

ARCHITETTURE TERRONE

Romina De Novellis

9 May 2025

10 September 2025



Opening days and hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:30 am - 6:30 pm

Opening: Friday, 9 May, from 5 pm to 8 pm

Architetture Terrone: rethinking the space, geography and territory of a stigmatized culture, traditionally rooted in the land.

It is with this strong and sharp statement in mind that Romina De Novellis (Naples, 1982) – a visual artist, performer, researcher, and anthropologist with Mediterranean roots, yet long based in Paris – intends to formalize her solo exhibition at the Venetian venue of Alberta Pane Gallery.

Through the counter-ritual gestures of her long-lasting performances, Romina De Novellis highlights, unhinges and dismantles binary and patriarchal frameworks ingrained in contemporary thought.

In *Architetture Terrone*, special attention is given to fragile and ephemeral structures, which in the

artist's performances become visual and cognitive tools for rethinking the South and the oppression of genders. Adopting an eco-feminist lens, De Novellis critiques societal constraints, challenges dominant gender paradigms, and interrogates the relationship between humanity and nature.

In a retrospective approach, the exhibition highlights some of the most significant performances Romina De Novellis has created over the past fifteen years, primarily through a diverse array of installation-based devices.

These ephemeral and temporary displays become visual instruments for rethinking space and the constraints historically tied to it. Though absent of the performer's body that once inhabited them, these structures engage in dialogue with videos

and photographs, which serve as essential traces of De Novellis's performative practice.

The gallery's long entrance corridor welcomes visitors with a rhythmic sequence of small photographs, documenting all of Romina De Novellis's performances from 2009 to 2024. The exhibition then unfolds in the main space, where installations, videos, and large-scale photographs are shown.

Among the works on display is *Del maiale non si butta via niente* (2022), first presented at the Jeu de Paume in Paris. The piece offers a critical reflection on the productivity-driven logic of the agri-food industry, drawing a parallel between female and animal bodies, placed in a condition of simultaneous co-presence and absence.

A similarly eco-feminist sensibility emerges in *Si tu m'aimes, protège-moi* (2020-2021), where the binomial denounce-care is central, and in *Eurydice*, a performance conceived in 2021 for the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature in Paris, in which the myth of Eurydice and the Mediterranean traditions associated with it are reread.

On the other hand, *La Gabbia* (2012-2016) and *La Veglia* (2012-2022), presented in installation and photographic form, delve into the moral, social, and cultural claustrophobia that pervades everyday life, while a desire for escape and freedom.

As the exhibition continues into the second part of the space, visitors encounter the installation-performance *Voulez-vous danser avec moi ? Merci, je ne préfère pas* (2023), inspired by a characteristic element of Southern Italian urban architecture: the traditional Salento bandstand. First presented in the Jardin des Tuileries as part of the Public Program of Art Basel Paris, the work reflects on the solitude embedded in human relationships. Through this piece, the artist reimagines ritual tradition and proposes a renewed significance for this architectural form.

Through the body and performative gesture, Romina De Novellis's work offers a non-binary reimagining of space — as a form of resistance against ritualistic, suffocating, and pervasive dynamics. Her practice advocates for an inclusive, feminist vision of identity, liberated from imposed constraints.

In *Architetture Terrone*, social and cultural impositions — along with the constructs of tradition, faith, religion, and family, and their repercussions on genders — are critically examined and subverted. Through sculptural structures and performative devices, De Novellis uses her own body to give aesthetic, conceptual, and poetic form to some of the most urgent and pressing issues of our time.

ROMINA DE NOVELLIS

Born in Naples, Italy, in 1982. Lives and works in Paris, France.

Romina De Novellis (born in Naples in 1982, currently living and working in Paris) grew up in Rome and has been based in Paris since 2008. After graduating in 1999 from the Royal Academy of Dance in London (RAD certification), she continued her studies at the DAMS department of Roma Tre University, later assisting Luigi Squarzina with the artistic direction at the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome. In Paris, she pursued research in anthropology, which culminated in a doctorate at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).

Following years dedicated to dance and theater, and a significant accident that forced her to shift career paths, De Novellis found in performance — particularly in long-duration practices — the medium through which to redefine and express her artistic vision.

The artist draws on eco-feminist theories and geopolitical reflections to challenge the constraints imposed by contemporary society. Through the body, she disrupts gender paradigms and calls for a redefinition of the dichotomous male-female and man-nature relationships. The Mediterranean and the South — both as geographical locations and as symbolic, cultural spaces — lie at the heart of her poetics, representing territories of conflict and memory, belonging and transition.

Marches and processions define a conceptual exploration in which the body — simultaneously subject and object — becomes a tool for social, political, and anthropological inquiry. Her *tableaux vivants*, constructed from repetitive gestures, reflect the essence of humanity, exposing the body's capacity to occupy space as an act of resistance. The artist frequently draws from classical art iconography, creating a connection between past and present, where ritual, tradition, and contemporary relevance converge.

Consistent with her artistic research, Romina De Novellis founded DOMUS Artist Residency in 2019, a residency and research initiative based in Galatina, Lecce, Italy. This project engages in dialogue with Atelier Essenza, a French association established in Paris in 2014. Both organizations advocate for an intersectional, eco-feminist, and anti-violence approach, fostering inclusive strategies for 'diverse' bodies through pedagogy, scientific research, and artistic creation.

Romina De Novellis' work has been presented in major international institutions and contexts, including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Art Basel Paris - Public Program (Jardin des Tuileries), Paris; Jeu de Paume, Paris; Ca' Pesaro, Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Venice; MAC VAL, Musée d'Art Contemporain du Val-de-Marne, Ivry-sur-Seine, France; Fondation Villa Datriis, France; Pompeii Archeological Parc, Naples; Biennale di Poznan, Poland; Salotto Missoni, New York, USA; Museo MADRE, Naples; Espace Vuitton, Paris; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, Paris; Institut Culturel Italien de Paris; Kulturzentrum Faust, Hannover, Germany; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Something Else Off Biennale Cairo, Cairo, Egypt, to name a few.

GALLERIA
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Del maiale non si butta via niente, 2022, Performance, Jeu de Paume, Paris, France



Voulez-vous danser avec moi ? Merci, je ne préfère pas, 2023, Performance, Art Basel Paris, Jardin des Tuileries, Paris, France

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