

LAVERONICA
arte contemporanea

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THE
ENCOUNTER
A PERFORMANCE BY
ADRIAN PACI

Laveronica arte contemporanea is pleased to present *The Encounter*, a performance by Adrian Paci.

Starting at 5 p.m. on 21 August 2011, the Albanian artist will meet several hundred people on the parvis of San Bartolomeo in Scicli to share with them the gesture of shaking hands. This simple but highly metaphorical gesture will be repeated obsessively, ultimately becoming a ritual: one in which the only thing being celebrated is the gesture itself. During the performance the spectators-actors will wait at the edge of an empty square with a chair set in the middle of it. Leaving the entrance of a house, the artist will cross the square and sit on the chair, waiting for people to approach him, one by one, to shake his hand and then move on, leaving him behind. As in a secular procession, a long line will leave the group to form a thin but crowded barrier of individuals in motion.

The multiplication of an everyday gesture such as that of a handshake – which, by sanctioning an agreement or encounter between two individuals, brings mutual acquaintance and exchanges between people beyond the indecisiveness that precedes them – will determine the union or tension between the artist and the cultural and urban context of the place. The repeated action magnifies the gesture, imbuing it with a significance that is not perceptible in its customary everyday development, and the sign, reiterated as part of a ritual celebrating its unfolding, becomes exclusive by virtue of its separation from the surroundings in which its meaning appears irrevocably unambiguous and an end to itself. As the performance unfolds, the artist's body thus becomes the threshold of an unknown identity whose boundaries cease or blend together close to one's own. The exchange, beyond the individual gesture, becomes the sharing of experiences, an openness towards new and unknown realities. Similarly, the square – the appointed place in which the traits of a community are expressed and developed – is viewed as the privileged place of encounter in which to produce an event that associates the performance with a place powerfully connoted by its traditions. Scicli, the Hyblaeen city overlooking the Mediterranean, where the beauty of Baroque art is entwined with ancient traditions that vary in origin to form an accumulation of cultures and civilizations, becomes the theatre for new encounters of different identities.

Adrian Paci was born in Shkoder (Albania) in 1969. He lives and works in Milan.

Paci has exhibited at the most important international events, from Manifesta to the Venice Biennale, and in prestigious museums and public places around the world. His most important solo shows include those at the Kunsthaus Zurich, curated by Mirjam Varadinis (2010); Villa Medici, Rome (2009); the Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv; Kunstverein Stuk, Leuven, Belgium; Kunstverein Hannover, Hanover; Bonnier Konsthall, Stockholm (2008); Milton Keynes Gallery, Milton Keynes, UK; Museum Am Ostwall, Dortmund (2007); Galleria Civica di Modena, Modena (2006); and PS1, MoMA, New York (2005). Collective exhibitions include *The Mediterranean Approach* at the Palazzo Zenobio in Venice, curated by Adelina von Fürstenberg (2011); the Poznan International Biennial of Contemporary Art (2010); the Biennials of Tirana, Lyons and Athens (2009); the Rome Quadriennale (2008); the Prague Biennale (2007); the Busan Biennale in Korea and the Biennale of Sydney (2006); the Venice Biennale (2005); *Exit* at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin and *Nuovo Spazio Italiano* at the Galleria Civica d'Arte Contemporanea di Trento, MART, Rovereto (2002).

Information

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Dates: august 21, 2011 at 5 p.m.

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