

only silence is shame
video screening exhibition

**w/ Simona Andrioletti, Hamza Badran, Juan
Pablo Macías, Alessandro Manfrin, Margherita
Moscardini**

26.02 - 06.04.2024

**Gian Marco Casini
Via Montebello 5
Livorno, Italy**



Gian Marco Casini

Alfredo, a character in the film *Nuovo Cinema Paradiso* by Giuseppe Tornatore, is the only projectionist at the cinema in a small Sicilian town. Alfredo, who gets his elementary school diploma only late in life, has an education cultivated merely by viewing films shown in “his” cinema. In fact, the advice he gives to the young Salvatore actually consists of quotes taken from the great cinema of the 1950s-60s.

It was more or less the same for me, I owe much to the cinema in the years of my upbringing.

My early stages as a spectator were “directed” by the composer, known mainly for his music written for cinema, Ennio Morricone, who I got to know through Sergio Leone’s films. I started to listen to the soundtracks he wrote for various directors, even before seeing the films they were written for. One of the earliest films I saw was *La Califfa*, directed by Alberto Bevilacqua, with Romy Schneider and Ugo Tognazzi. In the film, set in the years of *operaismo*, a wealthy industrial boss falls in love with the wife of a worker killed during clashes between police and strikers. Then I came to the films of Elio Petri, such as *Todo Modo*, *La proprietà non è più un furto* (*Property is No Longer a Theft*), *A ciascuno il suo* (*We Still Kill the Old Way*), *La classe operaia va in paradiso* (*The Working Class Goes to Heaven*)...

It was a very formative time for me. I watched films with only soundtracks by Ennio Morricone in common, and because of this, I explored certain topics in depth, really the most diverse. For example, I watched *The Mission* and went to get a book about Ignazio De Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order. I got to know Pasolini through *Uccellacci and Uccellini* (*The Hawks and the Sparrows*). And with Bellocchio, Pontecorvo and Bertolucci, I learned about the 1960s and ‘70s in Italy.

But the film that affected me the most was certainly Giuliano Montaldo’s *Sacco and Vanzetti*. This 1971 film brought Ennio Morricone and Joan Baez together for its soundtrack. Montaldo tells the story of Bartolomeo Sacco and Nicola Vanzetti, two Italian emigrant anarchists to the United States unjustly condemned to death in the 1920s (because they were anarchists). During their trial, entire squares in America and Europe rose up to support the two anarchists, demanding justice.

Joan Baez, for the text of *The Ballad of Sacco and Vanzetti (Part 2)*, was inspired by the letter Vanzetti wrote to his father from jail. This is the beginning of the song:

Father, yes, I am a prisoner
Fear not to relay my crime
The crime is loving the forsaken
Only silence is shame¹

This inspired the title of the exhibit.

In this film, which I watched again recently, the dialogues are very violent, over the top. There is an anger that profoundly touched me. Montaldo said that, during filming, some of the extras were deeply moved during the monologues of the protagonists Volontè and Cucciolla.

I’ve been thinking a lot about the quote from Joan Baez, “only silence is shame”, which resonates so much from various sides. It comes to us from Ukraine, where President Volodymyr Zelens’kyj strives to maintain attention and support for “his” country at war. It comes to us from the Palestinians and those who support them, denouncing the massacre underway in Gaza. We hear it from the Italian Jewish Community, seeking justice for the Hamas attack and decrying the silence of the Italian authorities. And we also have it from the families, and others, of Israeli hostages in the hands of Hamas and Jihad, protesting daily in Israel to pressure the government to negotiate for their release. And also, for entirely different reasons, after yet another femicide in Italy, it is echoed by movements like Non una di meno. Also in Italy, many are speaking out against the silence of President Giorgia Meloni, failing to condemn the latest neo-fascist demonstrations. In recent years, we’ve had it often from the younger generation, making the strong voice of climate change heard. And even for more current issues, like the campaign “Verità per Giulio Regeni (Truth for Giulio Regeni)” or the battles of workers at the former Ilva or the former GKN.

In short, the slogan “only silence is shame” seems to join all these struggles together.

To quote Antonio Gramsci: “I hate the indifferent. I believe that living means taking sides. Those who really live cannot help being a citizen and a partisan. Indifference and apathy are parasitism, perversion, not life. That is why I hate

the indifferent².”

But who are the indifferent, in the cases above? Gramsci wrote this in 1917, and the word “partisan” holds its generic meaning of “a strong supporter of a party, cause, or person”. Does choosing one faction make you indifferent to the other? Or is there one indifference that is just, because the issue is thorny, and an unjust one?

Today, with the two wars close to us, we are asked to stand with one side or the other. One side that is right and one that is wrong, alternately. Or to stand in the middle without taking a clear position. Without leaving space for complexity of thought.

The first front created to give voice to “silence” that comes to mind is *J'accuse* by Émile Zola. I recently saw the film of the same name (released in Italy with the title *L'ufficiale and la spia*) about the Dreyfus Affair, by Roman Polanski. In it, the French writer publishes a letter of accusation directed at the then President of the Republic, Félix Faure, in the newspaper *L'Aurore*. I'll quote part of it here: “The truth, I will say it, because I promised to say it, if justice, regularly seized, did not do it, full and whole. My duty is to speak, I don't want to be an accomplice. My nights would be haunted by the spectre of the innocent who atones over there, in the most dreadful of tortures, a crime he did not commit.” He then finishes the letter with a series of statements beginning with “I accuse” and concludes: “In laying these charges, I am aware that I am putting myself under the umbrella of articles 30 and 31 of the press law of July 29, 1881, which punishes crimes of defamation. And it is voluntarily that I expose myself. [...] As for the people I accuse, I do not know them, I have never seen them, I have no resentment or hatred against them. They are for me only entities, spirits of social evil⁴.”

Rereading Zola's words now, I think of an author's right to express his or her own sentiments, to talk about injustices seen and felt. To put an end to “nights ... haunted by the spectre”. Even though this could lead to criminal consequences, or worse, censorship. “The truth, I will say it” writes Zola, and the reason he knows the “truth” is explained by Pasolini almost 80 years later in his famous letter *Cos'è questo golpe? Io so (What is this coup d'état? I know)*. In 1974, Pier Paolo Pasolini, denouncing the Italian massacres of the 1960s and 70s, said he knew “the names of those responsible” and at a certain point

says: “I know. But I don't have any evidence. I don't even have clues. I know because I'm an intellectual, a writer who tries to follow everything that happens, to imagine everything that is unknown or unspoken; who connects facts that may seem disparate, that puts together the disorganised and fragmentary pieces of an entire coherent political picture, who restores logic where arbitrariness, folly and mystery seem to rule. This is all part of my craft and of the instinct of my craft⁵.”

Following Pasolini's thinking, we must always remember that authors, artists and, in general, intellectuals, when they put themselves out there, they do not do so lightly. We cannot treat their thinking as if it were propaganda. Therefore, we must decide whether to let it go or silence it with censorship. Really, we really need to let the complexity of thought that they bring to society flow. And not minimise it.

In a world that has totally abolished debate around intellectual thought, there is a need for reflection from everyone. Now more than ever.

“I know” that I need Alessandro, Hamza, Juan Pablo, Margherita and Simona.

“I know” that I need them to put together the disorganized and fragmented pieces.

“I know” that I need their thinking and its complexity.

“I know” that I need artists.

And “I know” that they must be allowed to be free. Silence, especially theirs, is shame.

Livorno, 17 January 2024

Gian Marco

¹ The Ballad of Sacco and Vanzetti (Version 2), music and lyrics by Joan Baez/ Ennio Morricone, © Universal Music Publishing Ricordi Srl 1971.

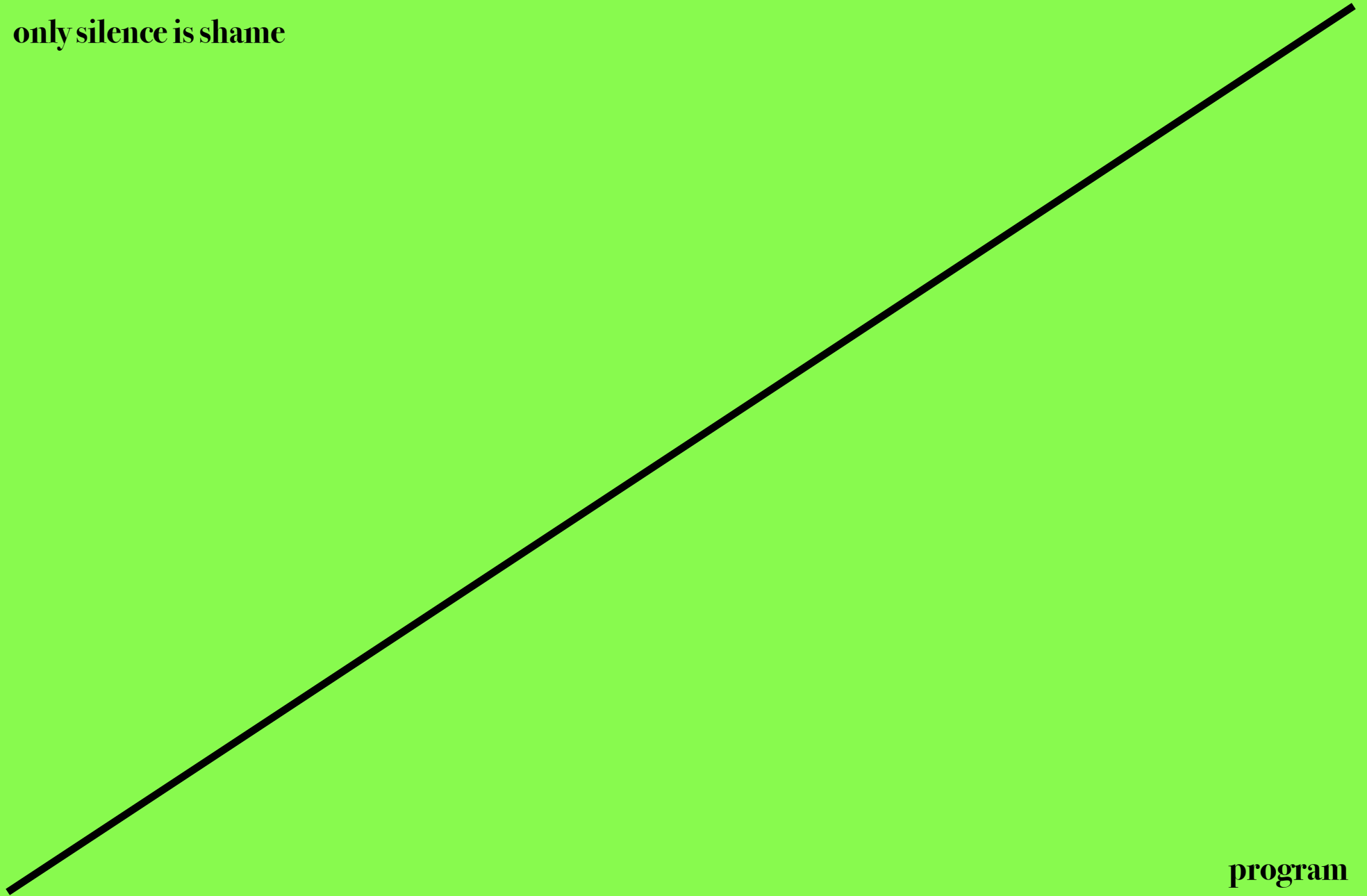
² I hate the indifferent, by Antonio Gramsci, Chiarelettere, Milan 2015.

³ J'Accuse, article by Émile Zola published on 13 January 1898 by the newspaper L'Aurore

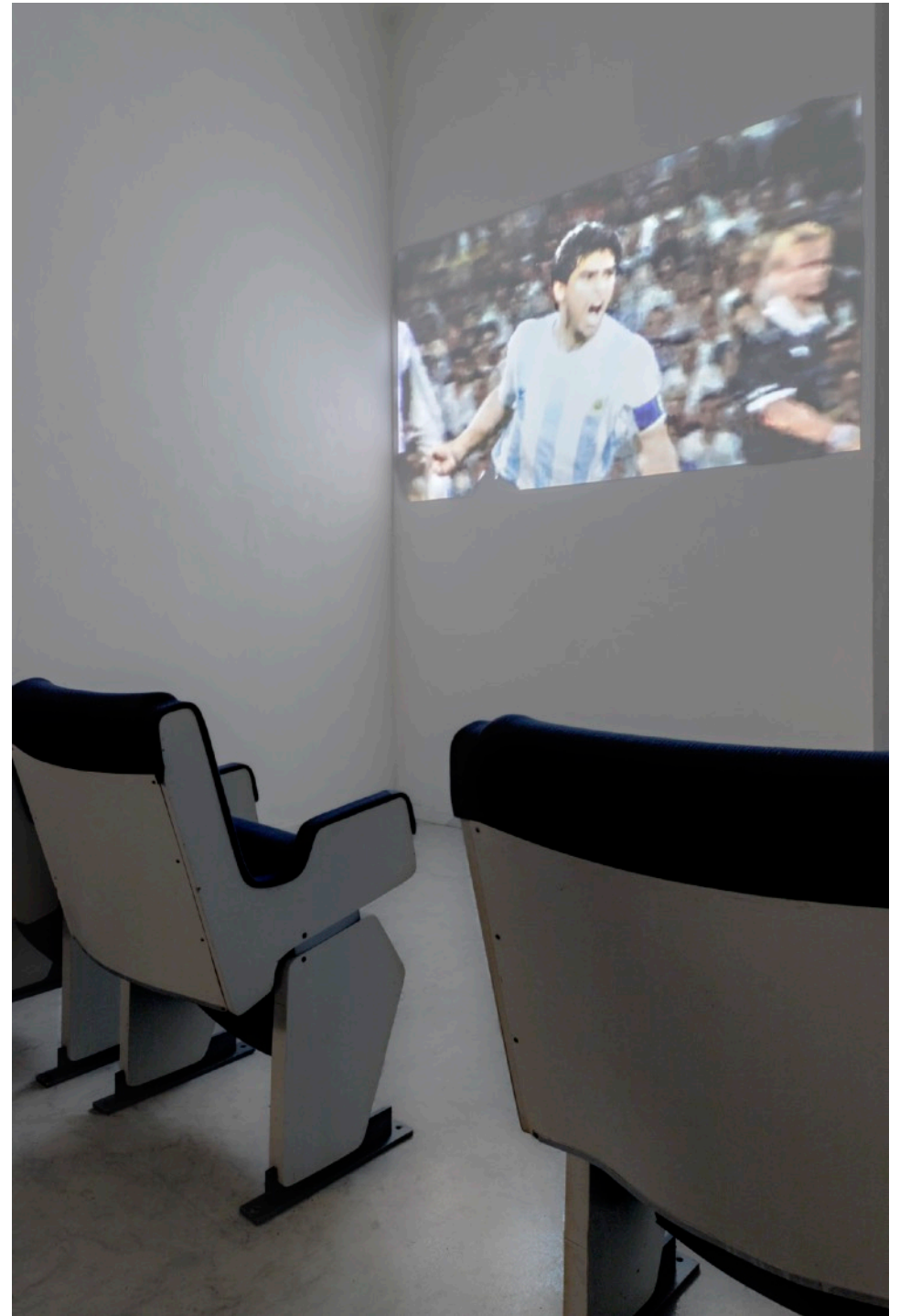
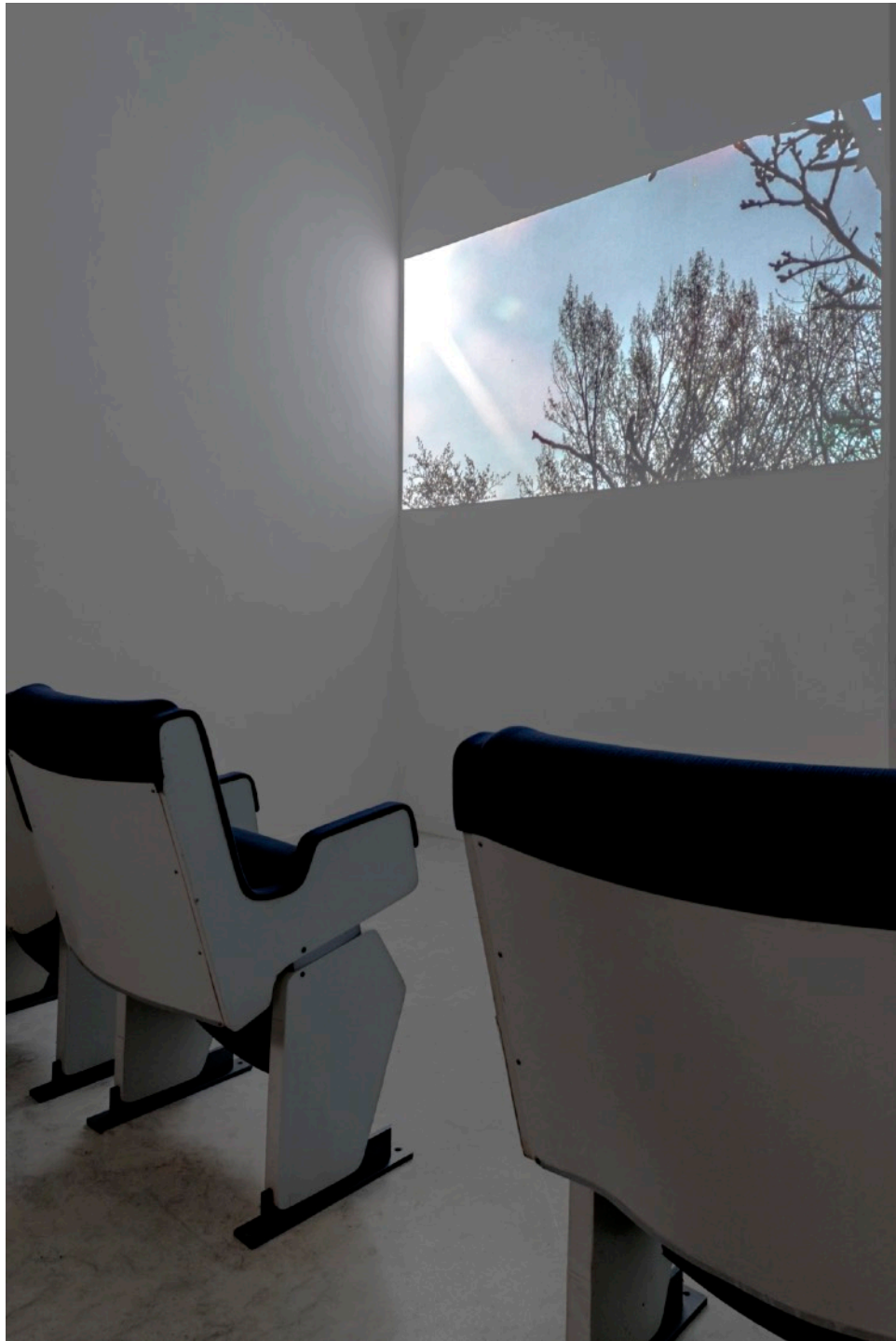
⁴ Ibidem

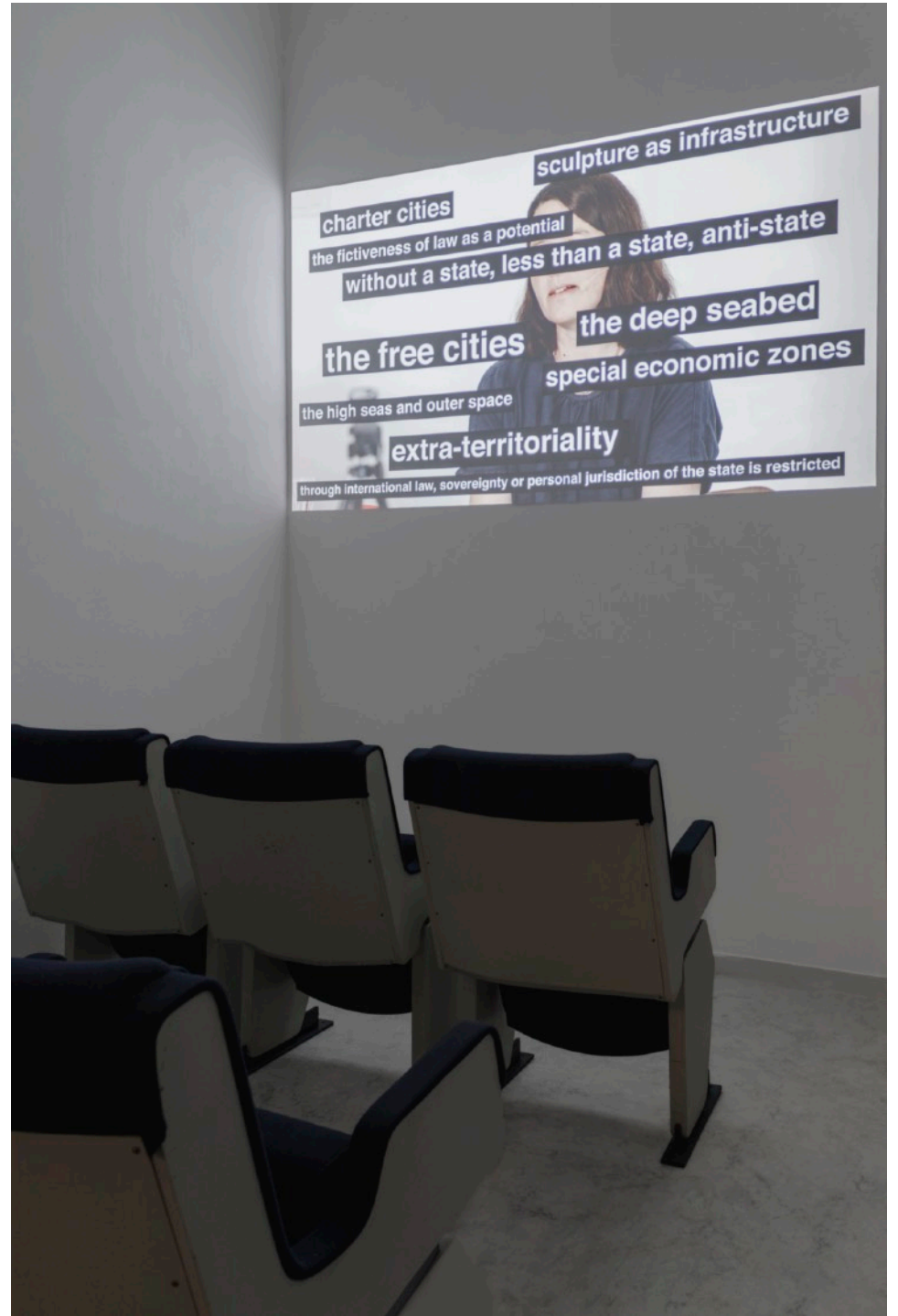
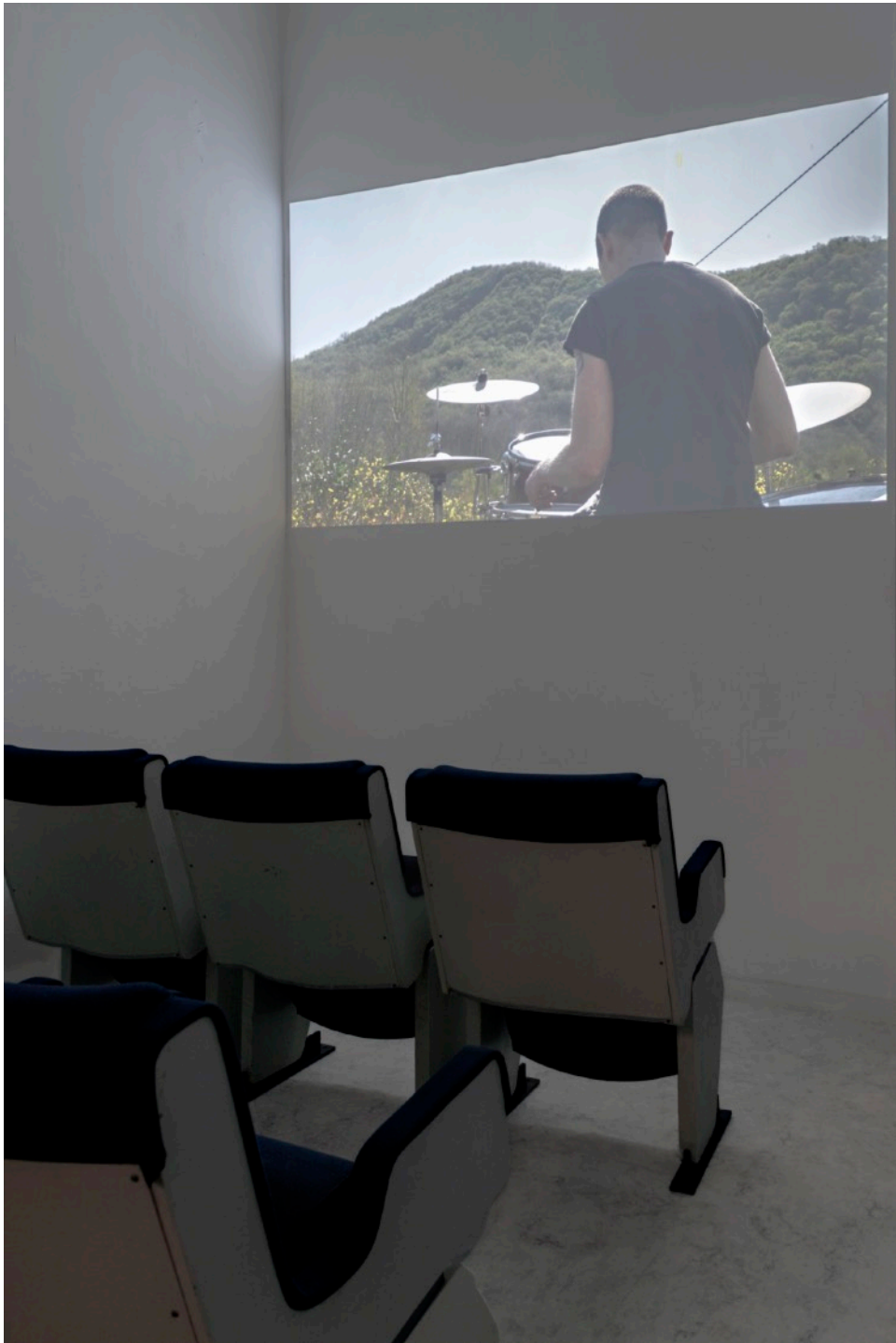
⁵ What is this coup d'état? I know, article by Pier Paolo Pasolini published on 14 November 1974 by the newspaper Corriere della Sera

only silence is shame



program





Program

Première: Saturday, February 24th at 6pm

Loop: from 26.02 to 01.03

“Owen” by Juan Pablo Macías

Première: Saturday, March 2nd at 6pm

Loop: from 04.03 to 08.03

“Najumoeniesa” by Hamza Badran

Première: Saturday, March 9th at 6pm

Loop: from 11.03 to 15.03

“Defence. What do you do with your anger?” by Simona Andrioletti

“Tonante Veduta” by Alessandro Manfrin

“Hose in Hose” by Hamza Badran

Première: Friday, March 15th at 7pm

Loop: from 18.03 to 22.03

“And remember that holes can move” by Margherita Moscardini

Première: Saturday, March 23rd at 6pm

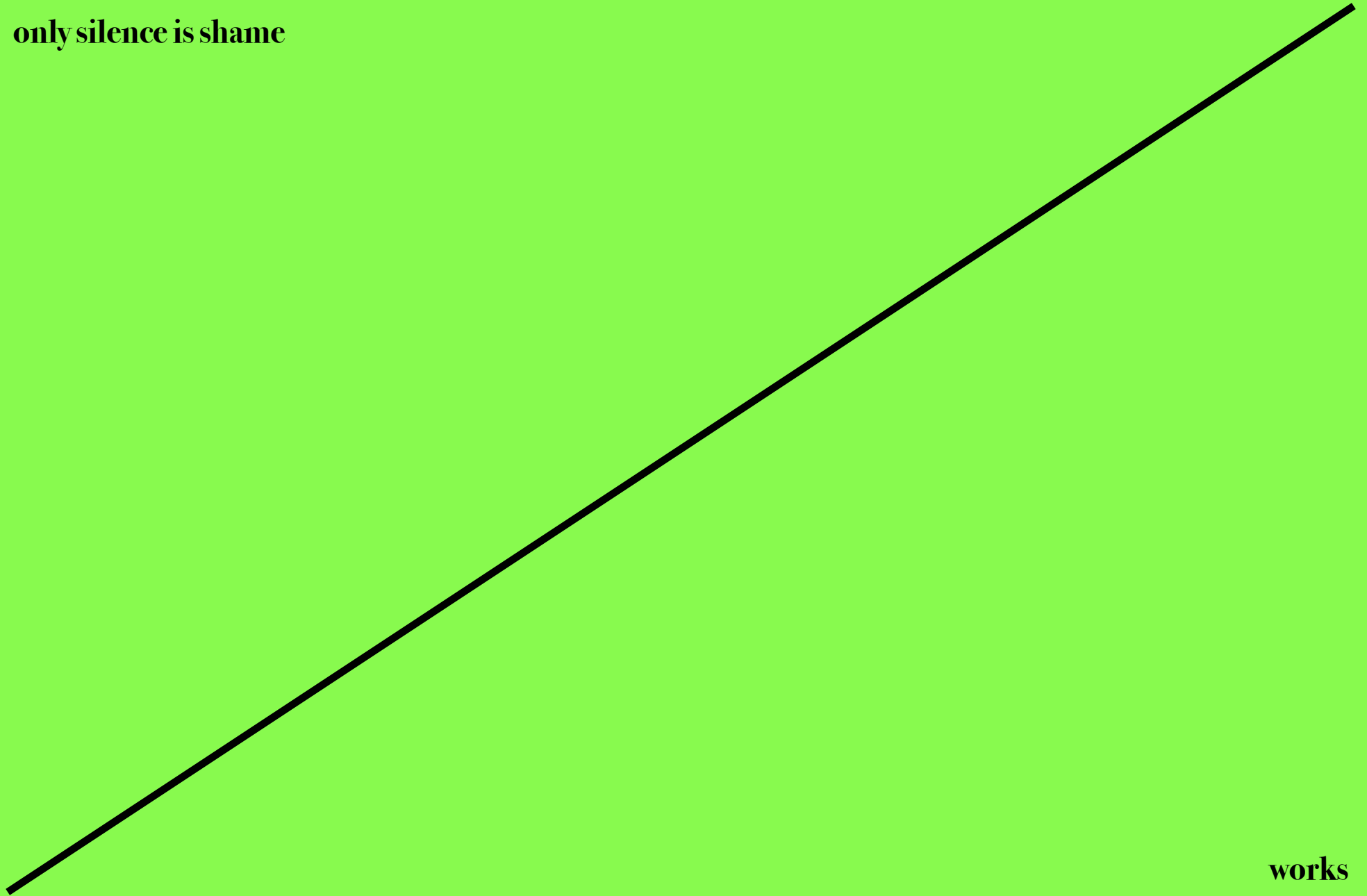
Loop: from 25.03 to 29.03

“to the sinello, to the plains of guilmi, to the sower, to the milpa, to zapalote chico, to xhuba ‘binii, to basorowa, to all voices” by Juan Pablo Macías

Marathon: Saturday, April 6th at 11 am

All videos screened

only silence is shame



works

WEEK I

Juan Pablo Macías

Owen 2015

b&w video, sound

41'19"

This work emerged as part of WORD+MOIST PRESS, a publishing imprint developed by artist Juan Pablo Macías (Puebla, 1974) and focused on the publication of texts of anarchist and libertarian thought. Since 2014, through that label, and as with other works, Macías has sought to raise resources from the art world, its market and institutions, to finance and circulate the proposals of that political doctrine in the public discussion. For the artist, the work of art is understood as a residue of the transaction between these spheres.

The imprint's second title, published in 2015, was the Spanish translation of "Problems of the Hour in Nine Brief Studies", an 1896 text by civil engineer Albert Kimsey Owen, who in addition to working on the Pacific Railroad deep-drafting project, in 1886 promoted the founding of the Pacific Colony, a socialist community in Topolobampo, Sinaloa, which eventually grew to 500 inhabitants. Owen's text, where he elaborates a critique of property and labor conditions in capitalism, is a sample of the approaches that supported his project. The current version includes historical photographs of the colony and a contemporary prologue by writer and visual artist César Cortés Vega.

In the unfolding of this project as an installation, Macías includes a video where he follows Owen's trail in Topolobampo and shows him in his print shop. The images are also intertwined with those of the editorial process of the re-edition and the interpretation of the music conceived especially for the project by the artist in collaboration with Gonzalo Macías. A copper stamp with the legend "Univ Calif - Digitalized by Microsoft®" and a photograph of the brand affixed to an arm are included with the video and a copy of the chained book. By drawing attention to the phrase, which comes from the watermark of the digital version of the book and indicates the ownership of the rights by the University of California, the contradiction underlying the restrictions on access to a title that questions private property is pointed out.

Juan Pablo Macías learned of Owen's work thanks to his contact with the Biblioteca Social Reconstruir (Social Library Reconstruct), an archive specialized in anarchist thought that has guided several of his projects. As part of its commitment to the dissemination of that line of thought, other WORD+MOIST PRESS titles include "The Anarchist Doctrine Accessible to All" (José Oiticica, 1925), published in 2014; "Everyday Life and the Culture of the Thing" (Boris Arvatov, 1925), published in 2019; and "Anti in Anarkhiia-Tvorchestvo" (Kazimir Malevich, 1918), also in 2019.

text courtesy: Museo Amparo, Puebla, México



WEEK II

Hamza Badran Najumoeniesa 2022

HD color video, sound
49' 16"

Najumoeniesa Damon, a seeker of the silence in our history trauma, present legacy and future transformation graces us with her unique perspective of Cape Town's past, present and future. This film dives into the complexities of the current realities of the most marginalised people in Cape Town. Intertwined in Mrs Damon's voice one can hear the trauma, triumph and concerns of the effects of settler colonialism, development, foreign investment and white privilege that seeks to dominate and strangle the progress of the black body.

Ms Damon eloquently details from her perspective the intricacies and delicate entangled realities of what it means to survive and attempt to achieve the "dream" set out in the Freedom Charter and the speeches of many leaders like late president Nelson Mandela.



WEEK III

Simona Andrioletti

Defence. What do you do with your anger? 2020

video mp4, color

10' 42"

“Defence. What do you do with your anger?” is a found footage collage in which we witness a succession of situations where different people try in different ways to defend themselves from physical, emotional and environmental oppression, without succeeding. Sometimes because the problem, compared to the means available to the protagonists, is impossible to face. Sometimes because the enemy they are fighting with is physically stronger. In other cases, because the defence mode they implement is self-destructive and leads the protagonists to ridicule themselves in front of the smartphone camera of any person who, cowardly, films in an amused way. Found footage videos have been reshot with a smartphone filming a computer monitor, as if to replicate that perverse mechanism of entertained voyeurism and “Shadenfreude”, similarly to those situations when the passer by, instead of helping, films the scene.



Alessandro Manfrin

Tonante Veduta 2021/2024

color video, sound

9' 44"

“Tonante veduta” is a work of found footage. The clips were taken from a YouTube channel found on the Warmap app - used by reporters to show active war zones to others - and then edited by Manfrin.

In “Tonante veduta” clips of skies, trees, sunrises are punctuated by the sound of bombs. The latter are images that cannot be traced back to a specific place, thus become universal.

Therefore these political subjects, if placed within a compositional scheme, translate into pictorial surfaces.

text by Francesca Brugola



Hamza Badran
Hose in hose 2016

color video, sound
19' 00"

This video documents an attempt to provide the Gaza Strip-Palestine with portable water through collecting the largest number of small water hoses from the inhabitants' houses in the West Bank-Palestine, then to connect the water hoses to each other and pump the water into Gaza. The video contains recorded conversations with the inhabitants taken when my colleague and I went around the West Bank asking them to lend us water hoses. Gaza is 93.2 km away from the West Bank. (The aquifer's water is high in nitrogen and chloride, making 90–95 per cent of Gaza's main water supply unfit for drinking and problematic even in terms of agricultural use).



WEEK IV

Margherita Moscardini

And remember that holes can move * 2023

Full HD color video, sound
44' 50"

How a sculpture, meant as both an object and as a walkable space, might be legally not subjected to the sovereignty of any state?

From 4 to 7 September 2023, six scholars met in the city of Bozen-Bolzano, within the spaces of Ar/Ge Kunst for a closed-door summit, with the aim of discussing valid proposals capable of qualifying some sculptures as spaces, which legally differ from the national soil they occupy.

Different positions and proposals emerged from the summit which was fully recorded and transformed into a video which is the core of the exhibition.

Participants: Stacy Douglas (artist; legal theorist; professor of law at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada), Isabel Feichtner (professor of public law and international economic law at the University of Würzburg), Lawrence Liang (Dean of the School of Law, Government and Citizenship at Ambedkar University Delhi, India), Francesco Palermo (Head of the Institute for Comparative Federalism Research, Eurac Research, Bozen), Nora Sternfeld (Art educator and curator; professor at the HFBK Hamburg; co-director of the master's course in exhibition theory and practice at the University of Applied Arts Vienna), Alexandra Tomaselli (senior researcher at the Institute for Minority Law, Eurac Research, Bolzano).

The very presence of law experts and art historians engaged in finding legal paths capable of challenging sovereignty through the fictiveness of law, has generated a space of disobedience. This space, recognized as a hole, has been created as a secret and later offered to the public. Might a different idea of public, of citizenship and a new nomos of the earth, originate from a sculpture?

*A new commission by Ar/Ge Kunst, 2023. In the frame of the exhibition And Remember That Holes Can Move (2023) curated by Zasha Colah and Francesca Verga.



WEEK V

Juan Pablo Macías

to the sinello, to the plains of guilmi, to the sower, to the milpa, to zapalote chico, to xhuba 'binii, to basorowa, to all voices 2023

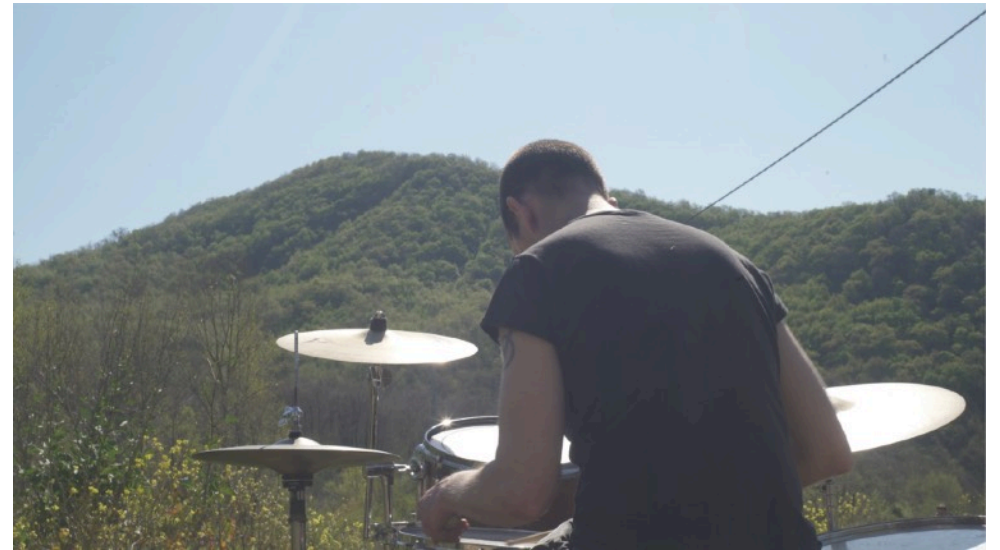
HD color video, sound

42'

The term Barosowa means “freedom of movement”, the most inalienable freedom according to the Rarámuri. It is the supreme value of all morality for which they have always fought. It is also noteworthy that the Rarámuri child, as soon as he is able to walk, is almost left to himself: he begins to explore the world around him and is thus connected with nature in an autonomous and free manner. But this freedom is only granted to him so that he can learn for himself to better know and respect his environment and is limited, as far as possible, in his obligation to support his family in its affairs. Thus the concept of freedom is so natural and inherent in them that they are born and live free.

Chicomexochitl in the Nahuatl tradition, is a maize deity which embodies a boy as well as maize, in a never ending series of death and birth. This deity is also the creator of poetry, music and dancing. The agricultural cycle in American pre-Colombian cultures are always accompanied by rituals like dancing, singing and music so Chicomexochitl is pleased and warrants a good harvest to them.

Juan Pablo Macías took a native maize cob from the Zapotec region to sow it in freedom in Abruzzo. The musician Hilary Binder, a resident in the Chieti hills, played drums to honour the countryside, the sower and the Zapalote Chico maize field.



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opening hours:

Monday to Saturday

10am-1pm | 3pm-8pm