

Dancers, singers and composers originating from locations within Italy and Europe will appear in Fabriano for a multi-media performance created by the visual artist Luisa Eugeni during her period of Artist Residency 2023

The curtain draws open for "FABER. An Opera for the Papermills of Fabriano" directed by Luisa Eugeni, commissioned and presented by the Fedrigoni Fabriano Foundation (FFF) in collaboration with the FABRIANO paper mills.

The inaugural event will open on Friday, Nov. 10 at 5:30 p.m. with a live performance followed by a repeat performance on Saturday, Nov. 11 at 4pm, both directed by the artist. Following the live performances, the artist's installation will remain on view Nov. 11-12 and Nov. 18-19 in the Paper Mill Supermarket, a series of exhibition spaces added to the Fabriano Paper Pavilion by the Fedrigoni Fabriano Foundation. Both spaces will remain open for visitors at the same time.

Here is the public Announcement posted in Fabriano on Oct. 27, 2023 – “FABER. An Opera for the Paper Mills of Fabriano” is a multi-media work based on gestures used in the art of paper making, drawn from the oldest craft traditions to those that still survive today – as conceived by visual artist Luisa Eugeni during her 2023 Artist Residency in Fabriano. The project highlights the creative and visual artists who use, interpret, and experiment with all kinds of paper every day in the land where the centuries-old papermaking tradition originated; an immersive and inspiring experience for their own work.

Fabriano has so far been able to welcome an important array of talents over the years: David Gentleman, Umberto Giovannini, Maria Pina and Gianna Bentivenga, Anusc Castiglioni, Massimo Zanelli, Nick Morley, Alberto Madrigal, photographer and storyteller Brahmino, and architect Giuseppe Ricupero.

The live performance that accompanies this artist's installation will include multi-channel video installations, music and lyric opera staged within the former spaces of the historic paper mills that are no longer in use today, but appear as background in the spectacle. The entire production is digitally transferred to a new exhibition space where the traditional papermaking steps are re-created in a model form. In one part of the installation, the artist has created a video of the hand-papermaking cycle: beginning with the repetitive gestures of the master 'vatman' who immerses his/her mould into the pulp vat to produce the formed sheet; followed by the 'coucher' who together with the 'layer' releases the still-damp sheet from the mould and transfers it to the felt; next the video records the 'seamstress' who passes the needle and metal-alloy thread from one side of the mould to the other in order to affix the watermark; and the 'counter' who repeatedly counts sheets five by five and by fanning them out. The dance-like movement of arms, hands and fingers of the workers recorded in the video lays out the groundwork for the live performance.

The recorded movements are transmitted to the performers, musicians and dancers, who are dressed in costumes made of paper for the live performance. Together, the synchronized movements of the figures combine with sound and visual effects in an orchestrated dialogue. The rushing of the Giano river, the beating of the wooden stampers and the creaking of the screwpress are sounds mixed in with the voices of the singers. The score, written for the live performance,

takes its cue from the finale of Gioachino Rossini's William Tell, interpreted with computer and synthesizer.

The Multimedia Opera can also be viewed during subsequent weekends: Nov. 11-12 and Nov. 18-19, with free admission, during the XXII Settimana della Cultura d'Impresa, a national weeklong event promoted by Confindustria and MUSEIMPRESA that introduces visitors to the extensive cultural heritage to be found within the museums and archives of large, medium and small Italian companies. This year's theme is "the individual at the center of sustainable development; the spirit of conscious enterprise," where the specialized gestures applied by skilled workers in their industry are highlighted. In: FABER. An Opera for the Paper Mills of Fabriano, they are translated through performance into an art form.

The Paper Mills Supermarket (aka the *spaccio*), an exhibition space inaugurated by the FFF in 2022, and the Fabriano Paper Pavilion (dedicated in 2019 for the XIII Meeting Creative Cities UNESCO) can be visited on the same day by reservation. The event is sponsored by the City of Fabriano, the Marche Region, the Pia Università dei Cartai, and *Passeggiando tra la storia*.

Luisa Eugeni, born in Assisi but currently living in Germany, is the co-founder and coordinator of the interdisciplinary art group Sineumbra, and a visual artist with a particular interest in the performing arts. She uses multimedia art forms to explore themes such as 'belonging' in relationship to individual and collective identities. In 2017 she began to form alliances with performers, musicians, filmmakers, photographers, fashion designers and graphic designers, as well as mathematicians, architects, writers and artisans to use the immersive environments of film, spatial interventions, sculptural objects, dancing figures, music and elements of literature to collectively investigate and process historical memory and its contemporary interpretation.

The artist has opened up her Residency to include the participation other international artists. Together they collectively create a transmedia narrative from the gestural heritage of papermaking: Paolo Casali (composer), Gabrio Gabrielli (dancer), Anna Jäger (dancer), Manuela Molinelli (mezzo-soprano), Janis Elias Müller (sound designer), Claudio Rocchi (tenor), Antonio Stella (dancer), Raphael Wutz (fashion designer).

The seamstress, the master papermakers, the filigranologist, the counters, and the women who prepare products of the Paper Mill for export are some of the key figures interviewed by Luisa Eugeni during her Residency. Luisa's project translates the cultural and historical significance of the centuries-old product of Fabriano paper into a performance art piece, highlighting not only the excellence of the artifact itself, but also the manual dexterity of the people who fabricate it and their specific roles.

With the collaboration of several papermakers and women in the industry who volunteered to re-enact their steps related to the production stages of papermaking for the camera, the same gestures could be conveyed to the performers. For example: the corps de ballet embodies these traditional movements, emphasizing the material qualities and physical gestures of the actual hands and arms that have made Fabriano paper over the centuries.

The classical and the contemporary, the manual and digital, and the real and virtual co-exist in vibrant hybrid form in this Opera, a symbol of the local craft that over eight centuries has become a collective identity. Historical memory morphs into a futuristic representation.

Luisa Eugeni is a visual artist currently researching and teaching at the University of Art in Bremen, Germany. She is a PhD candidate in the Performing Arts at Leiden University (Netherlands). Her undergraduate degree is in Political Science, with a thesis in International Relations from the University of Perugia (2011). She next studied "Expanded Ideas of Cinematic Spaces" (2018) and "Body and Space Concepts" (2019) at the Hochschule für Künste in Bremen. At the Luav University of Venice, she is currently completing a master's degree in "MOVIES Moving Images Arts" (2022-23). She is the co-founder and current coordinator of the group Sineumbra. She has exhibited at Kunsthalle, Weserburg Museum, GAK and Galerie für Gegenwartigekunst in Bremen (2021). She was artistic director of the Hybrid Museum of the Neighbourhood project at Jacobs University in Bremen (2021-22) an experimental project on memory related to space and hybrid technologies.

Residenza d'Artista is a project promoted by the Fondazione Fedrigoni Fabriano, in collaboration with FABRIANO, and is designed to host visual, audio and performance artists who work with all kinds of paper every day, while residing in the location where a respected tradition of papermaking originated, and here finding inspiration for their works. Fabriano has thus far welcomed an impressive list of artists over the years: from David Gentleman in 2018 to Umberto Giovannini, Maria Pina and Gianna Bentivegna, Anusc Castiglioni, Massimo Zanelli and Nick Morley in 2019, Alberto Madrigal in 2021, to Simone Bramante and Giuseppe Ricupero protagonists of the 2022 edition.

Fondazione Fedrigoni Fabriano (FFF) was founded in 2011 by Fedrigoni S.p.a to promote the study of the history of paper and the watermark, to support the development and popularization of paper science, and to protect the historical, archaeological and archival heritage of the local paper industry, preserving knowledge of traditional techniques used as far back as the Middle Ages. FFF also supports activities to preserve and enhance the archival and library collections, archaeological artifacts and historical papermaking materials of the Cartiere Miliani Fabriano, now under the ownership of Fedrigoni S.p.A. The Cartiere Miliani Fabriano Archives is the oldest historical business archive in Italy. It collects and maintains documents related to the area's paper mills since its founding in 1782, together with a collection of 1,500 watermarks, 1,00 historical photographs and a library of more than 3,000 volumes dedicated to the history of paper. In addition, the Cartiere preserves 2,000 m² of papermaking historical assets (BSC), i.e., antique tools and machinery such as a water-powered stamping machine with multiple hammers dating from the end of 18th century, a large screwpress from 1706, cylinders and dandyrolls used for the production of paper by the cylinder mould machine, 6,000 punches in wood, bronze e copper, and 2,295 moulds for the production of handmade paper. The noted filigranologist August Zonghi's collection of watermarks dating from 1267 to 1798 has been part of the Archive since 2016. Together with the collection of watermarks from the Cartiere Miliani Fabriano Archive they



constitute the Corpus Chartarum Fabriano (CCF), an advanced technology database accessible to scholars around the world without charge. www.fondazionefedrigoni.it

Information and images

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