RIFUGIO DIGITALE

Our Hidden Room
Mohamed Hassan

18.06 - 13.07.2025

From June 18 to July 13, 2025, **Rifugio Digitale** presents ***Our Hidden Room*** by **Mohamed Hassan**, the fourth installment in the series ***The Body I Live In***, dedicated to contemporary photography and curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci. The exhibition is organized in collaboration with **Forma Edizioni** and the **Associazione Infoto Firenze**. The opening will take place on June 18 at 6,30 pm at Rifugio Digitale, preceded by a talk at 5,00 pm at Spazio A – Archea Associati.

Our Hidden Room by Mohamed Hassan tells the delicate story of the artist's father, marked by mental illness, exploring themes of resilience and belonging through the powerful language of photography.
Part of the series *The Body I Live In*, which focuses on the body as a "site of conflict and a border for the assertion of identity," the exhibition offers an intense and personal visual narrative, exploring the complex interplay between memory, experience, and inner strength.

Florence, via della Fornace 41
June 18, 2025

5,00 pm
Talk in the presence of **Mohamed Hassan** 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 **Mohamed Hassan** and the **curators** at **Rifugio Digitale**
Event by reservation, by writing to info@rifugiodigitale.it

6,30 pm
Opening at **Rifugio Digitale** with **Mohamed Hassan** and the **curators.**

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Our Hidden Room is a love song to a fragile father – who succeeded, however, in instilling in his son the true meaning of resilience – and to photography, the language that Mohamed Hassan (born in Alexandria, in 1984) has chosen to bind together the tattered remnants of a tragic story.

This fourth personal exhibition in the cycle devoted to the concept of *The Body I Live In* is entitled *Our Hidden Room*, curated by Irene Alison and Paolo Cagnacci. The photographs are by Mohamed Hassan, and tell the story of the photographer's father, born in Egypt in the Fifties and forced to struggle all his life with mental illness. In the upheaval of a tumultuous life scarred initially by abuse and later by his own bipolar disorder that led to periods of hospitalization and a suicide attempt, the man found relief, refuge and even joy in photography, pushing the limits of obsession, in the need to express himself through this vehicle which offered him a ray of light even in the darkest hours. This same passion burns today in his son, who has devoted his entire life to photography. This project – which won the "Star Photobook Dummy Award" 2024 and is now published by RM in an intimate, delicate and touching book – is dedicated to his father, who died in 2010.

It is a voyage through memory, into identity, probing the shadows of the secret rooms in the mind and the darkroom which shaped the father's phantoms and the son's dreams.

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

Our Hidden Room
Mohamed Hassan
June 18 - July 13, 2025
Wed-Sun 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

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

RIFUGIO DIGITALE



Mohamed Hassan

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in collaborazione con
FORMA
infoto Associazione Culturale Firenze

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Mohamed Hassan

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Mohamed Hassan

Originally from Alexandria, Mohamed has lived in Pembrokeshire since 2007, graduating with a 1st class honors degree in Photography from Carmarthen School of Art in 2016, and then a Master's in Documentary Photography with Distinction at the University of South Wales in 2023. In recent years, Hassan's work has been included in several prestigious group exhibitions, including: *Facing Britain: British documentary photography since the 1960s* curated by Ralph Goertz (multiple venues across Europe, 2021-2023), *Many Voices, One Nation*, curated by Ffotogallery and the Senedd (multiple venues across Wales, 2019-2020) His work has also recently been acquired by the National Museum of Wales, National Library of Wales, Government Art Collection, Glynn Vivian Gallery, and Historic England. .



Mohamed Hassan, foto di Ahmed Taha

RIFUGIO DIGITALE

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.

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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

EXTERNAL RELATIONS
Irene Borsotti

TRANSLATIONS
Katherine Fay

EXHIBITION TEXTS
Irene Alison

MUSIC BY
Mohamed Hassan

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

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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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

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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