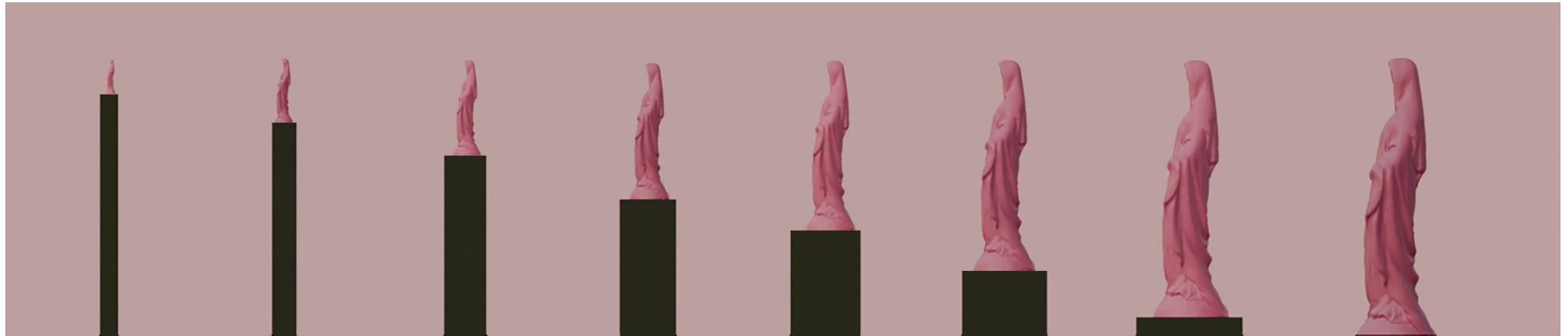


# NOTHING IS ORIGINAL



Venice exists as a space of continuous reflection, where the distinction between the authentic and the reproduced blurs. Perception here is always double: each object is present simultaneously in reality and in its watery mirroring; the boundary between original and copy dissolves, and repetition becomes a means of sustaining reality itself. Within this post-authentic condition, the sacred depends on no single foundation; it emerges through recurrence rather than revelation. Drawing on vanitas, the project frames it as a way of perceiving the present's instability. In the city where stone rests on water and every reflection announces its own disappearance, vanitas becomes a mode of seeing in minor keys, attuned to transition, finitude, and impending loss. Venice forms a setting in which the visible folds back into itself, turning perception into an act of self-observation. The exhibition follows this principle: its structure is oriented not toward display but toward concentration, unfolding as an immersive, almost theatrical field.



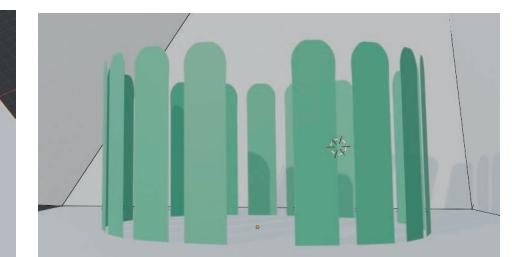
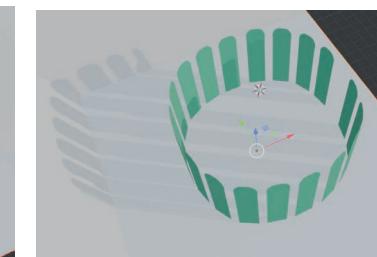
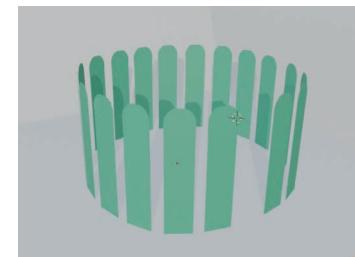
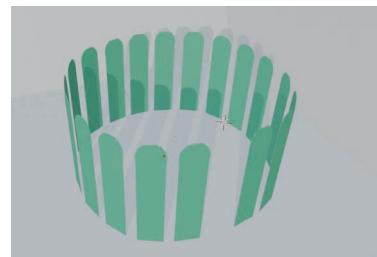
The project takes its point of departure from the Centro Culturale Don Orione Artigianelli, a former monastic complex shaped by centuries of disciplined observation. In its cloisters, reflection is not an image but a spatial condition, and the boundary between seeing and being seen becomes porous.

The exhibition begins with a passage. In the garden, the visitor encounters a circular mirrored structure recalling a confessional: twenty-three human-sized mirrors appear to hover, held in place by a concealed wooden construction. The movement through this formation unfolds as a measured interval, a room within the open air, relocating intimacy from the interior into the garden.

Upon entering the Sala Tiziano, the visitor encounters a space structured by intersecting lines rather than explicit symbols. The longitudinal axis of the arcades and the transverse cadence of the ceiling beams counterbalance one another, forming a figure both present and withdrawn. What emerges is not a sign but a spatial configuration, organizing the room while dissolving as it appears.

As one moves further into the space, a Madonna-like figure comes into view, elevated on a glass pedestal and appearing to form a quiet center. With the visitor's movement, this perception begins to unravel: behind it, a sequence of Madonnas in markedly different sizes emerges, concealed from the frontal axis and folding into one another. The variation in scale produces no hierarchy but an optical interlocking reminiscent of the Matryoshka, a form that contains another without fully revealing it. As one shifts position, the alignment opens or closes, so the Madonna appears at once multiplied and withdrawn. Within this layering, the installation touches on the art-historical question of origin, quietly evoking Courbet's *The Origin of the World*, where beginning is not an image but a threshold from which form emerges and into which it retreats.

The Madonnas are made of cork and fish glue. The cork is biodegradable and shaped using a newly developed 3D printing technique. The fish glue retains the memory of its aquatic origin and remains sensitive to moisture.



Along the lateral structure, narrow paper panels are integrated into a secondary framework set in front of the arcades. Rather than functioning as windows, they filter and diffuse daylight into the room, softening and tinting it as it spreads across walls and floor. The panels, coated with fish glue, remain subtly responsive to light, which is further taken up by the glass pedestals and dispersed within the space. In churches, light enters as a sign of transcendence; here, it reappears through diffusion and reflection, assuming the role of a copy within the immanent.

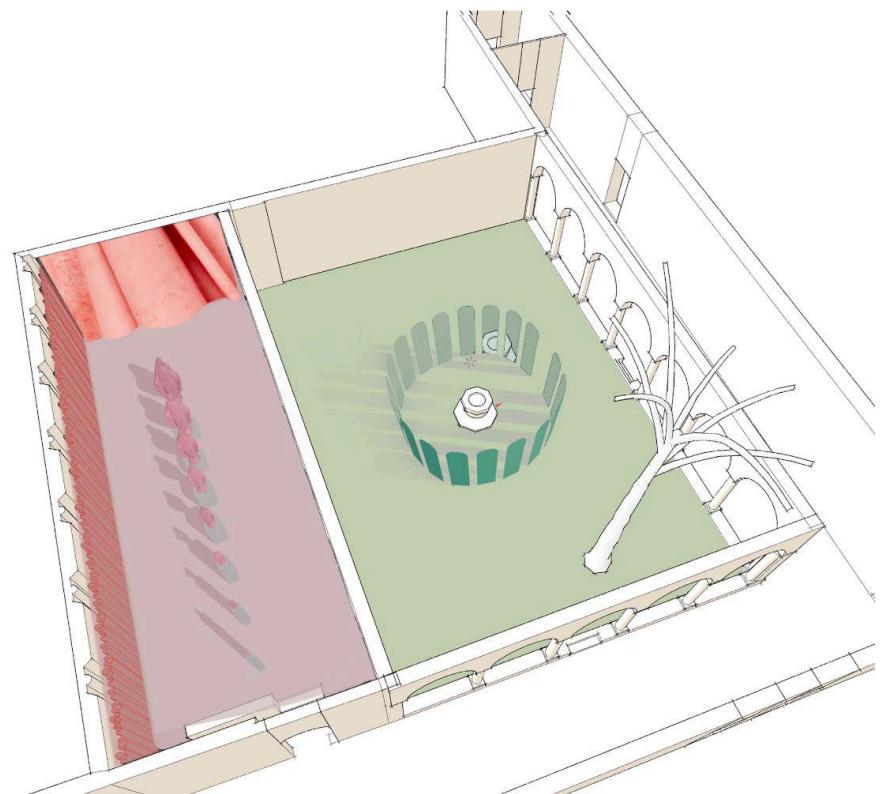
Shaped by folds, the freely hanging paper elements take on the character of textile envelopes that partially open, evoking the Madonna as a figure of emergence from which something comes forth without full disclosure.

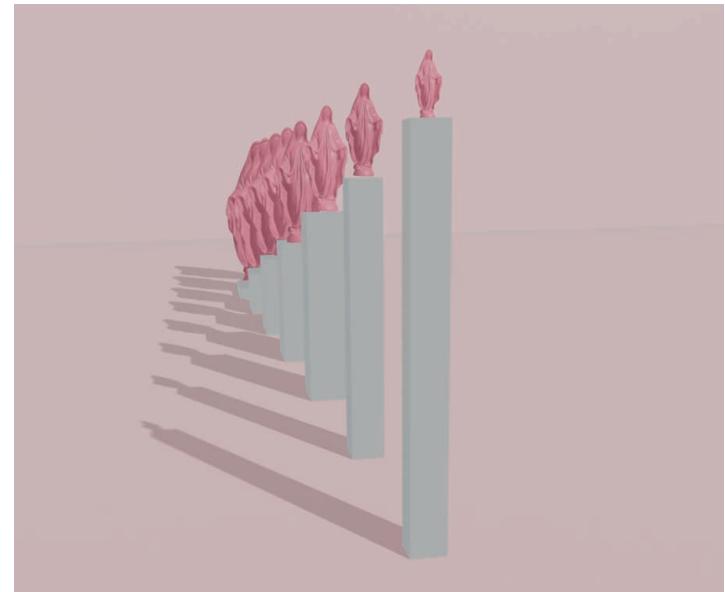
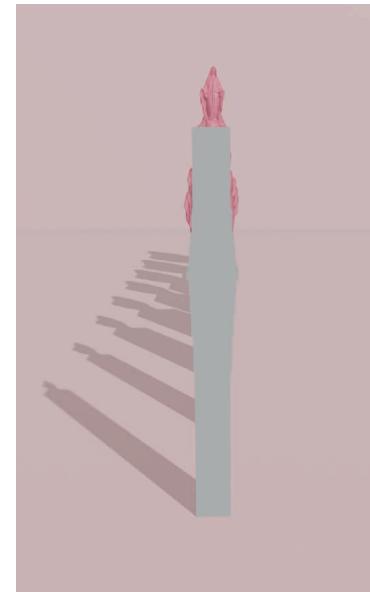
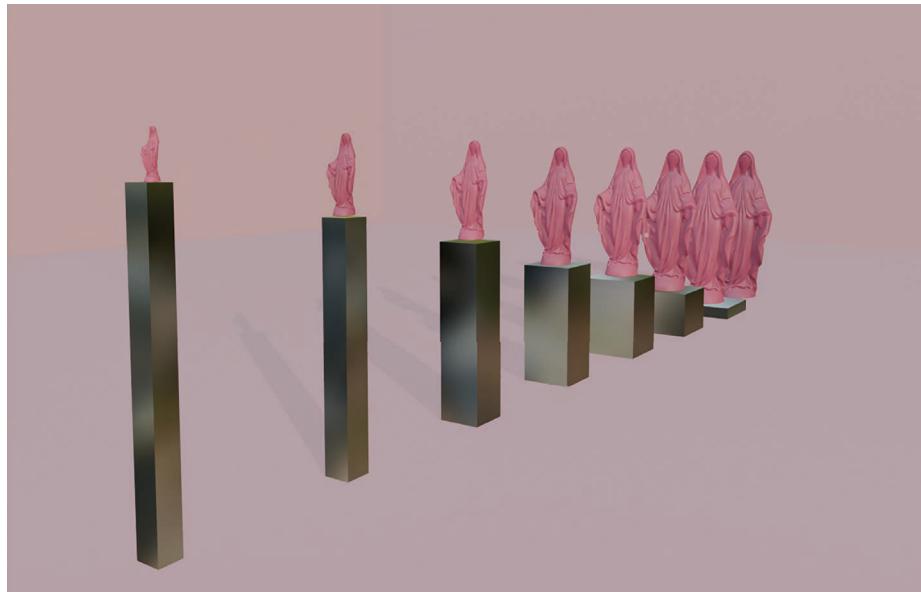
The floor is covered with a thin layer of wax that records each step, leaving traces that gradually soften, blur, and merge, turning the surface into a shifting register of crossings in which presence appears only to disappear again.

The sound is generated from the acoustic traces produced within the exhibition space itself. Movements, materials, and spatial resonances are captured and returned as recurring motifs that shift subtly with each repetition. Detached from any fixed source, the sounds circulate through the room, turning listening into a practice of attention shaped by variation rather than event.

All materials used in the project are mobile, reversible, and temporarily stable. Their physical properties express the central idea of a form that exists not in spite of decay but through it.

Alex Lebus was selected for work that articulates identity, repetition, and material instability through spatial and perceptual configurations. Ksenia Ravvina contributes an authorial and dramaturgical perspective attentive to absence, visibility, and form as process. Alex Hadjiev develops a sound work shaped by movement and resonance within the exhibition space.







BLOOD FLAP 4  
2024  
Hahnemühle paper, ink  
140 x 100 x 30 cm  
Balanced  
House of Paper, Berlin



THE MOTHER bronze,red  
2025  
wax, glass, bronze, tiles, wood, plaster,  
varnish, pigment, oil  
HOLY SHIT, Kunstbrücke am Wildenbruch



Thermoplastic cork-  
gelatin compound  
for 3D printing,  
research project  
"GreTA" /  
recyclable base  
structures for theat-  
rical sculpture using  
nature-based raw  
materials



DEFENCE 12  
2021  
Mirror, Wood, Varnish  
190 x 250 x 250 cm  
Motorenhalle, Dresden

## WORK EXAMPLES

## LIST OF WORKS

### WALLSKIN

paper, ink, fishglue  
shifting mass

### BLOODLINE

3D cork-gelantine print, wax  
on mirror pedestal  
190 x 800 x 80 cm

### OMEGA

Mirror, Wood, Varnish  
190 x 500 x 500 cm

