

Jacopo Benassi. *Void*

Twenty-five years of work in the first solo museum exhibition by the **Ligurian** photographer

curated by **Elena Magini**

8 September – 1 November 2020

from 31 August *The Belt*,

a photographic project by the artist dedicated to the **textile district of Prato**, will invade the streets of Prato with a large **billboard campaign**

Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci in Prato

Prato, 30 July 2020. Twenty-five years of photography at the **Centro per l'arte contemporanea Luigi Pecci in Prato** in the first solo museum exhibition dedicated to **Jacopo Benassi**: with the exhibition ***Void***, curated by **Elena Magini**, **from 8 September to 1 November 2020** the Prato museum will display the powerful, highly personal and mediation-free work of the **photographer from La Spezia**.

From the **artist's study** partly recreated inside the exhibition to the **rooms of Centro Pecci**, the exhibition project develops in a **dilated spatiality** that displays some of the **series** and **most significant works** by the artist, also spilling over into the city spaces where the exhibition is announced by a **site-specific billboard project**.

His first photograph shows a punk group in a community centre: from the late Eighties **Jacopo Benassi** was shaped by the underground culture of La Spezia, over time developing a distinct style marked by a **lack of depth of field and flash**; photography that was raw and true, despite the almost complete lack of real light: a forced act, an event created by the artist in which **the perfect shot does not exist**.

Benassi's **subjects** are highly disparate, ranging from the humanity that inhabits the **underground and international music scene** (starting with the experience of the *Btomic club*, managed by the photographer himself with some friends) to portraits of **models, actresses, artists and designers**

published in the most important Italian magazines, and the investigation of the **body**, which varies from his autobiographic documentation of **sexual encounters** to an intense look at **ancient statuary** which can be considered the “common thread” of his gargantuan output.

The **self portrait** occupies a special place in Benassi's work, often linked to his performative path: his experimentation with **performance**, his or that of others, is constantly linked to music and is always mediated by the photographic image, the subject and object of his research.

The exhibition also includes **unpublished works** linked to Benassi's interest in publishing and book production; a forthcoming editorial work gave rise to the series **The Belt, a project on the industrial district of Prato** in collaboration with **Archivio Manteco**, which in addition to being exhibited will be the focus of the **public billboards** in the city in the days leading up to the exhibition.

With **The Belt**, from **31 August**, the images, tools and men and women who will bring **Prato's textile district** to life become the subjects of the images displayed on the large **advertising boards** at various point of the city. The choice to **preview the exhibition with a work focused on Prato and its factories follows the Centro Pecci's interest in a more dynamic relationship with the community**, capable of bringing the museum outside the bounds of its walls.

The title of the exhibition – **Void** – refers to the author's specific feeling about his production: an “emptying” intended as a path of **public self-exposure**.

In this exhibition the photographer gives himself entirely to the viewer, handing over his studio, tools, the creative landscape that accompanies him in the gestation of his work, and the set of shots that gave rise to a **twenty-year investigation into issues of identity, the night, and work**.

This is an act of opening up to the outside, which represents **a point zero in the artist's career** and, on the other hand, a possible **rebirth**.

Thanks to the **Francesca Minini gallery** and **Archivio Manteco** for helping to organise the exhibition.

JACOPO BENASSI 1970, La Spezia. He lives and works in La Spezia.

In 2019 he presented the project **CRACK** in two solo exhibitions, at **CAMERA**, the Italian Centre for Photography in Turin, and at the 2019 European Photography Festival in Reggio Emilia. In the same year, he had a solo exhibition at Palazzo Bentivoglio in Bologna, curated by Antonio Grulli, **Bologna Portraits**. At the end of 2016 the book *Gli aspetti irrilevanti* was published by Mondadori, which he co-authored with Paolo Sorrentino: the Oscar-winning director created 23 short stories using 23 portraits by Jacopo Benassi as starting points. *No Title Yet!* is a photography and performance event created with the Kinkaleri theatre company. In 2014, a magazine published by Benassi was presented, produced at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in collaboration with Le Dictateur in Milan. He collaborated with the artistic director Federico Pepe on **COCO**, a music and

video-art project. From 2013 to 2015 he exhibited for three editions at *Si Fest* in Savignano sul Rubicone. In 2011, he had a solo exhibition at the Zelle gallery in Palermo. He launched *Talkinass Paper and Records* and produced a magazine and live CDs of artists of the underground scene. He has collaborated with directors and writers such as Paolo Sorrentino, Daniele Ciprì, Asia Argento and Maurizio Maggiani. In 2010, he took part in *No Soul for Sale* with *Le Dictateur* at the Tate Modern in London, an event curated by Maurizio Cattelan and Massimiliano Gioni. In 2009, the 1861 United Agency published a monumental monograph of Benassi: *The Ecology of Image*. Also in 2009, he took part in *FotoGrafia - International Festival of Rome*. In 2007, he exhibited at the exhibition *Vade retro. Arte e omosessualità, da von Gloeden a Pierre et Gilles*, curated by Vittorio Sgarbi and Eugenio Viola. He has collaborated with numerous journals in Italy and abroad. In 2005, he participated in *Aphotography* at the Changing Role gallery in Naples and in 2006 - 2007 in *Artissima*, Turin.

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