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NICCOLÒ MONTESI

The Unreality of Reality. The Reality of the Unreal

2 April 2026 > 30 May 2026

Niccolò Montesi

The Unreality of Reality. The Reality of the Unreal

Exhibition from 2 April to 30 May 2026

Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain is pleased to present 'The Unreality of Reality. The Reality of the Unreal', Niccolò Montesi's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Niccolò Montesi's photography is part of a tradition of research that considers the image as a means of questioning and transforming the gaze. In his practice, it becomes a process of abstraction and visual concentration that questions the relationship between reality, perception and imagination. The PANTELLERIA PAESE and TRESIGALLO series develop two complementary dimensions of his research. These two places, distant geographically, historically and in their urban form, are nevertheless linked by the same approach: that of considering reality not only as a physical space, but also as a symbolic and mental projection surface.

In Pantelleria, Montesi focuses on architecture that has been profoundly marked by time and daily use. Walls, surfaces and chromatic textures become the true subjects of the images. The low, irregular light emphasizes their materiality, revealing imperfections, cracks and traces of lived experience. Through fragmented, close-up compositions, often devoid of recognizable spatial references, Montesi isolates portions of reality and transforms them into autonomous visual fields. This approach reveals similarities with Alberto Burri's material research and Nicolas de Staël's lyrical abstractions. Pantelleria thus appears as an island that is felt rather than seen, where reality can only be grasped after a slow process of contemplation, revealing all the immaterial richness that permeates it.

With regard to the work on Tresigallo, a different but mirror-image direction is developing. Here, Montesi is interested in rationalist architecture in an urban space designed according to principles of order, symmetry and formal control. Similarly, the images are constructed from essential geometries, measured horizons and a rigorous use of light, which defines volumes and surfaces with almost analytical precision. Montesi also strives to reveal the mysterious dimension of this architecture. Tresigallo thus appears as a suspended and silent city, imbued with a sense of temporal immobility. This character echoes metaphysical painting, particularly that of Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carrà, where architecture becomes a symbolic place devoid of human presence.

Niccolò Montesi observes reality while transforming it, revealing the sensitive and symbolic dimensions of the landscape and urban space. In his work, the unreal is not a denial of reality, but one of its possible extensions. Photography thus becomes a tool for capturing the complexity and ambiguity of reality, opening up a space for reflection that goes beyond simple representation.

Niccolò Montesi (Padova, Italy, 1977) lives and works in Milan, Italy

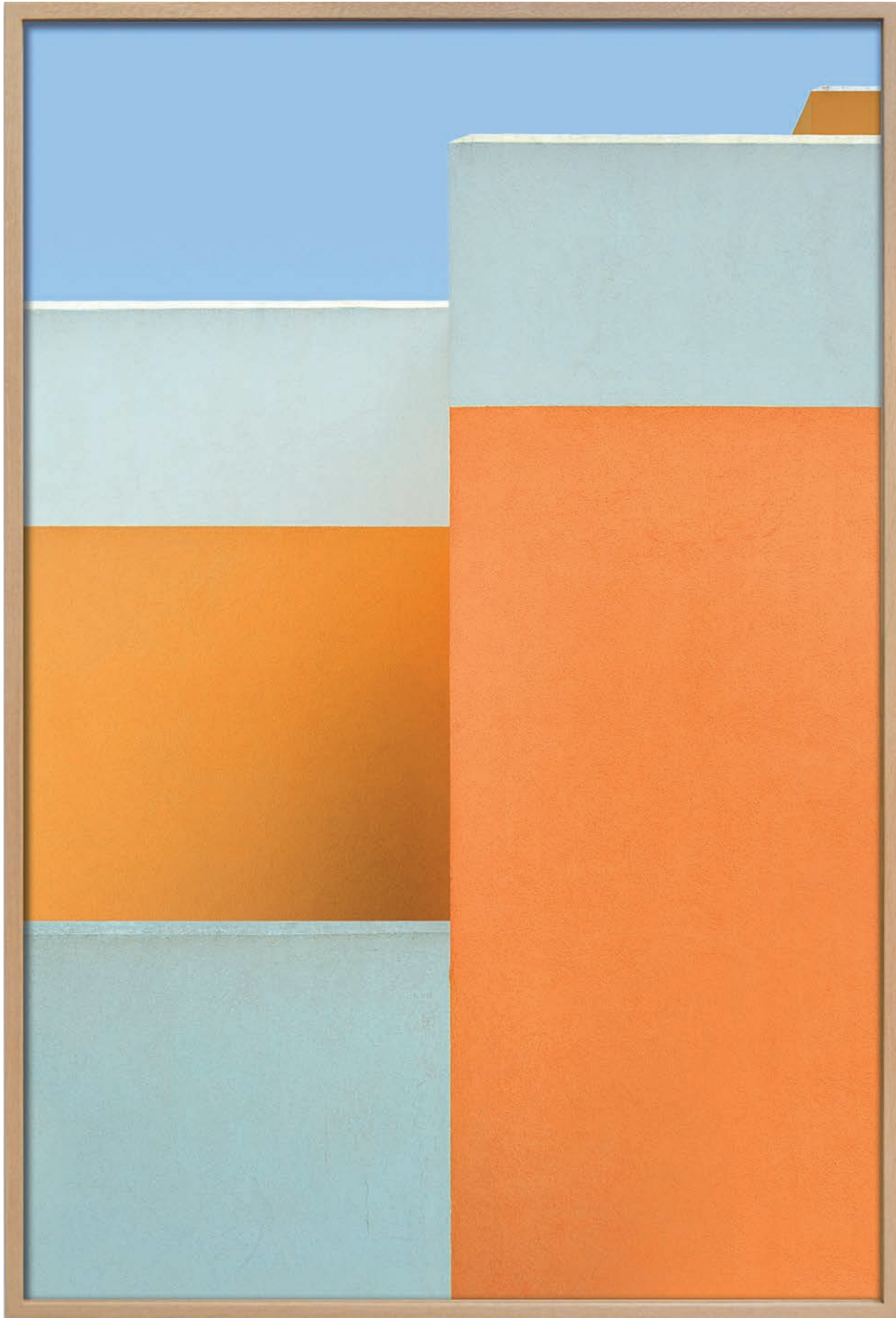
SOLO EXHIBITIONS (Selection) : «Mediolanum Urbe», Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2021) | «Over the Appearance», Fay (Tod's Group), Milan, Italy (2017) | **GROUP EXHIBITIONS (Selection)** : «Lights for winter», Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2023) | «BPAC Photo», Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2020) | «United we rise», Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2020) | Bias 2018, «Porta in itineris longissima esse», Pavilions at Riso Museum & at Palazzo Aliata di Villafranca, Palermo, Italy (2018) | «Porta in itineris longissima esse» Castle of Morsasco, Morsasco, Italy (2017) | «Porta Itineris Longissima esse», Algiubagìo Garden - Ca Donà, Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy (2017) | **COLLECTIONS** : JPMorganChase Corporate Art Collection, New York, United States

UPCOMING :

> Art Paris, 9 > 12 April 2026, Paris

Artists : Francisca Aninat | Irit Batsry | Débora Bolsoni | Thomas Broomé | Dias & Riedweg | Maria Friberg | Niklas Goldbach | Lake Vereá | Steven Le Priol | Pablo Lobato | Pedro Motta | **Niccolò Montesi** | Matthias Reinmuth | Caio Reisewitz | Olivier Richon | Florencia Rodriguez Giles | Julio Rondo | Miguel Rothschild | Giancarlo Scaglia | Alireza Shojaian | Sandra Vásquez de la Horra

Collaboration : Giulia Andreani | Bianca Argimon | Waldo Balart | Ernesto Ballesteros | Iulian Bisericarú | Cathy Burghi | Seba Calfuqueo | Julie Chaumette | Chiachio & Giannone | Alberto Cont | Luca Cutrufelli | Arnaud Dezoteux | Inci Eviner | Agnès Geoffray | Mauro Giaconi | Pablo Hare | Hirofumi Isoya | Adam Jeppesen | Lunga Kama | Aspasia Krystalla | Alejandra Laviada | Jarbas Lopes | Cinthia Marcelle | Norton Maza | Gori Mora | Ronald Morán | Julien Nédélec | Ouïe / Dire | Bernardo Oyarzún | Alicia Paz | Christiane Pooley | Bernardo Ramalho | Thiago Rocha Pitta | Dineo Seshee Bopape | Vahan Soghomonian | Fabrice Souvereys | Camila Sposati | Peter Stridsberg | TORAJIRO



PANTELLERIA PAESE 39, 2026
Fine Art digital print on Hahnemühle Cotton Paper
50 x 33.5 cm | 51.5 x 35 x 4.5 cm (Frame)
Edition : 3 + 2 AP



PANTELLERIA PAESE 45, 2026
Fine art Inkjet print on Hahnemühle Cotton Paper
100 x 150 cm | 102.8 x 152.8 x 4.5 cm (Frame)
Edition : 3 + 2 AP



TRESIGALLO 3, 2025

Fine art Inkjet print on Hahnemühle Cotton Paper, satin water-based enamel

80 x 120 cm | 81.6 x 122 x 4.5 cm (Frame)

Edition : 3 + 2 AP