

***Heads in Question***  
**by Rossella Biscotti**

Rossella Biscotti is once again on the traces of a recent past that, for various reasons, has been partly erased and concealed by official history. The discovery of five bronze heads of Mussolini and King Victor Emmanuel III, locked away in the basement of the Palazzo degli Uffici at EUR, have become the starting point for a new art project. The temporary move of the sculptures to the premises of Nomas Foundation is not however to be seen as an exhibition in the classic sense, but rather as inspiration to rethink their significance in relation to the present world. The various stages follow on in accordance with a rituality that recalls those of a pagan procession: preparation for the event, the journey made by the sculptures, their stopover for a few days and then their return to the basement. Or possibly it is more of a pretext to introduce the second part of the project, and the prelude to a new encounter with the public, who are greeted by the artist on a platform. This is a modernist architectural element, which is also devoid of any exhibitiv character, for it is designed as a space for a real and concrete dialogue about the idea of monumentality and of the architectural spaces this involves.

Some of the artist's previous works also revolve around the unfolding of a journey through time and collective involvement. In the *New Crossroads* video (2006) a tower of wooden planks remains upright for a single hour, before being gradually dismantled by its own inhabitants. However, while mechanisms of an economic and social nature are triggered off in *New Crossroads*, here the interaction tends more to examine an idea of a historical identity of ideological origin.

In *Cities of Continuous Lines* (2006) Rossella Biscotti, together with Kevin van Braak, had already tackled various aspects of Fascist architecture, investigating not so much its political and propaganda elements as its transformation in relation to the use that has been made of it over time.

While the passing decades have led to a gradual loss of identification with a monument which, now deprived of its original functions, has become historical evidence of something unalterable and part of the past, it is also true that buildings continue to evolve as real and living spaces subject to change. They are inhabited places with which residents interact and tend to identify.

The new project is also the product of the artist's reflections on comparisons between two elements: on the one hand the classical monumentality of the heads and, on the other, the futurism of Fascist regime architecture. This viewed the EUR district as a great monument to the future and to the idea of modernism, but at the same time it was a propaganda tool for the Fascist dictatorship.

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