Anna Franceschini
La jalousie
October 17th – December 19th
Emanuela Campoli, Paris

Press Release

Emanuela Campoli is pleased to announce *La jalousie*, Anna Franceschini's second exhibition with the gallery.

In Alain Robbe-Grillet's *La Jalousie*, jealousy is never openly declared but manifests itself through an obsessive scrutiny of things. Instead of establishing their truth, it produces suspicions, fantasies and the impression that something is happening beyond what can be seen. In Franceschini's *Veramon* (2018), the exhibition's opening act, the camera attempts to get behind and around objects, animating what is supposed to remain inert. Shot at Palazzo Lancia in Genova, the film subjects an archive of everyday objects to a series of camera gestures that include macro shots, static framing and rotating movements that obsess over certain textures or unseen shadows, making the objects appear to stir, to shift, almost to act of their own accord. If Franceschini's works are said to be "cinema by other means", in *Veramon*, it is the camera itself that brings things to life. These are archival objects, meant to be preserved, protected, and kept in their place. Many are wrapped in plastic, sealed off from contact, their forms only partially visible beneath translucent coverings.There is an erotic charge to this encounter, not only in the camera's attention to the objects' surfaces, textures and concealed forms, but also in the impression that it has caught them in the act of something they were never meant to reveal. The camera's gaze means to be forensic, but ends up being voyeuristic.

First presented as part of Franceschini's project for the Sanctuary of Hercules Victor in Tivoli, and produced using the rare Polaroid 20×24 camera made available by the Polaroid Foundation, the works on the first floor document a display of objects from the artist's studio. Props and fragments of the body - supposedly inert as the archive - are activated by the electrical energy of a Tesla coil. However, their display at Emanuela Campoli turns them, in a distinctly Franceschini manner, into machines. The presentation system consists of iron structures that allow the photographs to be manually opened or concealed by a telescopic rod. These mechanisms serve a practical purpose, protecting the light-sensitive surfaces of the Polaroids, but they also continue the thread around the censored image, with all the curiosity it arouses. In French, *jalousie* names both jealousy and a type of blind that allows one to look out without being seen. One structure incorporates Venetian blinds, recalling a now cult cinematic resource to create patterns of shadow (one could think of its use in John's aspirational 1980s corporate apartment in *Nine ½ Weeks*, symbolizing him caging Elizabeth). In others iron is perforated, evoking the confessional grille, a fetish and symbol of religious authority entangled with sexual attraction. As in other works by the artist, theatrical excess is never ironic or detached, but considered essential to our visual and psychic construction of desire - an element that probably found its way into her work through Fassbinders' visceral use of melodrama.

Curiosity and the fatal consequences it can entail lie at the heart of MORTADIMODAMODERNA (2024), a performance by Franceschini inspired by Charles Perrault's Bluebeard and Jacques Offenbach's nineteenth-century adaptation. Reimagining Bluebeard's last beheaded wife as the protagonist of a romantic yet caustic pop song, Franceschini turns a tale of obsession and jealousy into a macabre spectacle. The sculptural costume presented here, made of rubber and cinched around the performer's neck, gives the impression of a severed head emerging from a body bag, recasting the latter as a kind of haute couture garment. The tongue-twisting title works like a

nonchalante spell where the gruesome and the *modern* - a term that nowadays subsists only as a claim - can go together.

Punctuating the exhibition on the first floor, a series of stiletto heels, galvanized and embellished with sharp metal studs, evokes punk surfaces that have travelled from subculture to *haute couture* to the most accelerated fashion circuits. Sourced from sex work supply shops, the heels also evoke the bodily demands of these workers, where performance and labour are inseparable, and where the stiletto becomes both ornamental and defensive - *stiletto* originally meaning dagger. Other heels, the highest, are repurposed as door handles, where they can be touched and manipulated.

Door handles are also thresholds to another world. One could think of Dorothy's magical shoes in *The Wizard of Oz*, which Stuart Culver reads within a world of commodities, spectacle and manufactured desire, where magical objects promise forms of fulfillment they cannot necessarily deliver. The slippers themselves become objects of desire and consumption, even as they offer Dorothy a way out of that world. In Jeffrey Stern's psychoanalytic reading, the ruby slippers symbolize a girl's passage into womanhood through menarche and the emergence of female sexuality. It is embodied in an object she possesses without fully understanding its power, and which comes into her possession only through the death of another woman. *La jalousie* unfolds as a repertoire of gestures through which things are concealed, revealed and brought to life, opening onto other, seemingly magical realities, where the desire to see what should remain hidden becomes a lure.

Anna Franceschini (Pavia, IT, 1979) lives and works in Milan. She holds a PhD in Visual and Media Studies and teaches at NABA / Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti in Milan.

In September 2026, Lenz Press published Machines Wear Customs, the first comprehensive monograph dedicated to her work, edited by Attilia Fattori Franchini and Ilaria Gianni, with contributions by more than twenty authors.

Solo exhibitions and performances include: Nights Out, Kunsteverein Gartenhaus, Vienna (2025); Venere&Marte, Villa D'Este, Tivoli (2025); All Those Stuffed Shirts, Triennale, Milan (2023); The Siberian Cat Sleeps Curled Up by the Stove, Istituto Svizzero, Milan (2022); Il Salotto Cattivo, Emanuela Campoli, Paris (2022); Mechanically Yours, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2015); Laws of Attraction, Spike Island, Bristol (2014); The Diva Who Became an Alphabet and Some Remnants, Museion, Bolzano (2015); HALATION, Objectif Exhibi- tions, Antwerp (2012); VITRINE / Anna Franceschini, GAM, Turin (2015); Lezioni d'Italiano, Fiorucci Art Trust, London (2014).

Recent group exhibitions have been held at: Tinguely Museum, Basel (2024); Mudam, Luxembourg (2023); MAXXI L'Aquila (2023); Teatrino di Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2022); Neuer Kunstverein, Vienna (2022); Quadriennale d'Arte 2020, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (2020); Fondazione ICA, Milan (2021); MAXXI, Rome (2020); MACRO, Rome (2019); Matadero, Madrid (2019); Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin (2019); Les Abattoirs, Toulouse (2019); and Villa Medici, Rome (2018). Her videos and films have been presented at numerous festivals including: Locarno Film Festival; IFFR/Rotterdam Film Festival; TFF/ Torino Film Festival. Franceschini was a Merz Prize finalist for 2025. For 2022 she was one of the winners of the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. In 2019 she made the short film BUSTROFEDICO, a special project of the Italian Pavilion at the 58th Venice Art Biennale.

Her work forms part of the collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris; Les Abattoirs, Toulouse; Nouveau Musee National de Monaco; Triennale Milano; MACRO, Rome; GAMeC, Bergamo; Fondazione Fiera Milano; MACTE, Termoli; Nicoletta Fiorucci Collection; and Silvia Fiorucci Collection.