RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Bittersweet
Sander Coers

The Body I Live In

Florence, via della Fornace 41
April 9, 2025

5.00 pm
Lecture in the presence of **Sander Coers** and the **curators** at **Spazio A - Archea Associati**
Entrance from Lungarno Benvenuto Cellini, 13, Florence
Event by reservation, writing to info@rifugiodigitale.it

6:00 PM
Press conference with **Sander Coers** and the **curators** at **Rifugio Digitale**
Event by reservation, by writing to info@rifugiodigitale.it

6.30 pm
Opening at **Rifugio Digitale** with **Sander Coers** and the **curators.**

From April 9 to May 11, 2025 Rifugio Digitale presents the exhibition *Bittersweet*, by photographer Sander Coers, the third stage of the exhibition cycle dedicated to contemporary photography *The Body I Live In*, conceived by Irene Alison and curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci. The event, organized in collaboration with Forma Edizioni and Associazione Infoto Firenze, will open on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the presence of the artist and curators, following a lecture that will take place at 5 p.m. at Spazio A - Archea Associati (entrance from Lungarno Benvenuto Cellini, 13, Florence)

Certain summers are just unforgettable. Those summers when the lazy afternoons drag in fretful languor toward restless nights filled with new promise. Those are the bittersweet summers when we grow up: every love is forever, every problem a drama, every desire a fever and every time is the first time.

Bittersweet by Sander Coers, the third exhibition in the cycle entitled The Body I Inhabit, curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci, fills Rifugio Digitale with the dense colors and warm tones of the Dutch photographer and his exploration of unfinished, uncertain, adolescent bodies.

Drawing inspiration from the photographer's own personal memories, Bittersweet ventures into the emotional panorama of adolescent boys and presents a cast of characters – consisting mainly of the friends and family of the artist – to share his passage through various transformative experiences toward adulthood.

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

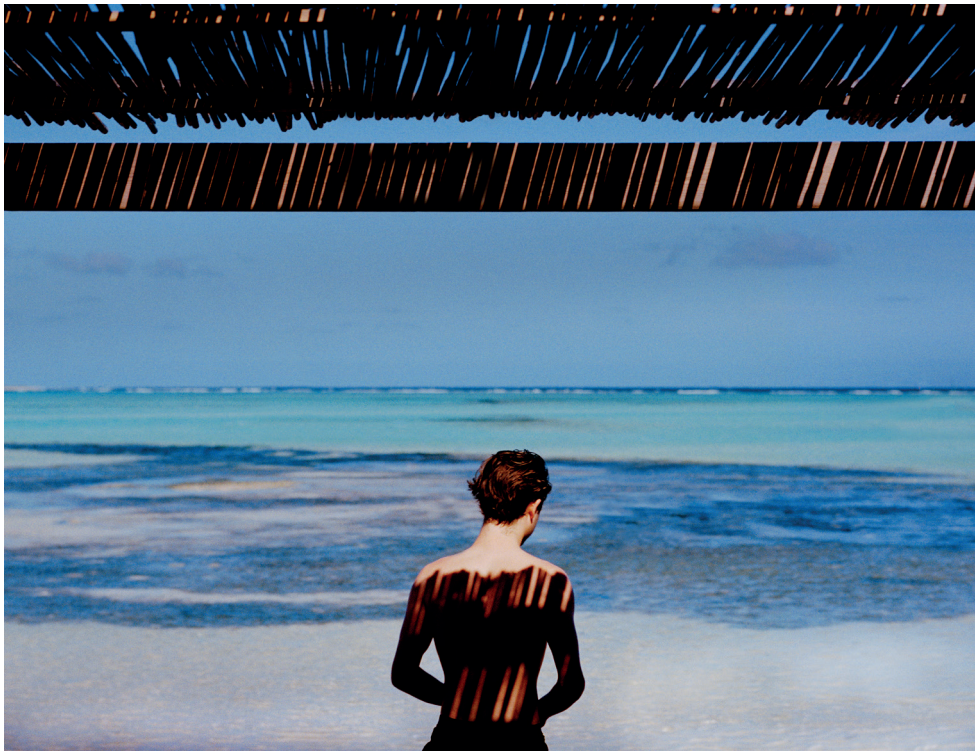
Halfway between memory and dream, Bittersweet is a visual narrative, a sensual, empathetic view of the complexity of the masculine world, with its tentatively probing of the secrets of love, intimacy and personal growth. His young adventurers, enmeshed in the conflicting desires of adolescence, are at the center of a study that attempts to answer the question of what it means to be men in a society that rejects the traditional models of masculinity but is unable offer new ones.

From the day of the inauguration, it will be possible to consult the catalogue of works by **Sander Coers** available at the gallery, on our website www.rifugiodigitale.it and on the website of Forma Edizioni, www.formaedizioni.it.

Bittersweet
Sander Coers
April 9 - May 11, 2025
Wed-Sun 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

Rifugio Digitale
via della Fornace, 41
50125 - Firenze (FI)

RIFUGIO DIGITALE



Sander Coers, *Shade*, from the series *Blue Mood (Al Mar)*, 2022

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Sander Coers, *Warm (View On Salt Mountains)*, from the series *Blue Mood (Al Mar)*, 2022

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Sander Coers, *Dream*, 2021

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in collaborazione con
FORMA
infoto Associazione Culturale Firenze

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Sander Coers

Sander Coers (b. 1997) is an artist based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, working primarily with photography. Through the deconstruction and recontextualization of memories, Coers seeks to uncover how histories – both personal and collective – are passed down through generations. His work blends technical processes and media to explore themes rooted in his own lived experiences and personal interactions. By doing so, he invites viewers to question the ways in which we remember, forget, and how these processes ultimately shape our identities across generations.

Drawing from both family archives and his own photography, Coers delves into the emotional repression that is inherited across generations, particularly among men. Using materials such as wood, textiles, and ceramics, he expands the tactile and emotional dimensions of memory. Additionally, he incorporates newer techniques, including artificial intelligence and digital manipulation, to reflect on the constructed nature of memory and the tension between reality and fantasy. Coers is especially interested in how family photos – often vacation snapshots – tend to present an idealized version of the past. By revisiting these images, he explores how they shape family stories and histories, often revealing the gaps and silences that lie beneath the surface.

Since graduating with Honours in Fine Art from the Willem de Kooning Academy in 2021, Coers has published three books: Come Home, This Naked Incident, and Blue Mood (AI Mar). His work has been exhibited in galleries and museums both in The Netherlands and internationally, with features in in “Foam”, “Vogue”, “Die Zeit”, “ i-D”, and “The Guardian”. Recognized as a "Rising Star of 2022" by the Dutch newspaper “NRC”, he was also nominated for the O. Berlin Talent Award and is currently part of the Foam Talent program for 2024-2025. His work has been acquired by prestigious institutions such as the Preus Museum, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rabobank, and various other collections.

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Sander Coers

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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 cycles *Homecoming* and *SuperNatural* at the Rifugio Digitale Gallery, 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 photography teacher, Paolo Cagnacci was born in Florence in 1971.

He studied photography at Fondazione Studio Marangoni, where he currently teaches portrait photography and lighting techniques. He has done photographic projects for Regione Toscana, Festival della Creatività, Festival dei Popoli, Osservatorio dei Balcani, Fondazione Michelucci, Tempo Reale, Unicoop Firenze, Comune di Firenze, Fondazione Telecom, Mibact, CNA. He has worked for companies such as Patrizia Pepe, Diesel, Paula Cademartori, Peuterey, Starbucks, Stefanel, Ottodame, Dmail. He has published his images in magazines such as *D la Repubblica*, *Corriere della Sera*, *la Repubblica*, *La Stampa, Sette*, *SportWeek, L'Espresso*, *Pagina99*, *Specchio*, *Left*, *Donna Moderna*, *Famiglia Cristiana*, *La Lettura,* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.* His projects have been distributed by Luz Photo Agency and Parallelozero Agency.

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Bittersweet
Sander Coers
09.04-11.05.2025

AN EXHIBITION PROMOTED BY
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Forma Edizioni
Associazione Infoto Firenze

ART DIRECTION
Laura Andreini

EXHIBIT CURATED BY
Irene Alison
Paolo Cagnacci

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION
Beatrice Papucci
Andrea Benelli
Chiara Mezzabotta
Ester Menichelli

TRANSLATIONS
Katherine Fay

EXHIBITION TEXTS
Irene Alison

MUSIC OF
Ttukunak, Txalaparta improvisation
for EXPO 2015, Milan

PRESS OFFICE AND COMMUNICATION
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.
Niccolò Natali
Giulia Guasti
Eugenio Pincelli

GRAPHIC AND SET-UP PROJECT
Veronica Paoli
Vitoria Muzi
Mattia Gerardi

VIDEO INSTALLATION
Associazione Rifugio Digitale E.T.S.

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

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. 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 and 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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RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Infoto

The cultural association **Infoto**-Firenze was established in 2019

The founding members, all photographers either born or adopted in Florence, are eighteen in number, though this is an open figure, as one of the main objectives of the Association is to promote initiatives and projects aimed at fostering broader participation.

In addition to organizing exhibitions and the constant presence of many of us in national-level competitions, we focus particularly on education, promoting teaching activities led by professional photographers. **Infoto**'s primary goal is to establish a reference point for photographic culture in Florence, which has long been overlooked. Our attention to visual culture in a broader sense leads us to expand our focus to other artistic disciplines, offering open lectures on topics related to painting, sculpture, architecture, and the city's urban history. We have also participated in exhibitions where our photographs were displayed alongside paintings and sculptures, seeking common themes and issues: a wide-ranging perspective from which to draw inspiration and new inspirations.

Currently, with the support of **Banca Ifigest**, we have planned to complement the significant exhibitions held at **Rifugio Digitale** with a series of workshops conducted by national and international photographers. Working alongside professional journalist and photo-consultant Irene Alison and photographer Paolo Cagnacci, who assist us in organizing exhibitions and workshops, has provided valuable insights for our work in the field of quality photographic research.

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www.youtube.com/channel/UCmLCcjqjLyqpYddVo5r-cFw

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Rifugio Digitale

Rifugio Digitale 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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Archea Associati, Rifugio Digitale, Firenze, 2022
ph. Pietro Savorelli and Associati

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Archea Associati, Rifugio Digitale, Firenze, 2022
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