

# MAGAZZINO

## *Ascolto il tuo cuore, città*

5 March – 10 April 2021

Open day: Friday 5 March, 12 pm – 7 pm

Magazzino is delighted to present *Ascolto il tuo cuore, città* (*I listen to your heart, city*) a group exhibition featuring works by Elisabetta Benassi, Jonas Dahlberg and Gianluca Malgeri & Arina Endo, Sze Tsung Nicolàs Leong and Leonardo Magrelli. The title draws upon the eponymous book by Alberto Savinio, published in 1944 during World War II, as an homage to the city of Milan pending one of the most dramatic moments of its history. The works chosen for the exhibition reflect different approaches to the thematic of human spaces and the city, imagining architectural spaces and interiors that can be interpreted as extensions of mental spaces. Both the close environment of a home as well as the open space of a city street, have been strongly connoted in the last year by our very own perception, that has certainly been redefined by the shifting and changes that our lives have undergone, both individually and socially. We find these artworks to trace a line that moves from a very intimate to an almost universal dimension, with both the former and the latter linked to the artists' attempt of reimagining contexts like home, city, space, place and world from their own perspectives.

Elisabetta Benassi's triptych *Smog* (2020) consists of three watercolors, from her series *All I remember*, reproducing the verso of photographs – taken from press archives – picturing heavy pollution in three American cities. Through aesthetic references to landscape painting, albeit minimal (the images are essentially grey monochromes) the works actually refer to the broader theme of a heavy human presence and its deep impact on our environment. The work *Ascolto il tuo cuore, città* (2021) stems on the reiterated practice, by the artist, of the objet trouvé and its recontextualization in terms of poetic potential. A copy of the first edition of the book by Savinio that inspired the exhibition title, is attached to a strange rack on a bicycle handlebar, thus speaking about our daily means of transportation as well as alluding ironically to anatomy and animals.

Jonas Dahlberg's videos *Untitled (Horizontal Sliding)* (2000) and *Untitled (Vertical Sliding)* (2001), feature empty interiors whose reality is both enigmatic and suggestive. The slow movement of the camera reveals one room after another, evoking archetypal spaces that look familiar and foreign at the same time. Light seeps from under closed doors, but there's no reason to think anyone's home, or rather, in their rooms. Appearances, of course, prove deceptive. Dahlberg's sets are architectural models, built to a circular plan, and filmed with a centrally positioned rotating camera. What seem to be tracking shots are really 360° pans, describing *loci* that inevitably read as nodes in a labyrinth—a subtly scary one, since its vertical and horizontal extension implies the impossibility of finding an external vantage point.

Gianluca Malgeri & Arina Endo's works, that include both collages and sculptures are part of their research about playgrounds that started in 2013. This attention led to an ample photographic documentation that was the starting point for a first series of collages that drafted the subsequent – and natural – shifting of the project to the third dimension through sculpture and *maquettes*, directly related to the images assembled in the collages. Whereas the first articulations of the project were related to more static and isolated structures, seen like impossible buildings or islands, through the years the works have shifted progressively to a more combinatorial and communicative dimension, where the single items can be easily identified as organic elements of a whole world.

*Storia della Storia* by Sze Tsung Nicolàs Leong was realized in collaboration with Judy Chung during their 2019 residency at the American Academy in Rome. is a series of black and white photographs that mainly picture Italian interiors and that embody a glimpse of history from ancient times up until today. The project allows us to observe a broad image of history and time, an in-progress that reveals how the way we understand time has changed during the years. Together, the photographs and texts depict how the physical and conceptual traces of the different eras exist concurrently today, and how aspects of the past have been displaced into the present—in essence, how certain times and histories can exist in other times and histories.

*West Of Here* (2020) is a series of black and white views of Los Angeles, that Leonardo Magrelli realized taking inspiration from the renowned videogame *Grand Theft Auto V*. The boundary between the reality of the places pictured in the images and their artificiality in tridimensional graphics, is the territory upon which Magrelli focuses his research, namely the relocation of places distinctly “recognizable” yet virtual in fact within the photographic field.

## *About the artists*

**Elisabetta Benassi** (Rome, 1966, lives and works in Rome) Using cultural, political, psychoanalytical, and artistic references to the Twentieth century as well as to salient and controversial contemporary issues, Elisabetta Benassi creates works that move along a difficult space, that of our times. She is aligned with the conceptual tradition, employing a plurality of media and techniques that reference artistic traditions of the twentieth century, her personal history, as well as broader political and cultural themes, including psychoanalysis and cultural memory. What emerges in her oeuvre is a critical examination of contemporary identity and the conditions of modernity.

**Jonas Dahlberg** (Uddevalla, 1970, lives and works in Stockholm) He is known for his video installations and for his ongoing series of video works that have become his fundamental research in how to analyze sites and the politics of space. Since 2000 he has developed a series of videos that primarily consist of slow movements through architectural spaces. The videos are created by building miniaturized architectural sets that are filmed employing experimental methods. In addition to video and video installation, his practice includes public art works, sculptures, book projects and photography. He is the founder of the studio and research lab OF PUBLIC INTEREST (OPI) which works with artworks, artistic strategies and methods in our common spaces.

**Sze Tsung Nicolàs Leong** (Mexico City, 1974, lives and works in Los Angeles) His visual practice focuses on how we see, understand, and belong to the world: whether it is by assembling together a new landscape that questions how we divide near and far, foreign and familiar, as in his series *Horizons*; by revealing the sweep of history through spaces, as in his series *Storia della Storia*; or by surveying the newly unfamiliar terrains of reshaped political maps, as in his series *Atlas*.

**Gianluca Malgeri & Arina Endo** (Reggio Calabria, 1974 and Hyogo, 1983, they live and work between Florence and Tokyo). Malgeri received his education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence and subsequently attended the Master Class for Visual Arts at the IUAV in Venice. Arina Endo was born in Hyogo, Japan 1983. She lives and works in Tokyo. After obtaining a BA from the Department of Architecture and Design at Kyoto's Institute of Technology and Design, Arina Endo moved to Florence, where she specialized in graphic arts at the International School for Printed Matters "Il Bisonte" and she attended the Florence Academy of Fine Arts for her MA. In their work, Malgeri and Endo combine imageries pertaining to different cultures and historically separate periods. It is possible to think of their research as a form of 'archaeography', intended as the ability to reinterpret and rewrite images that are fundamental to our culture, while recontextualizing them in an environment of altered suggestions.

**Leonardo Magrelli** (Rome, 1989, lives and works in Rome) after acquiring a BA in Design and Architecture from "La Sapienza" university in Rome. A certain openness to manipulation and reuse of images, inherent to graphic design work, as well as a particular attention to project and research, rather than instinctuality alone, are characteristics that remain visible in the author's practice even after the conversion to photography. The awareness of images' hybrid and ambiguous nature is in fact a constant subtext of his work, which varies from time to time between a more conceptual approach to photography and a more descriptive and documentary one.