



Chi esce entra. A tribute exhibition to a disappearing building
curated by Simon Würsten Marin

A group show to celebrate the history and future of a place in transformation

Artist3: Vincenzo Agnetti, Louise Bourgeois, Francesca Cornacchini, Jesse Darling, Eva Fàbregas, Tarik Hayward, margaretha jüngling, Thomas Julier, Tarik Kiswanson, Corrado Levi, Paul Maheke, Marie Matusz, Mónica Mays, Hana Miletić, Effe Minelli, Lulù Nuti, Francesca Pionati and Tommaso Arnaldi, Aurélien Potier, Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings, Prem Sahib, Davide Stucchi, Grégory Sugnaux, Ian Waelder, Rachel Whiteread

October 10 – November 9, 2025
Via Gregoriana 9, 00187 Rome, Italy

Press preview: Thursday, October 9, 11:00 AM
Opening: Thursday, October 9, 6:00 PM
Reservation required

In the heart of Rome, a building rich with a century of cultural history but now abandoned for thirty years is about to lose the traces of its past uses. How can art play a role in preserving what risks disappearing from collective memory?

From October 10 to November 9, 2025, the Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History presents *Chi esce entra. A Tribute Exhibition to a Disappearing Building*, an unprecedented site-specific project in the history of the Institute, curated by Simon Würsten Marin, hosted at Via Gregoriana 9, just a few steps away from its historic headquarters at number 28.

Gathering together **over twenty Italian and international artists** working across sculpture, painting, photography, installation, video, and performance, the exhibition pays tribute to the building's original function by bringing their artworks into a sensorial and reflective dialogue with its architecture.

Inaugurated in 1911 as a private gallery by the prominent art dealer and collector Ludovico Spiridon, the building has since undergone multiple transformations and served many functions over time. Most famously, it housed *La Cage aux folles*, an iconic club of Rome's vibrant nightlife

in the 1980s, before falling into disuse. Today it stands as a contemporary ruin – hidden in the historic center and inaccessible to the public though not yet quite forgotten. With this ephemeral takeover, the exhibition brings the building back to life in a collective act of memory before its radical transformation into a new extension of the Bibliotheca Hertziana.

Chi esce entra approaches the building's current state of disrepair as one more meaningful stage in its layered history and as fertile ground for creative expression and critical thinking. At its core, the exhibition reflects on the role and potential of artistic practice in both preserving cultural memory and challenging traditional historiography – notably by eschewing academic methodologies and nuancing institutional narratives. The participating artists engage in subjective, poetic or speculative ways with notions of decay, heritage, and the politics of memory. Their works invite us to reflect on how processes of memory and oblivion materialize in public and domestic space, thus participating in shaping individual and collective identities. Presented in this unconventional, derelict setting, the artworks – several of them site-specific – reactivate the building's architecture and history while simultaneously unfolding diverse storylines that expand the exhibition's inquiry beyond the walls of Via Gregoriana 9.

The exhibition title – *Chi esce entra* (Who Exits Enters) – is borrowed from a work made of felt by Vincenzo Agnetti of 1971, in which the phrase is engraved and painted into the surface. An apparent aporia, it suggests that opposites are not necessarily exclusive but can converge to produce unexpected perspectives and new meanings. In this context, it is the impending disappearance of a building that triggers remembrance, creating an opportunity to rediscover its history. Thus, rather than standing as the residual skeleton of a building now empty and stripped of its past functions, the space takes on an active role as protagonist in the exhibition, as it is once more populated by artworks and audiences alike.

An integral part of the exhibition, the **public program** – including live performances, guided tours, and a round table discussion – will create **opportunities for dialogue with the public as well as the artistic and academic communities**. A **publication** (edited by Dario Cimorelli Editore) with essays and extensive documentation of the building and the exhibition will be released at the end of the project, establishing a lasting record of via Gregoriana 9.

The exhibition is an initiative of **Rome Contemporary**, a **research focus** of **Tristan Weddigen's** department, and is supported by the **Max Planck Foundation**. The Foundation is the current owner of via Gregoriana 9, which it was able to acquire thanks to a private sponsor. As the builder and developer, the Foundation is implementing the transformation project in close cooperation with the Bibliotheca Hertziana.

FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

Opening hours and accessibility

Via Gregoriana 9, 00187 Rome, Italy

From Wednesdays to Sundays, 4 – 8 PM

www.biblhertz.it

Event Booking: <https://www.biblhertz.it/chi-esce-entra>

Free entry

We regret to inform visitors that, due to its architectural layout, the venue is unfortunately not accessible to people with reduced mobility. We apologize for this limitation.

Contacts

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Simon Würsten Marin (1991, Lausanne) is a Swiss-Spanish curator, writer, and lecturer. He holds a Master's degree with a specialization in Art History in a Global Context from the University of Zurich. His practice is situated at the intersection of visual and performative arts and focuses on the artistic reception of the underground and countercultural movements from the 1970s to the present. Since 2013, he has organized numerous exhibitions and curatorial projects in institutions and independent art spaces in Switzerland, Germany, Argentina, France and Austria. His critical texts have been published in Swiss and international magazines such as CURA, Nero, Kunstbulletin, and Art Basel Stories. He currently teaches *Contemporary art theory* at ECAL, Lausanne. He previously worked as co-artistic director of the *Foodculture Days* biennial, guest lecturer at the Institute of Art History of the University of Zurich, curatorial and teaching assistant at the Basel Academy of Art and Design, among others.

The **Bibliotheca Hertziana – Max Planck Institute for Art History** promotes research in the field of Italian and global art and architectural history. The Institute fosters the training of outstanding researchers and offers the excellent resources of its library and photo library to international scholars.

Rome Contemporary is a research initiative promoted by the department of **Tristan Weddigen** that reconsiders the significance of Rome in the field of art during the 20th and 21st centuries and supports innovative research on the Roman art scene, taking into account its translocal interconnections.

The **Max Planck Foundation (Max-Planck-Förderstiftung)** is a private, independent and non-profit organization with the sole purpose of promoting excellent, innovative and forward-looking research projects of the Max Planck Society. Since its inception in 2006 around 500 private sponsors have supported the Foundation.

Simon Würsten Marin, curator of the exhibition:

"For this very special project, I chose artists whose work not only interacts visually with the space but also resonates with its history and the cultural challenges associated with the building's transformation. In their own way, each artist in the exhibition is interested in memory and how it manifests itself through architecture. Many of the artists in the exhibition take a critical stance toward institutional historical narratives and the way they exclude or even erase certain realities or perspectives. Art allows them to draw attention to these omissions and oversights. Through their works, several of which were created in situ, these artists invite us not only to experience this exceptional site, but also to reflect on how collective memory is constructed and impacts our sense of identity."

Tristan Weddigen, director of Bibliotheca Hertziana:

"As an art historical research institute, we feel a responsibility to document and remember such a cultural space before repurposing it for our scholarly activities. Since Bibliotheca Hertziana also supports the study of contemporary art, we adapted the methodology accordingly. With this exhibition, we stage a form of critical re-enactment of that building: by presenting contemporary art in the ruins of a historicist gallery, we invite the public to experience the history of art's aesthetic and institutional conditions as well as to create a collective memory of a place that we will all see for the first – and the last – time."

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Artists

Vincenzo Agnetti (Milan, 1926–1981)
Louise Bourgeois (Paris 1911–New York 2010)
Francesca Cornacchini (*1991 in Rome, lives and works in Rome)
Jesse Darling (*1981 in Oxford, lives and works in Oxford)
Eva Fàbregas (*1988 in Barcelona, lives and works in Barcelona)
Tarik Hayward (*1979 in Ibiza, lives and works in the Vallée de Joux, Switzerland)
margaretha jüngling (*1988 in Thusis, Switzerland, lives and works in Zurich)
Thomas Julier (*1983 in Brig, lives and works in Zurich)
Corrado Levi (*1936 in Turin, lives and works in Milan)
Tarik Kiswanson (*1986 in Halmstad, Sweden, lives and works in Paris)
Paul Maheke (*1985 in Brive-la-Gaillarde, France, lives and works in Montpellier)
Marie Matusz (*1994 in Toulouse, lives and works in Basel)
Mónica Mays (*1990 in Madrid, lives and works in Madrid)
Hana Miletic (*1982 in Zagreb, lives and works in Bruxelles)
Effe Minelli (*1988 in Pompei, lives and works in Torre del Greco, Italy)
Lulù Nuti (*1988 in Levallois-Perret, France, lives and works in Rome)
Francesca Pionati and Tommaso Arnaldi (*1990 in Avellino and *1993 in Rome, live and work in Rome and Milan)
Aurélien Potier (*1992 in Chenôve, France, lives and works in Marseilles)
Hannah Quinlan & Rosie Hastings (*1991 in Newcastle and *1991 in London, live and work in London)
Prem Sahib (*1982 in London, lives and works in London)
Davide Stucchi (*1988 in Vimercate, Italy, lives and works in Milan)
Grégory Sugnaux (*1989 a Fribourg, Switzerland, lives and works in Fribourg)
Ian Waelder (*1993 in Madrid, lives and works in Frankfurt am Main and Mallorca)
Rachel Whiteread (*1963 in London, lives and works in London)

Exhibition credits

Curator: Simon Würsten Marin
Curatorial Assistant: Silvia Carletti
Director: Tristan Weddigen
Executive Assistant: Mara Freiberg Simmen
Graphic Designer: Susanna Foppoli
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Publication

Chi esce entra, exh.-cat. ed. by Simon Würsten Marin, with texts by Tristan Weddigen, Simon Würsten Marin, Margherita Fratarcangeli, He Shen
Dario Cimorelli Editore, Milan, 2025

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Public Program

Thursday, October 9, 2025, 6:00 PM

Exhibition opening at via Gregoriana 9 and refreshments at via Gregoriana 22 with an edible installation by margaretha jüngling

Wednesday, October 29, 2025, 6:00–10:00 PM

Performance night with Lara Dâmaso, Sorour Darabi, ISAM, and more

Thursday, October 30, 2025, 5:00 PM

Via Gregoriana 22

Catalog presentation followed by a round table discussion with Anna Puigjaner (ETH Zurich), Facundo Revuelta (University of Buenos Aires), Yousef Taha يوسف طه (RIWAQ, Ramallah), moderated by HE Shen 何珅 (ETH Zurich)

Curator's guided tours

Saturday, October 18, 16:00 (ITALIAN)

Wednesday, October 22, 2025, 6:30 PM (ENGLISH)

Wednesday, November 5, 2025, 6:30 PM (ITALIAN)

Saturday, November 8, 2025, 4:00 PM (ENGLISH)