

PRESS RELEASE

EX – ILLUSTRIX ELENA XAUSA

Gallerie d'Italia - Vicenza, Intesa Sanpaolo's museum

From 15 April to 10 September 2023

As part of Festival Illustri, in collaboration with Associazione Illustri di Vicenza

Vicenza, 14 2023 – Intesa Sanpaolo is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition *EX-Illustri x Elena Xausa*, which runs from **15 April to 10 September 2023** at **Gallerie d'Italia – Vicenza**. Realised in collaboration with the Vicenza-based cultural association **Illustri** and in partnership with the Municipality of Vicenza, the exhibition forms part of a series of initiatives produced by Intesa Sanpaolo for **Festival Illustri**. The bank has collaborated with this important biennale of the association since 2015, by hosting the section **Illustrissimi**, which features exhibitions of renowned artists such as Lobato, Noma Bar, Malika Favre and Christoph Niemann. With this exhibition, the Bank's museum in Vicenza launches an annual series of projects focused on contemporary international illustration.

The first protagonist of the EX exhibition is internationally renowned Italian artist **Elena Xausa** (1984–2022). The title EX is inspired by the signatures in her work but it has been chosen also for its etymology: EX can also imply movement and a starting point; as well as what makes us move from there. This exhibition represents not only an homage to a great artist but also a celebration of contemporary illustration and an opportunity to bring her legacy to life through the liveliness of her art.

Elena Xausa lived in Venice, Berlin, Milan and New York, working not only for journals and magazines such as *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *Les Echos*, *Monocle*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Icon Design*, but also for international brands such as Apple, Nike, Fendi and many more. Her artistic research encouraged her to explore the never-ending possibilities of

drawing and to develop her work in relation to the third dimension, through site-specific installations, as well as design and fashion creations.

The exhibition presents **200 works**, providing both a chronological and a thematic approach to the artist's practice. The first gallery hosts **EXperimenti**, a section dedicated to the most private and intimate elements of her artistic practice. This section will feature many of her sketchbooks, as well as works in ceramic and sculptures.

In the section **Expo**, the exhibition unfolds to reveal Elena Xausa's artistic production from 2009 to 2019, when the artist left Italy and moved around Europe, eventually settling in New York for a several years. Libraries, cafés, coworking spaces, trains and ferries, planes and cars, friend's apartments, flowery meadows, Norwegian coasts and American clearings are some of the places and spaces explored in her illustrations. The section also presents Elena Xausa's **most important publications in her ten-year-long career**, sharing details of the collaborations she made with illustrious international newspapers and European and international trend-setting companies.

The section **EXnovo** offers further insight into the art and life of Elena Xausa, as well as the influence she had on other artists. One hundred illustrators, designers and artists have been invited to contribute to the exhibition and to share a personal homage to Elena through prints, paintings, sculptures, ceramics, installations, videos, and other works. Several of these works will be made available at the end of the exhibition to raise funds for AIRC, the Italian Association for Cancer Research. Artists involved include Matteo Cibic, Ale Giorgini, Luca Zamoc, Guido Scarabottolo, Giorgia Lupi, Mauro Gatti, Koes, Manuele Fior, Basik, Sarah Mazzetti, Emiliano Ponzi, Lorenzo Fonda, Lavinia Xausa, Luca Font, Massimo Giacon, and Riccardo Guasco.

Finally, the section **Excursus** allows space and time to each visitor to creatively express themselves and create a work following the suggestions and feelings that have blossomed from the visit. A mural by Luca Zamoc, a street artist who is creating a work dedicated to Elena between 12 and 14 April, will embellish the site.

Throughout the duration of the exhibition, **EXtra**, a rich programme of workshops, talks and projects focusing on contemporary illustration, will also take place at Gallerie d'Italia in Vicenza. Each week, **EXtra_01** will offer a selection of activities and events including family labs, creative workshops for children, educational activities and guided tours. On 17 and 18 June, **EXtra_02** will showcase a special series of inspirational events and workshops on illustration. On 8 and 9 July, **EXtra_03** will offer a two-day creative event in the courtyard of the Gallerie d'Italia, bringing together authors, illustrators and professionals from Elena Xausa's creative community to interact with the general public.

In addition to reduced ticket prices and free admission to planned activities, a **special open ticket**, allowing unlimited entry to the exhibition, is also available.

Michele Coppola, Executive Director, Art, Culture and Historical Heritage at Intesa Sanpaolo, states: “The project renews the well-established collaboration with Associazione Illustri, which in recent years has brought the most prestigious names in contemporary illustration to our Gallerie d'Italia in Vicenza, as part of the biennale, “Illustri Festival”. Giving continuity to the dialogue and confirming Palazzo Leoni Montanari as a place for the enhancement of this art form, a series of annual appointments is launched with “EX”, offering exhibitions together with activities such as workshops and meetings. Gallerie d'Italia continues to offer the city a space that hosts collections and exhibitions, as well as moments of coming together, sharing and creativity”.

Francesco Poroli, curator of the exhibition and President of Associazione Illustri, says: “We are happy and honoured to be able to present “EX - Illustri x Elena Xausa”, an ambitious project that renews the well-established collaboration between Illustri and Gallerie d'Italia. This will be a wonderful opportunity to gather together to discover the deepest meanings of the word creativity, while paying homage to Elena Xausa and the inspiration that her work has given and continues to give to a wide creative community, which is the protagonist of the project”.

Along with Gallerie d'Italia in Milan, Naples and Turin, Gallerie d'Italia in Vicenza is part of Intesa Sanpaolo's museum project, led by Michele Coppola, Executive Director of Art, Culture and Historical Heritage at the Bank.

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About Intesa Sanpaolo

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