

Imago Pietatis

Elena Franco

Curated by Jacopo Cenacchi

22 January – 4 July 2020

STUDIO CENACCHI — VIA SANTO STEFANO 63, BOLOGNA

Imago Pietatis, an exhibition by **Elena Franco** curated by **Jacopo Cenacchi**, opened at Studio Cenacchi on Wednesday 22 January 2020. Following its temporary closure due to Covid-19, the exhibition has been extended until **4 July 2020**.

Studio Cenacchi Arte Contemporanea presents a project by **Elena Franco** (Turin, 1973) exploring the *Imagines Pietatis* held in the **Historical Archive of the Monte di Pietà of Bologna**, preserved by the **Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna**.

Imago Pietatis is Franco's artistic re-reading of this remarkable archive, which contains more than one hundred volumes, each bearing a painted image of the **Christ of Pity (*Imago Pietatis*)** on its upper edge. Taking these historical images as her starting point, Franco creates new interpretations that address themes of solidarity, care and the human condition through a variety of visual languages.

Photography provides the common thread running through the project, although the resulting works rarely take the form of conventional photographs. Instead, the exhibition encompasses posters, scanned images — some subsequently altered by hand — and digital photographs reproduced on fabric.

For Franco, photography becomes a means of moving beyond the direct experience of the archive and creating a visual space that exists specifically through the image. The project therefore goes far beyond the photographic documentation of an artistic, cultural and archival heritage, culminating in an **artist's book produced in an edition of just three copies**.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book/catalogue presenting the works on display and the project as a whole. Alongside a text by the artist, it includes contributions by **Armando Antonelli, Elisa Baldini, Luisel De Gregoriis, Fabrizio Lollini and Luca Panaro**, each offering a different perspective on the archival heritage at the heart of the project.

The graphic design is by **Wowstudio** and the volume is published by **ARTEMA**.

Studio Cenacchi would like to thank the **Fondazione del Monte di Bologna e Ravenna** for promoting the wider artistic project devoted to bringing the Historical Archive of the Monte di Pietà of Bologna to new audiences.

ELENA FRANCO

Elena Franco (Turin, 1973) is an architect and photographer whose practice encompasses urban and territorial regeneration.

Documentary and research-based photography forms a substantial part of her work and frequently plays a central role in projects concerned with local identity and with creating connections between the cultural resources of a particular place.

Her principal photographic project, ***Hospitalia***, began in 2012 and has been exhibited at institutions in Milan, Naples, Vercelli, Lausanne, Venice, Florence, Siena, Arles and Lessines, alongside conferences and workshops inspired by her research. The project was published as a book by **ARTEMA** in 2017, followed by an English edition in 2019.

Her current artistic research brings together **architecture, archives and the territory**. Her works are held in public and private collections in Italy and abroad.

She contributes to ***Il Giornale dell'Architettura*** and is artistic director of **Fondazione Arte Nova**.

STUDIO CENACCHI

Galleria Studio Cenacchi opened in November 2016, born out of **Jacopo Cenacchi's** longstanding research into and passion for art, with a particular focus on contemporary art.

The gallery occupies **150 square metres across three floors** of the sixteenth-century **Palazzo Ghiselli Vasselli**, at Via Santo Stefano 63, on one of the most historic streets in central Bologna.

In an art world that can often appear vast, fluid and difficult to navigate even for specialists, the gallery aims to offer a rigorous point of reference. Its exploration of contemporary art is deliberately open, making no distinction between media or generations.

Studio Cenacchi works directly with the artists it promotes, with a strong emphasis on the quality of the works of art it presents. Its programme brings together **established and contemporary artists from Italy and abroad**.

The gallery also offers a dedicated **art advisory service for the acquisition of works of art**, as well as on-site consultations to develop **bespoke art placement projects for private homes and professional spaces**.

USEFUL INFORMATION

TITLE: *Imago Pietatis* — works by Elena Franco

CURATED BY: Jacopo Cenacchi

VENUE: Studio Cenacchi, Via Santo Stefano 63, Bologna

OPENING: 22 January 2020, 6–9 pm

CLOSING DATE: 4 July 2020

OPENING HOURS: Tuesday to Saturday, 3.30–7 pm, or by appointment