

NICOLÒ DEGIORGIS

Le baron perché

Nicolò Degiorgis's (1985) photographic surveys bear witness to social phenomena. Using the image as a vector and the book as a form - the book becomes an object, unfolding and developing into a potential exhibition - his work allows us to enter uninhabited, neglected spaces that nevertheless reflect the collective uses of the city.

The exhibition **Le baron perché** presents three sets of works: *Hidden Islam* (2009-2014), *Heimatkunde* (2017), and *L'Arlequin & La Villeneuve* (2018). These ensembles take a benevolent look at questions dealing with origin, immigration and place in the social and physical space of the cities through which the artist passes, and from which he draws subjective reports. However, these works are careful not to provide easy answers, nor to exploit complacency or emotional responses. What links Nicolò Degiorgis's projects presented at the CAP - Centre d'arts plastiques de Saint-Fons, is an object of complexity, an aesthetic approach that involves photography, the artist's book, and the exhibition display that leads us to a mise en abyme of the gaze.

Hidden Islam

«Consider these facts. In Italy the right to worship, without discrimination, is enshrined within the constitution. There are 1.35 million Muslims in Italy and yet, officially, only eight mosques in the whole country.

One consequence is that the Muslim population have accumulated a huge number of makeshift and temporary places of worship. These are housed in a variety of buildings including lock ups, garages, shops, warehouses and old factories.

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Le baron perché

22 septembre - 24 novembre 2018

Opening

Friday 21 September 2018 - 18.00

Access

Free

From Tuesday to

Saturday 14.00-18.00

and by appointment

rue de la Rochette

69190 Saint-Fons

Public transport

Tram T4 Lénine - Corsière

Bus 60 Yves Farge

Bus 93 La Rochette-Clochettes

lecap-saintfons.com

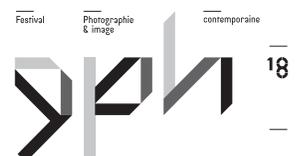
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This shortage of places to worship is particularly acute in north east Italy – where the photographer Nicolò Degiorgis lives – home to many anti-Islamic campaigns headed by the right wing party Lega Nord. The dull images of the many and diverse buildings that house the makeshift mosques are printed on folded pages. You open up the gatefold to reveal the scenes inside the mosques, shot in full colour. The size of the gatherings varies, from large crowds who sometimes pray outside to a small room full to bursting, or to intimate groups of two or three Muslims.

Degiorgis provides a fascinating glimpse of hidden world and leaves the conclusions about this project entirely in our own hands.»

From the introduction by Martin Parr

In 2014 Hidden Islam was awarded the Gold Award - Deutscher Fotobuchpreis, First Book Award - Paris Photo/Aperture Foundation and Author Book Award - Les Rencontres des Arles.



Nicolò Degiorgis, *Hidden Islam*,
book, 90 pages, 16 x 24 cm,

2014

Heimatkunde

Heimat is a German word that does not translate directly into any other language. It describes a feeling of belonging in a local, social, cultural and geographical context.

Thought as *Heimatkunde* in German speaking elementary schools in South tyrol until the beginning of the 90s, the subject explores every child's world starting with the individual, expanding to the family, friends, classroom, social structure and immediate geography up to the environment, animals and plants, and local history.

Heimatkunde has been realized in collaboration with Degiorgis' school-teacher Christine Frenes, and is composed of the Heimatkunde Journal Nicolò Degiorgis made himself between the age of 8 and 10. The book is an invitation to map your own geographical and conceptual elements of the place we live in, creating a personal, multi-layered vision of our local dimension.



Nicolò Degiorgis, *Heimatkunde*,
book, 340 pages, 16 x 24 cm, 2017

L'Arlequin & La Villeneuve

« The project, *L'Arlequin & La Villeneuve* was made by the artist, Nicolò Degiorgis, during a research and production residency, carried out since October 2017 at the ÉSAD - Grenoble - Valence at the invitation of the research platform *Pratiques d'hospitalité*, in partnership with the Museion Bozen-Bolzano - Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Bolzano (IT) and with the support of the Italian Council, which supports the production and dissemination of contemporary Italian art, which was created by the Direzione Generale Arte e Architettura Contemporanea e Periferie Urbane du MiBACT.

As can be seen in the series *Hidden Islam* (2009-2014) and *Le Tunnel* (2017), Degiorgis's photographic work seeks to document social and political minorities in the public and domestic spheres, and how they inhabit the contexts of urban segregation within the contemporary European space. The visibility produced by his photographic images - often produced in a collaborative way - makes it possible to inject back into the collective imagination what had been taken away from it in a detrimental way.

As part of his residency in Grenoble, Nicolò Degiorgis was interested in the architectural, social and political complexity of L'Arlequin and La Villeneuve. Built by the Atelier d'Urbanisme et Architecture (AUA) between 1970 and 1983, in a peri-urban area located in the south of Grenoble, these two districts were seen at the time of their construction as an architectural utopia based on the myths and rhetoric of innovation and social diversity; exalting community life through experimentation with forms of active citizenship, as shown by the experience of *Vidéogazette* neighbourhood television (1972 - 1976). Subsequently transformed into a housing area for ethnic, religious and social minorities, these areas were stigmatized as «sensitive neighbourhoods,» by the media and political discourse in the early 2000s in the wake of suburban riots.

At the same time, and perhaps because of this negative valorisation, these spaces have become a particularly intensive field of investigation in sociology.

It is in this context, that Nicolò Degiorgis critically questions the capacity of the artistic and documentary media to formulate a diagnosis of social complexities and their presumption to constitute themselves as a space of denunciation. In order to avoid the hyper-visibility and stereotyping of the suburban context that the media and cinema have generated, Degiorgis has chosen to photograph solely architectural spaces and their natural environment. By



Nicolò Degiorgis, *Le baron perché*,
color photograph,
from the series
L'Arlequin & La Villeneuve, 2018

presenting these impressive architectural structures in the evening light, where human presence is «dormant», confined to their domestic spaces, his images propose an inversion of miserable and paternalistic narratives that offer other ways of narrating the experience of these peri-urban areas. They contribute to the elaboration of an ethical and responsible position on the part of the artist regarding the urgent need for a tangible hospitality that refuses representation and vampirization. »

Simone Frangi and Katia Schneller
ÉSAD ·Grenoble ·Valence

Nicolò Degiorgis benefited from a three-part research and production residency in Grenoble from October 2017, as part of the activities of the research platform Pratiques d'hospitalité, founded and coordinated by Katia Schneller and Simone Frangi at the ÉSAD (École Supérieure d'Art et de Design), in Grenoble. He has produced a photographic series, a number of installations, and an artist's edition published by Rorhof Publishing, which was exhibited in April 2018, in the Gallery of the ÉSAD.

Le baron perché is an exhibition by the artist Nicolò Degiorgis, curated by Nicolas Audureau, and promoted by ÉSAD ·Grenoble ·Valence (École Supérieure d'Art et de Design), winner of the first edition of Italian Council (2017), a competition conceived by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Art and Architecture and Urban Peripheries (DGAAP) – an organism of the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities, to promote Italian contemporary art in the world.