

PRESS RELEASE

PAOLO VENTURA

THE VIA EMILIA + 1

The Milanese artist exhibits his project about the Via Emilia, created for the Photography Festival in Reggio Emilia, and other stories in Pietrasanta.

July 10 through August 15 2016

Opening July 9 at 19:30

Galleria Marcorossi artecontemporanea is particularly happy to present this season's key event, a solo show by Paolo Ventura in Pietrasanta.

Paolo Ventura has attracted the world's attention with his photographs of melancholic, sometimes ironic reconstructed worlds, to which he gives new life. Like puppet theatres frequented by solitary, mysterious personages in what appears to be a suspended, unidentifiable time, his works take spectators into a dream universe of atmospheres that are unreal yet somehow familiar.

The show is entitled *The Via Emilia +1* because it will present **eleven unique large-scale works** composed of a mosaic of photography with paint and collage which the artist created for Fotografia Europea 2016, open until July 10 in Reggio Emilia, plus an installation.

The 2016 Fotografia Europea Festival, a key event on the Italian and international cultural calendar, addresses the theme of *The Via Emilia. Streets, voyages, boundaries*, going back to the theme addressed thirty years ago in *Explorations on the Via Emilia (1986)*, a group show of landscapes presented by Luigi Ghirri bringing together a group of photographers and writers to show "the face of a real country", marking a milestone in contemporary photography.

In 2016 Fotografia Europea commissioned seven prominent photographers from Italy and other countries, including Paolo Ventura, to come up with "new explorations" of the Via Emilia, a surprising voyage between reality and imagination, the most exciting new development in this year's festival.

The artist says of the works created: "I'm not familiar with the Via Emilia: I may have been on it a few times as a child. But it's a name that makes me think of geometry: a straight line passing through the trees on the plains of the Po Valley, orderly, symmetrical, forming horizontal and vertical straight lines. My Via Emilia is like a geometric drawing."

Alongside the eleven pieces in the *Via Emilia* cycle, the exhibition features the installation *100 days as a sheep*, made with more than 100 figures cut out by hand and exhibited in a plexiglass case.

Paolo Ventura was born in Milan in 1968 and studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera between 1989 and 1991. He lived in New York for many years, and came back to Italy a few years ago, where he divides his time between Anghiari and Milan. His work has been exhibited in museums and private galleries all over the world, including the 54th Biennale in Venice. His photographs are included in important collections such as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Library of Congress in Washington, Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, and MACRO in Rome. In 2015 he exhibited his new works in the "La città Infinita" series at Westein gallery in Minneapolis and the anthological exhibition *Un mondo infinito* at Valkhof Museum in the Netherlands. The 2015 Utrecht Festival presented a documentary on Paolo's work by Erik Van Empel entitled "The Vanishing Man", which was later broadcast on Dutch television during the dates of the exhibition at Valkhof Museum.