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EX_PATRIA

Marta Czok

Curated by Jacek Ludwig Scarso with Georgiana Ionescu

From 15th April 2024

Palazzo Montecitorio, Rome



Curatorial Notes

Continuing the collaboration with the Culture, Sciences, Education Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, which began with the exhibition *De Innocentia* in January 2024 on the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day, Fondazione Marta Czok presents an anthological exhibition taken from its Permanent Collection, in a site-specific intervention in the Galleria dei Busti at the Italian Parliament's Palazzo Montecitorio, Rome.

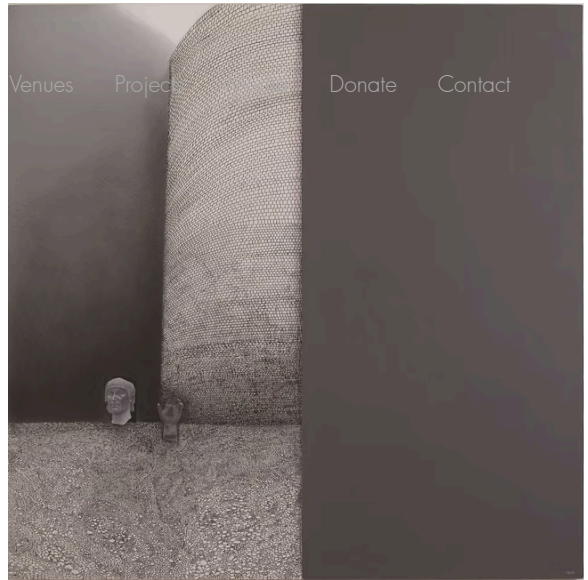
Here, the broad imagery of Marta Czok, as an international artist, born in Beirut (1947) to Polish political refugees, raised in London and, since the seventies, Italian by adoption, focuses on the urban context, exploring the scenes of social life that have made the work of this artist recognizable all over the world. In Marta Czok's paintings, the city can be defined as a metaphorical fulcrum, through which society is portrayed in complex, often crowded depictions, where the individual finds their meaning within the social relations in which they are immersed. Just as the concept of *urbis* (i.e. the city made up of buildings and infrastructure) implies that of *civitas* (the citizens who reside within it), the cities in Marta Czok's works combine the architectural charm of the urban context with countless narrative cues: from intimate and familiar scenes of life to complex commentaries on social injustices.

Among these works, specially selected for the Galleria dei Busti at Palazzo Montecitorio, we see in a central position the polyptych *Città Salva Anima / Soul Saving City* originally commissioned in 2000 by the French Embassy to the Holy See, in response to the Jubilee, as part of the exhibition *Roma Jubilans*. Here,



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h faith: scenes of daily life in the Roman
monumental Rome, in a reflection that is
:ept of the Eternal City. Marta Czok sees
s, with her experience of stateless identity:
erspective that is both familiar and external



Alon
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om 2011-2012 (*Life of An Average*
and *C'era una Volta*) offer food for thought
on Rome's imperial past, with a subtle ironic vein, for which the historical
treasures of the past become the dust on which we walk now. In Marta Czok's
vision, history is made up of continuous change, concealed by a collective
imagination that sees a dimension of eternity in what is, however, ephemeral: like
a Julius Caesar who symbolically appears and disappears from the scene, so the
riches of the Roman Empire become ruins in a city in constant motion: a
deliberately ambiguous comment on how every empire rises and crumbles, and
with it its own ideological values.

This exhibition launches in conjunction with [Marta Czok EX PATRIA](#), curated by
Jacek Ludwig Scarso in Venice, in response to the 60th Biennale Arte.

Marta Czok's interview on Exibart Magazine

