

## VENETIKA EXHIBITION ARRIVES AT MAXXI

### THE IMMERSIVE AND ENGAGING VIDEO INSTALLATION BY FERZAN OZPETEK WITH KASIA SMUTNIAK

FROM 29 MARCH TO 30 APRIL

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Roma, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022. A magic box that encloses Ferzan Ozpetek's visionary Venice. Sinuous images in soft colors, filtered as in a dream by the liquid lens of the water, of the sea that surrounds it. It is **Venetika**, the director's tribute to the lagoon city: a video installation starring a wonderful **Kasia Smutniak**, eternal and mysterious as the city that embodies.

The project, curated by **Giovanna Zabotti**, produced by Faros Film and Fondaco, with Bulgari as main partner, was conceived in 2019 for the 58th Venice Biennale of Art and it now arrives in Rome at MAXXI, National Museum of Arts of the 21st century, **from 29 March to 30 April 2022**.

This is how **Ferzan Ozpetek** describes Venetika "Venice is represented as a woman submerged in water (Kasia Smutniak). The floating, liquid and opaque surface of the lagoon acts as a screen: on her face and body appear images of the materials the city is made of, when liquid became solid and turned into marble, wood, string and metal. The images of the city move on her, beautiful and eternal, lying underwater because everything own her but in the meanwhile she owns everything. This woman is neither the Mermaid that lives in the water nor Ophelia that in the water dies. She is the city itself being reborn continuously, feeding on its own images, protected by a water that resembles the amniotic fluid".

Visitors will find in piazza Alighiero Boetti a unique casket, a red cube of 7 meters by 7 with mirrored walls that on the one hand recall the tradition of the "Venetian mirrors", on the other reflect the surrounding environment immersing in it.

The explosion of color of the outside acts as a counterpoint to the darkness and the rarefied atmosphere of the inside, where the audience follows a path that, as in a game of Chinese boxes, winds around a central "room" dedicated to the projection of the short film, true heart of the installation. On the ground the wooden slats refer to the typical piers of Venice, on the walls large-format images taken from the film accompany the visitor.

The route ends with the Corto, a 5-minute film enclosed like a treasure in the inner area. The visitor, suspended above a pier, is wrapped by the projection on 3 walls, while images reflect on the ground on a water pool, creating an engaging and immersive feeling. All around you can smell the scent of the lagoon, while the music and the voice of Sezen Aksu spread.

**Giovanna Melandri** says: "*Every time I describe a city, I say something about Venice. So states, Marco Polo to Kublai Kan in *The Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino, evoking the magic of Venice. Here, this magic takes shape in the work of Ferzan Ozpetek, beautiful and poetic, engaging, immersive, ineffable. Venetika brings to Rome a bit of this enchantment, creating an ideal bond between the two cities, eternal and wonderful. This work also reflects the dialogue between knowledge that is in the MAXXI DNA and still strengthens the collaboration with Bulgari with whom we share the love for experimentation, innovation and support for creativity*".

The curator, **Giovanna Zabotti**, comments "Venice is a crossroad of people, a multicultural city, a door from and to the world. I had a challenge: to find someone who represented the intersections of the "multi cultures", who was as human as possible and who, at the same time, was able to give a true representation of the City. The name of Ferzan Ozpetek was suggested and he really is all this: human, visionary, multicultural,

The artist immersed himself in the city, became part of it, chose to live it with different eyes and made a unique portrait: Kasia Smutniak in apnea, taken among the projections of the most famous pictorial representations of the city, of its unmistakable views. Choosing MAXXI as the first location for this moving work was natural: a contemporary art museum and an architecture outside the box, a place of research and experimentation, the perfect place for Venetika".

**Lucia Boscaini**, Bulgari Brand Curator adds: "For many reasons, linked to the stylistic codes and to the history of the brand, we have "reflected" in this project: first of all, the visionary creativity of Ozpetek who chose to project his creation on water, an unconventional screen that has captured the essence of a city that lives and reflects on the water. Ozpetek's "magic box" contains a jewel, and this jewel is interpreted by a woman who gives it soul, sensitivity, depth. In the more than 130 years of his creativity, Bvlgari has often taken unusual paths, playing with the most diverse materials to translate his contemporary aesthetics. Ozpetek is also a film director and Bulgari has a deep connection with the world of cinema, with the many stars who loved the brand and with the many films in which our jewels have appeared. Finally, Venetika arrives at the MAXXI, Museum with which for years Bulgari has shared a synergy of values and actions to promote young talents. We could not but proudly support this short circuit between cinema, art and poetry, an exciting contamination of languages that is also a gift for Rome."

MAXXI, National Museum of Arts of the 21st century  
Via Guido Reni 4 A, Roma  
Opening: martedì 29 marzo  
Entrance with museum ticket (12 euro full ticket, 9 euro reduced)

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