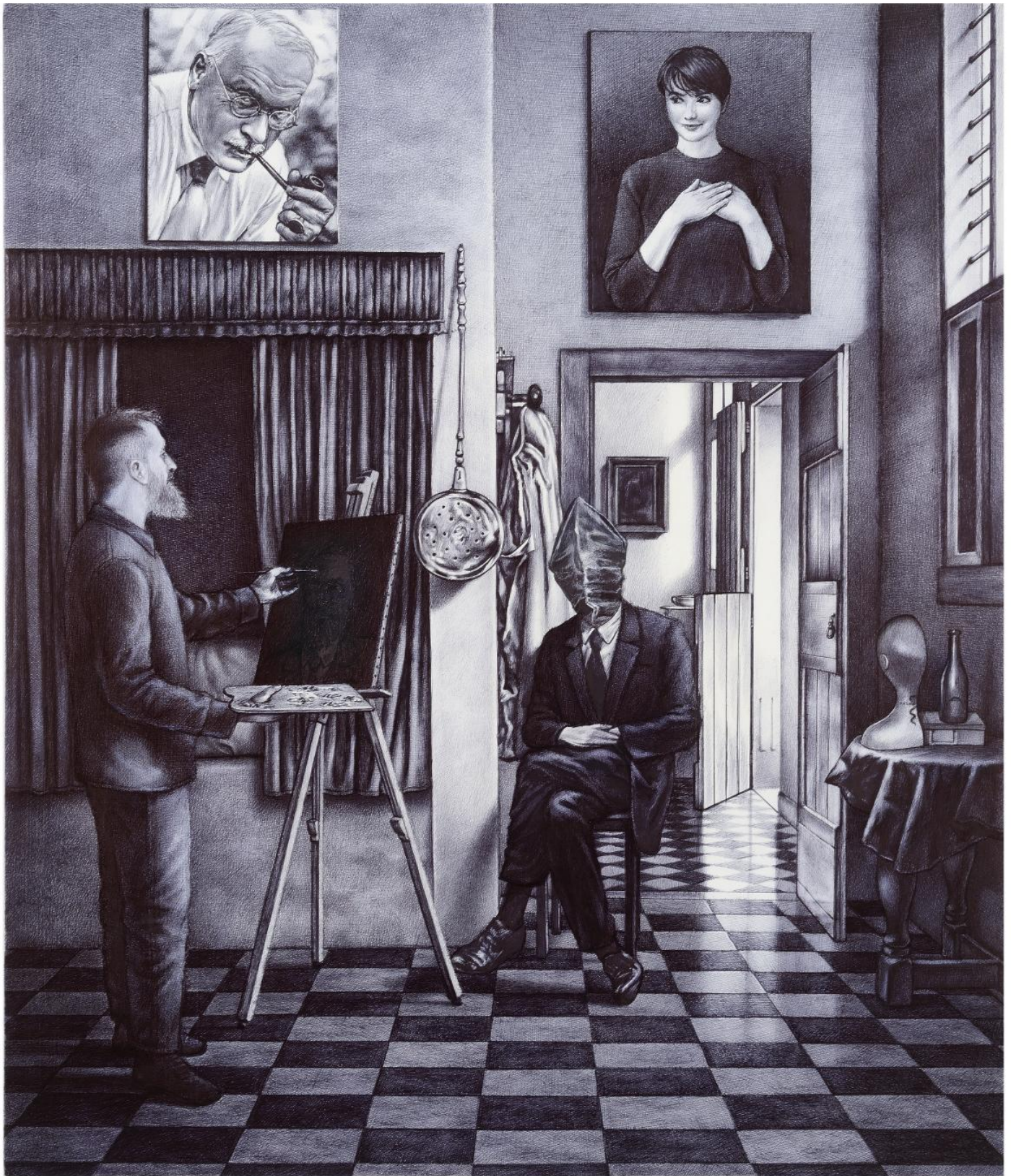
Casa

2019
Bic pen on prepared wood
35 x 29 cm



Doppia visione interna

2022
Bic pen on prepared wood
40 x 30 cm



Sagra famiglia Maria Crispal Giuseppe e Junk

2020

Ball point pen on wooden panel

29,5x36 cm



Icona

2020

Ball point pen on wooden panel

29,5x36 cm



Voluntary Quarantine

2020

Ball point pen on wooden panel

35x29,5



Lampedusa

2020

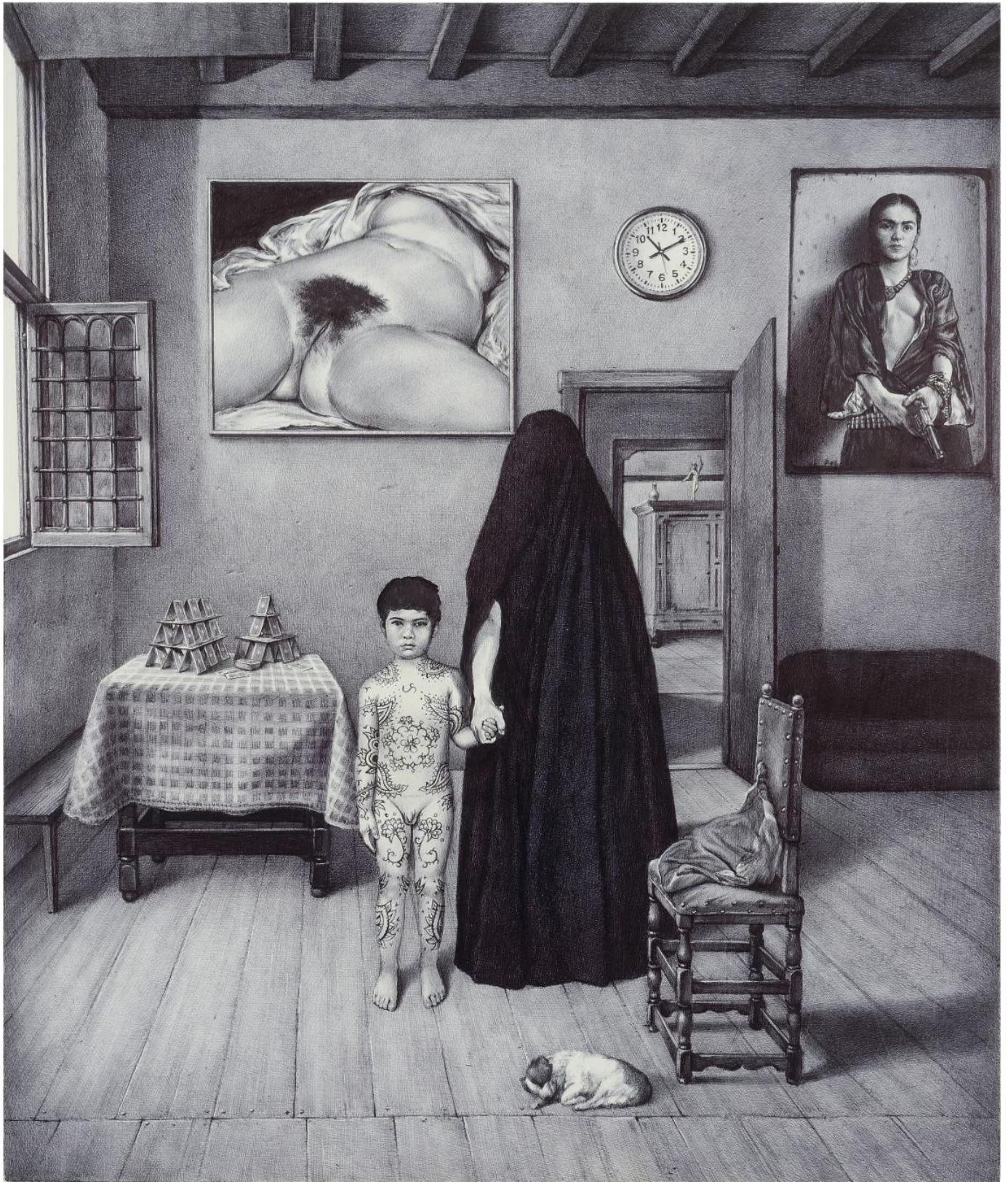
Ball point pen on wooden panel

35x29,5



A Maria Crispal

2020
Ball point pen on wooden panel
30x40 cm



Gioconda con baffi

2020

Ball point pen on wooden panel

29,5x35 cm



Ricordo di un carnevale a Venezia

2020

Ball point pen on wooden panel

35x29,5 cm



Emigration Made

2022
Graphite on prepared wood
40 x 30 cm



Europa vs Europa

2022

Graphite on prepared wood

35 x 30 cm



Global education, istruzioni per l'uso all'acquisto per arte contemporanea

2021
Graphite on prepared wood
36 x 30 cm



Women

2021
Graphite on prepared wood
36 x 30 cm





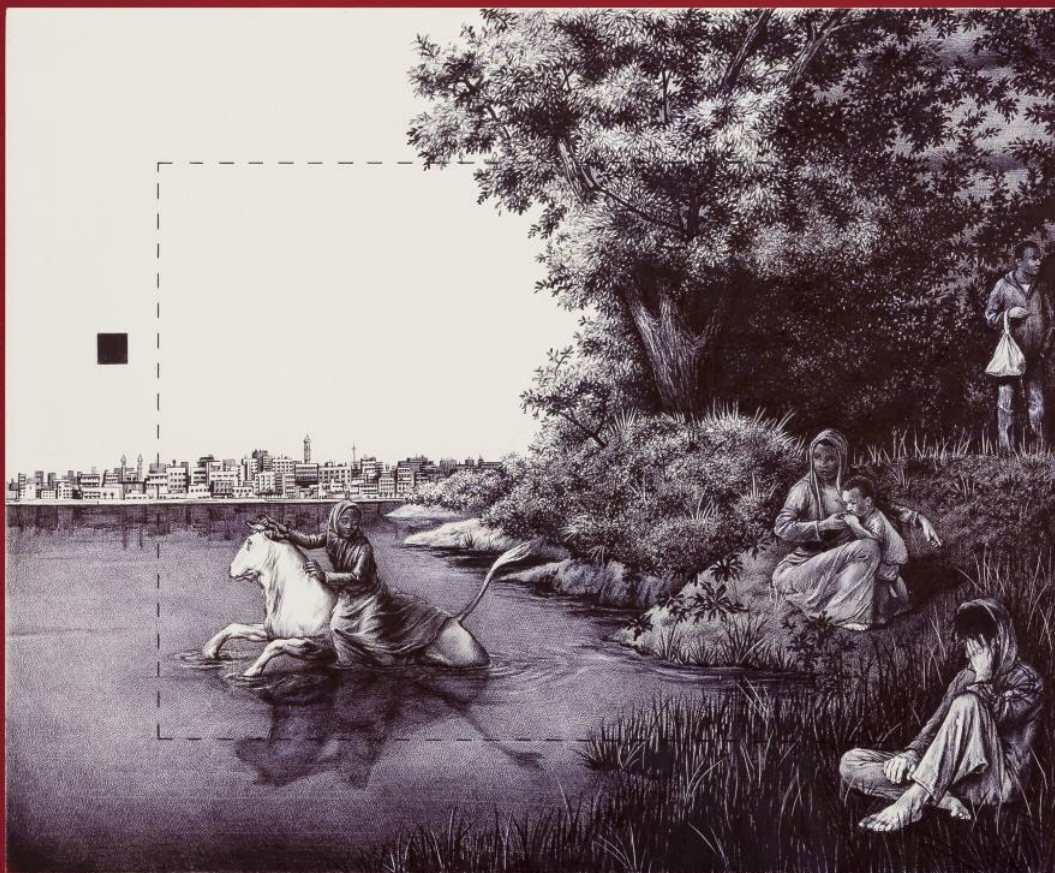
Emigration Made

2018
Ball point pen on wooden panel
26x35 cm



The End

2018
Ball point pen on wooden panel
30x40 cm



Europa vs Europa

2018
Ball point pen on wooden panel
26x35 cm



Vanitas

2018
Ball point pen on archive book pages on
French colonialism in Africa
120x90 cm



Maria Crispal in the studio

2016

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm

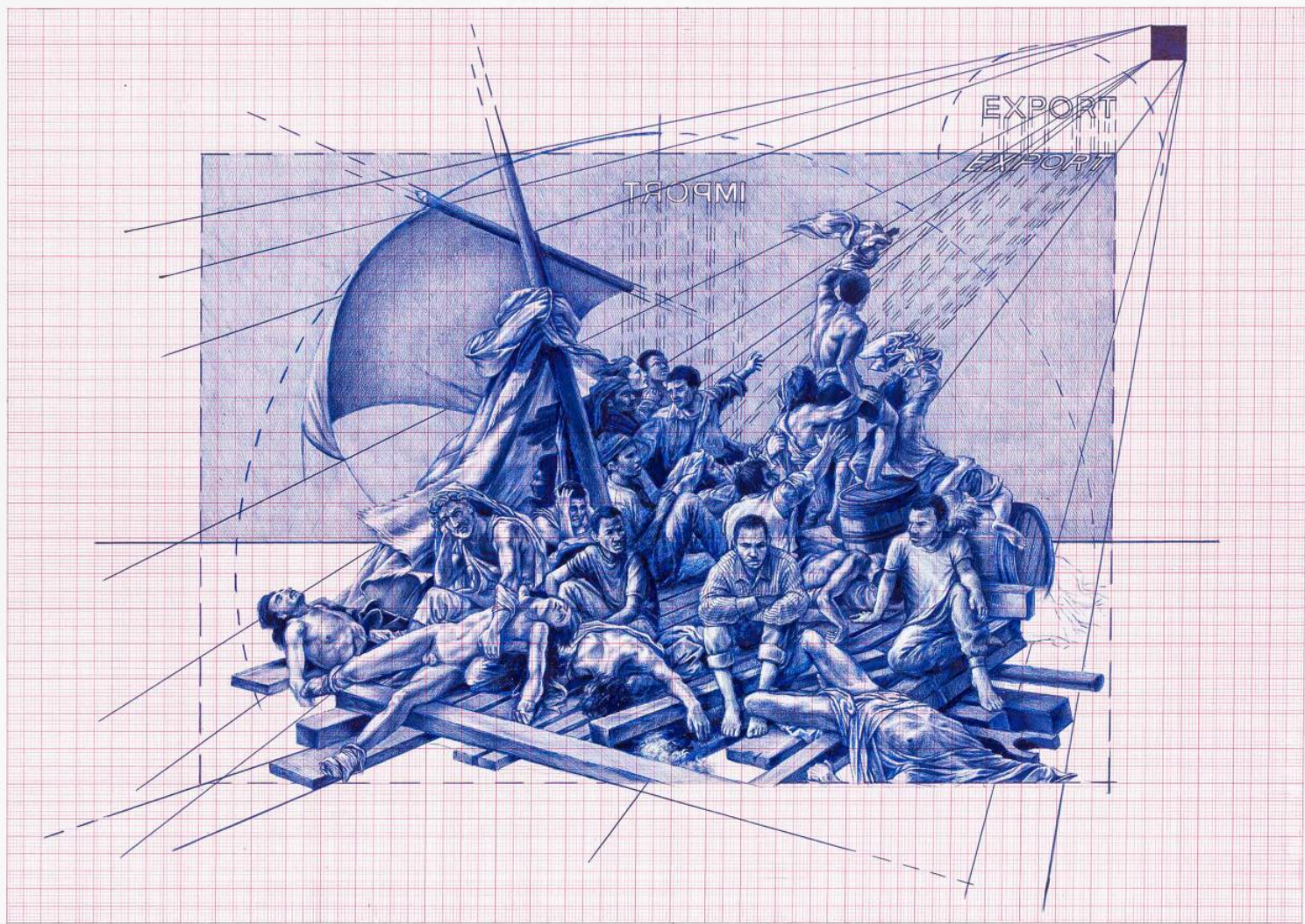


Narcosis

2018

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



La Zattera della Medusa

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

30x40 cm

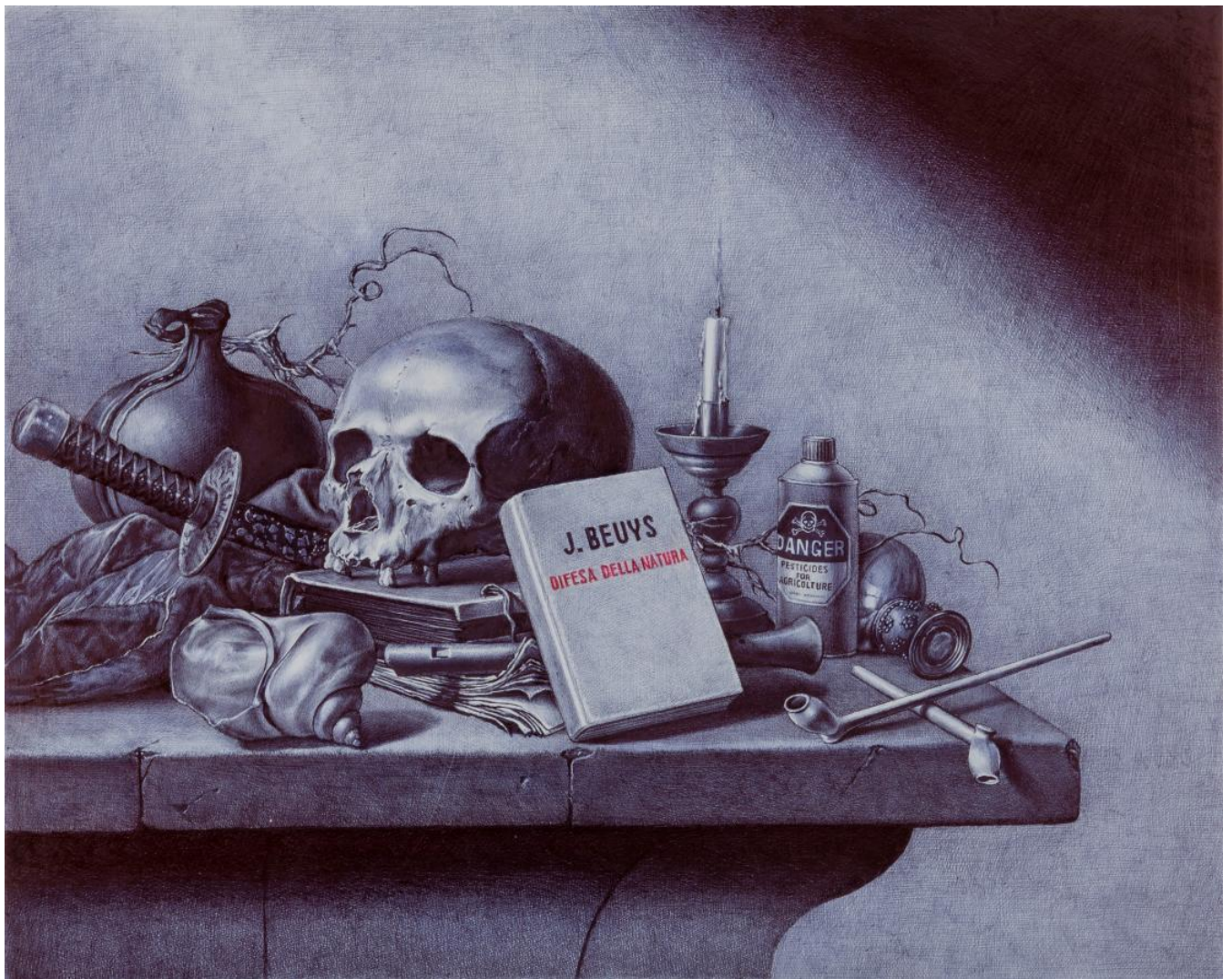


Vanitas

2018

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm

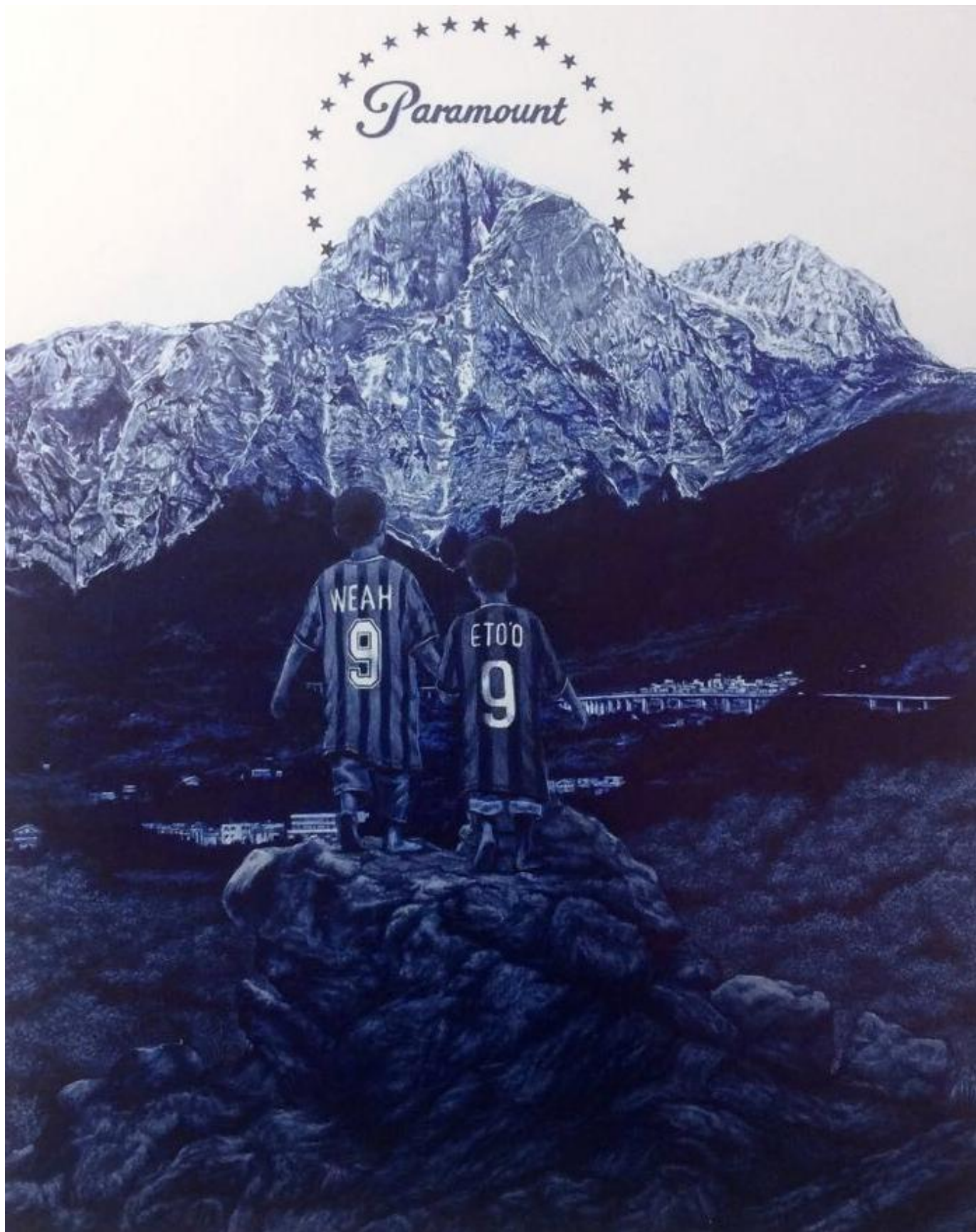


Vanitas

2018

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



Emigration Made / Welcome to Gran Sasso

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



Emigration Made / Welcome to Rotterdam

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



Made in France

2018

Ball point pen on French colonies
geographic atlas pages
200x200 cm

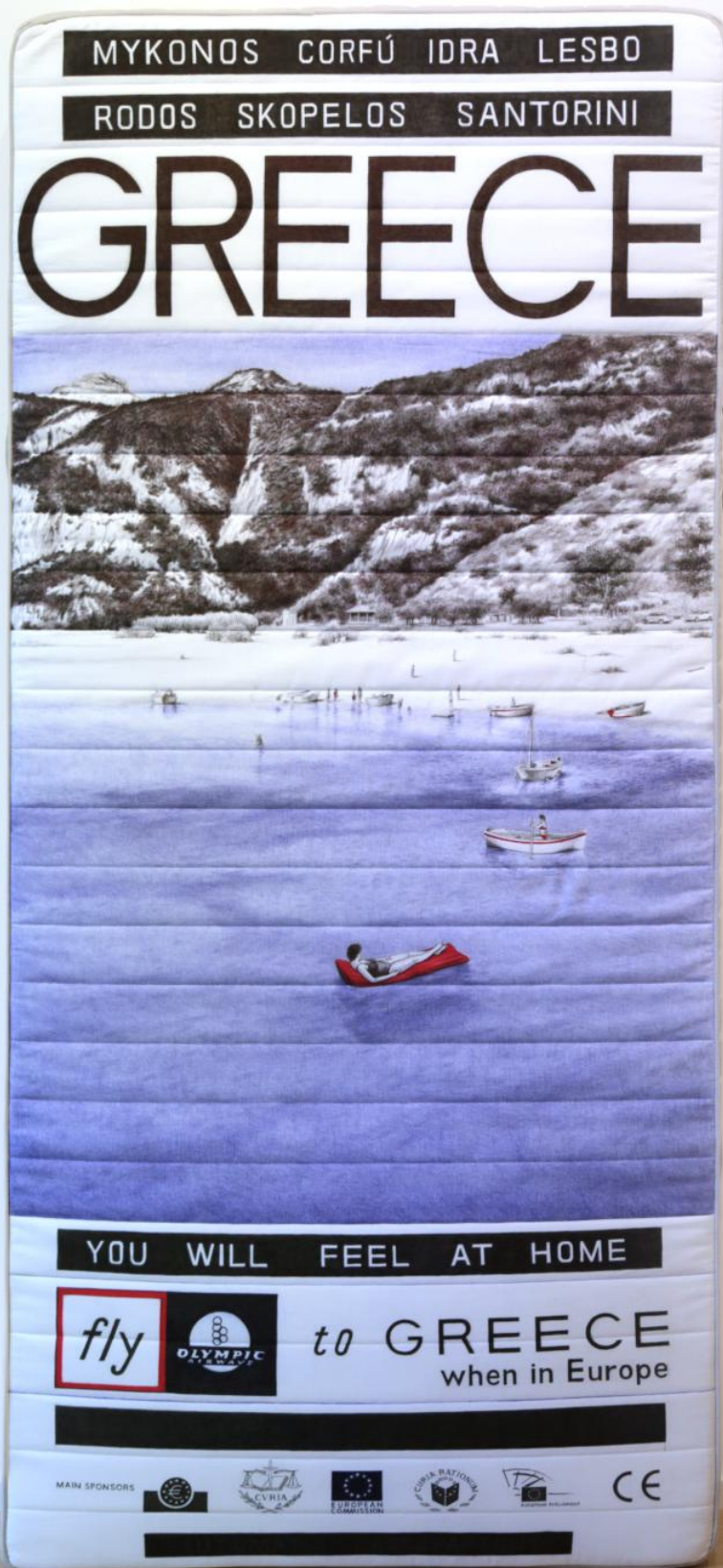
2018
Ball point pen, graphite and acrylic on paper
180x135 cm



Golden Residencies

2016

Ball point pen on mattress
200x90x15 cm



Golden Residencies / Welcome to Greece

2016
Ball point pen on mattress
200x90x15 cm



Golden Residencies / Welcome to España

2016

Ball point pen on mattress

200x90x15 cm

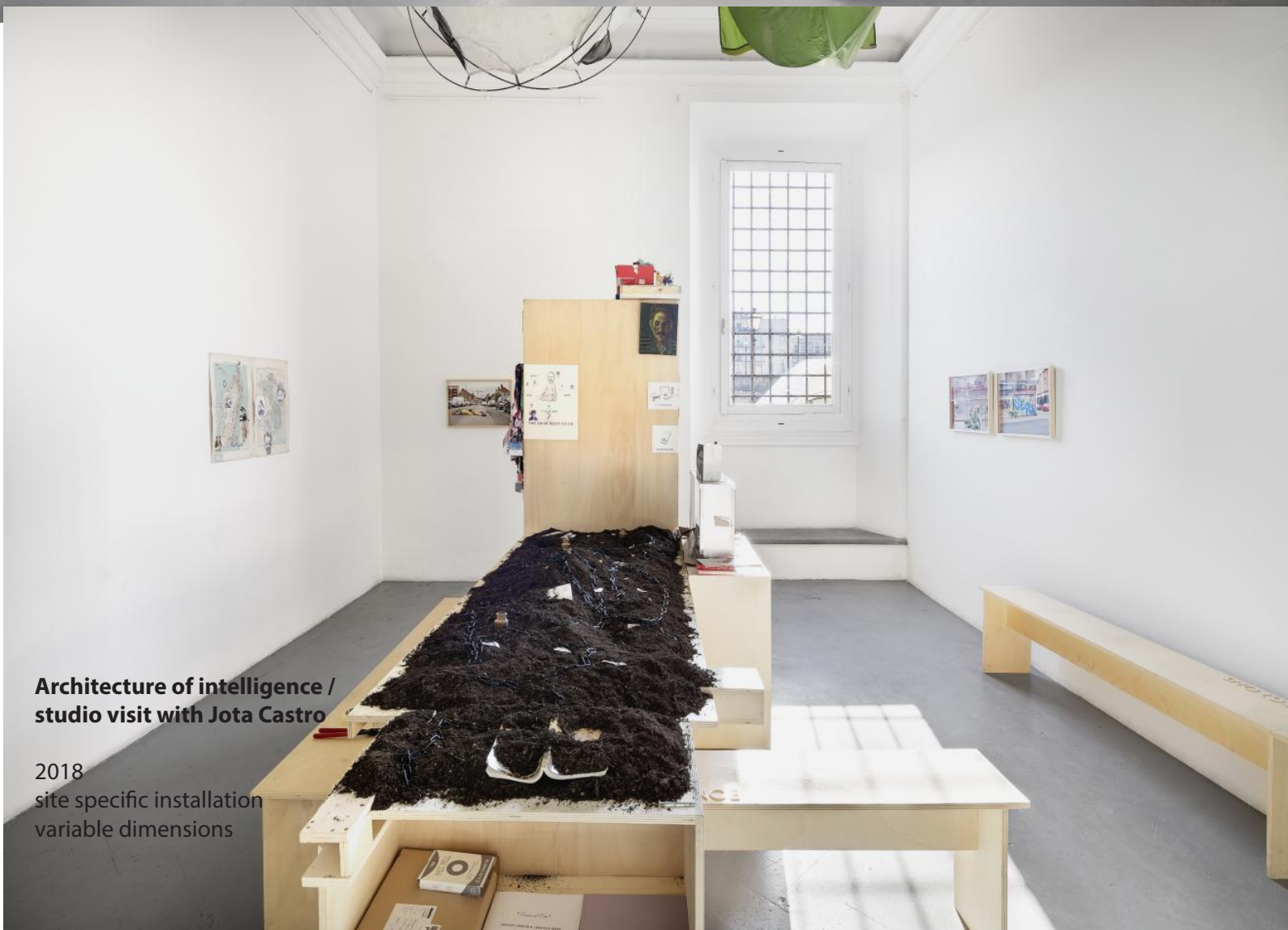


Golden Residencies / Welcome to Malta

2016

Ball point pen on mattress

200x90x15 cm



**Architecture of intelligence /
studio visit with Jota Castro**

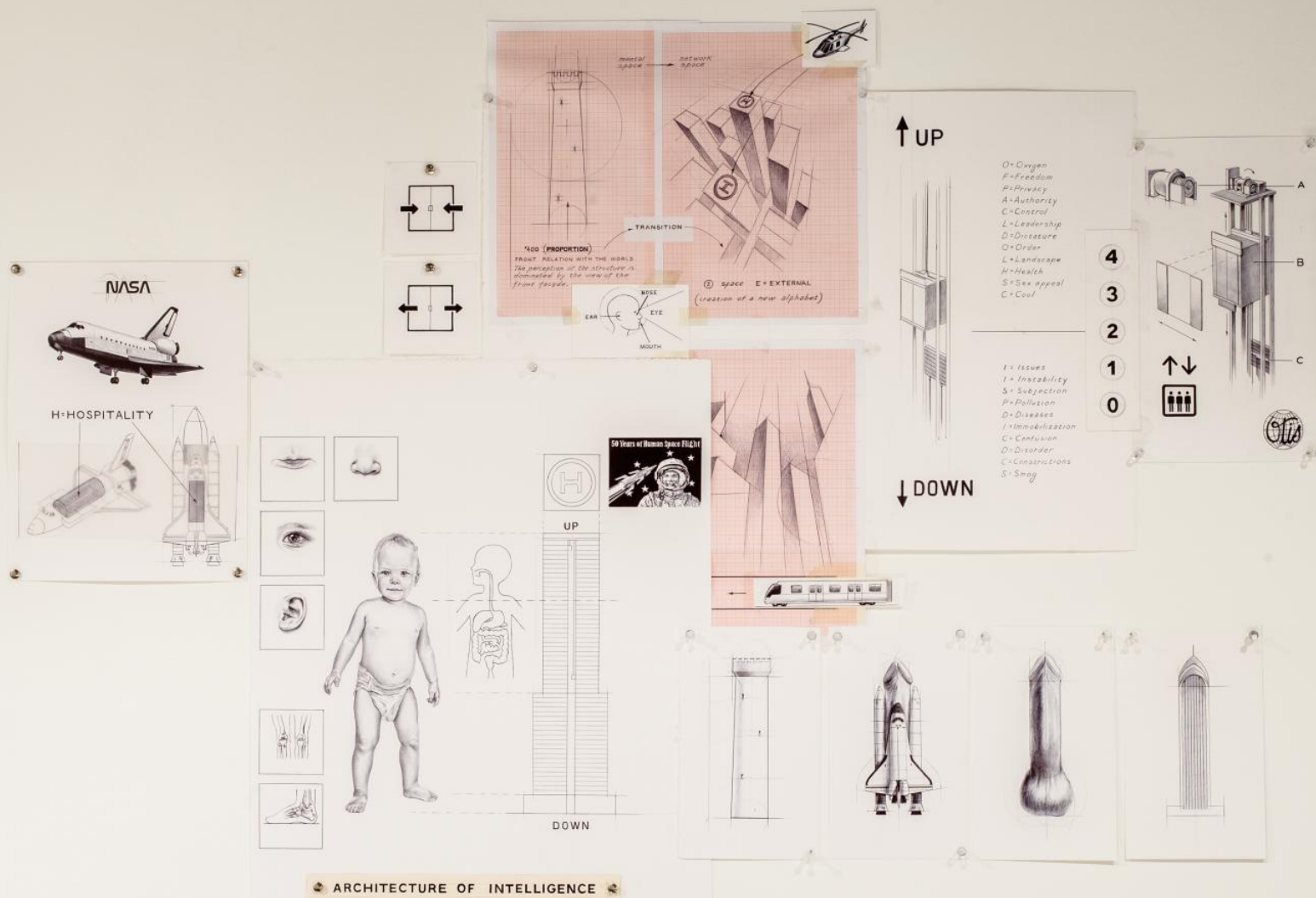
2018
site specific installation
variable dimensions

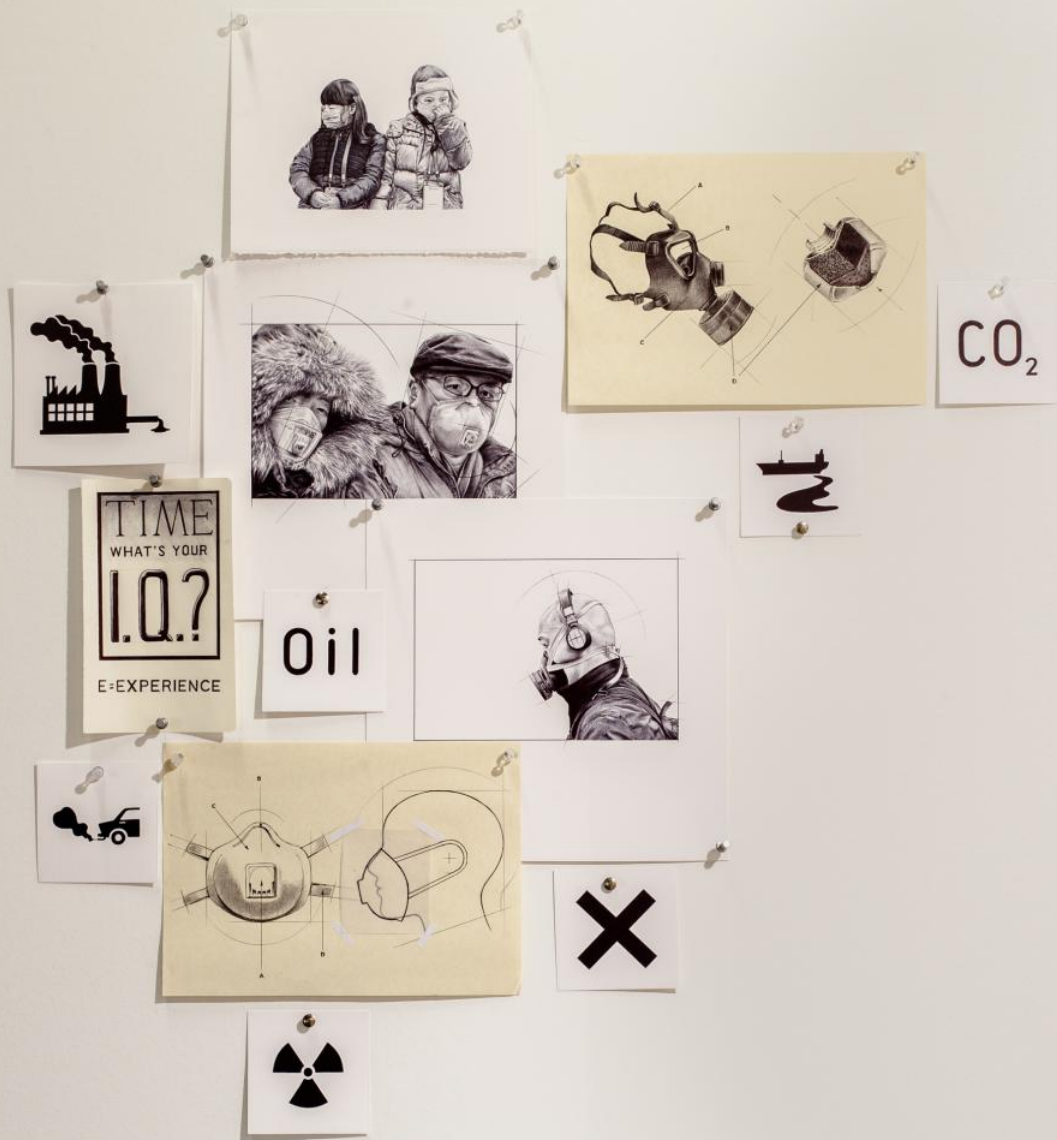
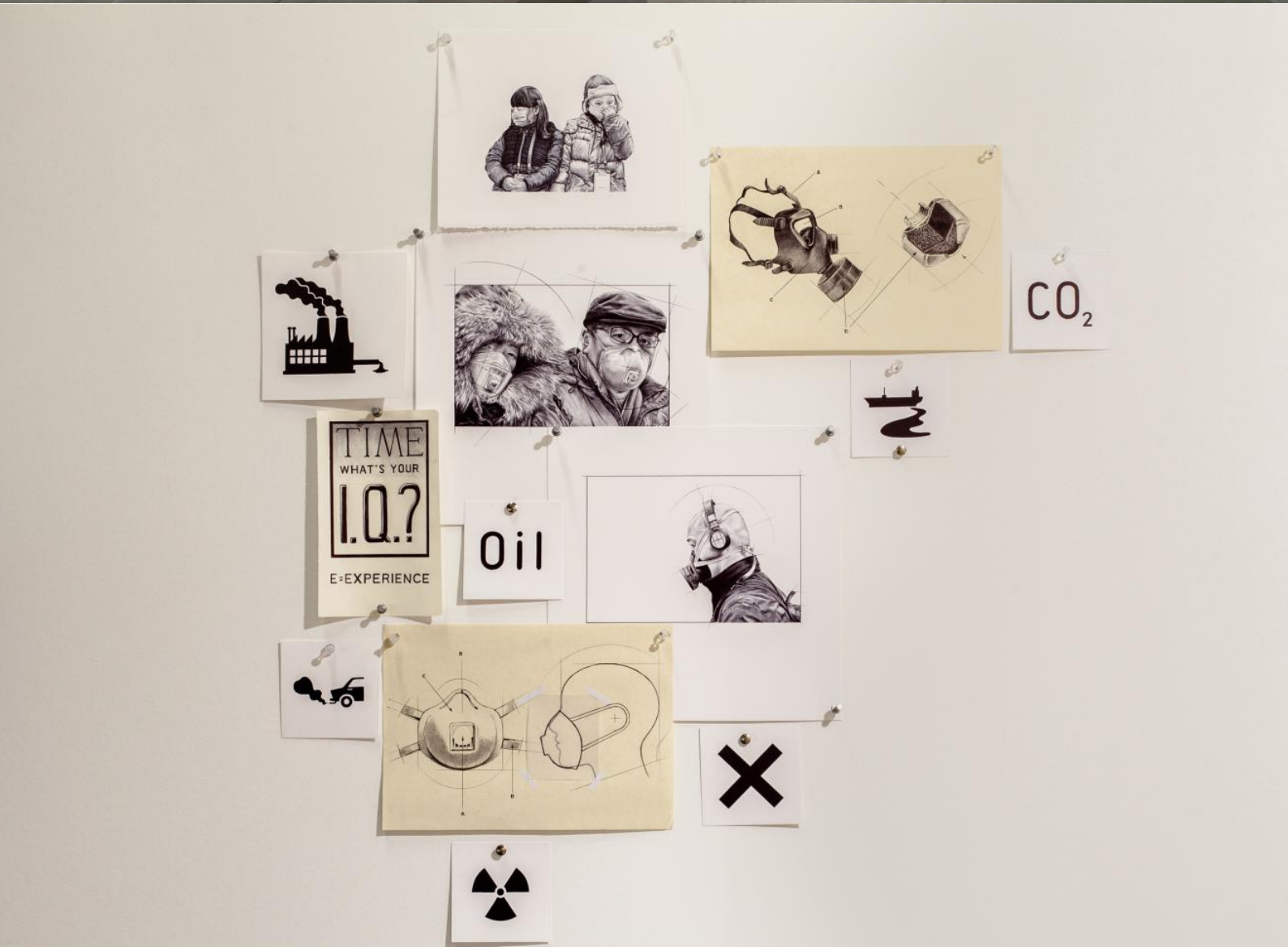




**Architecture of intelligence /
studio visit with Ugo La Pietra**

2016
site specific installation
variable dimensions



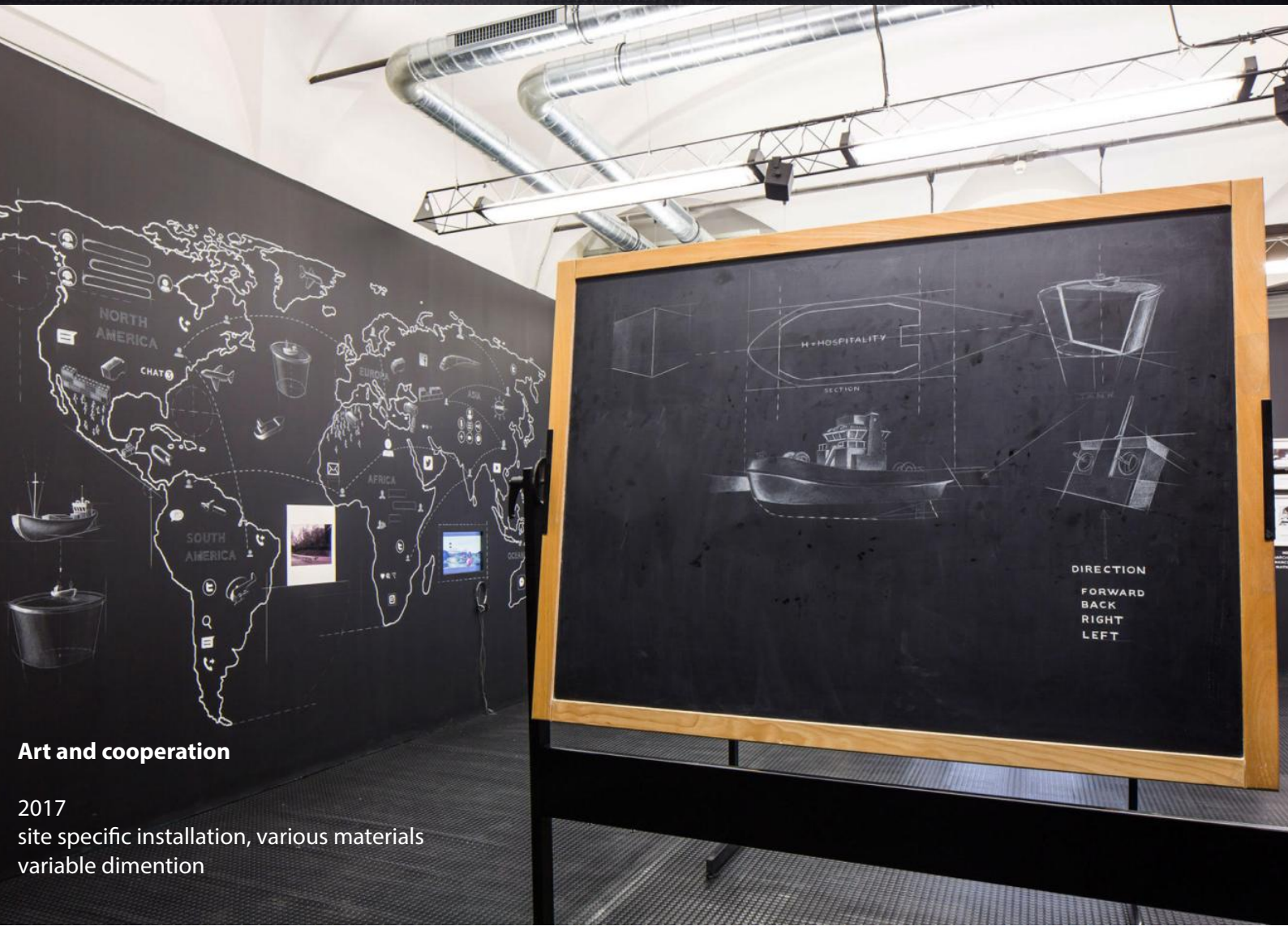




Mirage

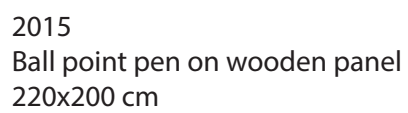
2018

site specific installation, chalk on wall
variable dimensions



Art and cooperation

2017
site specific installation, various materials
variable dimension





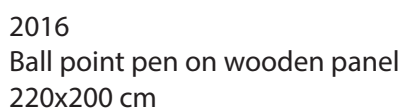


Phallic erection

2016

Ball point pen on wooden panel

220x200 cm





L=LUNG

P&G

I=ICON

LENIN
KHRUSHCHEV
BREZHNEV
GORBACHEV
RUSSIAN

IRA

UKRAINE

KAZAKHSTAN

ETA
FRANCE
SPAIN

Kellogg's

TURKEY
GEORGIA
AZERBAIDZHAN
SYRIA
LEBANON
ISRAEL
PALESTINE
IRAQ
IRAN

PAKISTAN

Coca-Cola

LYBIA
EXXON

EGYPT

Esso

SAUDI ARABIA
YEMEN

Coca-Cola

MAURITANIA
MALI
BURKINA FASO

NIGER
Chevron
EXXON
Chevron

CHAD
SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

m&m's

●=ACTIVE VOLCANOES

Z=ZERO

S=SUPPOSITORY

AUSTRALIA

L=LAXATIVE

V=VITAMINE



Mare finito

2015
Interactive sculpture



Retta finita

2015
Interactive sculpture



Cerchio finito

2015
Interactive sculpture



Emigration Made

2014

Istallazione interattiva

Courtesy American Academy Roma





H-HOSPITAL

SAVIR
SCHANKER



A short interview with Giuseppe Stampone about his work

Giacinto Di Pietrantonio (curator of GAMeC Museum, Bergamo): Shall we start by speaking of your poetics?

Giuseppe Stampone: Mine is a conceptual approach, for me art is a language, I am interested in the time-space within which the work manifests itself today with the "dilation of time". In the era of globalisation I am interested in recovering the concept of "Doing". Not as a mannerist choice, but as a conceptual one, as a process. Doing (giving shape to one's own thoughts) implies a time of realisation that has us recover our intimate time set against the speed imposed by the market, by the internet and by the new global village. Warhol defined himself as a machine, I define myself as an intelligent machine that though only makes one copy. I work at the choice of the global image from internet but with the desire to possess it uniquely, as a unique moment. This is possible in the fleeting moment of carrying out the appropriation that is no longer an appropriation of the image, but the appropriation of the time of the image, in the making of it. I am for the recovery of the "made in" of the Re-doing. Craftsmanship is no longer a mannerist fact, but a conceptual one. If you make a beaker and you take a second (in China or in any other part of the world) and in some other place they take six months, those six months imply the time for discovering the history of that object, that memory; for getting to know the material but above all for rendering quality via the "the right time dilated towards the formulation of the thought" so to speak. Hence attention, a dilation of time, is today the true Anarchy against the dictatorship of this new frenetic, speedy and obsessive time-space, and the return to recovering one's own intimate time.

G. D. P.: Is that your way of trying to subtract yourself from the bombardment-flow of the crowd of images from our hypermedial world?

G. S.: How do I manage, if I am bombarded everyday by millions of images, to understand the contents of the same, if I don't have the physical time to read them and to pause? As an intelligent photocopier I draw liquid, iconic files from the internet, and copy them just as they are. Recopying them exactly as they are I turn the manner into concept, because redoing the file above all turns an iconic image from liquid to solid: a file that you could print out the world over I redo it as a one-off, drawing it with a bic pen. A Mao, a war, or other social dramas of the world. I am not interested in dealing with historic archives, but I want to create some current and contemporary ones, archives that narrate my times, my personal experiences and not those of a bygone generation different from my own. With this I want to catalogue contemporary archives.

G. D. P.: Is this slowing down enabled by your use of the bic pen, like a form of contemporary oil painting?

G. S.: Yes indeed, each drawing contains from 20 to 32 stratifications, bic pen veils; the veils used by Raphael or van Eyck in oil painting, I do the same with the bic pen, creating overlapping time-spaces. Day after day I continue to add new layerings: hour after hour, day after day, month after month. I am interested in the final result, I mean in the process made of dilated time-spaces that give shape to thought, because it is the process that creates the drawing: 32 or 25 veils imply a time of completion that I call dilation in time, regaining control of one's own time. It is the artist who does not accept the speed of internet, of that file on the internet, but I make a copy of it the way a Gothic manuscript miniaturist would have done in the 14th century. It takes two, three, even four or five months to make a file, so making it is no longer mannerist but conceptual: it implies the stretching out of time, and is my genuine disobedience to the speed of the internet and globalization. What I want people to say in 100 years is while everybody else had a phallic erection, while everybody had to produce a hundred thousand photos, Stampone decided to remain in his studio, copy this file again and again, day after day like a monk, because it was a conceptual exercise to regain his own intimate time. Which is why I use a bic pen: because it contains a certain amount of oil inside it, and allows me to return to work day-after-day and create time-space stratifications.

When I create my drawings I have two types of work: intelligent photocopiers and historic activations.

G. D. P.: Hence in your case one could speak of a contemporary past?

G. S.: Indeed the second reason I use the bic pen is that of the reinterpretation of historic paintings in a contemporary light. For example the Raft of the Medusa, that I presented at the Biennial of Migration, brainchild of Jan Fabre, at Ostend in Belgium, is a smaller version of that painting, measuring 30x40 centimetres. In the Raft of the Medusa Géricault represents the failure of both the Napoleonic Empire and of the French Revolution, with the France of the time being at the mercy of the waves. Indeed, as you rightly point out, in this historical painting I saw an image of today's migrations. I see a Europe that is lost on this raft, losing an opportunity among these waves, and displaying its inability to save its present.

So I took some pictures of migrants landing in Lampedusa, I cropped out the people I was interested in and put them on the Raft of the Medusa in place of some of the historical figures, all thanks to the perspective that in fact allowed me to amalgamate things in a single vision and form two different time spaces; that of the post French revolution Raft of the Medusa and the current and contemporary one of the landing of migrants on Lampedusa.

G. D. P.: A perspective re-enactment?

G. S.: Yes indeed, thanks to perspective I was able to reallocate past historic facts to the present, cancelling out the time-space. Like Piero della Francesca in the Flagellation of Christ (where he combined the death of his contemporary Oddantonio and the flagellation of Christ). In my Raft of the Medusa, I did the same thing, unifying an event that did not take place in my time-space, with one that did. That is to say, I unfreeze hypertexts.

G. D. P.: Thus this contemporisation of history allows you to use art to broach one of the hottest issues of the moment, that of migration and the destiny of Europe?

G. S.: Which is why I did it on the concept of the Raft of the Medusa, but also on Christ derided, and on the birth of Europe (Europe versus Europe) with the work of Rembrandt, where I turned his Abduction of Europe into this new vision of religious war. Here too with the use of the bic pen I allow myself to return to and re-elaborate on the stratification of time-spaces, that then, combining things together, dilate today's time, featured by internet and by globalisation. Hence it can certainly be considered contemporary criticism.

G. D. P.: What do you mean by making one-offs of reproducible images, is it because your works arise from your encounter with reproductions and not from your encounter with the originals?

G. S.: Because I am a child of my time, born first with television and then with the internet, hence also when I did the show with 100 portraits of contemporary artists at GAMEC, I defined myself an "intelligent photocopier", because I took the images from internet and I retranslated them into one-off portraits with the bic pen. I play on the icon of reproductive recognition that I render unique. More in general the images I make unique have to in some way be iconic and historic.

G. D. P.: This comes with your obsession for the Renaissance, why?

G. S.: Because the Renaissance, as has by now been established, is seen as the launchpad for everything that developed after it. One goes from the mechanical arts to the free arts, from the craftsman to the intellectual. I am particularly bound to two instruments that appeared in the Renaissance: one is perspective, the other Gutenberg's typeface. I define Gutenberg's typeface and perspective the two most dangerous weapons of total destruction created by man. Perspective deprives man of his empirical experience: it defines existential space allowing it to be conceptualised. Within the perspective Renaissance painting, reality is no longer an oral tale passed from parent to child, but a political vision dictated by the patron or client. Gutenberg's typeface is the same thing, because it transforms the human experience to one's own convenience.

G. D. P.: But in your love of perspective, for the slowing down of time through remaking, the continuous veiling, doing, making, remaking, is there not a risk of drawing satisfaction from aesthetic excess?

G. S.: It is not really a matter of aesthetic gratification, more of physical enjoyment, because the moment I draw I slow down my time, in front of internet and globalisation I react recovering my intimacy, I re-acquire my intimate time, also in this way attaining mental gratification. This is why I use the terms of physical and mental enjoyment, because the dilatation in time returns you to - it allows you to become re-acquainted with and brings you back to the archè. And regaining one's time through dilatation also means regaining one's life, it means having time to decide, but above all to mark out the stages. On this count I always take the example of the tea ceremony: it is a rite that takes its aesthetics from the everyday, from tea-drinking, and raises this act to a work of art. A tea master might repeat the same exercise thirty years over. This very repetition leads to perfection. Drawing, when I copy and perform this daily task, every day, becomes a sort of mantra for reaching perfection. Speaking of the tea ritual the difference between Europe and the East is interesting. Just to think that in the West, in 1400, man wanted to adapt nature to himself, while in the same historic period in the East, man wanted to adapt to nature.

G. D. P.: At this point one could ask in your case whether the concept or the doing comes first?

G. S.: It is always the concept that dictates the method. I am neither a draughtsman nor a painter. I don't know how to paint because I don't know how to imagine, and I don't know how to draw because I don't know how to imagine. I have never drawn anything I imagined. I copy and archive reality, resetting it in a contemporary manner. It is a sort of post production in which I try to nullify the sequential didactic time-space of history, because history is false, it is political action. I do not believe in history, but I believe in experience.

For this very reason I am driven to nullify the historic slant, this sequential, anachronistic and mannerist didactic. I am a child of television because I was born in 1974, but also a child of internet and hence I want to analyse this world, because I don't want to be superficial in terms of the image. In the end I am a kind of romantic who takes these files and does not want to see them disappear from the internet, rather I want to render them immortal, defend them by crystalizing them in the uniqueness of my image.

G. D. P.: Could you be more clear about the idea of the uniqueness of the reproducible image?

G. S.: I work in series and all these start from an iconic image, a scan, a selection, an interaction with google. I write iconic words, that lead to an icon search and an icon image archive. I then choose an image that has been part of the collective memory, the archive of the history of humanity, a popular and recognizable image. Not in the pop-political sense, because there is a difference between pop-political and popular: politics is an action done by a few for the many, pop though is an aesthetic form where the spectator merely puts the contents. An image behind which lies a tradition, an identity at a sociological and anthropological level is popular.

I am not interested in political images, I am interested in popular ones, because popular images have a content. Hence for example I chose the cover of Led Zeppelin, or the Sex Pistols, or others, because they are groups that belong to the genre of music and movements like rock, punk, post punk that have modified the history of humanity on an anthropological, sociological and political level, they have modified the internal customs. Hence I go and choose images that according to me have made a mark with the people, with their popularity. I take the contents of that image and with a sort of post production I re-contemporise them. They are political images (like that of Led Zeppelin with the German zeppelin, protagonist of that terrible catastrophe in 1936 in New Jersey). On the other I consider some concepts of rock, punk or post punk music, like the last epistemological rifts after Marcel Duchamp's urinal.

G. D. P.: Can the Abduction of Europe that we already mentioned be considered part of this?

G. S.: Yes because I recontextualised it analysing the Schengen area. I noted that there are the golden residences and the gold visas, meaning that if you have a certain economy and you are not a European citizen you belong to the Schengen area. Hence the movement is not only associated with belonging to a nation and/or Europe but to money. Therefore the work concerns Europe versus Europe and its contradictions. In my Abduction of Europe I cancel out the original family, I insert the city of Beirut in the background, I turn the garden into a black forest, a place of danger, I turn the sea into a sea of ice. An image of danger seen from the eyes of abducted Europe.