



Le Stanze della Fotografia

Le Stanze della Fotografia [The Photography Rooms]

The joint initiative by Marsilio Arte and Fondazione Giorgio Cini

Opening to the public from 29 March 2023

On Wednesday 29 March 2023 “Le Stanze della Fotografia”, the new exhibition and research centre, opens to the public inside the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, in the Sale del Convitto, on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice.

“Le Stanze della Fotografia” is a joint initiative by Marsilio Arte and Fondazione Giorgio Cini intended to move further along the path begun in 2012 at La Casa dei Tre Oci in Venice – a historic Neo-Gothic building located on the island of Giudecca recently acquired from the Berggruen Institute – in the conviction that photography, among the most interesting modern and contemporary artistic languages, must continue to have its own specific “home” in Venice. To complement the exhibition activities, a dedicated Foundation will support research projects thanks to the contribution of the strategic partners **Fondazione di Venezia** and **San Marco Group**.

Over the last ten years **Marsilio Arte** has managed all the exhibitions and activities of La Casa dei Tre Oci, offering thirty exhibitions that have told the story of the work of the greatest photographers, including Elliott Erwitt, Sebastião Salgado, Gianni Berengo Gardin, Helmut Newton, David LaChapelle, Letizia Battaglia, Ferdinando Scianna and Mario De Biasi, in parallel with significant research activities conducted through exhibitions to rediscover authors such as René Burri, Willy Ronis, Henri Lartigue and Sabine Weiss, welcoming over 500,000 visitors in all.

The association between photography and the island of San Giorgio is a natural one, as the **Fondazione Giorgio Cini** hosts one of the most important photographic collections in Europe. This is a precious collection that over time has been enhanced with a photographic stock that is unique within the sphere of historical artistic research: a huge documentary heritage consisting of the photographic collections that have come into the possession of the Institute of the History of Art over time, belonging to important art historians, among whom Berenson, Bettini, Fiocco, Pallucchini, to journalists and writers, such as Ojetti, together with a conspicuous number of photographs produced from exchanges with other cultural institutions, from the relations existing over a number of decades between Vittorio Cini, the Fondazione Giorgio Cini and the Alinari company. Until 1970, this association contributed to the creation of the Photo Library, which today has almost a million photographs in its possession, freely consultable in the spaces of the Nuova Manica Lunga by scholars, researchers and enthusiasts, by appointment; and

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online, thanks to the major commitment made by the Fondazione Cini since the early 2000s to digitise its stock.

Conceived as a genuine **international centre for research and the appreciation of photography and the culture of the image**, alongside the exhibitions in Venice and in the other Italian and foreign cities, **the Stanze will offer laboratories, meetings, workshop, seminars with national and international photographers and master's degrees**, in continuity with the cultural design motivated the Casa dei Tre Oci to date, but with a drive and a vision that are even more international. With a view to this, various partnerships will be developed with the most important players in the world of photography, such as the Magnum Photos agency, the Parisian Jeu de Paume centre, the Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie and the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne, to mention just a few.

The centre can rely on the creation of a **dedicated Foundation**, which will enable the research projects to be financed and supported, where strategic partners can meet, such as the **Fondazione di Venezia**, committed to the appreciation of photographic language ever since the purchase of the Casa dei Tre Oci in the 2000s, and which intends to promote the creation of an annual prize for photography aimed at young photographers, and the **San Marco Group**, leader in Italy in the sector of paints and varnishes for professional construction, which confirms its solid bond with the experience of the Tre Oci.

The artistic directorship of Le Stanze della Fotografia is entrusted to **Denis Curti**, who has fulfilled this role for the Tre Oci since 2012 and boasts vast experience in the world of photography. He has been director and founder, in 2014, of the galleria STILL in Milan, he is artistic director of the "Festival of Photography" in Capri and for five years he managed the "SI FEST" in Savignano sul Rubicone. He is executive director of the periodical *Black Camera* and Course Leader of the Master's in Photography at Raffles Milano. He has been curator of various exhibitions and author of various publications devoted to the great Italian and international photographers and of two photography essays for Marsilio Editori: *Capire la Fotografia contemporanea* and *Il Mosaico del mondo. La mia vita messa a fuoco*, devoted to the biography of Maurizio Galimberti. In the 1990s he directed the photography section at the European Institute of Design in Turin and the Italian Foundation for Photography. For over 15 years a journalist and photography critic for the pages di *Vivimilano* and *Corriere della Sera*, from 2005 to 2014 he was also director of *Contrasto* and vice-president of the Fondazione Forma in Milan.

Research and exhibition activities are coordinated by the technical-scientific committee chaired by **Luca Massimo Barbero**, director of the Institute of History of Art of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, and composed of **Emanuela Bassetti**, president of Marsilio Arte, **Chiara Casarin**, head of cultural development and communication for the Fondazione

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Giorgio Cini, artistic director **Denis Curti** and **Luca De Michellis**, managing director of Marsilio Arte.

The technical sponsors include **Distilleria Nardini**, the first distillery in Italy with over 240 years of history and tradition, **Grafica Veneta**, leader company in the publishing and printing of books and volumes, **iGuzzini**, international leader group in the sector of the architectural lighting, **NeoTech**, an I.T. services company specialising in the creation and development of audiovisual design layouts.

«When we inaugurated the exhibition by Sabine Weiss a year ago» – comments **Emanuela Bassetti**, president of Marsilio Arte –, «an event that concluded our experience at the Casa dei Tre Oci, we said that this would not mean the end of Marsilio’s “photography in Venice” road, which went well beyond a building. A year later, with the exhibition by Ugo Mulas, we are delighted to inaugurate our new “home” on the island of San Giorgio, launching an ambitious international cultural project of research and memory in partnership with the Fondazione Giorgio Cini».

«Major attention has always been devoted by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini to photography, both as an art form and as historical artistic documentation, creating, at the instigation of Vittorio Cini himself, what today is one of the most extensive photo libraries in Italy and Europe», explains Giovanni Bazoli, president of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini. «The opening of the Le Stanze della Fotografia here on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore is therefore a new component enriching what is already an extensive and diverse cultural offer by the Fondazione Cini».

The building of the former boarding school that hosts Le Stanze della Fotografia, which consists of around 1850 square metres structured over two levels, has been the subject of significant refurbishing and restoration work in order to enlarge and optimise the spaces; the work was carried out by the Studio of **Architects Pedron / La Tegola** with the special participation of the **Teatro La Fenice in Venice**, which has allowed the installation of light, movable walls, which, like **theatre scenes, will be re-adjustable to suit the various exhibition layouts, with a view to the sustainability of the cultural enterprise**. The bookshop, with a layout design created by the **Paolo Lucchetta Retail Design** studio, has been conceived as a bookshop proper and a fundamental space of welcome and encounter, and will offer an extensive range of its own publications, with specialist journals, magazine, essays, design articles and iconic objects.

Originally used for the warehouses of the customs service, the site took on its current form in around 1870. In 1952, with the birth of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, the building became a boarding school and in 2007 was restored and turned into an exhibition centre. It is located in the north-east zone of the island of San Giorgio: on one long side it

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overlooks the adjacent foundations of the Darsena Grande; on one short side it looks out over the lagoon, which is visible from the interior thanks to two large, spectacular windows.

The exhibition programme

The centre opens to the public on Wednesday, March 29 2023 with two exhibitions. The complete retrospective coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the death of the author on 2 March 1973, **Ugo Mulas. The Photographic Operation**, curated by Denis Curti and Alberto Salvadori, is visitable from 29 March to 6 August 2023. and presents around 300 images, including 30 photographs never displayed before now, documents, books, publications and films.

Displayed on the first floor of Le Stanze della Fotografia, the new exhibition "**Venezia alter mundus**", opens to the public from March 29 to June 4, 2023, with **60 photographs by Alessandra Chemollo**, offering a peculiar vision of the most photographed city in the world, suspended between past and future.

Paolo Pellegrin, autumn 2023

In autumn 2023 Le Stanze della Fotografia will host an exhibition devoted to Paolo Pellegrin (Rome, 1964), among the most important contemporary international photojournalists, who has documented many of the world's major disasters and conflicts. The project, constructed as a full-blown anthological exhibition, also considers the theme of climate change and the relationship between humankind and nature. The exhibition is curated by Denis Curti and Annalisa D'Angelo and realized in collaboration with Magnum Photos.

The exhibition, in many ways unprecedented, offers all the main themes that have defined the path of Paolo Pellegrin, who over the decades has interwoven his reporter's vision with the visual intensity of the artist, through sketches, notebooks and notes, photographs illustrating the complexity of the author's creative process. The exhibition route tells a story of infinite humanity in the present age thanks to installations, enlargements and previously unpublished photos, with a corpus of images from his most **recent reporting in Ukraine**, which the photographer visited in the months following the outbreak of the war.

Helmut Newton, spring 2024

In spring 2024 it will be the turn of the retrospective "HELMUT NEWTON. LEGACY", curated by Matthias Harder, Director of the Helmut Newton Foundation in Berlin, and Denis Curti, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the artist's birth (Berlin, 1920 – Los Angeles, 2004).

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Through 250 photographs, magazines, documents and videos, the exhibition will look back over the entire career of one of the best loved and widely discussed photographers of all time. Alongside the more iconic images, a corpus of previously unpublished photographs, presented for the first time in Italy, will reveal many less known aspects of Newton's work, with a **specific focus on the more unconventional fashion shoots**. Polaroids and contact sheets will also provide information on the creative process surrounding some of the iconic motifs present, while special publications, archive materials and statements by the photographer will contribute to enabling visitors to gain an understanding of the context in which the inspiration for this extraordinary artist came about.

With a view to expanding and consolidating relations with institutions and cultural bodies also outside of the city of Venice, **the exhibition will be on display exclusively in Italy from spring 2023 until summer 2024 with a tour of other prestigious sites: in Milan, at Palazzo Reale, from 24 March to 25 June 2023; in Rome, at the Museo dell'Ara Pacis, where it will arrive in the autumn of 2023; finally, in Venice in the spring of 2024.**

Venice, March 28th 2023

Press Office

Marsilio Arte | Giovanna Ambrosano: mob. + 39 338 4546387;
email: g.ambrosano@marsilioarte.it, ufficio.stampa@marsilioarte.it
www.marsilioarte.it

Fondazione Giorgio Cini Onlus: phone: +39 041 2710280; fax: +39 041 5238540;
email: stampa@cini.it
www.cini.it/press-release

Press kit: <https://lestanzedellafotografia.it/press>

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