

# Giuseppe Stampone

Selected works

Since 2017 Giuseppe Stampone is an associated member of Civitella Ranieri Foundation in New York, since 2013 he is associated member of The American Academy of Roma, and in the same year he was invited to a residency in the Young Eun Museum of Contemporary Art (YMCA) of Gwangju in South Korea. His works are exhibited in international art shows, museums and foundations including: Biennial of Architecture in Seoul, South Korea (2017); Triennial of Ostenda, Belgium (2017); 56th International Art Biennial of Venice, Italy (2015); Biennial of Kochi-Muziris, Kerala, India (2012); 11th Biennial of L'Avana, Cuba (2012); Biennial of Liverpool, UK (2010); 14th and 15th Quadriennial of Rome, Italy (2004 – 2008); Museum of Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, U.S.A (2016); The American Academy of Roma, Italy (2008 - 2013 - 2014 - 2015); Art Kunsthalle of Gwangju, South Korea; Wilfredo Lam Contemporary Art Center of L'Avana, Cuba; MAXXI – National Art Museum of XXI Century of Rome, Italy; MACRO – Contemporary Art Museum in Rome, Italy; Foundation Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; Palazzo Reale, Milan, Italy; Triennial Bovisa, Milan, Italy; Cabaret Voltaire, Zurich, Switzerland; GAMeC – Modern and Contemporary Museum of Art, Bergamo, Italy; The Invisible Dog Art Center, Brooklyn – NYC, U.S.A.. Some of his art works are kept in different foundations and public collections including: MAXXI Museum, Rome, Italy; Foundation of Biennial of Kochi-Muziris, Kerala, India; Foundation of Biennial of Sidney, Australia; Foundation of Quadriennial of Rome, Italy; MACRO Museum of Contemporary Art, Rome, Italy; Phelan Foundation, New York, U.S.A.; GAMeC Museum of Bergamo, Italy; Wilfredo LAM Contemporary Art Museum, L'Avana, Cuba; Birbragher Foundation, Bogotá, Colombia; La Farnesina Collection, Rome, Italy; La Gaia Foundation, Busca, Italy; Pecci Contemporary Art Museum, Prato, Italy. Giuseppe Stampone is represented from Prometeo Gallery of Milan-Lucca, Italy and MLF Gallery of Bruxelles.

Information, the revisitation of visual and verbal languages of history, of pedagogical and collaborative conjugations, Stampone summarizes the images and the processes in his artwork, which is the visible synthesis, the formal precipitate, in which time, space and relation are found. The main themes of the author's research are pedagogical activity as a way to formalize artworks, the connection with art history, and the relationship with other artists. Stampone explores these three subject matters, overlapping them and always posing new questions about the role of the artist in the contemporary world.

The artist's recent production focuses on the reinterpretation of masterpieces from European art history: just like altar pieces, within a secular universe and painfully yet clearly sensitive to the humanitarian emergencies of our times, the works reinterpret famous paintings such as "Mocking of Christ" by Fra Angelico, "Abduction of Europa" by Rembrandt, or "The Painter's Studio" by Gustave Courbet. In this mighty agony, Stampone measures himself with the need to reconnect the so-called Western civility to his responsibilities, and opens to a critical reflection on the position of art compared to the spheres of power, both in the present and in the past.

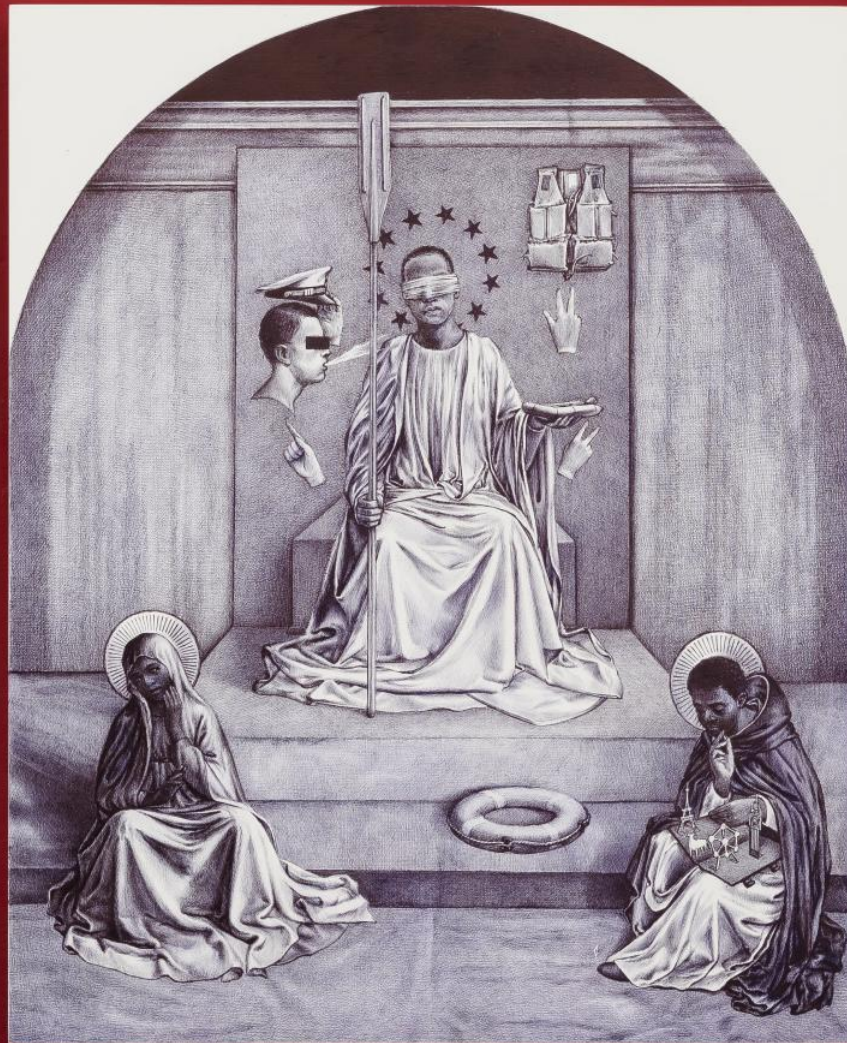
"The Abduction of Europa" is the chronicle of an ongoing act of self-cannibalism: a flight from personal and collective responsibilities based on the destruction of memory. Stampone creates a series of works that reconnect to the origin of things and their consequences. Like scattered tesserae, the many tiles compose a background that is a declaration regarding firstly his role as citizen, then as an artist, and, lastly, as an individual. It is important to remember that artists are not invested with any special exemption, nor are they gifted with superhuman talents or abilities. The author's focus on his own work reinforces this absolute dedication to time and history, as well as a certain responsibility towards one's work and of the same. Indeed, at first, there was a journey, a lacerating and forced journey, a symbolic form of the uninterrupted migration of humanity to lands that is unavoidable for all of us (even for Giuseppe Stampone, the child of emigrant parents and who is constantly in transit). In his rendition of Rembrandt's work, Stampone maintains the geometry of the 17th century composition, but chooses to subtract Europa from her captor. There is nothing to be seen on the coast from where the two characters depart, no handmaidens or any other symbol that could indicate a possible return to her homeland. In his Rembrandt-like background, the image of Titus veering in the port of Flanders has been substituted with the skyline of a modern European city; the original dimension of the painting has been almost doubled, alluding to the different entity of the migratory phenomenon today. The petroleum-like sea, both opaque and waveless hinders Europa in her voyage, declaring that she was no longer being abducted but was fleeing. This lake of pitch absorbs all hope, as if no safe haven or destination exists.

An exercise of connection, a vocation to dialogue and to plurality are featured also in other projects, which imply the involvement of other authors. "Architecture of Intelligence" is a cycle realized in collaboration with international artists such as Ugo La Pietra, Stefano Arienti, Jota Castro, and the group Madeinfilandia; the latter is a focus on the pedagogical capacity of art. The work develops starting from the constant research of the space of visual perception, introducing the topics of communication as a hegemonic tool, the rhetoric of power, and the

destabilizing capacity of the fragmentation of language. What guides the aesthetic of the Architecture of Intelligence is first and foremost a physical and sensory element: the space in which the work originally took shape coincides with the context the work refers to (in the figurative modes used for its expression). The artist conceives this work as a synthesis of a relational condition deeply connected to the contextual components of all human variables – creative and moral – that intersect at a given moment in a precise place.

Architecture of Intelligence is the definition of a process rather than the title of a work, and this process (in its freedom and its demand for an expansion of its own confines) is the encounter with other authors. The narration stemming from Architecture of Intelligence distances itself from hegemonic narratives, which, by definition, tend to simplify, assimilate pre-existing models and schematise relationships. The trust Stampone's work declares in autonomy of thought, communities and the connections that make them intelligent is expressed in the educational function attributed to art and the transformations it produces, navigating through multiple dialogues - where "dialogue" is understood in its etymological sense of words, considering both their spoken form as well as the space between them - as it moves towards the construction of commonality.





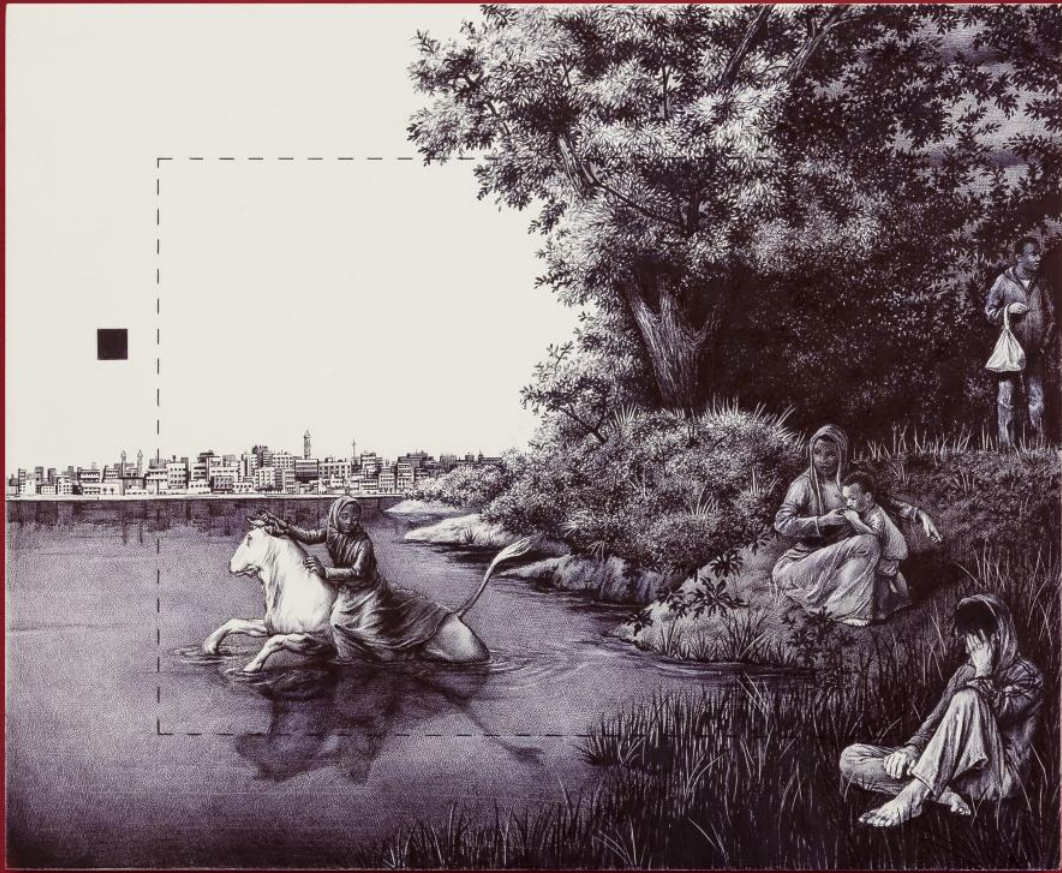
## Emigration Made

2018  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**The End**

2018  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
30x40 cm



## Europa vs Europa

2018  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**Europa vs Europa**

2018  
dittico  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
30x40 cm









**Visione di una città futura**

2018  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**Vanitas**

2018  
Ball point pen on archive book pages on  
French colonialism in Africa  
120x90 cm



**Maria Crispal in the studio**

2016  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**Narcosis**

2018

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



## Emigration Made

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



**Mat au roi**

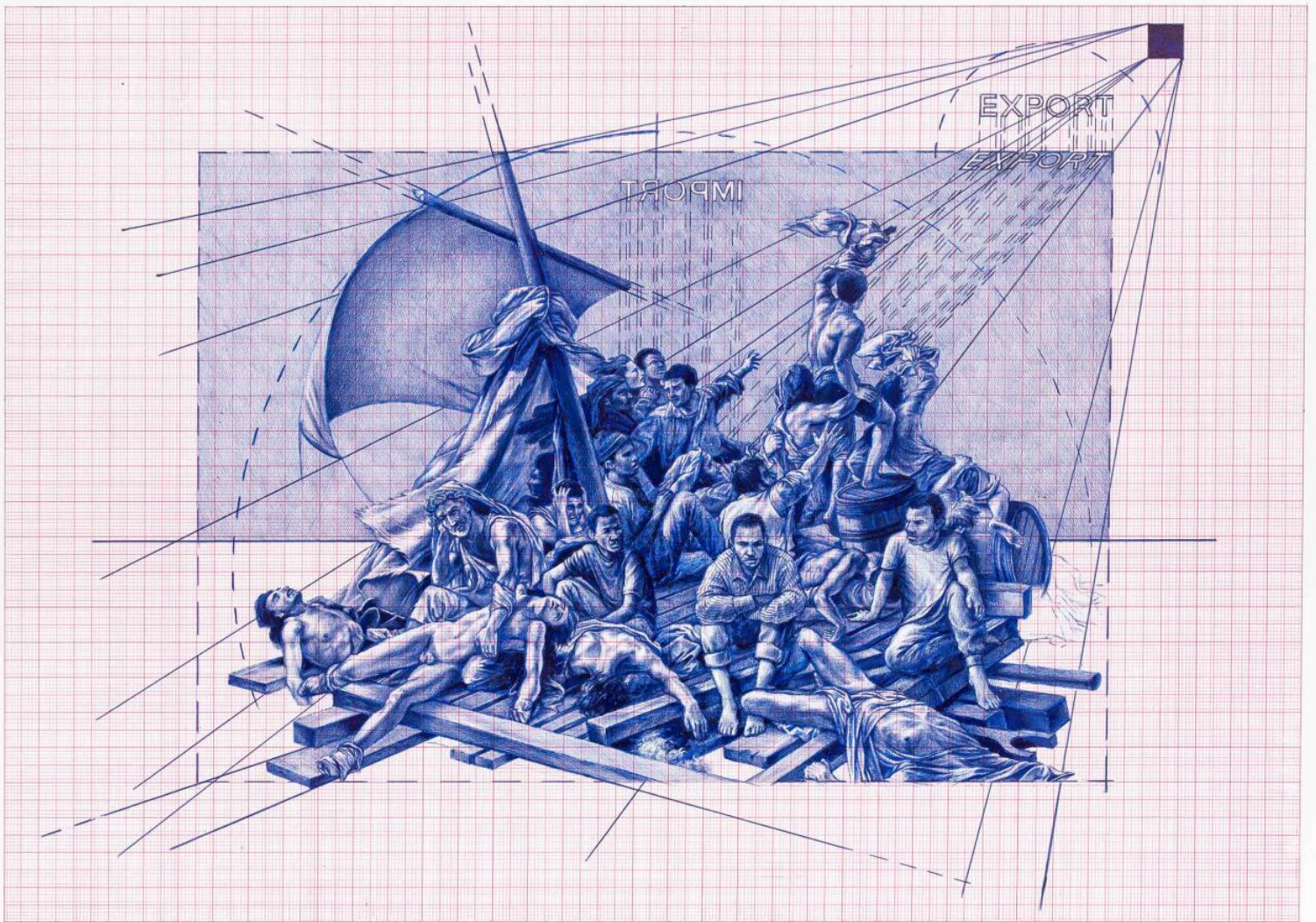
2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm





## Lampedusa

2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



## La Zattera della Medusa

2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
30x40 cm



**Game Over**

2016  
 Ball point pen on paper,  
 Einrich Bunting | Europa prima pars Terrae in  
 forma virginis | xylography, colored by hand,  
 from Itinerarium  
 45x35,5 cm



**Vanitas**

2018

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm

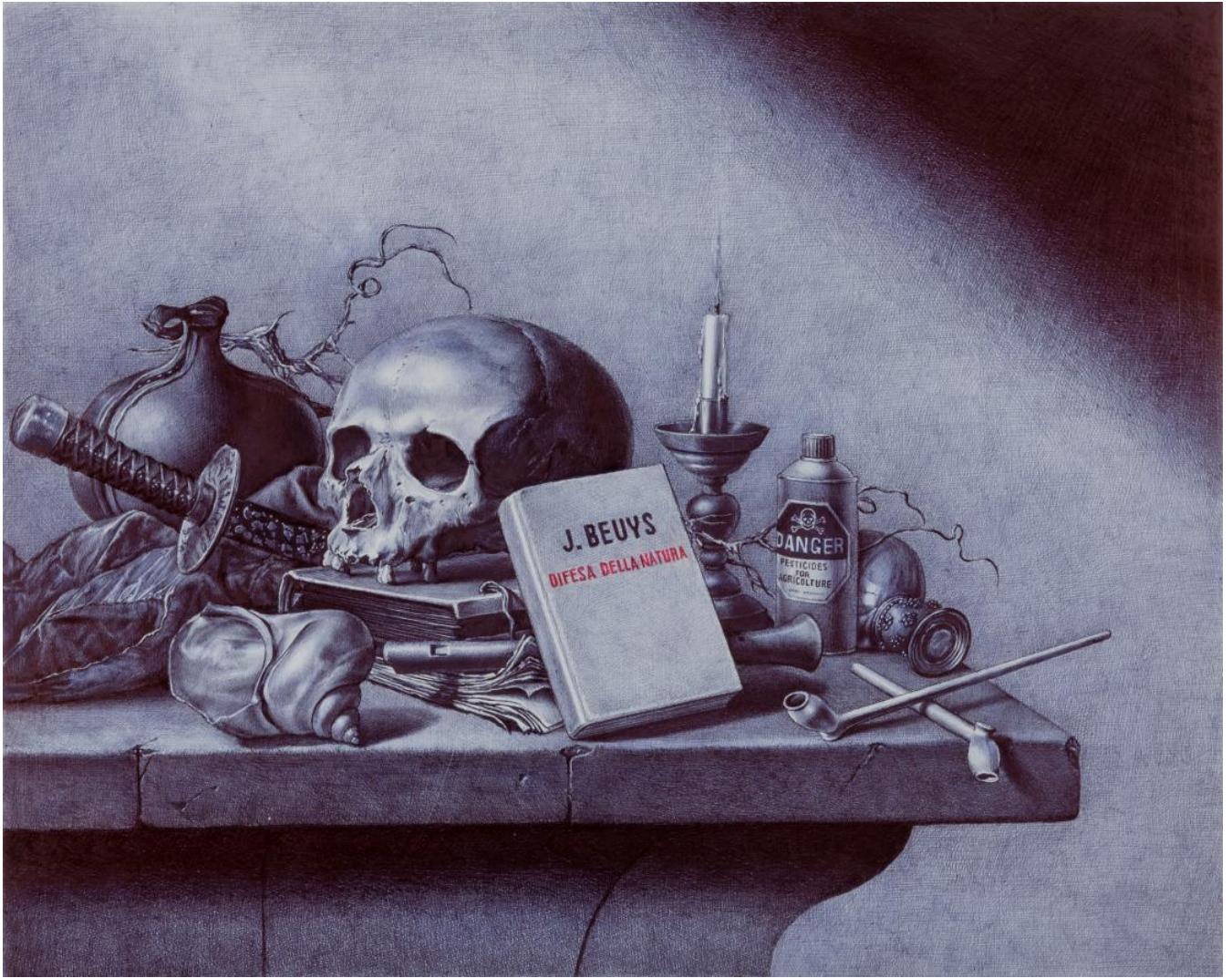


## Studiolo d'artista

2016

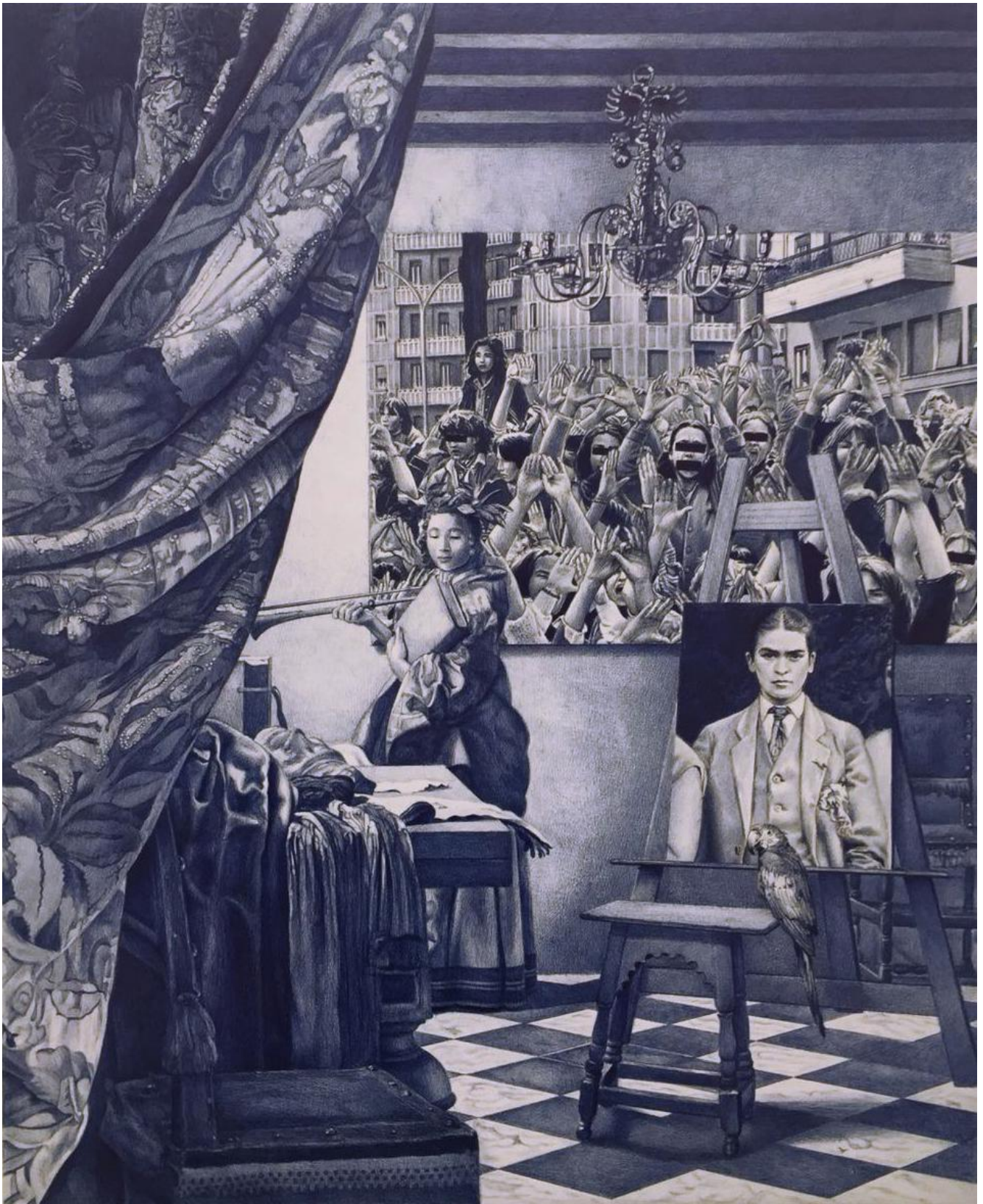
Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



**Vanitas**

2018  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



'68

2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**Esthétique de la vie quotidienne**

2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



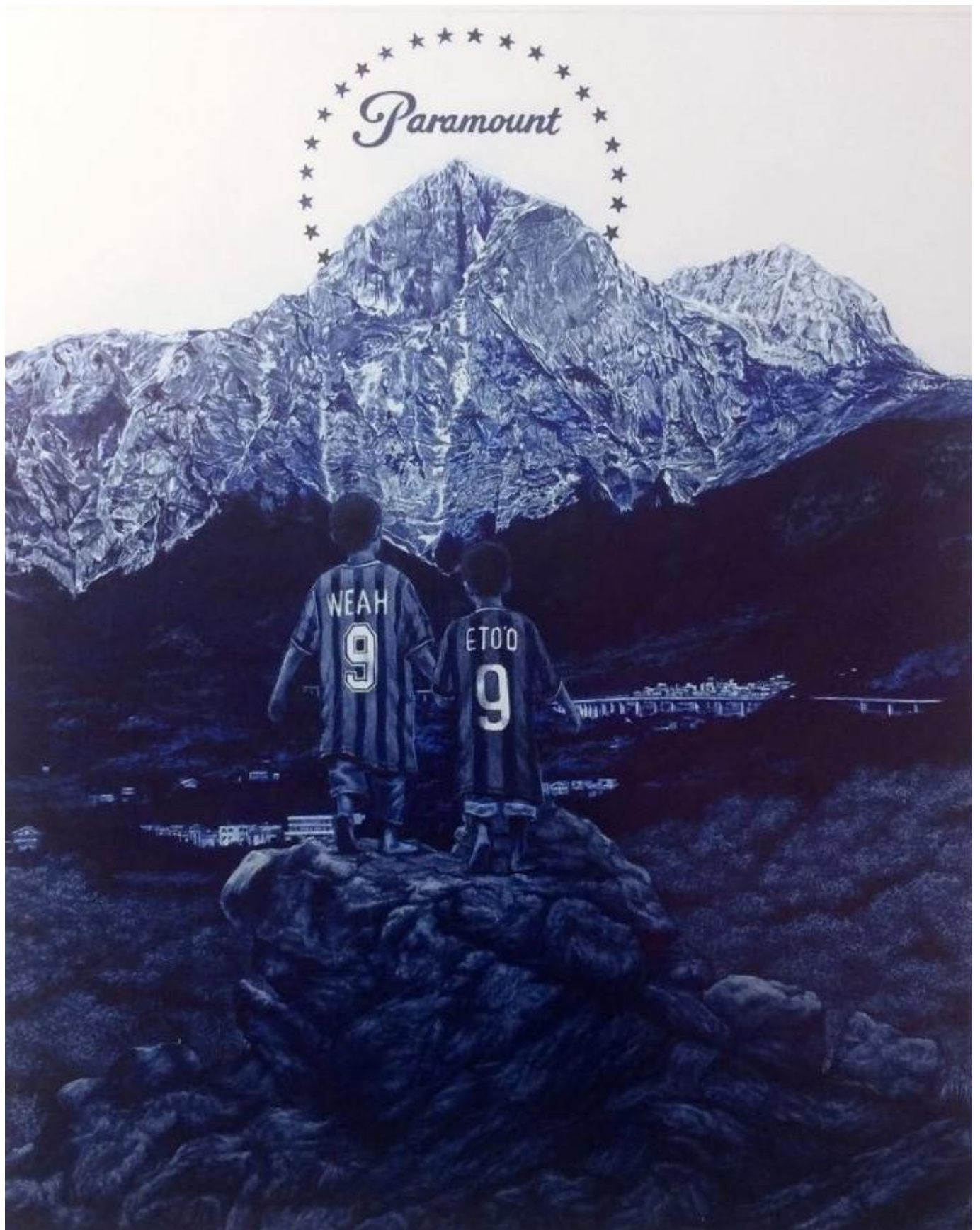


## Adamo ed Eva

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



**Emigration Made / Welcome to Gran Sasso**

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



**Emigration Made / Welcome to Rotterdam**

2017  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
26x35 cm



**Emigration Made / Welcome to San Paolo**

2017

Ball point pen on wooden panel

26x35 cm



**Made in France**

2018  
Ball point pen on French colonies  
geographic atlas pages  
200x200 cm





## Golden Residencies

2016

Ball point pen on mattress

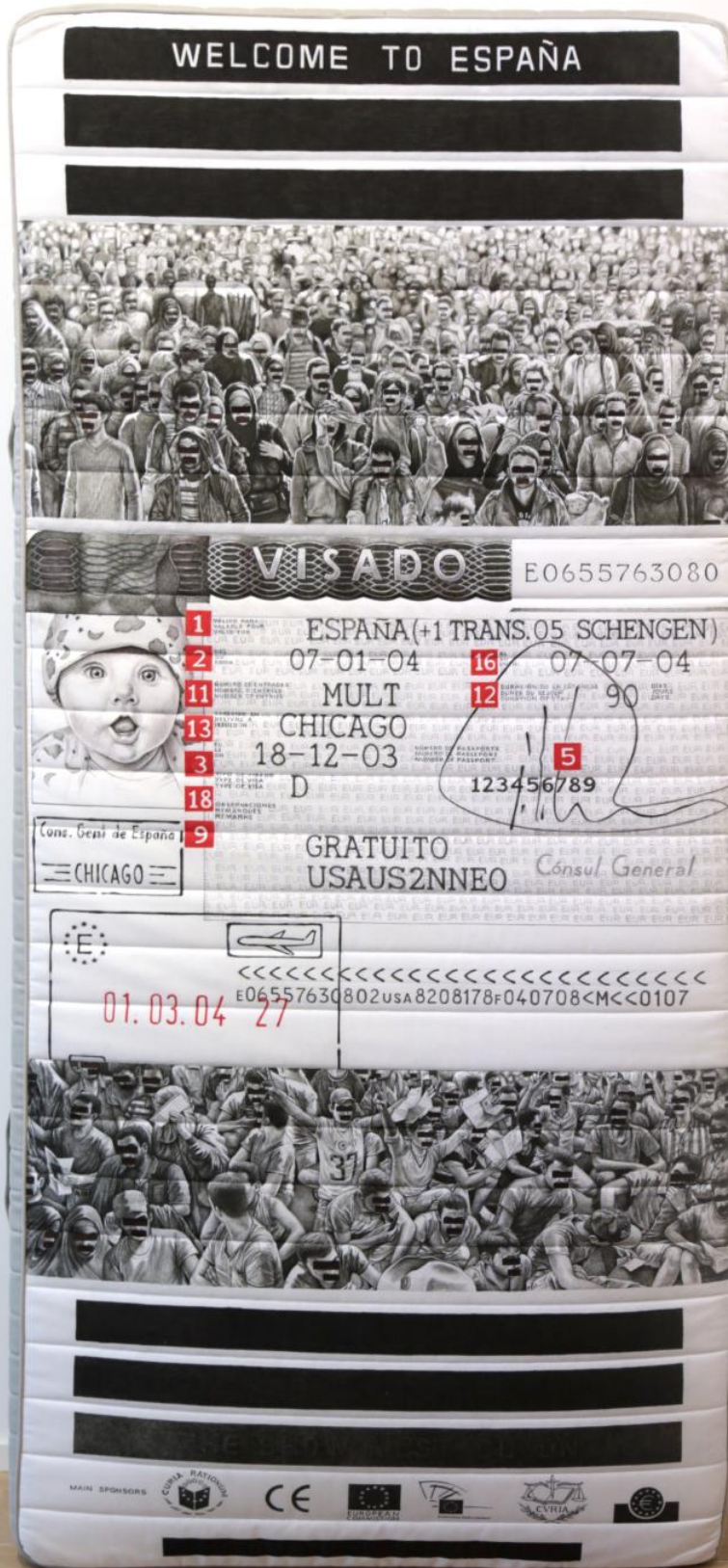
200x90x15 cm



**Golden Residencies / Welcome to Greece**

2016  
Ball point pen on mattress  
200x90x15 cm





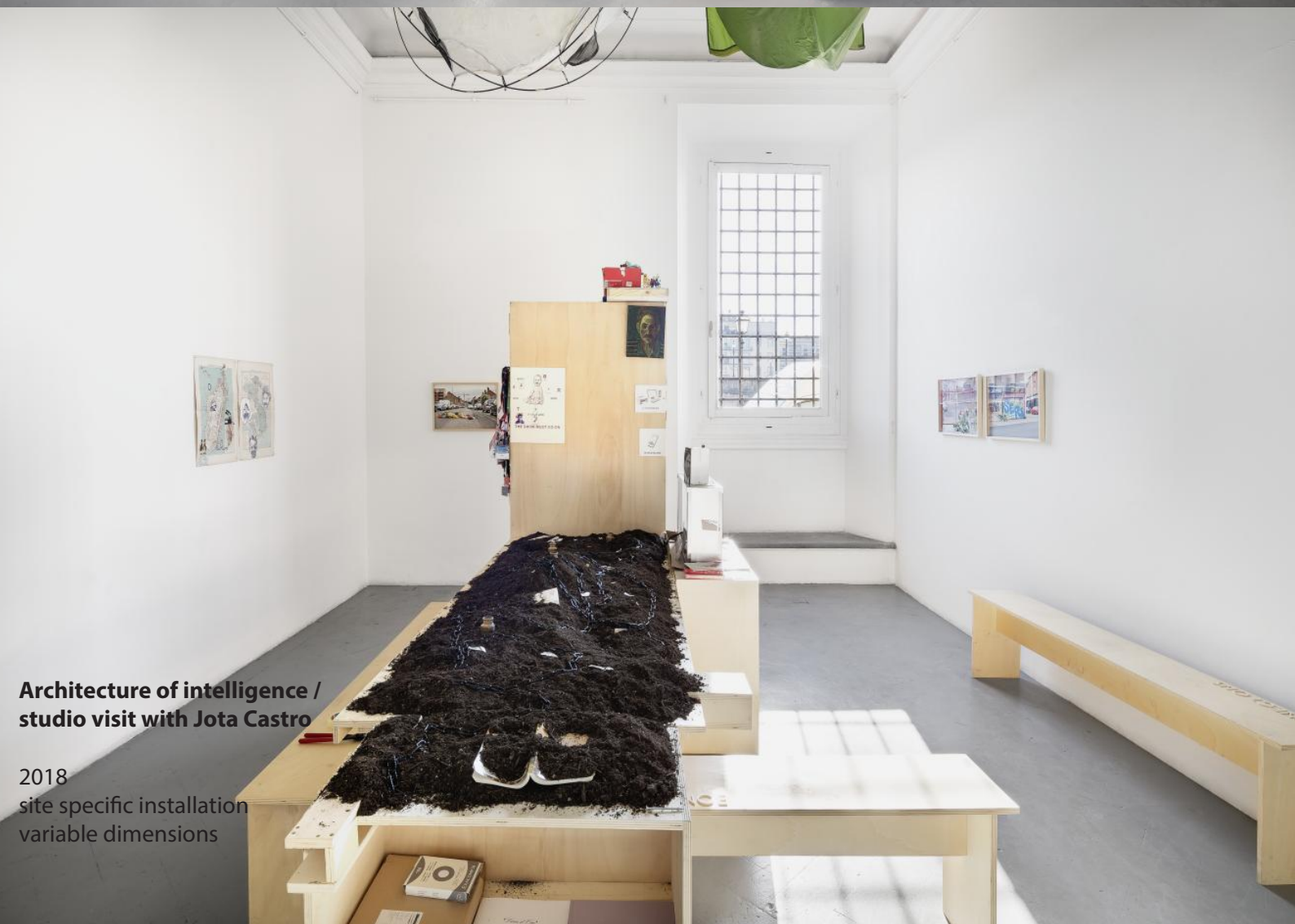
**Golden Residencies / Welcome to España**

2016  
Ball point pen on mattress  
200x90x15 cm



**Golden Residencies / Welcome to Malta**

2016  
Ball point pen on mattress  
200x90x15 cm



**Architecture of intelligence /  
studio visit with Jota Castro**

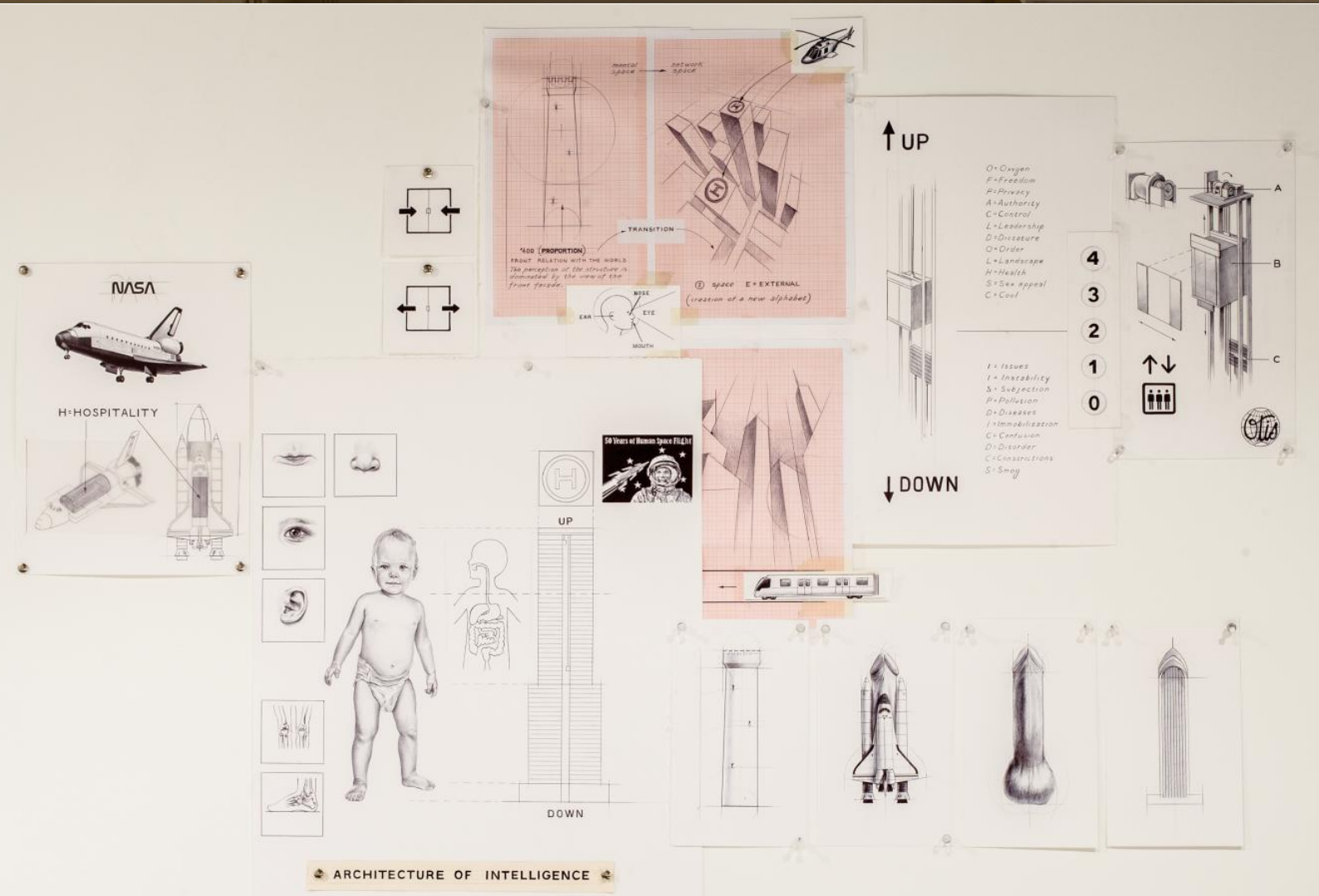
2018  
site specific installation  
variable dimensions





**Architecture of intelligence /  
studio visit with Ugo La Pietra**

2016  
site specific installation  
variable dimensions







**Mirage**

2018  
site specific installation, chalk on wall  
variable dimensions





**Art and cooperation**

2017  
site specific installation, various materials  
variable dimension







**Made in Italy**

2015  
 Ball point pen on wooden panel  
 150x70 cm



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**Kids games**

2016  
Ball point pen on wooden panel  
220x200 cm







**Mare finito**

2015  
Interactive sculpture



Retta finita

2015  
Interactive sculpture



**Cerchio finito**

2015  
Interactive sculpture

## A short interview with Giuseppe Stampone about his work

Giacinto Di Pietrantonio (curator of GAMEC Museum, Bergamo): Shall we start by speaking of your poetics?

Giuseppe Stampone: Mine is a conceptual approach, for me art is a language, I am interested in the time-space within which the work manifests itself today with the "dilation of time". In the era of globalisation I am interested in recovering the concept of "Doing". Not as a mannerist choice, but as a conceptual one, as a process. Doing (giving shape to one's own thoughts) implies a time of realisation that has us recover our intimate time set against the speed imposed by the market, by the internet and by the new global village. Warhol defined himself as a machine, I define myself as an intelligent machine that though only makes one copy. I work at the choice of the global image from internet but with the desire to possess it uniquely, as a unique moment. This is possible in the fleeting moment of carrying out the appropriation that is no longer an appropriation of the image, but the appropriation of the time of the image, in the making of it. I am for the recovery of the "made in" of the Re-doing. Craftsmanship is no longer a mannerist fact, but a conceptual one. If you make a beaker and you take a second (in China or in any other part of the world) and in some other place they take six months, those six months imply the time for discovering the history of that object, that memory; for getting to know the material but above all for rendering quality via the "the right time dilated towards the formulation of the thought" so to speak. Hence attention, a dilation of time, is today the true Anarchy against the dictatorship of this new frenetic, speedy and obsessive time-space, and the return to recovering one's own intimate time.

G. D. P.: Is that your way of trying to subtract yourself from the bombardment-flow of the crowd of images from our hypermedial world?

G. S.: How do I manage, if I am bombarded everyday by millions of images, to understand the contents of the same, if I don't have the physical time to read them and to pause? As an intelligent photocopier I draw liquid, iconic files from the internet, and copy them just as they are. Recopying them exactly as they are I turn the manner into concept, because redoing the file above all turns an iconic image from liquid to solid: a file that you could print out the world over I redo it as a one-off, drawing it with a bic pen. A Mao, a war, or other social dramas of the world. I am not interested in dealing with historic archives, but I want to create some current and contemporary ones, archives that narrate my times, my personal experiences and not those of a bygone generation different from my own. With this I want to catalogue contemporary archives.

G. D. P.: Is this slowing down enabled by your use of the bic pen, like a form of contemporary oil painting?

G. S.: Yes indeed, each drawing contains from 20 to 32 stratifications, bic pen veils; the veils used by Raphael or van Eyck in oil painting, I do the same with the bic pen, creating overlapping time-spaces. Day after day I continue to add new layerings: hour after hour, day after day, month after month. I am interested in the final result, I mean in the process made of dilated time-spaces that give shape to thought, because it is the process that creates the drawing: 32 or 25 veils imply a time of completion that I call dilation in time, regaining control of one's own time. It is the artist who does not accept the speed of internet, of that file on the internet, but I make a copy of it the way a Gothic manuscript miniaturist would have done in the 14th century. It takes two, three, even four or five months to make a file, so making it is no longer mannerist but conceptual: it implies the stretching out of time, and is my genuine dis-obedience to the speed of the internet and globalization. What I want people to say in 100 years is while everybody else had a phallic erection, while everybody had to produce a hundred thousand photos, Stampone decided to remain in his studio, copy this file again and again, day after day like a monk, because it was a conceptual exercise to regain his own intimate time. Which is why I use a bic pen: because it contains a certain amount of oil inside it, and allows me to return to work day-after-day and create time-space stratifications.

When I create my drawings I have two types of work: intelligent photocopiers and historic activations.

G. D. P.: Hence in your case one could speak of a contemporary past?

G. S.: Indeed the second reason I use the bic pen is that of the reinterpretation of historic paintings in a contemporary light. For example the Raft of the Medusa, that I presented at the Biennial of Migration, brainchild of Jan Fabre, at Ostend in Belgium, is a smaller version of that painting, measuring 30x40 centimetres. In the Raft of the Medusa Gericault represents the failure of both the Napoleonic Empire and of the French Revolution, with the France of the time being at the mercy of the waves. Indeed, as you rightly point out, in this historical painting I saw an image of today's migrations. I see a Europe that is lost on this raft, losing an opportunity among these waves, and displaying its inability to save its present.

So I took some pictures of migrants landing in Lampedusa, I cropped out the people I was interested in and put them on the Raft of the Medusa in place of some of the historical figures, all thanks to the perspective that in fact allowed me to amalgamate things in a single vision and form two different time spaces; that of the post French revolution Raft of the Medusa and the current and contemporary one of the landing of migrants on Lampedusa.

G. D. P.: A perspective re-enactment?

G. S.: Yes indeed, thanks to perspective I was able to reallocate past historic facts to the present, cancelling out the time-space. Like Piero della Francesca in the Flagellation of Christ (where he combined the death of his contemporary Oddantonio and the flagellation of Christ). In my Raft of the Medusa, I did the same thing, unifying an event that did not take place in my time-space, with one that did. That is to say, I unfreeze hypertexts.

G. D. P.: Thus this contemporisation of history allows you to use art to broach one of the hottest issues of the moment, that of migration and the destiny of Europe?

G. S.: Which is why I did it on the concept of the Raft of the Medusa, but also on Christ derided, and on the birth of Europe (Europe versus Europe) with the work of Rembrandt, where I turned his Abduction of Europe into this new vision of religious war. Here too with the use of the bic pen I allow myself to return to and re-elaborate on the stratification of time-spaces, that then, combining things together, dilate today's time, featured by internet and by globalisation. Hence it can certainly be considered contemporary criticism.

G. D. P.: What do you mean by making one-offs of reproducible images, is it because your works arise from your encounter with reproductions and not from your encounter with the originals?

G. S.: Because I am a child of my time, born first with television and then with the internet, hence also when I did the show with 100 portraits of contemporary artists at GAMeC, I defined myself an "intelligent photocopier", because I took the images from internet and I retranslated them into one-off portraits with the bic pen. I play on the icon of reproductive recognition that I render unique. More in general the images I make unique have to in some way be iconic and historic.

G. D. P.: This comes with your obsession for the Renaissance, why?

G. S.: Because the Renaissance, as has by now been established, is seen as the launchpad for everything that developed after it. One goes from the mechanical arts to the free arts, from the craftsman to the intellectual. I am particularly bound to two instruments that appeared in the Renaissance: one is perspective, the other Gutenberg's typeface. I define Gutenberg's typeface and perspective the two most dangerous weapons of total destruction created by man. Perspective deprives man of his empirical experience: it defines existential space allowing it to be conceptualised. Within the perspective Renaissance painting, reality is no longer an oral tale passed from parent to child, but a political vision dictated by the patron or client. Gutenberg's typeface is the same thing, because it transforms the human experience to one's own convenience.

G. D. P.: But in your love of perspective, for the slowing down of time through remaking, the continuous veiling, doing, making, remaking, is there not a risk of drawing satisfaction from aesthetic excess?

G. S.: It is not really a matter of aesthetic gratification, more of physical enjoyment, because the moment I draw I slow down my time, in front of internet and globalisation I react recovering my intimacy, I re-acquire my intimate time, also in this way attaining mental gratification. This is why I use the terms of physical and mental enjoyment, because the dilatation in time returns you to - it allows you to become re-acquainted with and brings you back to the archè. And regaining one's time through dilatation also means regaining one's life, it means having time to decide, but above all to mark out the stages. On this count I always take the example of the tea ceremony: it is a rite that takes its aesthetics from the everyday, from tea-drinking, and raises this act to a work of art. A tea master might repeat the same exercise thirty years over. This very repetition leads to perfection. Drawing, when I copy and perform this daily task, every day, becomes a sort of mantra for reaching perfection. Speaking of the tea ritual the difference between Europe and the East is interesting. Just to think that in the West, in 1400, man wanted to adapt nature to himself, while in the same historic period in the East, man wanted to adapt to nature.

G. D. P.: At this point one could ask in your case whether the concept or the doing comes first?

G. S.: It is always the concept that dictates the method. I am neither a draughtsman nor a painter. I don't know how to paint because I don't know how to imagine, and I don't know how to draw because I don't know how to imagine. I have never drawn anything I imagined. I copy and archive reality, resetting it in a contemporary manner. It is a sort of post production in which I try to nullify the sequential didactic time-space of history, because history is false, it is political action. I do not believe in history, but I believe in experience.

For this very reason I am driven to nullify the historic slant, this sequential, anachronistic and mannerist didactic. I am a child of television because I was born in 1974, but also a child of internet and hence I want to analyse this world, because I don't want to be superficial in terms of the image. In the end I am a kind of romantic who takes these files and does not want to see them disappear from the internet, rather I want to render them immortal, defend them by crystalizing them in the uniqueness of my image.

G. D. P.: Could you be more clear about the idea of the uniqueness of the reproducible image?

G. S.: I work in series and all these start from an iconic image, a scan, a selection, an interaction with google. I write iconic words, that lead to an icon search and an icon image archive. I then choose an image that has been part of the collective memory, the archive of the history of humanity, a popular and recognizable image. Not in the pop-political sense, because there is a difference between pop-political and popular: politics is an action done by a few for the many, pop though is an aesthetic form where the spectator merely puts the contents. An image behind which lies a tradition, an identity at a sociological and anthropological level is popular.

I am not interested in political images, I am interested in popular ones, because popular images have a content. Hence for example I chose the cover of Led Zeppelin, or the Sex Pistols, or others, because they are groups that belong to the genre of music and movements like rock, punk, post punk that have modified the history of humanity on an anthropological, sociological and political level, they have modified the internal customs. Hence I go and choose images that according to me have made a mark with the people, with their popularity. I take the contents of that image and with a sort of post production I re-contemporise them. They are political images (like that of Led Zeppelin with the German zeppelin, protagonist of that terrible catastrophe in 1936 in New Jersey). On the other I consider some concepts of rock, punk or post punk music, like the last epistemological rifts after Marcel Duchamp's urinal.

G. D. P.: Can the Abduction of Europe that we already mentioned be considered part of this?

G. S.: Yes because I recontextualised it analysing the Schengen area. I noted that there are the golden residences and the gold visas, meaning that if you have a certain economy and you are not a European citizen you belong to the Schengen area. Hence the movement is not only associated with belonging to a nation and/or Europe but to money. Therefore the work concerns Europe versus Europe and its contradictions. In my Abduction of Europe I cancel out the original family, I insert the city of Beirut in the background, I turn the garden into a black forest, a place of danger, I turn the sea into a sea of ice. An image of danger seen from the eyes of abducted Europe.