

# NOPE!

DAVIDE SGAMBARO

With a text by Ilaria Gianni\*

21 May



1 July, 2022

47 rue de Montmorency - 75003 Paris

**Vernissage: Saturday 21 May, from 3pm  
during Paris Gallery Weekend**

Opening hours: Tue-Sat 11am - 7pm

Alberta Pane Gallery is pleased to present Davide Sgamaro's first solo exhibition in its Parisian space.

The exhibition consists of four bodies of work that form a single narrative and explore the limits an individual has when confronted to precarious situations. Using an irreverent tone, Davide Sgamaro invites us to face playful scenarios with sculptures and installations relating to the world of entertainment, idleness and to certain *clichés* linked to youth.

The installation entitled: *Father, forgive them because they don't know what they are doing*, consists of a *Sky dancer*<sup>1</sup>. Stuck at the back of the gallery, with its smiley face, the sculpture destroys itself as a result of its friction against the ceiling and the walls. The ideas of impediment and obstacle are then echoed by the sculptures entitled *Calcinculo* installed high on the wall. These sculptures are inspired on the hard-to-win prizes typical of the so-called *Flying Chairs* of Italian fairgrounds. The artworks present the objects that one must catch to win the prize during the ride. In these entertainment devices, the technique of Calcio in culo (Kick in the butt) performed by two people allows one to reach the object, grab it, and win the prize which is usually a free ride.

Furthermore, the ability to manage or to find the right strategy to achieve a goal is also present in the work *The Bremen Musicians* inspired by the namesake fable title written by the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm and published in 1819. In this fable four farm animals, deprived by their old age of their ability to work, are left to their fate. During meeting by chance on the road, they decide to help each other and find a refuge to survive. In the course of this quest they find a house inhabited by thieves and, joining forces, they stand on top of each other. The thieves glimpse a monstrous figure in the darkness. They think that the house is haunted by monsters and witches and run away, leaving the shelter to the animals. Referring to this fable, the artist presents an image of the Bremen musicians made with a digital collage of emojis. This reference to instant messaging relates to the generations Davide Sgamaro alludes to and to the theme of lack of security and stability<sup>2</sup>. This idea takes us to the last work in the exhibition: *So-so*. It is a foam plate normally used for furniture upholstery on which the artist draws a sad face by burning the surface with a cigarette. This burning creates a drawing that visually contrasts with the happy face of the smiling dancer that keeps on trying to get out of the space before falling down, exhausted.

Despite the smiling characters, the exhibition is a reaction to a precarious life, a narrative portrait of generations in which the adverb NOPE! (no!) seems a repetitive and amusing mantra in response to contemporary needs.

Thanks to the irony always present in his work, which contrasts with a certain melancholy, Davide Sgamaro creates intriguing narrative paradoxes that can depict extreme and precarious situations by evoking memories and common imaginary.

# GALERIE ALBERTA PANE

The playful universe, the techniques used and the idea of art as an emotional language are elements that characterize the work of this artist, who is interested in the creation of a shared vocabulary that aims at a unconventional visual communication.

1. Advertising device in the form of a nylon tube driven by an industrial ventilator.

2. Ian Bogost, a media and game designer, assumes a deskilling of human life. He observes how automated technologies (from automatic toilet flushes to text message checkers) intensify a generalized sense of precariousness and unpredictability. Instead of adjusting to human needs, they force people to adapt to the unpredictable logic of machines. The supposed convenience of automated daily life is undermined by our lack of control, our confusion and the passivity to which technology forces us. Ian Bogost, *Why nothing works anymore*, Atlantic, February 23, 2007, theatlantic.com

\* Ilaria Gianni is an independent curator, art critic and lecturer. She is co-founder of IUNO, a research center for contemporary art and of *Magic Lantern Film Festival*, a research-based thematic investigation of the interstice between visual art and cinema.

She has collaborated with museums, institutions, project spaces and galleries including: Palazzo delle Esposizioni; MACRO; MAXXI and National Gallery, in Rome; Matadero, Madrid; MOA, Seoul; Loop, Seoul; Villa Croce Museum of Contemporary Art, Genoa; John Hansard Gallery, Southampton.

From 2016 to 2020 she was guest curator at the American Academy in Rome. Between 2009 and 2016 she was co-director and curator of Nomas Foundation, where she was responsible for the artistic programming. She has collaborated with contemporary art fairs, including ARCOmadrid, f(section « Opening », 2018-2019), Artissima (section "Present Future", 2019-2021). Between 2015 and 2017 she co-founded and curated the independent art fair *Granpalazzo*.

She is Adjunct Professor at John Cabot University, the Master of Art at Luiss Business School, IED (Rome) and at Naba (Milan). She has contributed with numerous art catalogs and magazines such as: Flash Art, artforum.com, Domus, Mousse, NERO, Cura, Arte e Critica. As part of the Quadriennale d'arte 2020, she curated the project *AccadeMibact: Domani Qui Oggi*. She is co-curator of Radio GAMeC 30 for 2022.

## Davide Sgambaro

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Born in 1989 in Cittadella (Padua), Italy  
Lives and works in Turin, Italy

Graduate from the IUAV University in Venice, Davide Sgambaro creates caustic and ironic narratives in response to contemporary disparities. Based on the imagery of games and adolescence, his works aim to reveal and exorcise certain beliefs, fears and distortions inherent to the social and cultural order.

His exhibitions include in 2022 *Too much and not the mood*, Localedue - Gelateria Sogni di Ghiaccio in Bologna, curated by Localedue; *Feeling fractional* at 9 French Place in London, curated by Virginia Simonazzi and *The expanded body* at Unosunove Gallery, curated by Angelica Gatto and Simone Zacchini in Rome, Italy. In 2021, *Kiss, kick, kiss*, solo show at the Italian Institute of Culture in Köln, Cologne, Germany ; ARTISSIMA Art Fair, Main section, Alberta Pane Gallery, Turin; *Ciak Collecting - Collection and the city* Art Verona Fair, curator: Irene Sofia Comi, Palazzo Orti Manara, Verona, Italy; *Never shall we labour*, Civic Centre Can Felipa, curator: Irene Angenica, Barcelona, Spain and *A Bartleby*, Alberta Pane Gallery, Venice. *Whatever it takes*, Galleria A+A, Venice (2020); *Paesaggi eterni*, Spaziosiena, Siena, Italy (2019); *L'abbaglio*, Società Interludio, Turin (2019); *Diari tra diari*, Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'Arte and GAM Torino, Turin (2019); *White and black stripes and a red nose (The game, Let's talk)*, Almanac Inn, Turin (2019); *Il disegno politico italiano*, Galleria A+A, Venice (2019); *Q- Rated*, La Quadriennale di Roma, Castello di Rivoli, Italy (2018); *Una cosa divertente che non farò mai più*, Galerie Rita Urso Artopia, Milan (2018); *Love me tender* Stonefly Art Prize, Fabbrica del Vapore, Milan ; *100th-99th Young Artists Collective*, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice (2015-2016), and *The Star Project*, Fondation La Non-Maison, Aix-en-Provence, France, (2016) among others.

His work is part of private and public collections, such as the MAMbo in Bologna, the Monte dei Paschi Foundation in Siena and the CRT Arte - GAM Foundation in Turin, Italy.



"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"  
2016  
red skydancer  
ambiental dmensions  
Installation view Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Galleria Piazza San Marco, Venice

## Father, forgive them because they don't know what they are doing

installation | variable dimensions | 2016

"Father, forgive them because they don't know what they are doing" consists of a red skydancer stuck in the exhibition space that writhes uselessly with a violent and noisy lament. The artist recovered the inflatable from a company that went bankrupt in 2013 and it was repaired from the gashes and recontextualized in the exhibition space as a performer of itself. The skydancer therefore witnesses his tragic past through the random wiggling influenced by the patching made during the restoration: the air inflates the puppet and exits the cracks causing it to lose pressure and thus determining its movement. So, the skydancer will wear out with friction and colliding with the walls and overtime it will self-destruct, finally forming a funeral monument of air and shreds, recalling the fate of the place represented at the time. Every time the skydancer is exposed it will be repaired with cloth tape bringing the memory of the suffered events.

[Link video](#)



"Too much and not the mood (pop)"  
2022  
installation  
environmental dimensions  
installation view 9 French Place, London

## Too much and not the mood performance serie | environmental dimensions | 2022

*Too much and not the mood* is a series of actions aimed at creating environmental installations. The title is a phrase taken from Virginia Woolf's diary in which she expresses her frustration against certain superficial policies of disrespect for the work, venting against the continuous requests to readapt the text. *Too much and not the mood* is presented as a series of actions in which the work interacts with the spectator in space and remotely, using infantile and provocative practices to describe the feeling of disorientation, apathy and burn out in the production context. Through different modes of fruition, the artist wants to create a double narration to underline the often superficial approach in the reading of any research practice. The repetitive actions and the set designed for each action will later create the environmental installation.

Subsequently, two series of photographs are produced: *Too much and not the mood (without you)*, which will show the photo of the environmental installation without the presence of the body, and *Too much and not the mood (despite you)*, which portray the performer during the action.



"I push a finger into my eyes (kiss, kick, kiss) #1"  
installation view  
2021  
multilayer glass case, wooden case, stainless steel, exploded firecrackers  
120 x 55 x 110cm  
Winner of the Public Call "Cantica21. Italian Contemporary Art Everywhere" - Under  
35 Section promoted by MAECI-DGSP and MiC-DGCC  
ph. Matilde Cassarini

Museum MAMbo Bologna Collection

## I push a finger into my eyes (kiss, kick, kiss)

installation | variable dimensions | 2021

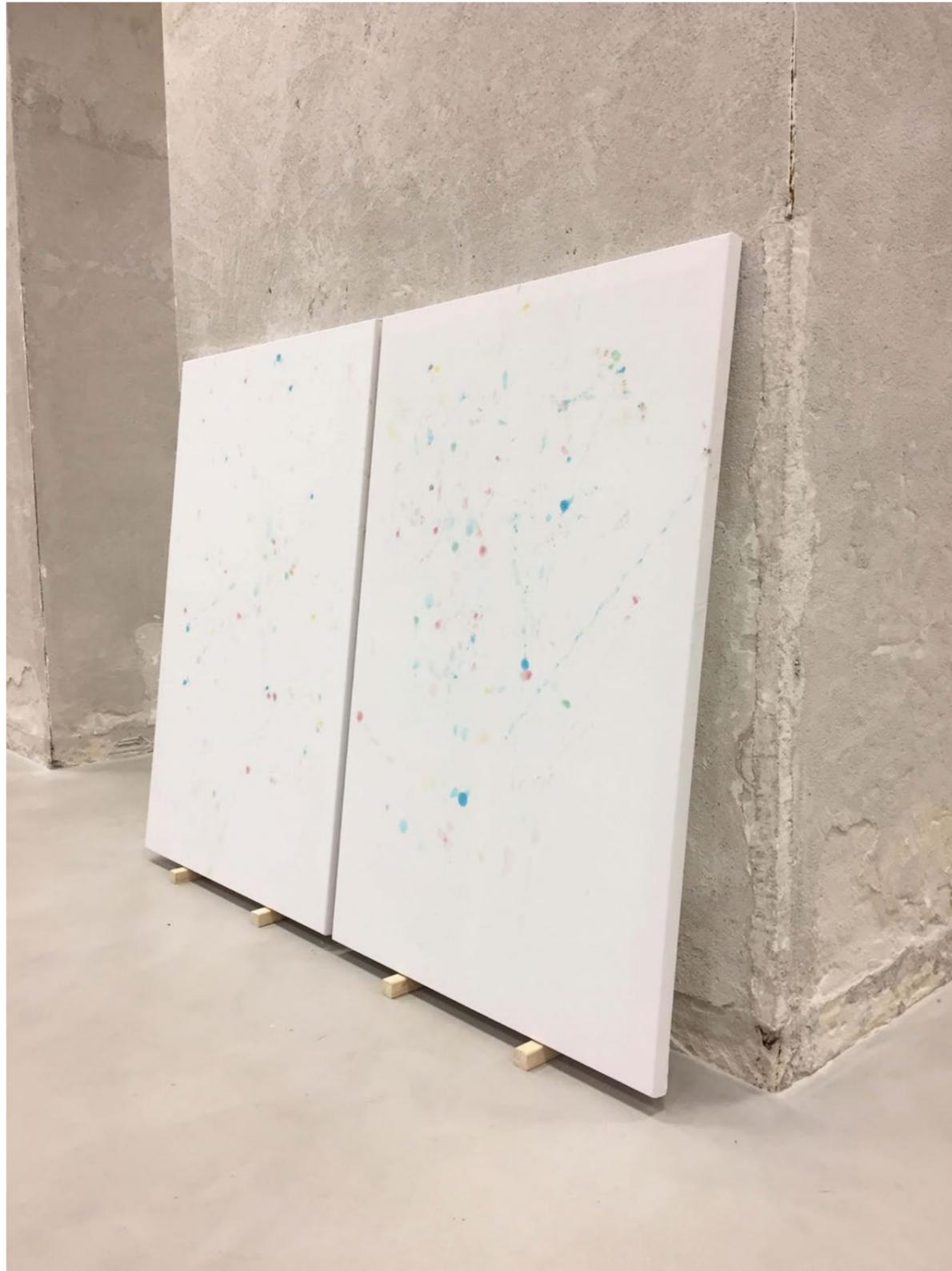
*I push a finger into my eyes* is a series inspired by the "Kiss, kick, kiss" technique, used to communicate bad news (for example, a dismissal) in the world of work, starting with praise, moving on to bad news and ending with praise. Hence my intention is to create a sort of fragile monument to precariousness where a multilayer glass case contains and protects (kiss) the explosion of a firecracker (kick) which only shows itself in its final form and therefore only after the explosion has taken place in its wonderful fragility (kiss). The project concludes with this series of sculptures containing emotions such as anger and resignation. The body and the action are omitted, the image is that of a ghost, of a violent event that has happened but that we have lost, forgotten or ignored. Each sculpture differs in form and arrangement according to the power of the exploded firecracker and thus the resistance of the glass, which changes its size.

*I push a finger into my eyes* is a research project involving a series of productions ranging from public programs to sculpture.

This project aims to reflect on the figure of the precarious individual characterised by social and environmental insecurity, thus analysing the swinging relationship between success and failure driven by deep illusory feelings and media schizophrenia.

[Link video simulation](#)

[Link video making off](#)



## Parappaparaparapappapara

installation | series | cotton, m&m's | variable dimensions | 2019 - 2021

"Parappaparaparapappapara" is a series of works on cotton canvases that testify an act of pure boredom in which the artist, placing a glass over the sheet on the bed, begins to try to center it using m&m's. The m&m's that do not enter the glass impress the sheet of their food coloring. A light and totally casual pictorial touch, a trace of an amusing failure. The work originates from some suggestions regarding the history of the clown, specifically the parallel between the figure of the white clown and the Augustus: clown with a colorful costume, awkward and clumsy. A relationship between order and mathematical failure that flows onto laugh. The potentially infinite series will end when all the m&m's thrown, fall into the glass. The title itself is the awkward attempt of a research on youtube of the symphony "Entry of the gladiators" by Julius Fucik. Each work has a code subtitle that is the serial number of the m&m's package. This work reasons about the precariousness of the artist and of making, creating an amusing paradox between production and play, a deceptive pictorial approach resulting from a performative act that describes the situation of cultural workers who are often not professionally recognized. The various sizes of the series follow the dimensions of the various types of beds.

"Parappaparaparapappapara (924F1HAGN60)"  
2019  
120x80cm each  
m&m's on sheet  
installation view "Estate, autunno", State-of, Milan



"You pretend to be humble, unambitious and happy"  
2020  
digital print on fine art paper baryta  
60x40cm  
edition of 5 + AP

## You pretend to be humble, unambitious and happy

action | black ink tattooed on right hand | 2019 - 2020

"You pretend to be humble, unambitious and happy" is a performative work that reflects on the theme of presentism.

Once the artist has tattooed the onomatopoeia HAHA on the palm of his hand, he attempts to erase it over time by shaking hands in the act of greeting or presentation.

Thanks to the sudden change of the epithelial tissue of the palm, this work narrates an ambivalent state of mind between enthusiasm and its fading away, between presentism and the banality of circumstantial attitudes until the total disappearance of the laugh.

The performance is accompanied by an edition of 10 copies representing the movements of the hand in the act of greeting. The photographs are scans of the hand made in a darkroom.



"A kind concession to disorder (ass), (forearm), (feet)"  
2019  
wood, velvet, cotton  
variable dimensions  
Installation view Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'Arte

## **A kind concession to disorder (ass), (forearm), (feet)**

**sculpture | series | wood, velvet, cotton | variable dimensions | 2019**

"A kind concession to disorder" is a series of wooden sculptures that refer to the dimensions of the artist's body, above which some postures have been reported, related to static nature. These measures were carved into the wood and then re-proposed as an invitation through a velvet-covered pad. Each sculpture assumes a different posture. Therefore the sculptures become podiums on which the artist offers the user a momentary view of the disorder, intended as an unpleasant way of presenting or conducting oneself, caused by the absence or loss of the appropriate collocation benchmark. Therefore "A kind concession to disorder" are monuments to leisure, inspired by representations of some demons of art history, mainly depicted in positions of ease and comfort.



"Valzer#1"  
2015  
office chair, wall  
variable dimensions  
installation view La Non Maison Foundation, Aix-en-Provence

## Valzer

installation | office chair, wall | variable dimensions | 2015

"Waltz" is an installation born from the observation of traces created on the walls due to the rubbing of chairs by office employees. In the exhibition space, the artist exaggerates the gesture, creating a sort of score of work neurosis that manifests itself through an almost invisible installation that replaces the figure of the body. In doing so, the amusing action that allows the realization of the trace clashes with the theme of burnout, making a dramatic reading thanks to the absence of the body and action.

# CV



Davide Sgambaro (Cittadella, 1989)  
lives and works in Turin.

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## Institutional Collections

MAMbo Bologna  
Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena  
Fondazione CRT Arte - GAM Torino

## Solo Show

2022, *Nope!*, Galerie Alberta Pane, Paris, ctitic text by Ilaria Gianni  
2022, *Too much and not the mood*, Gelateria Sogni di Ghiaccio, Bologna, curated by Localedue  
2022, *Feeling fractional*, 9 French Place, London, curated by Virginia Simonazzi  
2021, *Kiss, kick, kiss*, Italian Institute of Culture, Cologne  
2019, *Paesaggi eterni*, Spaziosiena, Siena, curated by Lisa Andreani e Stefania Margiacchi  
2019, *White and black stripes and a red nose (The game), (Let's talk), (A Movie)*, Almanac Inn, Turin, curated by Giulia Gelmini  
2018, *Una cosa divertente che non farà mai più*, Rita Urso Artopiagallery, Milan, curated by Barbara Meneghel  
2016, *Le projet de l'étoile*, La Non-Maison Galerie, Aix-en-Provence, curated by Sascha Guedj-Cohen

## Selected Exhibition

2022, *Paradise is exactly like where you are right now only much, much better*, Palazzo Nicolò Spinola di Luccoli, curated by V. Lupo, M. Sironi, Genova  
2022, *The expanded body*, Unosunove Gallery, curated by Angelica Gatto and Simone Zacchini, Rome  
2021, *ARTISSIMA Art Fair*, Main section, Galerie Alberta Pane, Turin  
2021, *Ciak Collecting - Collection and the city Art Verona Fair*, Palazzo Orti Manara, Verona, curated by Irene Sofia Comi  
2021, *Never shall we labour*, Centre Civic Can Felipa, Barcelona, curated by Irene Angenica  
2021, *A Bartleby*, Galerie Alberta Pane, Venice  
2021, *Titolo*, Société Interludio, Turin, artist project by Francesco Carone  
2021, *La box\_Delivery n.1*, Spazio Volta, Bergamo, curated by Replica Artistbook Archive  
2021, *Don't take it so seriously*, Artoday Project, Milan, curated by Alessia Romano, Federico Montagna  
2020, *Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte*, Villa Brandolini, Pieve di Soligo, curated by Carlo Sala  
2020, *Whatever it takes*, A+A Gallery, Venice  
2019, *Estate, Autunno*, State Of Project Space, Milan, curated by Irene Angenica, Giovanni Paolin, Giacomo Pigliapoco  
2019, *Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte*, Villa Brandolini, Pieve di Soligo, curated by Carlo Sala  
2019, *L'abbaglio*, Société Interludio, Turin, curated by Stefania Margiacchi, Vasco Forconi  
2019, *i10 Spazi Indipendenti*, ArtVerona, Verona, curated by Stefania Margiacchi  
2019, *A jumi*, BoCs Art, Cosenza, curated by Giacinto di Pietrantonio, Giovanni Paolin, Irene Angenica, Giacomo Pigliapoco  
2019, *Diari tra diari*, Spinola Banna per l'Arte - GAM, Turin, curated by Elena Volpato  
2019, *Incanto*, Fondazione Merz, Turin, curated by Collettivo Diogene  
2019, *Be the difference with art!*, Museo Civico Bassano del Grappa, Bassano del Grappa  
2019, *Pendaison de Crémaillère*, Campobase Project Space, Turin, curated by Campobase  
2019, *Il disegno politico italiano*, A+A Gallery, Venice  
2018, *ArtVerona-scouting section*, ArtVerona, Verona, curated by Rita Urso Artopia Gallery  
2018, *La solitudine del curatore*, Dimora OZ Project Space, Manifesta 12, Palermo, curated by Katiuscia Pompili, Sasvatii Santamaria  
2018, *Love me tender*, Fabbrica del vapore, Milan, curated by Stefano Coletto  
2018, *Traffic - Festival delle anime gentili*, San Lorenzo in Campo, curated by Bianca Shroder, Pietro Consolandi  
2018, *Teoria e tecnica dell'appuntamento*, Zentrum Kunsthalle, Varese, curated by Lisa Andreani  
2017, *Combat Prize*, G. Fattori Museum, Livorno, curated by Paolo Batoni  
2017, *100ma Collettiva Giovani Artisti*, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice, curated by Stefano Coletto  
2016, *Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte*, Villa Brandolini, Pieve di Soligo, curated by Carlo Sala

2016, *Un coin du monde*, La Non-Maison Foundation, Aix-en-Provence, curated by Sacha Guedj-Cohen  
2016, *Roll-up*, Fondazione Bonotto partnership w/Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice, curated by Fabrizio Peterlini  
2016, *Quotidiana 2016*, Centro Culturale altinate San Gaetano, Padova, curated by Caterina Benvegnù, Letizia Liguori, Elena Squizzato  
2016, *Atelier Bevilacqua La Masa 2015-2016*, Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice, curated by Stefano Coletto  
2015, *99ma Collettiva Giovani Artisti*, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice, curated by Stefano Coletto  
2015, *A Symphony of Hunger Digesting Fluxus in Four Movements*, Galleria A+A, Venice  
2015, *Biennale Urbana*, Teatro Marinoni, Venice, curated by Cesare Pietroiusti

### **Main Residencies and prizes**

2022, *SUPERBLAST*, MAN Manifattura Tabacchi, Florence  
2021, *Finalist*, Rotary Club Asolo e Pedemontana Prize, Bassano del Grappa  
2020, *In-Edita, Residency*, Forte Marghera, Venice, curated by Venice art galleries  
2020, *Bagni d'aria*, Frassinetto Canavese, turin, curated by Caterina Molteni, Alice Visentin, Mattia Pajè  
2020, *Cantica 21*, winner project and production, MiBACT, Rome  
2020, *Finalist*, Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte, Pieve di Soligo  
2020, *Winner*, Racconto Plurale, Fondazione CRT, Turin  
2019, *Exploring new edges*, Siena, Spaziosiena w/Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena  
2019, *BoCsArt*, Cosenza curated by Giacinto di Pietrantonio, Giovanni Paolin, Irene Angenica, Giacomo Pigliapoco  
2019, *Finalist*, Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte, Pieve di Soligo  
2019, *Finalist*, Rotary Club Asolo e Pedemontana Prize, Bassano del Grappa  
2018, *Q-Rated Il resto dell'immagine*, Castello di Rivoli, Turin, w/Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Sofia Hernández Chong Cuy, Hito Steyerl, curated by La Quadriennale di Roma (Sarah Cosulich, Stefano Colicelli Cagol)  
2018, *Diari tra diari*, tutor Maria Morganti, GAM-Fondazione Spinola Banna per l'Arte, Turin, curated by Elena Volpato  
2018, *Production Prize*, Premio Stonelfy, Fabbrica del Vapore, Milan  
2017, *Residence 33*, La Non-Maison Galerie, Aix-en-Provence, curated by Sascha Guedj-Cohen  
2017, *Sculpture and Installation Prize, Combat Prize*, G. Fattori Museum, Livorno  
2017, *Finalist*, An Idea of Painting, FRASE Got Talent Prize, Venice  
2016, *Special Mention*, Premio Fondazione Francesco Fabbri per l'Arte, Pieve di Soligo  
2015, *Lago Pulsart*, Lago Film Festival, Revine Lago, curated by Anna Zerbaro Pezzin  
2015, *Residency*, tutor Lara Favaretto, Spinola Banna per l'Arte, Poirino, curated by Gail Cochrane & Guido Costa  
2015, *Residency 2015-2016*, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice  
2015, *Visual Poetry 1st Prize*, Ecole des regards-young talents, Aix-en-Provence - Marseille

### **Special Projects**

2022, Fondazione SMART educational project, Rome (upcoming)  
2022, *La Foresta Magazine*, intervention curated by Irene Sofia Comi  
2022, *MAC Residency*, public project, Padua  
2021, *Il crepaccio IG show*, Il Crepaccio, Milan, curated by Caroline Corbetta  
2021, *Entrainde*, Visiting artist, Università IUAV, Venice  
2020, *Artbite*, collector project by Nicoletta Rusconi, Milan  
2015, *Collaboration*, Fondazione Bonotto, Fluxus Archive visual and sound poetry, Molvena  
2015, *Artist talk, Comfort Zone: A New Urban Outlook*, curated by Giulia Colletti, Venice