

STEFANO SCHEDA

SCUOLA LIBERA DEL NUDO

Following the end of the solo exhibition "Nudo, mani in alto! Naked, hands up!" by Stefano SCHEDA, we want to share the project of the performance *Scuola Libera del Nudo* that should have been held at Galleria Fumagalli on 14 March 2020, but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



Stefano SCHEDA conceived two performances as part of the exhibition project "Nudo, mani in alto! Naked, hands up!": *Inerte/Inerme* was held on 16 January, 2020 during the opening reception of the exhibition, arousing great interest and involvement of the very large audience, who found themselves in front of some performers that got undressed and lay naked on the gallery floor ([Link to the excerpt of the video](#)); on the contrary, *Scuola Libera del Nudo* – scheduled for 14 March 2020 – was definitively cancelled due to the gallery's prolonged closure and the still current health emergency. Hereby we share its concept, which will be also documented in the forthcoming publication featuring the texts by art historian and curator Angela Madesani, by philosopher and psychoanalyst Matteo Bonazzi, and by gallery owner Annamaria Maggi.



Stefano Scheda, dress rehearsal of the performance *Scuola Libera del Nudo*, Artistic Anatomy classroom, Academy of Fine Arts, Bologna, 2019. Courtesy the artist

Through *Scuola Libera del Nudo*, a further expression of his artistic language and physical work, Stefano Scheda continues his reflection on the topic of nudity, focusing especially on **the concept of standard's subversion and on the difference between pornography and art**. For this unrealised project, the artist would have re-staged at the gallery a typical atelier of the Scuola Libera del Nudo – an academic class where students exercise in life drawing in front of a nude model, and one of the founding courses that characterise the historic Italian Academies of Fine Arts – thus activating new relationships between the portraitists, the model and the audience, starting from the typical features of a class gathered around a living subject.

The artist would have invited the audience to take part in the performance both as viewers and actively as portraitists by getting "naked", both mentally and physically taking their clothes off. It would have been a provocative act, indeed, in which **the roles of the naked portraitists and the covered model – as a forbidden subject – would have been reversed, changing the relationship between the model's and portraitists' glances**. While in a classic session the dressed portraitists look at the naked model to portray her – but also to desire her – in this case Stefano Scheda would have provided an open image without revealing the riddle.

«I've purposely left the possibilities open to the viewers of the performance: what happens if the hyper-dressed woman is portrayed by naked drawers? Usually the model doesn't see the naked portraitists, at best they can undress her with the imagination. The woman is seen, especially today, as an erotic object at the mercy of those who may take profit: must we take care and cover her to protect her? Does the covered model represent the unattainable primary object? Are the portraitists trying to mirror themselves to give consistency to a border? Each of us can offer an answer to these questions because there is no single response.»

The project arouses a reflection on the censorship at the time of social networks, considering that the nude was admitted within the drawing classes at the Accademia dei Desiderosi, established around 1582 in Bologna by Agostino, Annibale and Ludovico Carracci, despite the strong restrictions imposed by the Church during the Counter-Reformation.

The performance was previously staged only in the classroom of Artistic Anatomy of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna involving the students of the course "Strategia dell'Invenzione" ["Invention Strategy"] held by Stefano Scheda, founder and director of the festival Marradi Campana Infesta, which reaches its 7th edition "in(Differenza)" this year.