

GUIDO GUIDI

VENETO

September 25 – November 8

Opening reception: Thursday, September 25, 10pm

Galeria Pedro Alfacinha is pleased to announce *Veneto*, our inaugural exhibition. Consisting of a selection of 25 photographs drawn out of Guido Guidi's fundamental mid-1980's output, this body of work has never been exhibited or published before.

Photographing = Inhabiting. Most of Guido Guidi's work follows this equation. This is why so many of his images are shot in the areas he frequents the most: Emilia Romagna, the region of Northern Italy where he was born and still lives, and the neighbouring Veneto region, where he first studied (industrial design and architecture) and then taught in the same university. The result is an original combination of two apparently contrasting elements: analysis and affection. Since the former prevails over the latter (like bitter does over sweet or black over white), the immediate mistake to make would be to pass off his photographs as cold and detached. Yet this is not the case at all. The prevalence of straight lines, the parsimony of his scenarios and the care given right down to the last tiny detail should not be read as forms of detachment from the subject, but on the contrary, as a way of improving their description. Here, precision is first and foremost the consequence of an intimate relationship. Then it becomes a political matter: the inevitable respect for the thing itself. Thus, what Guidi inhabits is not simply the places that he represents, but regardless of where they are shot, he inhabits his own photographs. In other words, his vision lays down their very foundations. The framing corresponds to the perimetral delimitation process inherent in any form of settlement. The exterior becomes the interior, and the geometric space is organised in accordance with the preferences of the inhabitant: just like a home.

Monte Grappa, featured in various photographs in this exhibition, is a very particular case. Beyond the military bases that appear in Guidi's images, which happen to be more reminiscent of primitive cave dwellings, on the peak we in fact find an ossuary with the skeletal remains of over 12,000 soldiers. This was the stage of some of the decisive clashes of the First World War. The photographs show it just as it always has been: harsh, white limestone, nature intertwining with the traces of man. In Guidi's work, I have almost never seen the former without the latter. Be it out of modesty or interest, nature in his work is never monumental, and inevitably bears the scars of those who cross it, exploit it, preserve it or inhabit it. Common, everyday signs, which the photographer picks out and documents on Monte Grappa (such as tunnels, wording, paths transforming History with a capital H into so many little stories) and then in the towns at the foot of the massif, where all the other photographs in this selection were shot in the early '80s. Again in the Veneto region, in a small patch of territory some 70 kilometres from the capital, Venice, which here appears light years away. For there is no tourism here, no gondolas, no salty air. Only those mid-to-long shots which would characterise a lot of Italian landscape photography over the years to come (while Guidi was to progressively draw closer to his subjects), along with several homages (to Informal Art, Friedlander, etc.) and all the discreet intensity of the everyday.

Francesco Zanot

4 September 2014, Bertinoro, Bevano Est Motorway Service Area, on the way back from Guido Guidi's home.

Guido Guidi was born in Cesena, Italy, in 1941. He studied in Venice at the University Institute of Architecture (now IUAV), where he followed the courses of Bruno Zevi, Carlo Scarpa and Mario De Luigi, and at the Advanced Course in Industrial Design with Italo Zannier and Luigi Veronesi. He has worked as a photographer at IUAV Department of City Planning since 1970, and has taught photography at Ravenna Academy of Fine Arts since 1989 and at IUAV – where he holds the Laboratory of Artistic Techniques and Expressions – since 2001.

His work has been shown at the Venice Biennale, Fotomuseum Winterthur, Centre Georges Pompidou, Guggenheim Museum, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Whitney Museum of American Art, MAXXI, and widely across many other venues for the past 30 years.

Selected key collections include the Canadian Centre of Architecture, Montreal, the Centre George Pompidou, Paris, the Fotomuseum Winterthur, MAXXI, Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI Secolo, Rome, the Museo d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, the Museo di Fotografia Contemporanea, Cinisello Balsamo and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

In 2014, *Veramente*, a significant retrospective exhibition opened at the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, Paris in January, then moving to Huis Marseille Museum voor Fotografie, Amsterdam in June and the Museo d'Arte della Città, Ravenna in October. An accompanying book has been published by MACK.

Selected Monographs:

Preganziol 1983

MACK, London, 2013

La figura dell'orante. Appunti per una lezione, vol. I

Ravenna festival-Edizioni del bradipo, Lugo, 2012

Fiume

Fantombooks, Milano, 2010

Varianti

Art&, Udine, 1995