

iamvulnerable

so I live

Art is to love Reality

The *transdisciplinary artistic research 'iamvulnerable'*, curated since 2020 by Sergio Mario Illuminato, within the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, with the patronage of the Lazio Region, the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital, and the Municipality of Velletri, has given rise to various initiatives. These include the **BOOK** '*Corpus et Vulnus: Tàpies, Kiefer, Parmiggiani*,' the artist **RESIDENCY** '*Alchemical Workshop of Ideas*' at the former Pontifical Prison of Velletri, the **MOVEMENT** '*VulnerarTe*,' the **PERFORMATIVE PRACTICE** '*iosonovulnerabile*,' the **MAGAZINE** '*VulnerarTe*,' the **SHORT FILM** '*Vulnerare*,' and the **SCHOOL-WORK ALTERNATION PROGRAMS** '*Enter Outside Exit Inside*,' in collaboration with schools in Rome and its province, as well as **INTERNATIONAL** programs at **Italian Cultural Institutes** abroad, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation**.

"I believe it is necessary to educate the new generations about the value of defeat, how to handle it, and the humanity that arises from it; to build an identity capable of feeling a sense of common destiny, where one can fail and start again without their value and dignity being affected; to not become a social climber; to not trample over others to get ahead. In this world of vulgar and dishonest winners, of false and opportunistic oppressors, of people who matter, who hold power, who steal the present, let alone the future, to all the neurotics of success, of appearance, of becoming. I much prefer the anthropology of the loser. It's an exercise that I excel at and reconciles me with my sacred few."

Pierpaolo Pasolini

Program for the
ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTES abroad

iamvulnerable

curated by SERGIO MARIO ILLUMINATO

a transdisciplinary performative practice of *painting-sculpture*
with a site-coexistence character in *publishing-cinema-dance-music-photography*

The 'IAMVULNERABLE' brand as an innovative creative enterprise.

The transdisciplinary research on the '*Contemporary Cathedrals of Vulnerability*,' traversed through an aesthetic and ethical movement of art, becomes an Italian brand.

Nominated among the '*excellent Cultural practices*' of the Lazio Region and presented as an '*innovative creative enterprise*.'



In an age of permanent crisis, where the international order is in decline, and the laws of the planet have escaped control due to the excessive exploitation of natural resources, the identity of today's artist is well-defined, though interpreted with alternative approaches and methods: to HYBRIDIZE, to cross boundaries between languages and cultures while maintaining a sensitivity to the context and its limitations. Remaining on the edge between different creative categories and experiencing a certain restlessness about definitions represents the journey of contemporary art, which inherits the baton from early 20th-century movements like the Bauhaus. It is imperative to insist on the question of paradigm change that the new design of contemporary art must confront, escaping all forms of comfort zones. This research focuses on unusual perspectives guided by the concept of TRANSDISCIPLINARITY, aiming to understand the complexity of the present world. We move in the unusual space of INTERSTITIAL ZONES between painting ∞ sculpture, influenced by the language of cinema, dance, music, and photography, in order to continually re-signify exhibition spaces and experiment with relational creative practices that reveal connections, affinities, and possible developments with the participating elements. This is the exciting necessity in the unfinished expressive search for an authorial dimension that, through the 'COSMIC-WEAVE-FABRIC' of 'COMMUNICATIVE-ARTISTIC-ORGANISMS,' is based on 'CO-EXISTENCE' in creating irregular performative rings, conceived as meeting places and communities, spaces for generation and active knowledge, not just consumption. It is a reversal of the trend in art, moving away from exhausted exclusive castes and self-referential systems. From here, we interweave the primal themes of the 'BODY-BEYOND-MATTER,' 'VULNERABILITY,' 'NOMADIC-ETHICS' and 'CONVERGENCE-AESTHETICS' based on the creative mechanisms of Ruins, to expand and divert contemporary inquiries regarding what is propagated through the para-verse. In this context, this neologism refers to the relentless degradation of virtual worlds towards the shallowness of mirror worlds in our daily lives.



INTRODUCTION

The performative practice 'IAMVULNERABLE' distinguishes itself for its rich narrative that unleashes internal conflicts and revelations, offering the spectator an intriguing blend of narrative and artistic potential.

Its aim is to delve deeply into the connection between vulnerability and creativity in an extraordinary environment, with the promise of skillfully blending elements of drama, mystery, and introspection.



The unique setting in an abandoned nineteenth-century prison adds historical charm and a suggestive atmosphere, transforming a time laden with dark and painful moments into a fascinating creative space.

Two crucial aspects are treated with particular attention: the transition for the participant from the dramaticity of the prison past to a creative context and the intertwining of conflicts in the complex dynamics between art and reality. These elements significantly contribute to making the performative practice engaging and intriguing, challenging exhibition conventions.

The exhibition project proposed here falls within the excellent Cultural practices of the Lazio Region and is presented as an '*innovative creative enterprise*': the central concept of '*Contemporary Cathedrals of Vulnerability*' indeed, through an aesthetic and ethical movement of art, becomes an Italian brand.



We are in Italy, in an old nineteenth-century pontifical prison. It was born while three days of mourning were proclaimed for the loss of the honorary citizen and national hero Giuseppe Garibaldi. After two centuries, the prison is decommissioned, and the last inmates are transferred to a modern penitentiary. Abandoned to itself for over 30 years, just before demolition, as a final testimony, it is inhabited by a group of artists: painters, photographers, filmmakers, dancers, musicians. The spectators, associating themselves with this contemporary *'Urbex Squad,'* practice a form of creative spelunking, capable of bringing to light *'Communicating Artistic Organisms'* that can reveal the powerful link that exists between human vulnerability and the creative strength that resides in each of us. Is it perhaps a performative practice on the absurdity of modern times?

CLIMAX

The artistic devices of painting-sculpture, photography, music, cinema, and dance converge in the performative practice 'IAMVULNERABLE', generating a powerful synergy that combines culture and nature, reality and abstraction.

In the compositional strength of the setup, the chromatic palette of the artistic devices organically merges with the soundtrack and sound, contributing to the polyphony of the exhibition means used, thus seeking to involve a broader and more diverse audience.



The Communicating Artistic Organisms act as flashes of pure color, integrating with the black and white photos of the prison environments, the dusty files, and the furnishings of the 19th century, allowing the worlds of painting and reality to communicate deep inner impulses.

Music, sound, and video, equated with the scenic component, are crucial elements that require particular attention to guide the transition from the dramaticity of the prison past to a creative context, intertwining conflicts in the intricate dynamics between art and reality with mastery and sensitivity.

Art is designated here as a bearer of higher value and inner truth that surpasses its mere representation of the visible.

SETTING

We find ourselves inside an ancient nineteenth-century prison, a place rich in history. Born during the three days of mourning for Giuseppe Garibaldi, a national hero, the prison was decommissioned after two centuries when the last inmates were transferred to a modern facility.

Abandoned for over 30 years, the prison/exhibition space now becomes the stage for contemporary artists who, together with the spectators, decide to bring it back to life in a surprising way. The setup will allow visitors to collaborate with painters, photographers, filmmakers, dancers, and musicians to bring to light the "*Communicating Artistic Organisms*."

Engaging the audience in this '*Urbex Squad*' begins practicing '*creative spelunking*,' immersing themselves among decaying cells, inscriptions engraved by inmates, and dusty files to explore through different forms of art the powerful link between vulnerability and creative strength that resides in each of us.

The story of 'IAMVULNERABLE' reflects on the absurdity of modern times, where beauty and strength can emerge from the most unexpected corners and from the most difficult experiences. The prison becomes a metaphor for society, its complex history and potential for transformation merge through creativity and the sharing of human vulnerabilities.



OPENING PERFORMATIVE EVENT FEATURING MUSIC, DANCE, LIVE THEATER

In the context of the inaugural day, 'IAMVULNERABLE' aims to manifest its transdisciplinary essence even more through a performative action that combines cinema, dance, music, and live theater and infuses it into the spaces of the Italian Cultural Institute hosted in foreign capitals.

Through images, gestures, sounds, and words, the spectators will embark on an exciting journey between ancient and new stories, exploring resistances and vulnerabilities.

This encounter between art and reality, between culture and nature, is manifested in a lively and meaningful dialogue precisely because the memory of the former Pontifical Prison of Velletri reveals itself among the splendid halls of the Italian Cultural Institutes.

The event takes on a particular aura thanks to the '*Communicating Artistic Organisms*' (CAOs), painting and sculpture devices that bestow creative power and establish a profound connection between past and present.

COMMUNICATING ARTISTIC ORGANISMS



Art is to love reality! This statement is embodied by *Communicating Artistic Organisms* (CAOs), custodians of the idea that art is a process closely linked to life as its raw material. Departing from conventional grammar, these devices are not easy works to contemplate; they lack a fixed and conclusive form, resembling more of a '*cosmic-fabric-weave*' in continuous evolution, composed of metallic and organic pigments constantly changing through chemical reactions, fermentations, chromatic alterations, and degradation

The main devices of the exhibition are the '*Communicating Artistic Organisms (CAOs)*', accompanied in the setup by black-and-white photos of degraded corridors and cells, rows of abandoned dusty files from a criminal court, attacked by time, humidity, and insects. Stacked on the ground as if to protect the boundaries of walls with peeling plaster colored by mold. CAOs, as well as the music, videos, and choreographies, are born thanks to and for the performative practice proposed here.

Within the exhibition, CAOs come into conflict, between purpose and accident, between aesthetic nature and ethical nature, between past and present, between what is no longer and what is not yet. This conflict, emphasized by the dynamic setup, persists, creating a 'tense' coexistence that permeates the entire spectator's experience.

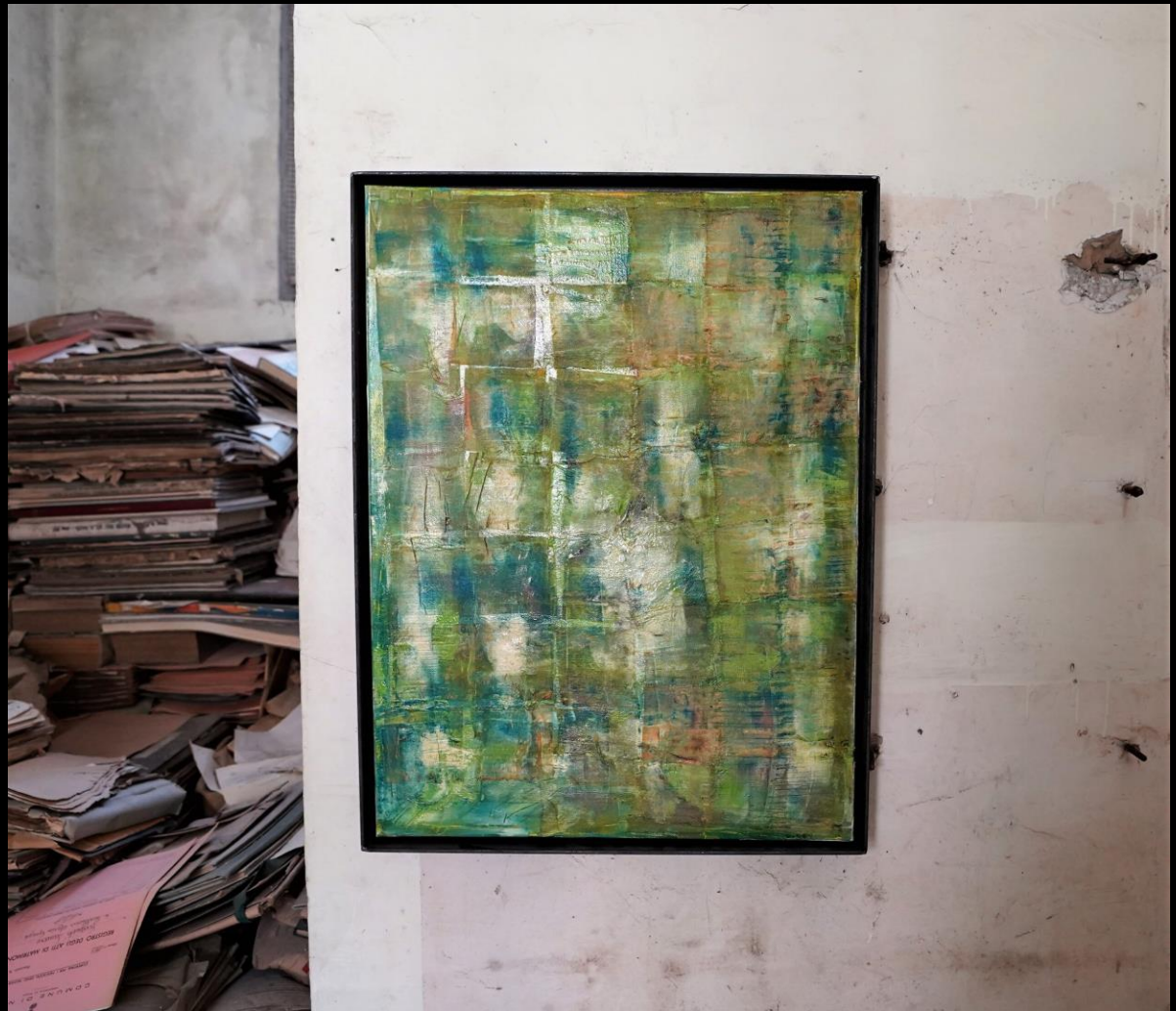
The active objective that this performative practice aims to bring out, liberated from the static universe of symbolism, is to make them become an authentic medium within a relational background. The experience of CAOs unfolds in its deep connections with the spectator, involving them authentically and impenetrably through their body.

Recognizing the interconnection between nature and culture, where we produce ruins, we can conceive this converging exhibition device as part of an ongoing evolution exhibition. No longer a formal synthesis, but rather a fabric, a weave of an inextricably connected experience.

CELL 1: *Prohibition of Fission*
(70×120×5)



CELL 2: *Collision*
(50×70×5)



**CELL 3: *Exhausted silence*
from cooking (80×100x5)**





CELL 3: *Enantiodromia-Metamorphosis-Infinite Evil* (70×300x5)

**CELL 4: *The four
seasons of the present*
(70×100×5)**



CELL 5: *RedRome*
(40×120×5)



**CELL 5: Enter Outside Exit
Inside (70×100x5)**



CELL 6: *Phloem*
(80×100x5)



CELL 7: *Moderna*
(70×120×5)



CELL 7: *Noumenon*
(61×100x5)



CHAPPELL-CINEMA:
Synéchein (120×70×5)



*'The past leaves deep marks, messages of suffering and hope imprisoned, like an unheard prayer.
These signs among people, among things, should not be ignored.
Art reveals to the world the hidden energy in places of vulnerability*

PICTURES OF THE ORIGINAL WORDS INSCRIBED BY THE INMATES ON THE PRISON WALLS...

I'm sorry too!

Love me, my God, I beg you, with heart and not words.

When I die, I will go to paradise because I have lived intensely in the hell of the living.

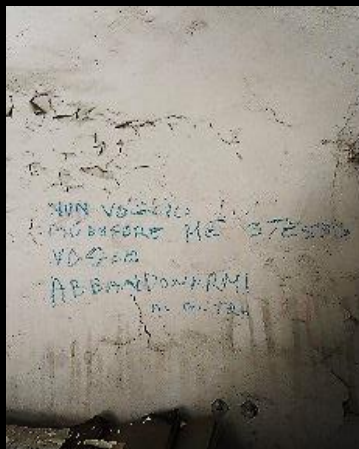
I don't want to be myself anymore, I want to surrender to something else.

Always live even when someone doesn't want you to.

Don't let anyone stop you from doing what you want.

The cuts on the skin are not an illusion, they don't heal anymore.

I and everything around me are consumed, what sense does life have?



Sergio Mario Illuminato

CORPUS ET VULNUS

Tàpies, Kiefer, Parmiggiani

The **body** and **vulnerability**

are strong elements of **humanity**

banned from the globalized commerce of the present, rightfully entering the materials used in art

to create **Communicating Artistic**

Organisms of **nomadic ethics** and

to emancipate the journey of modern man

Preface by FRANCO SPERONI, writer, historian, and art critic, professor of contemporary art history and the history and methodology of art criticism at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome.

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CURATOR - ARTIST: Sergio Mario Illuminato



Curator - artist. Holds a Master's degree in 'Painting' from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome and in 'Letters and Philosophy with a focus on Theater and Performance' from the University of Rome La Sapienza. Certified Master's degree in 'Contemporary Art' from the MOMA in New York. President of the VulnerarTe APS Movement. Registered with the Order of Journalists of Lazio. Lives and works in Rome.

He curated exhibitions such as: 'Around Futurism' at Villa Madama, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Fondazione Memmo, Museo del Genio Civile, Foreign Embassies, and Academies; 'Around Seduction – Susanna de Lempicka' at Palazzo Valentini - Rome.

He has exhibited, thanks to the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Italian embassies abroad, as a painter and sculptor in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, Latvia, the United Kingdom, Russia, as well as in Italy. He is present with permanent exhibitions on international art platforms: Wikiart, Saatchi Art, Artid, Singulart, Kaboomart, Rome Art Week, Absolute Arts, ArtSted, Pitturiamo, Arte Laguna World, Yicca Community. He is a columnist on aesthetics-philosophy themes for Contemporary Art Magazines: Artribune, VulnerarTe, Dialectika, and E-zine; he is the author of essays and art books, the latest of which is 'Corpus et Vulnus, Tàpies, Kiefer e Parmiggiani', with a preface by Franco Speroni, writer, historian, and art critic, professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. Author and Producer of the documentary 'Mediterranea' and the spot '30 anni di Convenzione di Barcellona' for the United Nations Environment Programme and the Italian Government; author and producer of the documentary 'Intorno al Futurismo' for the Fondazione Memmo and the Fondazione AIRC per la Ricerca sul Cancro. Author and producer of RAI television programs: 'Il Festival delle Azalee' - 'AmoRoma', live music, theater, and dance from Piazza di Spagna for the Natale di Roma, in collaboration with the Accademia Nazionale d'Arte Drammatica Silvio D'Amico, the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia, the Conservatorio di Musica S. Cecilia, the Accademia Nazionale di Danza, and the Accademia di Costume e di Moda; 'Omaggio a Toscanini' from the Teatro Argentina in Rome for the Celebrations of Arturo Toscanini; 'Giù la Maschera, In scena contro la Mafia'. In collaboration with the trade unions CGIL, CISL, and UIL to pay tribute to the victims of the mafia at the Stadio della Favorita in Palermo, a few weeks after the assassination of Judge Falcone and his escort and Judge Paolo Borsellino. Assistant director at the Teatro Stabile di Roma with Maurizio Scaparro, in 'Memorie di Adriano' with Giorgio Albertazzi and 'Pulcinella' with Massimo Ranieri.



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