



fotografia europea · reggio emilia 2008

Human, Too Human

The tactile image of bodies/the tactile body of images
(European Photography – Reggio Emilia, 30th April/4th May 2008)
Exhibition until 8th June

As of Wednesday 30th April **European Photography** returns to **Reggio Emilia**. This annual international exhibition, curated by the art critic **Elio Grazioli**, is promoted by **Reggio Emilia Town Council** in collaboration with the **Ministry for Arts and Culture – Department of Architecture and Contemporary Art**, the **Emilia Romagna Region**, the **Province of Reggio Emilia** and the **Cassa di Risparmio Pietro Manodori Foundation**. The event is organised under the **High Patronage of the President of the Italian Republic** and with the patronage of the **Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers**.

Umano troppo umano (Human, Too Human) is the title and key theme of this third edition, dedicated to the controversial concept of the **body**, explored in its many and sometimes radically contrasting meanings. There is the body **'on show'**, transformed in the renewed cult of fitness and well-being into a malleable tool of pleasure and performance. There is the **'post-technological body'**, which is affected by the new media, the virtual world and the inter-connectivity. There is the **tormented**, worn out body, consumed to its limits by new wars, new weapons, new diseases and new miseries. There is the **inert body**, the dissected subject of scientific research that analyses and studies it with objective detachment. Finally, there is the **body of photographic images**, a body that has developed and changed over the years as much as the human body, incorporating new materials, new techniques and new devices, right up to the apparent immateriality of digital technologies.

As a result of our now consolidated multi-disciplinary approach, numerous **temporary exhibitions** will be organised until **8th June 2008** in fifteen places around the city – from the Cloisters of San Domenico to Spazio Gerra, from the Ex-OPG to the Sala Verdi, to name just a few. These will be joined by a rich calendar of over **one hundred events** lasting until **4th May**, including **lectio magistralis**, **conversations**, **seminars**, **workshops** and **performances**, all dedicated to the event's central theme and which this year will see not only the participation of the photographers, artists and critics involved in the exhibitions, but also that of authoritative experts from the Italian and international intellectual scene.

These include the sociologist **Derrick De Kerckhove**, a theorist of connective intelligence, who will investigate the neuropsychological implications of the media and new technologies on human beings, in a *lectio magistralis* dedicated to the theme of **tactility** and its relationship with film. The historian **Giovanni De Luna** will look at the changing concept of the body produced by historical development, in *Corpo "reale" tra guerre e malattie (The 'Real' Body in War and Illness)*, while the philosopher **Adriana Cavarero** will deal with the theme of the female body, traditionally an object of male desire, but also a maternal womb that procreates and a hand that nurses, today the subject of a view that has changed radically.



The philosopher and psychoanalyst **Umberto Galimberti** will look at the theme of the body's *Sensoriality* and its natural ambivalence, dealing with the stages of its cultural repression in the Western world. In the same vein of the traditional division between body and soul, the theologian **Vito Mancuso** will offer his reflections on the immortality of the one and the frailness of the other in the modern secular view.

A round table in collaboration with the **University of Modena and Reggio Emilia** will investigate the impact of media intrusion on the concept of the body in the collective mind, which is increasingly orientated towards extremes of purity and impurity, of monstrous, 'showcase' bodies; while on a literary level, the authors **Walter Siti** and **Vitaliano Trevisan**, presented by the critic and poet **Alberto Bertoni**, will give readings created *ad hoc* for the event on the theme of the image as obsession.

The exhibitions of this third edition of *European Photography* will concentrate on the '**tactile**' dimension of the photographic image, focussing on **original professional and artistic paths** that have tried to challenge the two-dimensional nature of the pictorial model and to move nearer to the concreteness and hyper-realism of sculpture, sometimes including the artist as a presence in the image and sometimes stimulating an 'atypical' response from the onlooker – the desire to touch and to interact – through special techniques and image modifications.

Five European artists have been chosen for the **solo exhibition** section. They all come from different historical and socio-cultural periods and contexts, but are all leading figures in **new experimentation** and theoretical reflection on **portraying the body**. The Austrian **Raoul Hausmann** (1886-1971) was one of the founders of the Berlin Dada movement and invented the technique of photomontage. He is the author of intense nudes that contain what he termed "eccentric sensoriality". The German **Wols** (1913-1951), was a leading exponent of the Informal, but was less well-known for his photographs of miscellaneous organic materials, in which that which is common and every-day is represented so clearly and emphatically that it becomes ambiguous and enigmatic, through a process that he himself called "transubstantiation" and "permanent change". The Italian **Paolo Gioli** (1942-), experiments with a pinhole camera, a direct descendent of the *camera obscura*, where one can see the body represented, the image, the photographer and the camera. The Portuguese **Jorge Molder** (1947-), produces *ad hoc* self-portraits that involve the observer in a play on gazes, details and backlighting, creating a mysterious, suggestive atmosphere. The Frenchmen **Pierre et Gilles** (Pierre Comroy (1950-) and Gilles Blanchard (1953-) whose work in the eighties concentrated on photographs retouched with painting, dedicated to pop, gay and religious culture, this year present an exhibition entitled *Exil Interieur* in Reggio Emilia.



Together with these five solo exhibitions, there are also four **special exhibitions** by four European photographers – the Dutchman **Erwin Olaf**, the Sweden **Ann-Sofi Sidèn**, the Frenchman **Antoine D'Agata** and the Pole **Aneta Grzeszykowska**. These have been invited to offer their own subjective iconographical interpretation of the main theme *Human, Too Human* with shots that reveal a multitude of facets and discords. The works commissioned will become the property of Reggio Emilia Town Council and will join the body of work purchased during the two previous editions of European Photography, which includes works by Basilico, Parr and Scianna, amongst others.

Following the event's traditional formula, there will also be a selection of **special projects** in photographic research into the main theme. One of these is *Sirene (Mermaids)* by **Elio Mazzacane**, a series of shots inspired by the novel of the same name by Laura Pugno, with whom the photographer has already collaborated to illustrate *Il colore oro (The Gold Colour)*. *Grazia ricevuta (Grace Received)* by **Patrizio Esposito**, is a reflection in images on those who have been blessed. *Dialoghi dei corpi (A Dialogue between Bodies)* by **Bruno Cattani** links marble and the gestures of statues with the flesh and emotion of the human body, while **Benedetta Alfieri** evokes the absence of the body through the traces it has left. **Fabio Donato** presents a poetic investigation of our relationship with advertising, which is all-pervading on the urban landscape. **Jarno Zaffelli's** project is entitled *Total Portrait*, and uses an original technique developed by the photographer in 2007 to create a never-before-seen representation of the human body on a scale of 1:1. **Vanni Codeluppi** offers *Puro e impuro (Pure and Impure)* an exhibition organised in collaboration with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia that uses hundreds of photographs from the media to exemplify cultural models of the body in today's contemporary mind, featuring an aesthetic care that goes so far that it deprives the individual of humanity. The consolidated collaboration between *European Photography* and the *Reggio Emilia Dance/Festival* offers as well a reflection on a particular area of the city for 2008, through a day of events and performances (with the participation of the dance company **Aterballetto**, amongst others), an exhibition on the social and urban history of "Gardenia" and a commissioned project on the area by the photographer **Nicola Vinci**.

The programme is also enriched by complementary exhibitions, which include the **Edward Steichen** retrospective in collaboration with Palazzo Magnani, *Heroines* by **Bettina Rheims** at the Cloisters of San Domenico and the group exhibition *Atlante italiano 07*, commissioned and produced by **DARC**, Rome, in the "Loris Malaguzzi" International Children's Centre.

The exhibition programme is completed by **thirty works** chosen as part of an international photography award, **The Core of Industry**, organised in collaboration with the Reggio Emilia Manufacturers' Association. At the **awards ceremony** on **2nd May 2008**, the **winner** will receive **5,000 Euros** to create a photography project on **industry in Reggio Emilia**, which will be part of the 2009 *European Photography* Programme.



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The programme also includes a packed calendar of itinerant workshops and laboratories for children, young people and families, developed through teaching projects created specially by **Reggiochildren** and the “**Giannino Stoppani**” **Cooperative** in Bologna, together with three days on the protection and conservation of contemporary and historical photographic heritage, aimed at those working in the arts and university students. This has been organised by the **Biblioteca Panizzi Photo Library** in collaboration with the **Media Library of Reggio Emilia University**. The three seminars will include the participation of **Anne Cartier-Bresson**, director of the *Atelier de Restauration et de Conservation des Photographies* (ARCP) in Paris, **Alberto Salarelli**, lecturer in Foundation Information Sciences at Parma University, and **Silvia Berselli**, lecturer in restoration at the Brera Fine Arts Academy and director of the Centre for Restoration and Conservation of Photography in Milan.

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Can be found on the Internet at www.fotografiaeuropea.it

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