

MARIA DI STEFANO

people into landscape / landscape into people

curated by dionæa.

opening: thursday 16th november 2023, from 6 to 9 pm

closing: 13th january 2024

opening hours: from tuesday to Saturday, 4-8 pm

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STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI is proud to present *people into landscape / landscape into people*. This is the first solo exhibition of Maria Di Stefano's work at the gallery, curated by dionæa.

The exhibition presents 16 photographic images, digital and analogue, taken between 2015 and August 2023, giving a sense of the artist's output from her earliest work to the present day. With most of the images printed specially for the occasion, the exhibition provides the first comprehensive overview of Di Stefano's work, be it in Italy or abroad.

The exhibition title echoes the short statement the artist usually employs to describe her work. An etymological analysis of the English word "landscape" almost suggests that people experienced landscape in art before they experienced it in real life: originally derived from sixteenth-century Dutch, the word was first defined as, "a picture of natural inland scenery" – with terminology connected to the affirmation of landscape painting – and only later was it used to define "a view or prospect of natural inland scenery".

In a similar way, Maria di Stefano's images highlight – and occasionally enact – visions of landscapes both 'proper' and 'improper', in terms of their physical and intangible features: natural, artificial, architectural, urban and domestic views; inhabited places in which an encounter with the Other – sought out and yet serendipitous, as if stumbled upon by chance – plays out.

The landscapes unveiled here are shaped by human, cultural, political and other forces: as such, they bring out the social and historical nature – and complexity – of landscape more generally, as the environment that actualizes the relationship between an individual and the context they belong to. This osmotic relationship of constant and mutual influence is where the artist's interest lies.

If a landscape can not only be the subject represented and conveyed by a medium, but itself a medium in which identities, social practices, power dynamics and appropriation become manifest, then it is the photographic eye that unveils these potentialities. What emerges here is an atmospheric, occasionally dreamlike narrative in which the human body plays the central role; it's visible, almost tangible, even when not physically present.

MARIA DI STEFANO is an Italian multimedia artist. After completing a degree in Art History at the Sorbonne in Paris and a master's degree in Fine Art at the UCA in Canterbury, she moved to the United States to work as Richard Kern's assistant photographer in New York and as Artist in Residence at Esmoa in Los Angeles.

In 2021, her project "This is Us" won the **Lazio Contemporaneo** grant dedicated to young artists in Rome. She has won the 2022 **Italian Council** award promoted by the Italian Ministry of Culture allowing her to continue her work in Paris. The artist also recently received a research grant from the **University Paris VIII**.

Among the **exhibitions** in which she participated: Nordic Light Festival of Photography, Kristiansund (2023); *THIS IS US*, The Room, Paris (2023); SHE DEVIL, BIENALSUR 2023, MUNTREF Artes Visuales, Buenos Aires (2023); *THIS IS US*, MZIN, Lipsia (2023); *Complessità. Sostantivo plurale*, MLAC, Rome (2023); *THIS IS US*, traveling exhibitions on billboards along Tram line 19, Rome (2021); *Babies Are Knocking*, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome (2021); *Digitalive* – Romaeuropa Festival, Mattatoio, Rome (2019); *Poesia e destino, La fortuna italiana di Werther*, Casa di Goethe, Rome (2019); SHE DEVIL X, Studio Stefania Miscetti, Rome (2018); *Meet Me Under Water*, One Room, Rome (2018); *Entertainment*, Una Vetrina – The Independent MAXXI, Rome (2018); *No Human Traces*, Avenue 50, Los Angeles (2017).

Among her upcoming exhibitions, in 2023 Maria Di Stefano will exhibit at Vasli Souza in Oslo.