

PRESS RELEASE

From 17th September at the Gallery of Modern Art of Rome The innovative style of the two renowned Italian *Muralists* in the exhibition “STEN LEX. Rinascita (Rebirth)”

On exhibition a selection of works and a stencil poster installation
in the Gallery’s cloister

Rome, 17 September 2020. From 17th September to 22nd November 2020, the **Gallery of Modern Art of Rome** will host **STEN LEX. Rinascita (Rebirth)**, an exhibition promoted by **Roma Capitale**, the **Office for the Promotion of Culture – the Capitoline Superintendence for Cultural Heritage** and the **Wunderkammern** gallery, organized in collaboration with **Zètema Progetto Cultura**.

The project, curated by Wunderkammern, is part of **Romarama**, a program of cultural events promoted by Roma Capitale.

For the exhibition, that presents a **selection of medium-large works** among which are stencil posters and prints on paper with iron, wooden and glass supports, the two Italian artists have also produced a stencil poster installation in the **cloister of the Gallery** as well as another large stencil poster, still in the planning stage, to be installed on the facade and presented to the public at a later date.

Rebirth, renewal and regeneration are just some of the ideals underpinning the innovative style of Sten Lex, the pioneers of stencil posters, that place them among **the most internationally renowned Italian muralists**.

Their huge figures with unknown faces and dense abstract patterns are found today on the walls of Paris, New York, London, Shanghai, Barcelona, Mexico City, Madrid and Rome.

They are dynamic works that come to life over time together with the walls, changing their appearance and getting rid of the original matrices. Giant faces that, unperturbed, survey the street and passers-by, some in busy places, others in hidden and undiscovered urban corners, stencils and posters, pieces of paper that are painted and attached to the walls grow older and change, they die and decompose becoming part of the artwork itself.

One is from Rome, the other from Taranto, class of 79-80. Their names first appeared on Roman walls in **2001**, with works with strong references to cinema, sacred art and pop culture, first separately, making portraits of characters from Italian b-movies and 1970s American TV series, such as Hitchcock, Orson Welles and Bergman. In 2005, their paths and their names begin to come together, unleashing twice the energy and creativity in their works. From the iconic faces of stamps and banknotes to drawings and posters on tissue paper, they arrive at the creation of what they call *Hole School*, inserting the mezzotint into the stencil, making optical figures composed of pixels or lines.

From 2010 to 2013, they made portraits of anonymous people on large walls, mostly students and professors taken from university yearbooks from the 1960s-1990s: this is when they move further away from Pop iconography to give space to unknown characters belonging to the middle class.

Constant experimentation, that characterizes their art, soon led the two artists to the invention of the “stencil poster”, a technique based on the combination of mezzotint and stencils that is inspired by classical engravings and today’s prints, and that has earned them the title of “engravers of the new millennium.” The stencil poster consists of pasting a poster on a wall as if it were wallpaper, cutting it to make a matrix, painting it, and finally letting the weather, that substitutes the artists, reveal the final work by destroying the paper matrix, bringing out the painting underneath. This process goes against the main utility of the stencil, which is its reproducibility, the decaying matrix makes the work “unique” and no longer replicable, a paradox of the technique itself.

The style of Sten Lex takes a surprising new turn in **2013**, when the two artists veer **from figurative art** towards the composition of **abstract** forms, lines and landscapes, under the influence of artists such as Kandinsky, Mirò, Dorazio, Twombly, Sol LeWitt, and Frank Stella but never abandoning the street, the place where it all began.

Appreciated not only in Italy, in **2008 they were invited by Banksy to his Cans Festival** in London and, evermore in demand, in the years to follow they began to work on immense surfaces, creating gigantic works for some of the most important international festivals. These include the Nuart Festival in Stavanger, Norway (2008, 2010), the Living Walls in Atlanta in the USA (2012), the Katowice Street Art Festival in Poland (2013), the Palma festival in Caen in France (2019) and many more. In 2014, the Italian Culture Institute, sponsors their creation of a mural in **Shanghai**, entitled “Vulcano”. In 2014 they created “Arazzo” at the Foro Italico in Rome. In the same year, they took part in collective exhibitions in contemporary art museums such as the Maco in Oaxaca, Mexico, the Caixa Cultural in Sao Paulo in Brazil and the Cafa Museum in Beijing.

One of their latest projects to note is their participation in the “Cross the Streets” exhibition at the MACRO in Rome in 2017.

INFO SHEET

<i>Title of exhibition</i>	STEN LEX. Rinascita (Rebirth)
<i>Location</i>	Galleria d’Arte Moderna di Roma – via Francesco Crispi, 24
<i>Open to the public</i>	17 September - 22 November 2020
<i>Opening times</i>	From Tuesdays to Sundays 10 AM - 6.30 PM Closing days: Mondays, 1 January, 1 May, 25 December
<i>Tickets</i>	Online pre-purchasing advised Full price € 7,50; Concessions € 6,50 For residents in Rome Full price € 6,50; Concessions € 5,50 Admission with free ticket for certain categories included in current fee regulations. Admission with free ticket for MIC Card holders
<i>To enter the museum</i>	Wait for your turn keeping a safe distance from others (at least 1 m. apart). Temperature will be measured with a temperature scanner (those with a temperature of 37.5 or over will not be admitted). Show your digital ticket or your

print@Home paper ticket. It is not necessary to go to the ticket office.

Inside the museum

Use of masks is obligatory. Gatherings are not permitted. Safe distancing must be practiced (at least 1 m.) with the exception of families. Sanitizing hand gel/gloves available. Access to the WC is in limited numbers. Please pay attention to the signs.

Promoted by

Roma Capitale, Office for the Promotion of Culture – Capitoline Superintendence for Cultural Heritage and Wunderkammern Gallery

Curated by

Sten Lex

Organized by

Zètema Progetto Cultura

Exhibition Info

Tel. 060608 (every day from 9 AM – 7 PM);
www.galleriaartemodernaroma.it