

Giorgio Andreotta Calò
SENZA TITOLO (ANASTASIS)
ἀνάστασις

24 May – 23 September 2018
Oude Kerk
Amsterdam



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I. INTRODUCTION

The complex installation project *Anàstasis* was conceived by Giorgio Andreotta Calò (Venice, 1979) for the spaces of the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, where the artist was invited to come up with an original site-specific intervention, curated by the director of the institution, Jacqueline Grandjean, on public view from 24 May to 23 September 2018. Oude Kerk, literally 'old church', is the most ancient religious building in Amsterdam: today it is a place of worship, a museum and also a non-profit organization, the statutory aim of which is the conservation and valorisation of the church itself, through an approach

based on the notion of transhistoricity. Uniting the promotion of historical-artistic heritage with the production of contemporary art, Oude Kerk in fact commissions interventions that trigger reflections on the present by major international artists, relating specifically to the monumental complex of the church and the lively neighbourhood in which it is situated, De Wallen.

Giorgio Andreotta Calò's proposal is inspired by the historical vicissitudes of the church, and in particular by the conversion from the Catholic to the Protestant faith which took place in 1566. It was accompanied by a sharp



Aerial Photo - KLM 1952



Nave, cross vault and choir, 1952. Netherland Cultural Department

and violent alteration (*alteratie*) in the symbolic and decorative framework of the building, known as *beeldenstorm* (literally, 'storm of images'). His research starts off from this specific context, the events of which are shared by all the Northern European countries during the Protestant Reform, with a view to developing a broader and more universal reflection on the processes of iconoclasm that to this day characterise key religious, political and social changes on a global level, often as the result of conflicts.

The project is made up of various elements: the temporary installation, which foresees the screening off of all the windows of the church with red filters, and which thanks to the presence of natural light, will transform the space, immersing visitors in a dense, saturated red atmosphere; a permanent site-specific work consisting in the construction of a red blown-glass window in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, capturing the meaning and mechanism of the whole installation; a body of photographic works of an experimental nature, closely bound up with the installation part in terms of form and contents, produced during the period in which the exhibition is open, during which time the church will also serve as an active workshop.

All these interventions revolve around the role of light, which the artist investigates and uses in different ways. He explores its symbolic potential and sensorial impact in the creation of both images and imagery. But above all, he focuses on its physical properties, and in particular on the role of red light in the process of analogical photographic development, where it is used thanks to its adiactic properties: by neutralising the oxidation of

silver salts, it protects photosensitive material and prevents any alteration to the image. This aspect creates a conceptual link to the processes of iconoclasm, with the removal and preservation of symbolic images. Furthermore, the movement of the sun, a source of natural light, takes on a fundamental importance in the whole installation, both for the symbolic meanings attributed to it by the Christian faith, and insofar as the same process of placing filters on the windows is dictated by the circular movement of the sun. Lastly, while during daylight hours the installation will be viewed by those visiting the church, during the night the intervention will be viewed from the outside, for thanks to the artificial lighting from within, the building will give off red light. The creation of the glass window in the Holy Sepulchre is made possible thanks to support from the Italian Council, a body of the MiBACT (Italian Ministry of Culture) promoting contemporary art interventions of international standing. This partnership also includes the collaboration with the Fondazione la Triennale in Milan, which will receive a photographic work that constitutes both a result and a synthesis of the entire research process; complementary to the permanent work at the Oude Kerk, it will be included in the permanent collection of the institution, thus creating a strong and lasting tie between the two countries which, on a biographical level, reflects the life and artistic career of Giorgio Andreotta Calò.



De Beeldenstorm (detail), paintings of Dirck van Delen, 1630



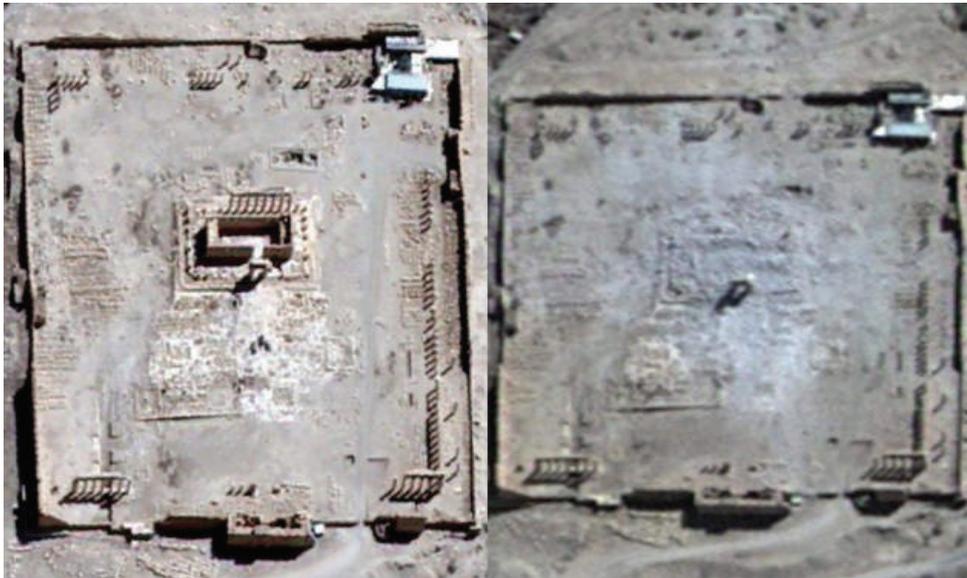
Bas-relief in a chapel in the Cathedral of Utrecht with faces destroyed during the Beeldenstorm, 1566



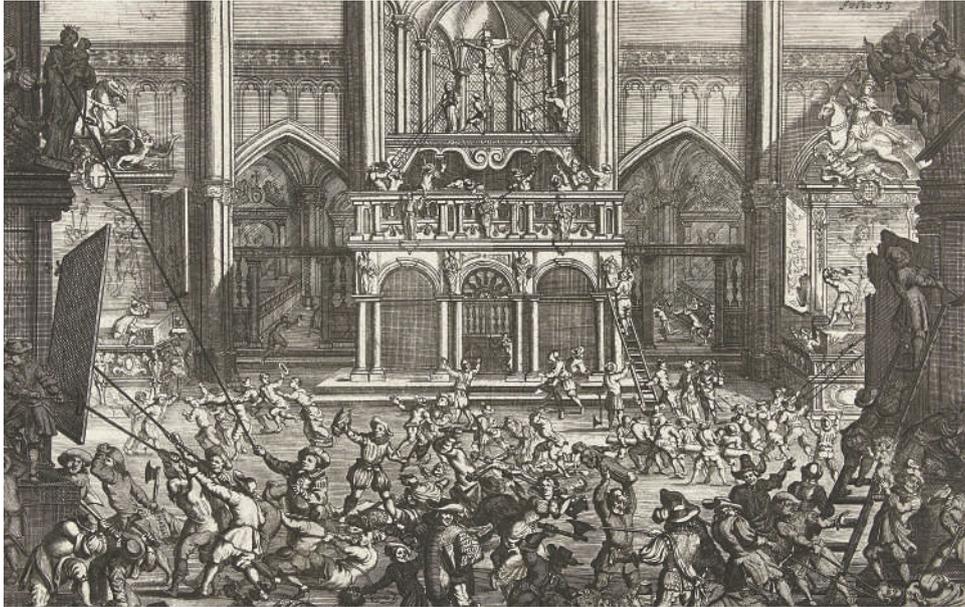
The empty niche of one out the two rock-cut Buddha of Bamiyan, 230km from Kabul, destroyed in 2001 by Talibans through explosives. 38 and 55meters tall, they were sculpted in the IV and V Centuries A.D.; they had been nominated World Heritage sites.



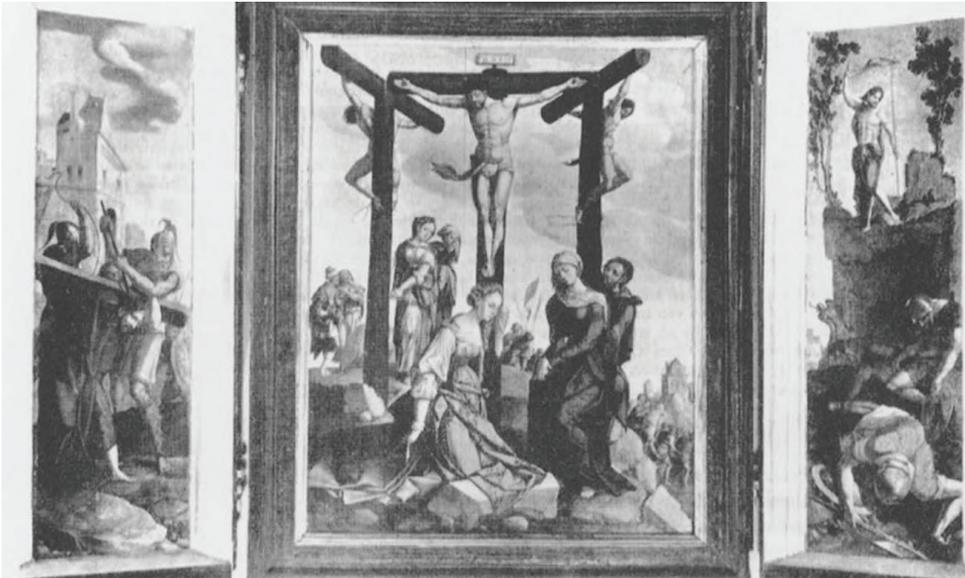
Destruction of the archaeological artefacts from the ancient Ninive, conserved in the Mosul Museum in Iraq, ISIS, 02/2015



Satellite images – Bel Temple in Palmira (Siria) – 2014/2015. Palmira was one of the most important cities in the ancient world. It's large archaeological site includes many buildings erected during the Roman era, between I and III Century A.D. In 2015 and 2016 the ISIS militants destroyed some of the most important monuments.



Beeldenstorm in de Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal te Antwerpen, Gaspar Bouttats, 1650 - 1695



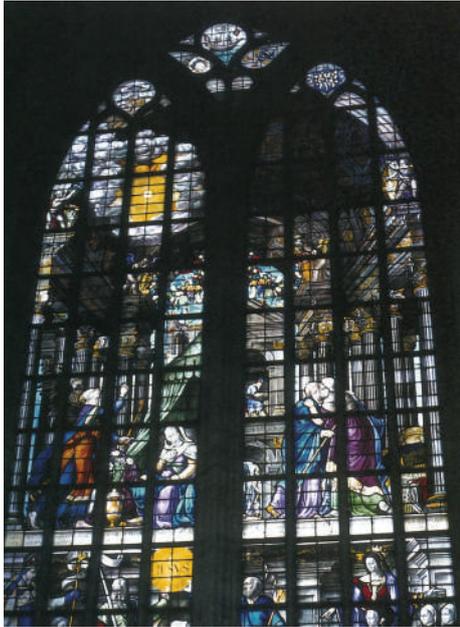
Central panel of the major altarpiece. Copy from 16th Century according to the lost original by Jan van Scorel. Copy in the Archiepiscopal Museum in Utrecht

images), along with the rest of the places of worship, all the decorations, statues and paintings in the Oude Kerk which conveyed the Catholic imagery were destroyed and removed; only a few artworks were saved and brought to South Holland. The sumptuous Church of Saint Nicholas (the name of which was changed to Oude Kerk, just during the *Aleratie*, the Reformation) was transformed into a sober Protestant church by removing all Catholic components, which were considered by Protestants too evocative and emotional. In addition to the sculptures and the paintings, nearly the totality of the colourful windows of the church—which were realised with multi-coloured leaded glass rich in religious imagery, both narrative and symbolic—were destroyed and replaced as well. The new glass had a colder tone, which modified the quality of light entering the church, making it lighter and more uniform; furthermore, the glass was transparent, more functional to the new permeability between internal and external space that came with the rationalist perspective linked to the Protestant worship, with the aim of promoting a critical and individual reading of the Bible as well as of reality. Only one section, the Mariavensters, has remained intact from the Catholic period until today. In recent years the church has faced a last transformation: while remaining a place of worship, it has become a cultural and exhibition space inside which new processes of reinterpretation take place and a dialogue between historical memory and our present is built through the language of contemporary art. Inspired by the prospect of trans-historicity promoted by Oude Kerk, Giorgio Andreotta Calo's research starts from this specific context to develop a wider and more universal

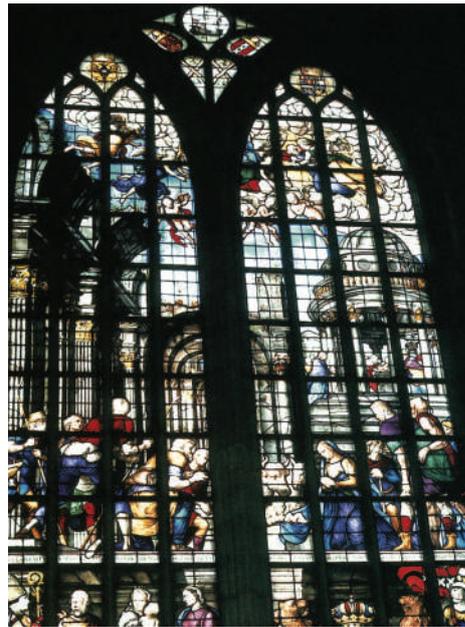
reflection on the processes of iconoclasm which happened in the previous centuries, but also even now globally—not only in religious scenarios, but also in terms of the destruction of political and cultural symbols and monuments, often within conflict and social revolutions.

Interior of the church and choir, 1958
Netherland Cultural Department

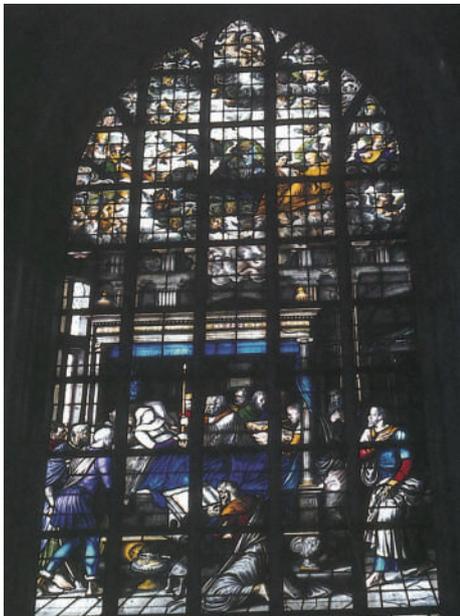




a.



b.



c.

a. *Glass with Annunciation,*
Maria Chapel, 1981, H. Janse

b. *Glass with Adoration of the Shepherds,*
Maria Chapel, 2000, H. Janse

c. *Glass with Mary in her death bed,*
Maria Chapel, 1981, H. Janse

III. THE ARTISTIC INTERVENTION IN DETAIL

a. The temporary site-specific work at Oude Kerk

In a similar way to what was realised by Giorgio Andreotta Calò in other interventions within architecture and landscape, light is the distinguishing feature of the work: transformed, manipulated, a means of passage between indoor and outdoor space; light is the element which is penetrated, filtered and modified in order to alter the perception of the space that hosts it.

As already mentioned, the specific orientation of the building with respect to the cardinal points allows it to be inundated by sunlight all day long. Through the application of red filters on the entire surface of the church's glass windows, for a total of 1600 square meters, the entire building will be invaded by a saturated red light, which serves to radically alter the perception of the visitor. The 54 leaded windows of the church will be screened off through red gelatine film, similar to that which is used in theatre and cinematography. Although the tone of the filter used on all windows is the same, different chromatic effects will occur. These will depend on the variation in the intensity of the sunlight, as well as on the different angles through which the light will enter the church during the different times of the day—not to mention the unpredictable atmospheric changes which characterise Holland. The film will be mounted on frameworks, which will overlap the original windows of the Oude Kerk. The installation at Oude Kerk will be processual. Just like in the past where cathedrals were developed and built gradually and worshippers started attending the religious place before its final completion, the installation of this



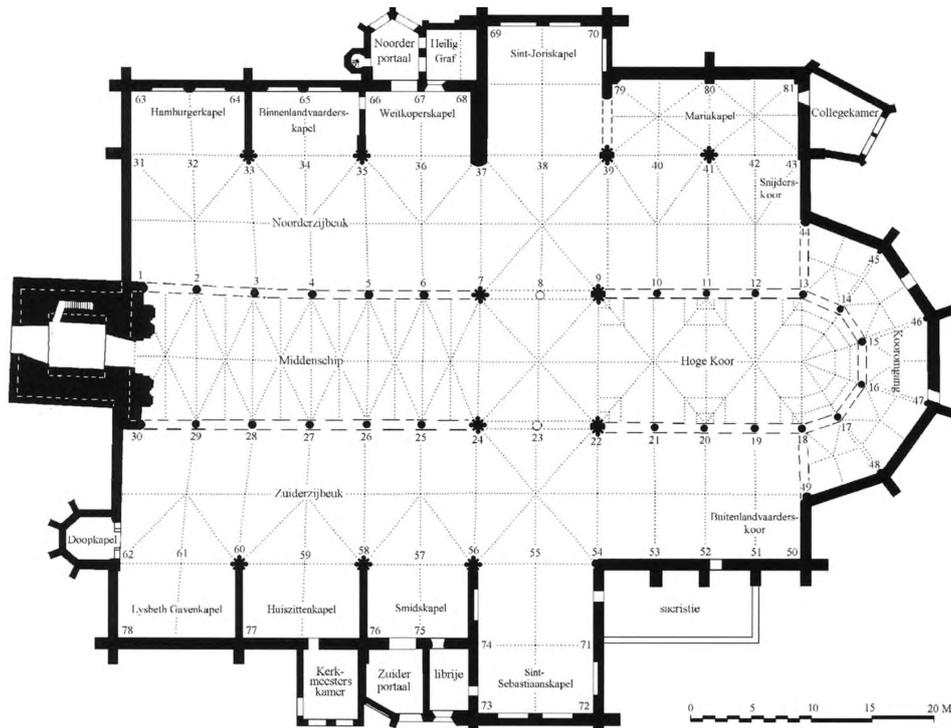
Interior of the church and choir, 1958
Netherlands Cultural Department

artwork will also happen gradually, when Oude Kerk is opened to the public. The first window to be covered will be the one of Sint Joris (Saint George), which faces north and corresponds to the transept. The installation will then proceed clockwise, following the movement of the sun, parallel along the windows of both the superior and the inferior order. It will last one month. This ideal circular movement will finish only at the end of the exhibition, with the installation of the last window of the ring, that of the Holy Sepulchre,

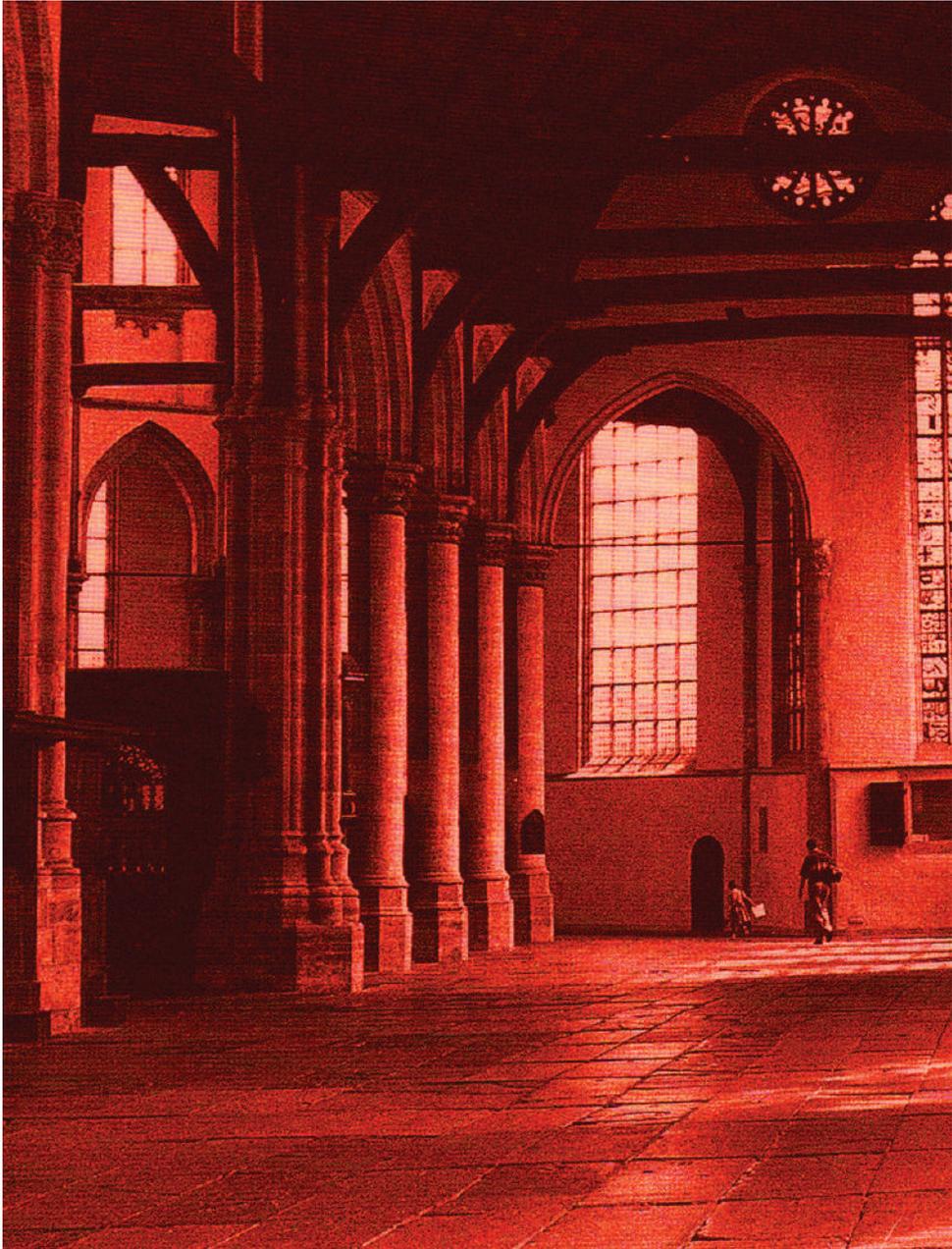
where the existing glass window will be replaced by a red glass window (as described below).

Visitors will therefore see the effect of the red light intensifying with the passing days, until a total overwhelming space is created.

The dense and totalising red atmosphere obtained is rich in symbolic and iconographic references. First of all, the warm tone of light recalls the Catholic origin of the place. References to red are numerous in Christian and spiritual artistic representations.



Map of the church with the names of the chapels,





Red also creates a connection between the church and its geographic location, the so-called Red Light District. This epithet refers to the many activities connected to the erotic sphere (from brothels to sex shops and museums, to the prostitutes exhibiting themselves behind windows, illuminated with red light). But this connection with Giorgio Andreotta Calò's work inside the Oude Kerk is only an illusory one.

In fact, the artist does not mean to subvert the connotation of the church, but rather he attaches paramount importance to the use of red light in analogue photography where, by neutralising the oxidation of silver salts, it allows the production and development of images. Within the darkroom, in a traditional process of photographic development, the red light is a 'safelight', as it absorbs the frequencies of the light spectrum that produce the oxidation of the silver salts, blocking the impression of the photosensitive material. On a symbolic note, it preserves the latent images, yet to be shown, before their development.

Lastly, the artist considers the emotional and physical impact induced by the red light, which will overwhelm visitors and produce an estranged experience. The red atmosphere will produce a flattening of the perception of space, not allowing one to notice all the details and depth highlighted by the different colours. Behind an apparent perception of stillness, however, the red colour creates a feeling of unease. Red is in fact a warm colour which recalls powerful energy and action; it's the colour of sexuality and passion, but also of danger and fire—all strong stimuli which oppose the rational and sober experience of the Protestant religion.

b. The glass window in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre

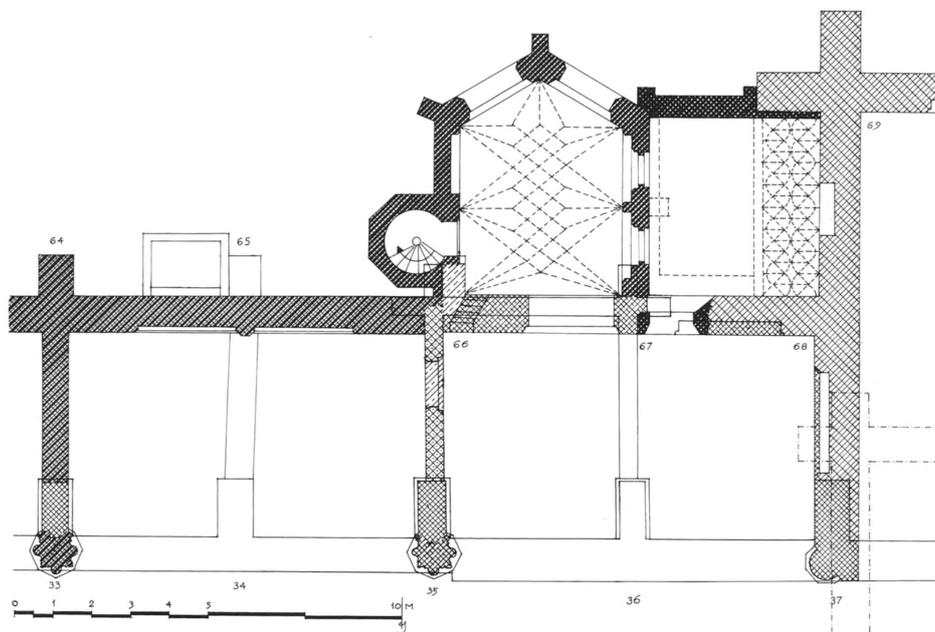
The symbolic core of the whole intervention is the creation of an entire non-actinic red glass window, realised in Tilburg according to the old medieval techniques of glass blowing and plumbing, which will permanently replace that which is present in the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre.

This Chapel has been taken by the artist as the symbol of the iconoclastic process which the entire church went through. In the chapel in fact there is an empty niche, a canopy under which originally a sculptural group representing a scene of Christ deposition was placed. Both the location of the chapel in the north side of the church as well as the peculiar

structure of its glass window were functional to the movement of light, which retained a strong symbolic impact. The rib structure of the windows is built in an oblique way towards west. At a time when the tall buildings along the north side of the church were not yet built, this solution allowed the light to penetrate inside the chapel only at dusk, lightening up the sculptural group. The end of the day and the end of the sun metaphorically accompanied Christ's death.

The canopy today is empty and Giorgio Andreotta Calò's intervention aims to turn over the mechanism described above.

According to the Holy Writ, on Easter Day, the third day after Christ's death, the Resurrection happened and the Holy Sepulchre remained empty.



The Holy Sepulchre chapel is top right in this detail map; inside the chapel, the area corresponding to the empty niche is outlined



Northern Gate and Holy Sepulchre chapel, external view, 1964. Netherland Cultural Department

The empty space within the chapel of the Oude Kerk assumes a new and powerful symbolic meaning, associated with rebirth and resurrection. From here the word *Anàstasis*, which in ancient Greek means Resurrection, but also sun-rising and to revive. In Christian culture, this term designates Christ's Resurrection as well as the final resurrection of all the dead and, as an extension, the Holy Cave of Christ's Sepulchre. Curiously, secondary meanings of the Greek term are departure, expulsion, banishment, and destruction, which open the exhibition's title to new and deeper readings compared to the dominant theme of Iconoclasm.

Through a mirror placed on the roofs in front of the chapel's glass window and oriented towards east, so to capture the rays during

sunrise, the light will lighten up the niche of the Holy Sepulchre which is empty only at dawn—the rising of a new day and the symbol of a new life. The light radiated from within won't be the same light that lightened the space originally; in fact, it will be filtered by the non-actinic red glass, which, as already mentioned, preserves the hidden images, not allowing their impression. Thanks to the studies on the sun's movement, the location of the mirror has been chosen so that the light will enter the chapel at the time of the sunrise only in the period of Easter (between the 22nd of March and the 25th of April), when the chapel becomes a special object of worship for the believers.

The positioning of the glass window will happen on the 23rd of September 2018,



Holy Sepulchre chapel, interior view

coinciding with the last day of the exhibition but also with the autumn equinox. If ideally the light process of the exhibition starts on the 21st of June, during the summer solstice, from the 23rd of September the artwork will find its completion on the glass windows, but at the same time also its end: the day after, the dismantlement of the red filters on the glass windows of the church will start in a circular motion.

The intervention in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre will have a permanent character continuing after the end of the temporary exhibition. The chapel being an 'autonomous space', which one can access through a door from the left nave of the church, the operation on the glass window will allow a total red light within the room, preserving in a durable way

the light dimension recreated within the church for the duration of the exhibition.

The realisation of this part of the installation is supported by the Italian council, MiBACT; the support will be acknowledged through a brass plaque installed on site.



Lamentation over the Dead Christ, Niccolò dell'Arca, group of 7 terracotta sculptures, 1463-1490. Chiesa di Santa Maria della Vita, Bologna

c. Photographic works

The Photograph in the Holy Sepulchre Chapel

As anticipated, an important function of the red light is linked to its use in analogue photography. In the traditional process of photographic development, within the darkroom, the non-actinic red light allows the handling of the negatives without imprinting the photosensitive material, preserving and conserving the images. The red filters, in fact, screen off a part of the light spectrum responsible for the impression of the silver salts, stopping the image from fixing on the support. This creates a conceptual reference to the Iconoclastic tendency that marked the conversion of Protestant churches, but also to the removal (or preservation) of images and symbols, which even today are linked to the ideological, cultural and religious changes that cross our society and often takes place in wars and conflicts.

The first photographic work stems from these premises, and whilst building an immediate relationship with the site-specific installation in Amsterdam, it also expands the meaning of the work in its complexity, opening it up to a more articulated and universal reading, which unties itself from the specific context and has to do with the latency of images, their symbolic value, and iconoclasm.

This consists of a large photographic black and white print, superimposed by a slab of non-actinic red glass, of the same type of the one used for the glass church window. The subject portrayed in the image is the empty niche inside the church of the Holy Sepulchre, an emblem of all the images removed and

latent. Therefore, one can find a reference to a place rich in symbolic and religious meanings, which is represented through a conceptual apparatus that elevates it to a universal dimension. In the artist's intention, this is the first milestone in a research process that in the coming years will involve further places and iconic subjects of iconoclastic processes in different nations and cultures.

The Mariavensters

The subject of the second photographic work are the Mariavensters, the glass windows that narrate a number of scenes in Mary's life. These are the only ones still presenting the religious imagery from the Catholic period. From a technical point of view, the work consists of a project with a strong experimental character, which implies the realisation of photographic contacts in natural light. Normally, in the process of analogue photographic development within the darkroom, the process of photographic contacts is performed through the light of the magnifier, placing the negatives in direct contact with the photosensitive paper; the time of exposure to light that will allow one to obtain an adequate positive and a good reading of the shot will be defined according to the density of the negative. The process within the Oude Kerk will happen in a similar way, but with some relevant differences: the light utilised will be natural, filtered through the windows and not artificial, and therefore there won't be a way to regulate the intensity. From a practical point of view, the installation will be realised with a system where for each tile of the window, external glass, the red filter, a sheet of photographic paper and a support to sustain the previous

layers and to allow them to adhere to the window will be assembled. Furthermore, with the images of the leaded glass windows being in 'positive', the final result will be a negative image, mirroring the original subject. The works will focus on a section of the glass window composed of the 48 tiles that portray scenes from the life of Mary.

These photographic works are conceived to be exhibited in a museum space separated from the church. One or more of these images, capable of encapsulating the meaning of the entire artistic research, will become part of the permanent collection of the Triennale of Milan, thanks to the support of the Italian Council (MiBACT).



Rendering of the photographic work that will be realised on the windows of the Mary Chapel (detail of the Annunciation)

IV. THE CATALOGUE: PUBLISHING PROPOSAL

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication, printed in 1000 copies, which has to be considered not so much as a mere documentation of the works produced and exhibited, but rather as a different medium through which the themes explored in the show can be addressed and analysed in depth, developing their meaning.

Aside from information regarding the artist and the works, the book will include some critical essays which will look at the exhibition in Amsterdam, contextualising it with regard to specific issues such as the broader theme of iconoclasm, the symbolic meanings of light and the colour red. A rich body of images will document the different phases of the artistic creation, starting from the research to the production and the complex installation process. Archival and historical photographs and illustrations will also be reproduced, which have been considered by the artist as important references for the conception of the work. The choice of specific colours in the printing phase and the insertion of some red transparent acetate sheets, which will shade some illustrations, will allow some images to be concealed; the reader can reveal them by browsing the pages. This will also evoke the physical perceptions experienced in the environmental installation.

The technical proposal, still to be defined, is the following:

- _Languages: Italian / English
- _Hard Cover
- _Vertical Format, 17 x 24 cm
- _Number of pages 128
- _70 B/W images
- _30 Colour images
- _Insertion of red transparent acetate sheets

V. COMMUNICATION

The communication strategy will exploit and benefit from the instruments and channels of the two institutions involved, Oude Kerk and Fondazione La Triennale di Milano, thus reaching broader and diversified audiences.

The goal will be not only to attract a large number of visitors in the two exhibition venues, but also to give great exposure to the overall project.

The presence of both a permanent installation in Amsterdam (where the support from the Italian Council will be signaled through a specific plaque onsite) and a work that will be installed in Italy at the Triennale in Milan, but which will also possibly be on view at other exhibition venues, will allow long-term media visibility for the project and for the international collaboration among institutions. The Oude Kerk communication campaign, in particular, will take advantage of many collaborations with graphic designers, with the press agency Coebergh Communicatie & PR, and with cultural associations and media partners like CJP, We Are Public, Subbacultcha, Parool, Museumcard, and Amsterdam Art.

Several communication tools will work in synergy:

- Free advertising
- Paid advertising
- Website, social networks and newsletter
- Partnerships with cultural and other public institutions
- Press office

Oude Kerk aims at attracting 35,000 visitors during the months of the exhibition. Explanatory texts and guided tours about the artist and his work will be made available to visitors

onsite. Both an opening reception and a finissage will be organised, the latter on the occasion of the mounting of the glass window in the Holy Sepulchre Chapel.

With regard to La Triennale di Milano, the Foundation will also make use of all its current communication channels, which include:

- direct and steady relationships with periodical and daily press
- website (756,969 visits to www.triennale.org)
- social networks (100,892 Facebook fans; 43,800 Twitter followers; 16,800 Instagram followers; 86,200 Google Plus followers)
- monthly newsletter (with over 20,000 contacts)
- advertising
- open air posters
- internal communication onsite

On the occasion of the installation of Giorgio Andreotta Calò's work at the Milanese Institution, a press conference will also be organised.

Both institutions regularly organise a rich educational programme, with a very broad offer ranging from labs and tours for primary and secondary schools, to activities directed at adults.

VI. SUBJECTS INVOLVED

Giorgio Andreotta Calò

web giorgioandreottacalò.com
email studio@giorgioandreottacalò.com

Kirsten de Graaf, Coordinator
Rachele D’Oswaldo, Fundraising and editor

Oude Kerk

Jacqueline Grandjean, Director e curator
Richard Pelgrim, Production Manager
Emma van Wolferen, Communication
Rieke Righolt, Fundraising
Marianna van der Zwaag, Project manager of permanent collection
Jacob Lekkerkerker, Curator Music
Lorenzo Benedetti, External Eye

MiBACT

Federica Galloni, General director for Contemporary Art, Architecture and urban suburbs
Carolina Italiano, Staff Unit of the General manager Special Projects Art
Italian Council italiancouncil@beniculturali.it

Fondazione La Triennale di Milano

Andrea Cancellato, General director
Violante Spinelli, Responsible for Cultural Production sector

VII.
GIORGIO ANDREOTTA CALÒ,
CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Giorgio Andreotta Calò's research revolves around a crossover dimension intended as a path to approach the work, developed through a process of withdrawing fragments from reality and the reappropriation of architecture, landscape and the artist's own history. Making use of abandoned buildings, reclaimed materials, object exposed to time passing and atmospheric agents as prime elements of his work, Calò creates situations that cross boundaries between participative and architectural interventions. The work presented to the public is never a specially made object or simply the result of a project; rather it is process and time coming together in the physicality of matter, which gains form from the environment it interacts with and the energies unleashed from within it.

Mara Ambrozić

Born in Venice in 1979, he studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti of Venice (1999-2005) and continued his studies at the KunstHochSchule Berlin (2003-2004). From 2001 to 2003 and also in 2007 he was assistant to Ilya and Emilia Kabakov. Since 2008 he has lived and worked between Venice and Amsterdam where he was artist in residence at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (2009-2011). In 2011 his work was presented at the 54th Venice Biennale, curated by Bice Curiger. In 2012 he won the Premio Italia for contemporary art, promoted by the MAXXI Museum in Rome. In 2014 he won the Premio New York, promoted by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Among his most recent shows: *Wanderlust*, curated by Cecilia Alemani at the High Line, New York; *Ennesima*, curated by Vincenzo de Bellis, Triennale, Milan, Italy, 2015; *16th Quadriennale d'Arte. Other Times, Other Myths*, curated by Luca Lo Pinto and Marta Papini, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, 2016-17. In 2017, with his presence in the Italian Pavilion exhibition *Il Mondo Magico*, curated by Cecilia Alemani, Giorgio Andreotta Calò was one of the three artists representing Italy at the 57th Venice Art Biennale.

VIII. PREVIOUS WORKS

In the past Giorgio Andreotta Calò has already explored the evocative potential of light and its ability to alter the perception of space, opening up to reinterpretations that on the one side offered original perspectives to spectators, on the other site were strictly connected with the past of the architecture or landscape involved.

As an example, the following works can be mentioned:



Dal Tramonto all'Alba (From Sunset to Sunrise), 2006, light intervention, XXII Sarajevska Zima International Winter Festival of Sarajevo, Parliament Tower, 17th floor, Sarajevo



Monumento ai caduti (Monument to the fallen), 2010, performative intervention, New building of the Municipality of Bologna, Piazza Liber Paradisus, Bologna



22 luglio 1911 - 22 luglio 2011 (22 July 1911 - 22 July 2011), 2011, performative intervention, Teatro Margherita, Bari



Senza Titolo (La fine del mondo) Untitled (The End of the World), 2017, Site-specific installation, 57th International Art Exhibition, Italian Pavilion, Venice