

# RAFFAELLA DE CHIRICO ARTE CONTEMPORANEA

**Un  
sen  
en**

as part of Art Rotterdam

**Encounters Section**

**Booth E8**

**Arsen Revazov**

**Federica Zianni**

**27 - 29 March**

**26 on invitation only**

**Rotterdam Ahoy**

**Ahoyweg 10 Rotterdam**

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**Raffaella De Chirico Arte Contemporanea** is pleased to present the project *Unseen Battlefields: First Part* by Israeli photographer **Arsen Revazov** (Moscow, 1966) presented in dialogue with the works of **Federica Zianni** (Rome, 1993). Revazov utilizes infrared film, a medium he has mastered since 2010 to reveal "invisible light" and transform ordinary landscapes into surreal, dreamlike scenes. The project focuses on eleven specific locations that, while appearing as quiet woods or empty fields today, were once the sites of legendary historical battles. Through the "Wood effect," where foliage appears white and skies take on ghostly hues, the artist creates a dramatic contrast between past violence and present silence. This aesthetic research serves as a conceptual critique of the absurdity of war, questioning how places once filled with shouting and blood can become so isolated and forgotten.

Revazov's work explores two main themes: the inevitable transience of history and the strategic dynamics of conflict. He reminds viewers that every war, regardless of its perceived importance or the number of casualties, eventually ends in a peace treaty and silence.

The project is accompanied by a dedicated photographic and documentary book. This publication serves as an essential extension of the visual art, featuring an introductory text by Revazov himself.

## **ARSEN REVAZOV**

Lives and works between Tel Aviv and Venice

Arsen Revazov is a photographer and a writer. He has been engaged with photography since his third year of elementary school. During the past few years, he has been shooting mainly on special infrared films. In this way, he tries to show an invisible world through a light that the naked human eye is unable to see. He shoots on large-format cameras which gives him the possibility to achieve extremely high-resolution images. His artistic task is to help viewers access a different, parallel reality. It can be wonderful and conflictual at the same time. He uses two different methods: classical silver bromide printing and the almost forgotten platinum contact printing which was common in the late 19th century. Since 2013, he lives and works predominantly in Venice.

## **BATTLE OF DIEN BIEN PHU**

In 1954, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu marked the end of French colonial rule in Indochina with the decisive victory of the Viet Minh led by General Giáp.

Despite French technological superiority, the Vietnamese managed to transport heavy artillery to the surrounding hills, trapping the base in a deadly siege.

The surrender of the garrison led to the Geneva Accords, establishing Vietnam's independence and profoundly influencing anti-colonial movements worldwide.



Arsen Revazov, *Dien Bien Phu*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 47x70 edition 1/3 | 67x100 edition 3/3 | 100x150 1/1

## BATTLE OF BORODINO

Fought on September 7, 1812, the Battle of Borodino was the bloodiest encounter of the Napoleonic Wars, pitting Napoleon's Grande Armée against the Russian army of General Kutuzov.

Despite massive casualties on both sides, the French managed to capture key positions, such as the "Great Redoubt," forcing the Russians into a strategic retreat that opened the road to Moscow.

However, Napoleon's victory proved pyrrhic: the Russian army remained intact, and the subsequent occupation of a deserted, burning Moscow marked the beginning of the disastrous retreat from Russia.



Arsen Revazov, *Borodino*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 39x70 edition 1/3 | 56x100 edition 1/3 | 83x150 edition 1/3

## BATTLE OF SALAMIN

In 480 BC, the Battle of Salamis saw the Greek fleet, led by the ingenious Themistocles, destroy the Persian fleet of Xerxes I in one of history's most decisive naval encounters. By luring the heavy Persian ships into the narrow straits, the Greeks turned the enemy's superior numbers into a fatal disadvantage, ultimately saving Western culture and democracy.



Arsen Revazov, *Salamis*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 39x70 edition 2/3 | 56x100 edition 2/3 | 84x150 1/1

## **BATTLE OF LEPANTO**

Fought on October 7, 1571, the Battle of Lepanto saw the fleet of the Holy League, led by Don John of Austria, clash with the forces of the Ottoman Empire in the Gulf of Corinth.

It was one of the largest naval battles in history between galleys; the Christians utilized the firepower of Venetian galleasses, floating fortresses armed with heavy cannons that disrupted the Turkish lines.

The Holy League's victory marked the decline of Ottoman maritime supremacy in the Mediterranean, taking on immense symbolic and religious significance for Europe at the time.



*Arsen Revazov, Lepanto, 2024*

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 23x70 edition 1/3 | 33x100 edition 1/3 | 48x150 edition 1/3

## **BATTLE OF THERMOPILES**

Fought in 480 BC, the Battle of Thermopylae saw a small Greek force led by the Spartan King Leonidas I stand against the massive Persian army of Xerxes I.

By exploiting the narrow pass between the mountains and the sea, the 300 Spartans and their allies managed to block the enemy advance for three days, inflicting heavy casualties through superior discipline and armor.

The final sacrifice of Leonidas and his men, betrayed by the shepherd Ephialtes who revealed a mountain path to the Persians, became an eternal symbol of resistance and allowed the Greek cities to reorganize the defense that led to the victory at Salamis.



Arsen Revazov, *Thermopiles*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

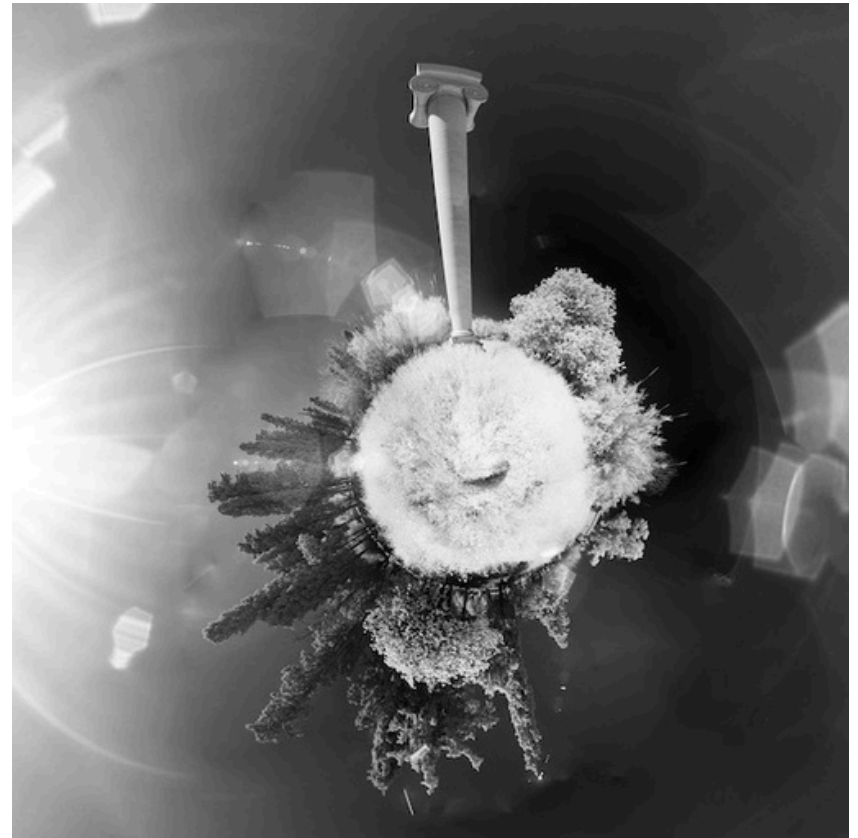
cm 23x70 edition 1/3 | 33x100 edition 1/3 | 48x150 edition 1/3

## **BATTLE OF MARATONA**

In 490 BC, the Athenian army led by Miltiades managed to defeat the Persians of Darius I despite being outnumbered.

Using a flanking maneuver that reinforced the wings of the formation, the Greeks forced the invaders into a chaotic retreat toward their ships.

The event remains legendary for Pheidippides' run to Athens, which inspired the birth of the modern marathon.



Arsen Revazov, *Maratona*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 70x70 edition 1/3 | 100x100 edition 1/3 | 150x150 1/1

## **BATTLE OF STALINGRAD**

Fought between 1942 and 1943, the Battle of Stalingrad represented the decisive turning point of World War II, seeing the disastrous defeat of the German Sixth Army at the hands of the Red Army. The city became the stage for brutal house-to-house urban warfare until the Soviet operation Uranus successfully surrounded the invaders in a massive pocket. The surrender of Field Marshal von Paulus marked the beginning of Nazi Germany's irreversible retreat, costing the lives of over one and a half million people, including soldiers and civilians.



Arsen Revazov, *Stalingrad*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 38x70 edition 1/3 | 55x100 edition 1/3 | 82x150 edition 1/3

## **BATTLE OF CANNAE**

Fought in 216 BC during the Second Punic War, the Battle of Cannae saw the Carthaginian general Hannibal annihilate a numerically superior Roman army led by consuls Paullus and Varro.

Hannibal used a brilliant inverted crescent formation: he lured the center of the Roman infantry into a trap, while his cavalry closed the flanks, completing a perfect double envelopment.

The defeat was one of the most catastrophic in Roman history, with tens of thousands of legionaries fallen, and Cannae remains a textbook example of encirclement tactics studied in military academies today.



Arsen Revazov, *Cannae*, 2024

Infrared photography fine art printing on Hahnemüle

Photo Rag Bright White 310g

cm 34x70 edition 1/3 | 48x100 edition 1/3 | 72x150 edition 1/3

## **Federica Zianni**

Lives and works in Milan

Federica Zianni earned her degree in Sculpture from the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. She returned there in 2022 as a professor of Foundry Techniques. She is currently a scholarship recipient for a PhD in Artistic Research in Cultural Heritage and Creativity – Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Lecce.

Through her research, Zianni explores how art—conceived as a practice—serves as a meeting point and a "neutral ground" to investigate the anxieties sparked by contemporary issues such as identity, cultural heritage, eco-anxiety, and migration. She addresses these themes directly and demonstratively through sculptural installations and performances.

The artist primarily works with artificial and often recycled materials, such as inner tubes and tourniquets, frequently juxtaposing them with classical materials like brass and bronze. She remains deeply connected to the lost-wax casting technique, which is a cornerstone of her practice.

Red Wax addresses the theme of war through a surface that both retains and conceals violence, avoiding any didactic representation in order to operate on a material and perceptual level. The red wax flows, thickens, and coagulates into irregular reliefs that evoke clotted blood and wounded tissue, transforming the panel into a field of traumatic sedimentation.

Evil does not erupt in a spectacular form; rather, it embeds itself within the matter, stratifying beneath the apparent normality of the surface and disguising itself in a shape that might seem purely abstract. The red wax also functions as a parallel to the artist's daily practice, where it is used in the foundry as a technical step in the sculptural process: here the material abandons its preparatory role to become the final outcome, a frozen image of injury.



Federica Zianni, *Red Wax*, 2025  
plexiglas and wax  
cm 51 x 42

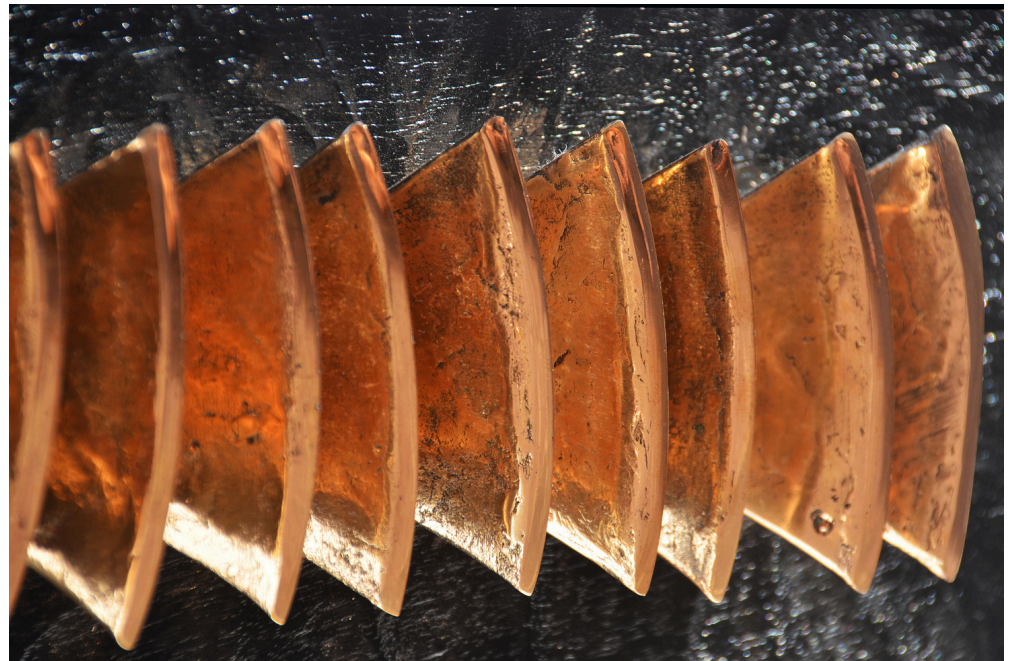
The work is generated through the interweaving and torsion of a recycled inner tube, whose industrial material is diverted from its original function to assume a new sculptural identity. The concentric ridges converge toward a central نقطة of rotation, like a restrained vortex, producing a black, glossy surface that is densely compacted. It evokes the idea of an оболence and protection; yet the compression of the folds and the internal tension of the form transform this promise into constraint, becoming an anaerobic structure. The work thus inhabits the paradox between protection and suffocation, situating itself on that threshold where the familiar turns unsettling.



Federica Zianni, *Oval Cocoon*, 2024  
wood, polyurethane and inner tubes  
cm 50 × 32 × 12

Scale is a linguistic double entendre that in English denotes both a weighing scale and a fish's scale. The ten elements placed side by side initially evoke the epidermal surface of an animal body, suggesting an organic and protective texture. On closer inspection, however, their true nature is revealed: they are hatchet blades.

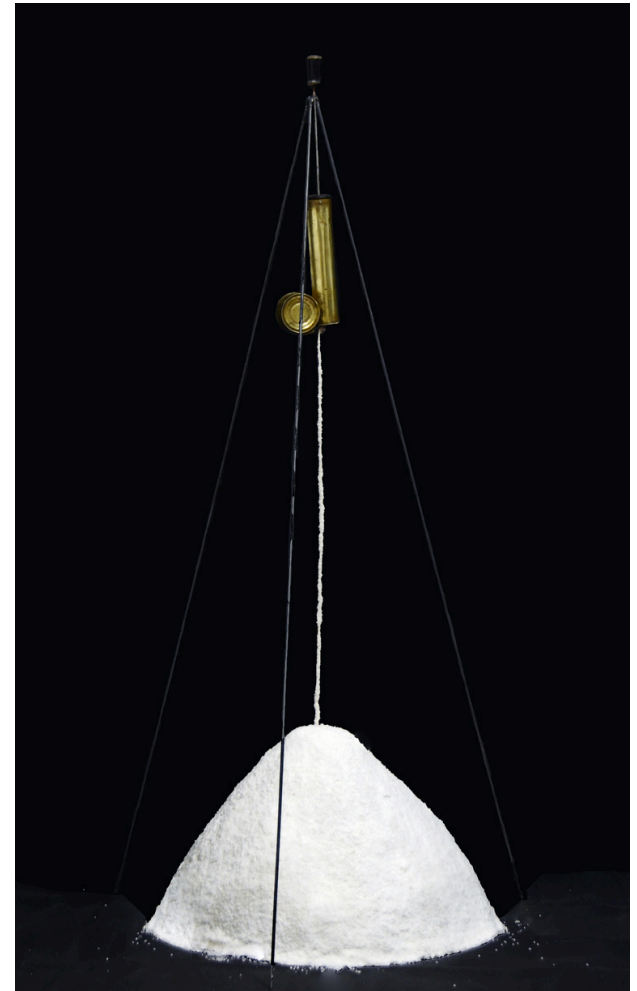
The work inhabits a zone of perceptual slippage in which the natural and the artificial overlap. What appears as biological growth discloses itself instead as an instrument of incision. A subtle equilibrium emerges between nature as organism and nature as transformed by human intervention, where forms accumulate and blur, destabilizing the boundary between what is given and what is produced.



Federica Zianni, *Scales*, 2023  
lost-wax bronze casting  
cm 45 x 18 x 10

The sculpture stages a paradox: the war object of the pump becomes here an instrument of slow, silent, seemingly harmless accumulation. Salt, on the other hand, a primary and vital element, has for centuries been a cause of disputes, monopolies, oppressive taxation, and conflicts.

The mechanical and repetitive act of pouring salt alludes to the absurdity of war: an excess that generates neither nourishment nor value, but only weight and sterile stratification. The mound grows like a sedimented memory of human tensions, reminding us that the causes of conflict often lie in elementary resources, transformed by power into instruments of domination.



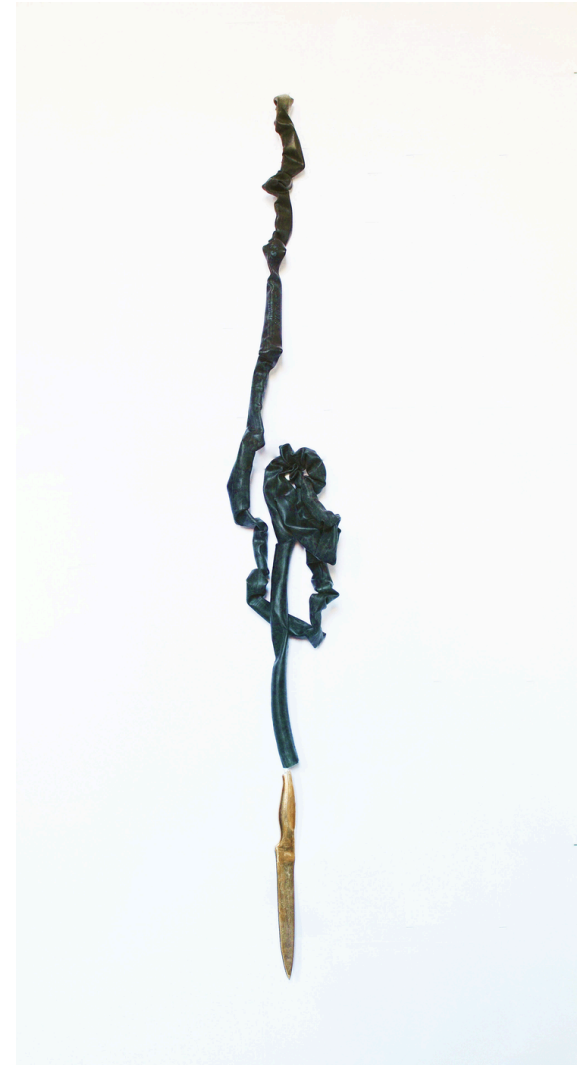
Federica Zianni, *White Gold*, 2026

mixed media

cm 70 x 70 x 160

Drawing on the Greek myth of Damocles, I investigate the ephemerality of existence and the perpetual tension between life and death that permeates everyday experience. The mythological sword is transformed into a kitchen knife, enacting a reversal of the archetype that relocates the myth within the domestic sphere, where danger lurks precisely among familiar tools.

Here, the paradox of the Unheimlich also emerges: the looming threat does not arise from heroic or distant scenarios, but is concealed within the normality of the home, among the objects we use daily to nourish ourselves and to care. The suspended knife becomes a metaphor for a precarious and fragile existential condition, in which the fear of loss manifests through what is most intimate and proximate, transforming the domestic into a terrain of vulnerability.



Federica Zianni, *Restlessness of Democles*, 2019  
bronze, lost-wax casting and rubber  
cm 145 x 20 x 10

## **RAFFAELLA DE CHIRICO CONTEMPORARY ART & ADVISORING**

The first location of Raffaella De Chirico Contemporary Art opened in Turin in 2011. Ten years later, the gallery expanded to Milan, which currently serves as its sole premises at via Monte di Pietà 1A, in the heart of the Brera district.

Raffaella De Chirico has consistently focused her exhibition program on producing and realizing projects that are almost entirely unprecedented within Italy. She prioritizes artists under 40 who have already distinguished themselves through their research and artistic proposals outside of Italy.

This same principle applies to the established historical artists represented by the gallery, with particular emphasis on those whose research stood out during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Consequently, the gallery has developed a dedicated branch for investment advising and the curation of collections focused primarily on Modern Art. A constant "then/now" research thread characterizes the gallery's attention to semantics, conceptual minimalism, the exploration of new production materials, and socially-driven documentary photography. The gallery seeks a precise dialogue with the past, determined to dissect the peculiarities of the present in an effort to stimulate discussion and exchange.

Twelve years after the opening of the first space, the advising project was launched to give structure to the expertise acquired over the years: site-specific projects, primary market acquisitions for public and private entities, archiving, secondary market services, appraisals, and valuations within the framework of art as an economic and financial asset.

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# RAFFAELLA DE CHIRICO ARTE CONTEMPORANEA & ADVISORING

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Mercoledì e Giovedì | Wednesday and Thursday 15.00 – 19.00

on other days by appointment only

## CONTACTS

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RAFFAELLA

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'RDC' in a cursive, flowing script.

DE CHIRICO