

PRESS RELEASE

On the occasion of the 2014 Fuorisalone

Fondazione Ermanno Casoli presents

Middle-Earth. A journey inside Elica

An exhibition with photos by
Fabio Barile and Francesco Neri
Curated by Alessandro Dandini de Sylva and Marcello Smarrelli
setup Studio stARTT

opening: Tuesday 8 April 2014, 6.30 pm
open from 9 to 26 April 2014

Showroom Elica
Milan, via Pontaccio 10 (Brera district)

Fabriano, March 2014

From Tuesday 8 to Saturday 26 April 2014, during the 2014 Milan Fuorisalone, Fondazione Ermanno Casoli and Elica present *Middle-Earth. A journey inside Elica*, an exhibition with photos by Fabio Barile and Francesco Neri curated by Alessandro Dandini de Sylva and Marcello Smarrelli, artistic director of the Fondazione. The setting up is designed by Studio stARTT, the many times awarded architecture and territory transformation studio.

THE PROJECT

The project is the result of a journey two young Italian photographers carried out across some of the Elica Group premises around the world (China, Italy, Mexico) with the objective of immortalizing a multifaceted reality that goes beyond a mere simple "business" dimension. A reality that is first of all made up of the people who work in it, each one with their own unique and valuable identity that these photos reflect in an all-round portrait devoid of rhetoric.

The idea of entrusting two young artists with the task of producing Elica's "portrait" derives from the Group's and the Fondazione Ermanno Casoli's will of experimenting the possibility of interpreting the company's image from an external perspective, capable of breaking free from consolidated conventions and schemes. A project that is totally in line with the mission of both the company and the Fondazione - these are in fact two institutions that have always promoted innovative processes through art. "The Fondazione Ermanno Casoli presented us another challenge and we decided to embrace it - explains **Francesco Casoli**, President of Elica Group. The Fondazione invited us to give the two young Italian photographers free access inside Elica; the result was a truthful portrait, in which I can detect the company's capacity of transforming its structure, a portrait in progress revealing how we are capable of reinventing ourselves".

THE EXHIBITION

The show presents over 30 photos by **Francesco Neri** and **Fabio Barile**, two artists who chose photography as their main means of expression. Neri studied and portrayed the faces of the people working in the Querétaro (Mexico), Shengzhou (China) and Fabriano (Italy) Elica plants, while Barile focused on the industrial landscape of the Italian premises in Fabriano and Mergo.

Once integrated, these two parallel works succeed in giving a description of Elica's multifaceted personality: its strong connection to the local territory and its international dimension, the strength rooted in the highest Italian design tradition and its openness to the dynamics and the cultures of the different countries in which it operates, its state of the art production technology and its openness towards research, typical of an industrial workshop.

For **Francesco Neri** his research on portraits is an experimental photographic investigation on human and social categories, explicitly inspired by August Sander's monumental oeuvre, an essential point of reference for whoever tackles photographic portraits. **Fabio Barile's** work instead focuses on the observation of the territory and on the phenomena that relate to it in an industrial context, made of machineries and artificial light. What binds the two works on a formal level is their slow-paced and carefully studied objective standpoint (a typical trait of the photographers of Guido Guidi's school) and the extraordinary quality in details, obtained by using a view camera, an instrument of patience and pause.

Please click [here](#) to download the exhibition's invitation and images in HR.

THE PUBLICATION

Middle-Earth. A journey inside Elica is accompanied by a catalogue published by Fondazione Ermanno Casoli and conceived and developed by Filippo Nostri, including a rich photo selection, texts by Francesco Casoli, President of Elica Group and Marcello Smarrelli, and a conversation between Fabio Barile, Francesco Neri and Alessandro Dandini de Sylva.

BIOGRAPHIES

Fabio Barile (Barletta, 1980) studied photography at the Fondazione Studio Marangoni with Guido Guidi. In 2007 he was among the fifteen finalists of the *Atlante Italiano 007* competition and his photos were exhibited at the MAXXI in Rome. His first solo exhibition, *Diary n°0 - Things that do not Happen*, was included in the 2009 *FOTOGRAFIA - International Festival* in Rome. That same year, his project *Among* was included in *Tempi Osceni - Moments de la photographie contemporaine italienne II* at the Centre d'Art Dominique Lang et Centre d'Art Nei Liicht and at the Athens Photo Festival. In 2010, he entered the *Documentary Platform, A Visual Archive*. In 2012, his publication *Soli Finti* was selected for the Dummy Award of the Photobook Festival and exhibited in Paris and Le Bal.

Francesco Neri (Faenza, 1982) studied photography at the Fine Arts Academy of Ravenna with Guido Guidi. His photographic research on portraits and social landscape has developed over the last 8 years. In 2009, he entered *Documentary Platform, A Visual Archive* and was one of the founders of the Ravenna Osservatorio Fotografico. In 2012, his long term research on portrait was awarded best photographic project at the *FOTOGRAFIA - International Festival* in Rome. That same year he won the Architecture Selection contest held by the Emilia Romagna Cultural Heritage Institute. In 2013, he was nominated director and tutor of the Visiting Program Lugo Land/AA - Architectural Association, School of Architecture of London.

Studio stARTT was founded in Rome in 2008. The studio's work has received many international awards, including the European YAP MAXXI 2011 award for under-35 architecture. Projects the studio participated in include *La jeune architecture européenne* at the Pavillon de l'Arsenal de Paris and the show *FUTURE: Architecture e(s)t Paysage* also in Paris. Works by **Studio stARTT** are currently exhibited at the Shenzhen and Hong Kong Biennale and included in the travelling exhibition on Italian architecture innovation entitled *Piccole Utopie*.

THE COMPANY AND THE FOUNDATION

The **Elica Group** - active in the domestic hood production since the 1970s and currently chaired by President Francesco Casoli and CEO Giuseppe Perucchetti - is today's world leader in terms of sold items. Elica also plays a leading role in Europe for the designing, the production and the commercialization of hood electric motors and water heating appliances. With about 3.000 employees and an annual production of over 17 million pieces, the Elica Group has a productive platform which includes eight plants in Italy, Poland, Mexico, Germany, India and China. A long-standing experience in the sector, great attention to design, select materials and state of the art technology for maximum efficiency and reduced consumes, are the features that distinguish the Elica Group on the market and that have allowed the company to revolutionize the traditional concept of domestic hood: not a mere accessory but unique design objects capable of improving quality of life.

Fondazione Ermanno Casoli was founded in 2007 in Fabriano (AN), in memory of the founder of the Elica Group. Fondazione Ermanno Casoli has always worked on the organization and the promotion of projects fostering the encounter between art and the corporate world. Contemporary artists are given the chance to access the heart of the companies dialoguing with the employees during workshops and projects designed to stimulate creativity, innovation and the shifting of established points of view, for better working environments. The Fondazione is currently directed by Deborah Carè, with Marcello Smarrelli's artistic direction. The board of advisors includes important personalities of the Italian artistic and cultural world, such as Pippo Ciorra, University Lecturer and Senior Curator in the Architecture department of MAXXI Rome, Pier Luigi Sacco, Lecturer of Cultural Economics and director of the Siena European Capital of Culture for 2019, and Andrea Zegna, architect and curator at Fondazione Zegna.

DETAILS

Exhibition: *Middle-Earth. A journey inside Elica*

Photographers: Fabio Barile e Francesco Neri

Curators: Alessandro Dandini de Sylva and Marcello Smarrelli

Set up: Studio stARTT

Opening: Tuesday 8 April 2014, 6.30 pm

Times and dates:

9 - 14 April 2014, from 11.00 am to 11.00 pm

16 - 26 April 2014 from 11.00 am to 7.00 pm

Closed on: Sundays and Mondays

GENERAL INFORMATION

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