

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Florence, via della Fornace 41
26th October 2023

12:00 p.m.

Press conference at Rifugio Digitale with Lara Shipley

6:30 p.m.

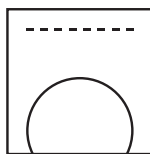
Inauguration of the event

From October 26 to November 12, 2023 Rifugio Digitale presents the exhibition *Desire Lines* by photographer Lara Shipley. The exhibition represents the first stage of the new exhibition cycle dedicated to contemporary photography *Homecoming*, conceived and curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci. The event is organized in collaboration with Forma Edizioni and Associazione Infoto Firenze and thanks to the support of Gruppo AF and Banca Ifigest. The opening will be held on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the presence of the artist and curators.

Desire Lines, by Lara Shipley, is a story of borders. The lines that mark these borders, however, are also the scars left by profound injuries, the traces of a desire, the uncertain contours of an expectation and a new beginning. The first exhibition in the second cycle dedicated by Rifugio Digitale to contemporary photography, is entitled *Desire Lines*, by the American photographer Lara Shipley, curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci. Here, the camera turns its eye on the sun-scorched desolation of the Sonoran Desert, between Arizona and Mexico, where one of the "hottest" frontiers of the United States is located: the focus of an increasingly polarized debate on application of the immigration laws.

The issue of how to manage migratory flows lies at the heart of contemporary social and political strife, also in other parts of the world, and is a central element of the theme – *Homecoming* – that this exhibition introduces. The new cycle, organized by Irene Alison for Rifugio Digitale, explores the concept from various angles, dissecting the precarious balance between global interconnectedness and national identity, the need of some individuals to find, protect and preserve their roots, and of others to find a place in which they can survive and put down roots. What do we mean today when we speak of "home"? Is it a geographical location, a state of mind, a community of people? Is home just the longing for a place in which we have never actually lived? A promised land?

For Lara Shipley, "home" is the place the migrants leave behind them when they set out, and also the



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place they hope to find when they cross the border. Yet, many of those who manage to survive the desert are destined to remain in limbo, between the nostalgia for what they have lost and the disappointment for what they have found in a country in which they are forever destined to be foreigners. Beyond the grim fascination of the stark Sonoran landscape – barren, dusty hills, dry weeds bent by the wind and, above, the menacing hum of helicopters and drones dotting the horizon of a hyper-surveilled region – *Desire Lines* explores a more metaphorical border: a vortex of estrangement and unfamiliarity, a story of a brutalized dream and of subjugation, destined to repeat itself in time. Mixing documentary snapshots with archival records, Lara Shipley positions the current migratory crisis ongoing along the American border in a much longer historical framework, forcing us to see it not as an isolated phenomenon, a particular “problem” in need of solution – but as part of a process that has deep roots in human history: a long history that goes back to the European conquistadores of the 17th century and the colonists in search of fortune in the “Wild West” in the 19th and early 20th century. The foundational myth of the United States was built around it then, and now walls are going up.

Desire Lines

Lara Shipley

26 October - 12 November 2023

Wed.-Sun. 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Rifugio Digitale

via della Fornace, 41

50125 - Firenze (FI)



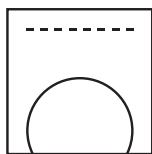
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Lara Shipley, *Desire Lines*, 2023.



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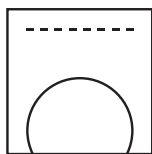
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Lara Shipley, *Desire Lines*, 2023.



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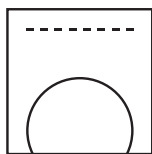
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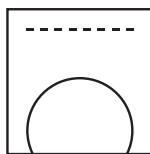
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Lara Shipley, *Desire Lines*, 2023.



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Lara Shipley

Lara Shipley is an American photographer. Her work was exhibited in international photography festivals such as the Athens Photo Festival at the Benaki Museum in Athens, Greece; and Cortona on the Move, in Cortona, Italy, as well as appearing in a biennial at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC, USA, and at GuatePhoto International Photography Festival in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Her work is in collection institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art Library in New York, Whitney Museum of American Art Library, Smithsonian American Art Museum Library, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago and the Nelson Atkins Museum for Art in Kansas City. A photobook of her work with artist Antone Dolezal, *Devil's Promenade*, was published by Overlapse Books in 2021. A second photobook, *Desire Lines*, was published by Overlapse Books in 2023. Lara's photographs appear in publications such as *The New Yorker Magazine*, *Harper's Magazine*, *British Journal of Photography*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Vice*, and *NPR*. She received a MFA in photography from Arizona State University and a Bachelors of Photojournalism from the University of Missouri. She is an Assistant Professor of Photography at Michigan State University.



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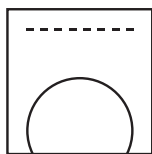
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Lara Shipley



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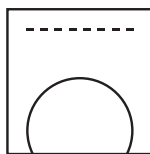
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Irene Alison

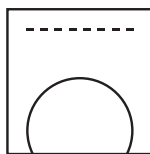
Professional journalist and photo-consultant by profession, Irene Alison was born in Naples in 1977.

She is the creative director of the DER*LAB studio of photographic consulting and design, and teaches at the European Institute of Design in Rome. She has collaborated as a tutor and consultant with several of the most prestigious Italian schools of photography (Isfci, Rufa, Scuola Romana di Fotografia in Rome and Fondazione Studio Marangoni in Florence, among others). As editor, she has worked for *Il Manifesto* and for *D, La Repubblica delle Donne*. As a freelancer, she has produced articles, with photographs, published in *Geo France, The Independent, l'Espresso, D, XL, Marie Claire and Riders*. Her articles of photographic criticism have also been published in periodicals like *La Lettura de Il Corriere della Sera, Il Sole 24 ore* and *Pagina99*. She has published two essays of photograph research, *My generation* (Postcart, 2012) and *iRevolution* (Postcart, 2014). Since 2020 she has been collaborating with CRFS Lipu in Rome, an important Italian rescue center for the recovery of wild animals, documenting its work photographically and managing its visual advertising. In 2022 the American publisher Yoffy Press put out *Holding Time*, a book written with the photographer Catherine Panebianco, for which Irene wrote the texts. Currently, she is the curator of the exhibition cycle SuperNatural at the Rifugio Digitale Gallery in Florence. The gallery is owned by the Archea Group and is devoted to contemporary photography. In 2023 her first photographic book was published by Postcart (*La Madre Attesa*, curated by Laia Abril). In 2024 she expects to public a new essay, *Muse col Muso*, the imaginary animal in contemporary photography: animals, and their cultural and iconographic representations, of which she write in her blog, *Zazie Dogzine*.

Paolo Cagnacci

Professional photographer and teacher of photography, Paolo Cagnacci was born in Florence in 1971.

He studies photography at the Studio Marangoni Foundation, where he currently teaches portrait photography and lighting techniques. He has also taught at the European Design Institute of Florence. His pictures have been published in magazines like: *D la Repubblica, Corriere della Sera, La Repubblica, La Stampa, Sette, SportWeek, L'Espresso, Pagina99, Specchio, Lei, Donna Moderna, Famiglia Cristiana, Corriere della Sera-La Lettura*. He has produced photographic and video projects for the Region of Tuscany, the Festival of Creativity, the People's Festival, Balkan Observatory, the Michelucci Foundation, Tempo Reale, Unicoop Firenze, the City of Florence, Telecom Foundation, Mibact, CNA. He has worked for companies like: Diesel, Patrizia Pepe, Paula Cademartori, Peuterey, Starbucks, Stefanel, Ottodame, Dmail, Rinascimento. He has worked for the Massimo Sestini Agency. His work is distributed by the Luz Photo Agency of Milano.



RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Desire Lines

Lara Shipley

26.10-12.11.2023

MOSTRA PROMOSSA DA
AN EXHIBITION PROMOTED BY
Rifugio Digitale

IN COLLABORAZIONE CON
IN COLLABORATION WITH
Forma Edizioni
Associazione Infoto Firenze

DIREZIONE ARTISTICA
ART DIRECTION
Laura Andreini

MOSTRA A CURA DI
EXHIBIT CURATED BY
Irene Alison
Paolo Cagnacci

COORDINAMENTO SCIENTIFICO
SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION
Beatrice Papucci
Andrea Benelli
Chiara Mezzabotta
Margot Modonesi
Fabio Gnassi

TRADUZIONI
TRANSLATIONS
Katherine Fay

TESTI IN MOSTRA
EXHIBITION TEXTS
Irene Alison

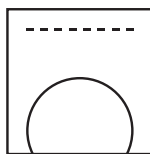
MUSICA DI
MUSIC OF
Lara Shipley

UFFICIO STAMPA E COMUNICAZIONE
PRESS OFFICE AND COMMUNICATION
Associazione Rifugio Digitale
Niccolò Natali
Giulia Guasti

PROGETTO GRAFICO E DI ALLESTIMENTO
GRAPHIC AND SET-UP PROJECT
Vitoria Muzi
Alessandro Baraccani
Alessandro G. Cosentino

INSTALLAZIONE VIDEO
VIDEO INSTALLATION
TNT Events S.r.l.

REALIZZATO CON IL SUPPORTO DI
REALIZED WITH THE SUPPORT OF
Gruppo AF
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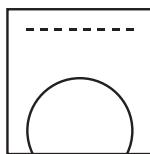
Forma Edizioni

Forma is an editorial (publishing) initiative developed in order to allow the dissemination and knowledge of avenues and experiences belonging to the world of art, architecture photography and more generally, to promote the best research in production and technology, following the changing lifestyles and contemporary living. Since its foundation in 2010, the catalogue has grown with about twenty titles a year giving "form" to the expressive traces that animate today's cultural debate, deepening both specific areas of knowledge already known to the public, and investigating those intellectual and artistic areas considered, for various reasons, revealing new points of observation of reality. A common feature of each project is the high quality of the product, images, printing, typographic or IT processes used, as well as a targeted diffusion and distribution in places of use, such as specialized bookstores, museum bookshops and exhibition sites, which they add to the normal availability on the net that necessary and indispensable presence in the "sites" where opinions and evaluations of merit are built. The publications range from, important monographs dedicated to contemporary and renowned architectural works, such as *Cantina Antinori, to chronicle of the construction of a new landscape*, research and insights related to university study issues, catalogues of important exhibitions, such as the one hosted at the Cini Foundation of Venice *EST. Italian travel, city and architecture stories* curated by Luca Molinari or the monographic exhibition hosted at the MAXXI Museum in Rome *Gio Ponti. Love architecture* in 2019. Exhibitions and events expand the cultural enhancement process that Forma sets out to offer to a refined and attentive public. The publishing house is in fact involved in the creation of volumes relating to the exhibitions annually hosted at the Forte di Belvedere in Florence or at the Stefano Bardini Museum and to the monographic exhibitions hosted in private galleries dedicated to artists of the calibre of Alighiero Boetti, Arnaldo Pomodoro, Lucio Fontana and Alberto Burri. There is no shortage of photography and design texts, such as the important monograph dedicated to the work and life of Karim Rashid, or the overview of contemporary Milanese design *The Design City. Milan city laboratory*. The on the road city architectural guide series is currently under construction. Mainly focused on contemporary works, each volume investigates the peculiar aspects of the most important cities in the world, proposing a critical reading of future scenarios. The publishing house has counted important collaborations with personalities of high intellectual depth and international fame such as the late Adolfo Natalini, founder architect of Superstudio, Bruno Corà, Luca Massimo Barbero and Sergio Risaliti, art critics and historians, Luca Molinari, architecture critic.

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Banca Ifigest

In the Middle Ages, the two largest banks in Europe already existed in Florence, the Bardi bank and that of the Peruzzi family, with branches all over Europe, lending money to merchants and monarchs. In the early 20th century, for the great bankers of New York, Florence was the icon of the maximum splendor they wanted to imitate and, indeed, when the building that houses the Federal Reserve was constructed, its architects were inspired by Palazzo Vecchio, Palazzo Pitti and, above all, Palazzo Strozzi, to give the structure an idea of stability, solidity and security. So it was in Florence, thanks to the initiative of several groups of entrepreneurs and historic Italian families, that Banca Ifigest was founded, in 1987. Banca Ifigest, one of the main Italian independent banks is still today the most trusted partner for the management and conservation of family wealth, thanks to its personal approach. Today the bank operates branches in Rome, Turin, Genoa, Milan, Prato and Santa Croce sull'Arno, in addition to its main headquarters in Florence, it also has offices of Financial Consultants in Sesto Fiorentino and Casalecchio di Reno. Among the numerous services provided by the banking group, Banca Ifigest offers services of assistance to those clients who need to preserve and safeguard complex equity situations, through its subsidiary Sevia Fiduciaria; it operates in the market of common investment funds, with its highly experienced management team, through its equity investment Soprarno SGR and through Fundstore.it, the largest supermarket of online funds, where it is possible to purchase in as many as 7,000 different sectors using your own current account with any Italian bank. Throughout its history, Banca Ifigest has always paid close attention to social considerations, working alongside small enterprises to ensure that their money is always used for the purpose for which it was intended. The Bank has often contributed to sponsor and realize cultural and sports events, demonstrating its strong ties to the local community.

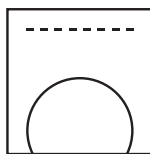
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RIFUGIO DIGITALE

INFOTO

The cultural association INFOTO-Florence was founded in 2019. Its founding partners, photographers who are all Florentine by birth or adoption, number eighteen at the moment, but it is an open number: one of the primary goals of the Association is the promotion of initiatives and projects targeted on increasingly broadened participation. In addition to organizing exhibitions, and the constant participation of many of our members in nationwide competitions, we are particularly focused on training, encouraging didactic activities guided by professional photographers. The main goal of INFOTO is to create a reference in Florence for photographic culture, which has been neglected for far too long. Attention to visual culture in its broadest sense, tends to make us more appreciative of other artistic disciplines as well, with a better understanding of painting, sculpture, architecture and the urban structure of our cities. Our members have participated regularly in exhibitions where their photography was featured alongside works of painting and sculpture, in search of the similarities and shared difficulties: a broader outlook from which to draw inspiration and new stimuli. At this time, with the support of Banca Ifigest, we plan to organize a series of workshops alongside the important exhibitions presented at Rifugio Digitale. The workshops will be held by Italian and international photographers. Working alongside the professional journalist and photo-consultant, Irene Alison, and the photographer Paolo Cagnacci, who participated with us in organizing the exhibitions and workshops, we gleaned a number of interesting ideas for our activity in the field of quality photographic research.

INFOTO

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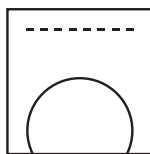
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Rifugio Digitale

Rifugio Digitale (Digital Refuge) is a new exhibition space in a former bomb shelter tunnel repurposed as a site devoted to the promotion of digital art, where architecture, design, photography, cinema, literature and all the other multiple forms of art and visual expression find their dimension and interact with one another. It was built on the foundations of an old anti-aircraft tunnel that served from 1943 as a bomb shelter in World War II. It was known as the "Forge Refuge" a safe haven during the tragedy of the war, and now it has been rechristened as the "Digital Refuge", a place of rebirth, where technology meets art, offering a contemporary space where people can explore creativity through the modern language of technology.

The requalification project, handled by Archea Associati, will house digital expressions of every kind, with an eye always on the future and on the new vanguards. In collaboration with the publisher Forma Edizioni, it will house exhibitions, but also events and performances related to art, architecture, photography, literature, cinema and other initiatives linked to the digital world. It will show original views and more on the 16 screens positioned along the 33 meters of the tunnel, a new idea for Florence where the connection between art, people and technology generates an intense visual experience, unexpected and interactive. It is a space designed for constant change, always dynamic, with a new and exciting speed that distinguishes it from a traditional art gallery.

Rifugio Digitale occupies an area of 165 square meters and is a versatile structure ideal for organizing exhibitions, events, presentation, but also debates, lectures and simple discussions. It is expected to appeal to a vast public desirous of indulging their interest in ideas and novel cultural experiences right in the heart of Florence.



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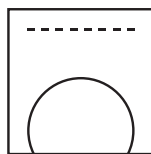
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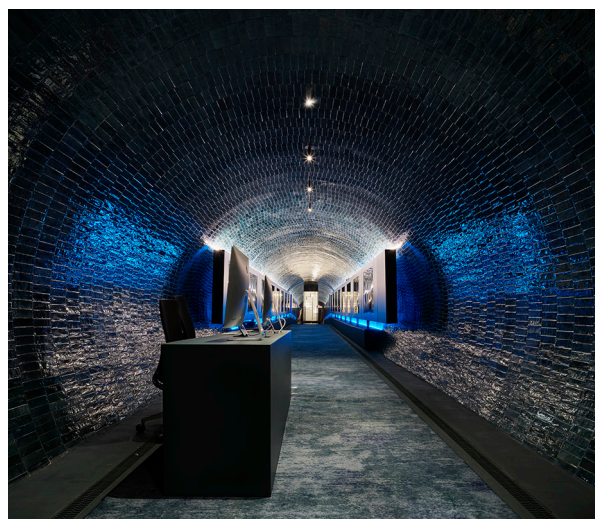
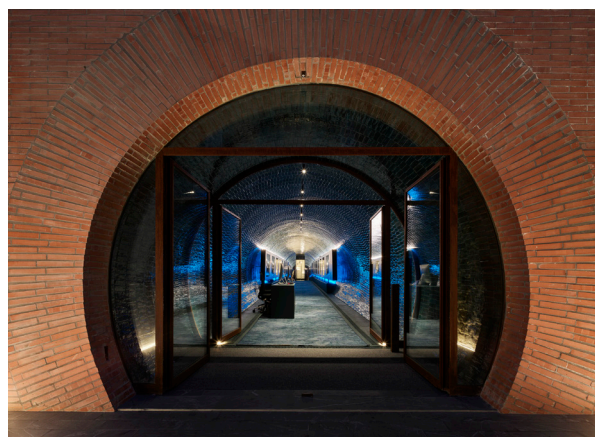
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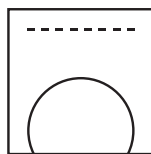
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