

An abstract topographic map of Italy, rendered in black and red contour lines on a white background. The map shows the outline of Italy and its surrounding islands, with various contour lines indicating elevation. The red lines are more prominent and form the main shape of the country, while the black lines provide additional detail and shading. The text "FRANCESCA DI BONITO" and "VISUAL ARTIST" is positioned in the upper right corner of the map.

FRANCESCA DI BONITO
VISUAL ARTIST

Francesca DI BONITO is a visual artist who draws on her artistic studies and from her experience of photoreportage to create a hybrid and multifaceted work, questioning the societal dynamics at the heart of contemporary issues.

At the junction between documentary research and a pure plastic approach, her work borrows tools and news from the mediatic repertoire, melting them into the artistic experience and giving them a new dimension, a new nature and story. A metamorphosis of information is thus achieved through the distortion of the visual and the way we read it. By inverting classic societal codes, crossing subjects and mediums, Francesca DI BONITO transforms the raw figurative elements, taken from reality, using clichés of testimonies or mediatic visuals, and throughout the creative process, she integrates other devices such as performance, video and textiles. The visual thus becomes the support and material of a hybrid work, inscribed in the field of narration.

Artifacts and simulacra, incongruous assemblages of opposites : Francesca DI BONITO's work is based on stories that start from the biological and real destiny of each human being to better reach the dynamics of our times. Thus, the photograph's story is no longer a chronological and straight one, but it's evolving back and forth. It starts from reality to show the imaginary, by any visual effects like staging, collage, manual manipulation on the medium. The deconstruction of reality and the construction of fiction thus alternate in her work within the same chronicle of life. She represents two sides of the same coin, two natures of the same story. Fiction appears in her creative process in the first place, in order to show the most commonly shared reality, since it is a societal story.

Francesca DI BONITO also uses devices such as installation to construct her plastic proposals. Following the example of the tableau vivant and how the surrealists used it, these practices lead the artist in the exploration of a fantastic imagery populated by grotesque figures, often transfigured. These subjects then play out a tense narrative, which stages.

The distortion of documentary material finds its equivalent in the hybrid use of bodies. Treated both as a medium of plastic inscription and of intimate writing, the body is the place where the experiences of our relationship to the world can be read. It reveals its tendency to be obscured, recognised, trivialised and loved. In a process of metamorphosis, thanks to the convergence of digital techniques and plastic approach, Francesca DI BONITO's bodies evolve, throughout the creative process, into surfaces of exchange and communication.

Altered, in mutation, and adorned with humour, these hybrid and supernatural bodies mark the boundary between reality and fiction, calling for the between reality and fiction, appealing to the most intimate and common aspects of the individual and their environment. From the flat surface to the volume, Francesca DI BONITO's productions production is nourished by fictional narratives that bear and figure the social and political.



LES DÉ-RÉ

Photographs, 2023

30 x 40 cm / 50 x 37 cm

Deteriorated, dismantled, demolished, destroyed, destined to be... Recovered, renovated, rehabilitated, reintegrated, or not. These are the red brick houses occupied by miners from the North of France, in the not-so-distant past.

These are LES DÉ-RÉ. Architectural remains slowly disappearing, witnesses of a heritage to be reconverted, scenographies of homes from another era. A house is a body that carries multiple stories. And like all bodies, it absorbs, transforms, becomes, and leaves traces.

Whose words, since the houses speak. Bricks, beams, wallpapers and cracks tell of families who have come from elsewhere to seek black gold in the deep abysses of a land that is as cold as it is foreign.

Black, a common color here in the mining basin, common to the winter sky, the slagheaps, the coal dust and the black mouths that breathed it in, worn down by silicosis.

And yet, the mining DÉ-RÉ were dressed in bucolic patterns in pastel colors. The pink, the purple, the green of the wallpapers resisted him, the black. They defied humidity, melancholy, mourning. This is what you can hear when you freeze in front of the warm colors of the flowery walls or the lace embroidered by the mold that runs along the ceilings. Facing the ragged walls with hypnotic features, these remains trace an immersive journey and open up new possibilities to the field, through their own mise en abyme.

See the complete series [here](#).



MANUAL OF SURVIVAL IN CASE OF EXISTENCE

Photographs, photos-texts devices

Work in progress, since 2020

Exist to survive or survive to exist?

Snapshots of moments of life, trivial moments and exceptional ones are associated with short sentences, to build a story that reminds us that existence can't be reduced to survival.

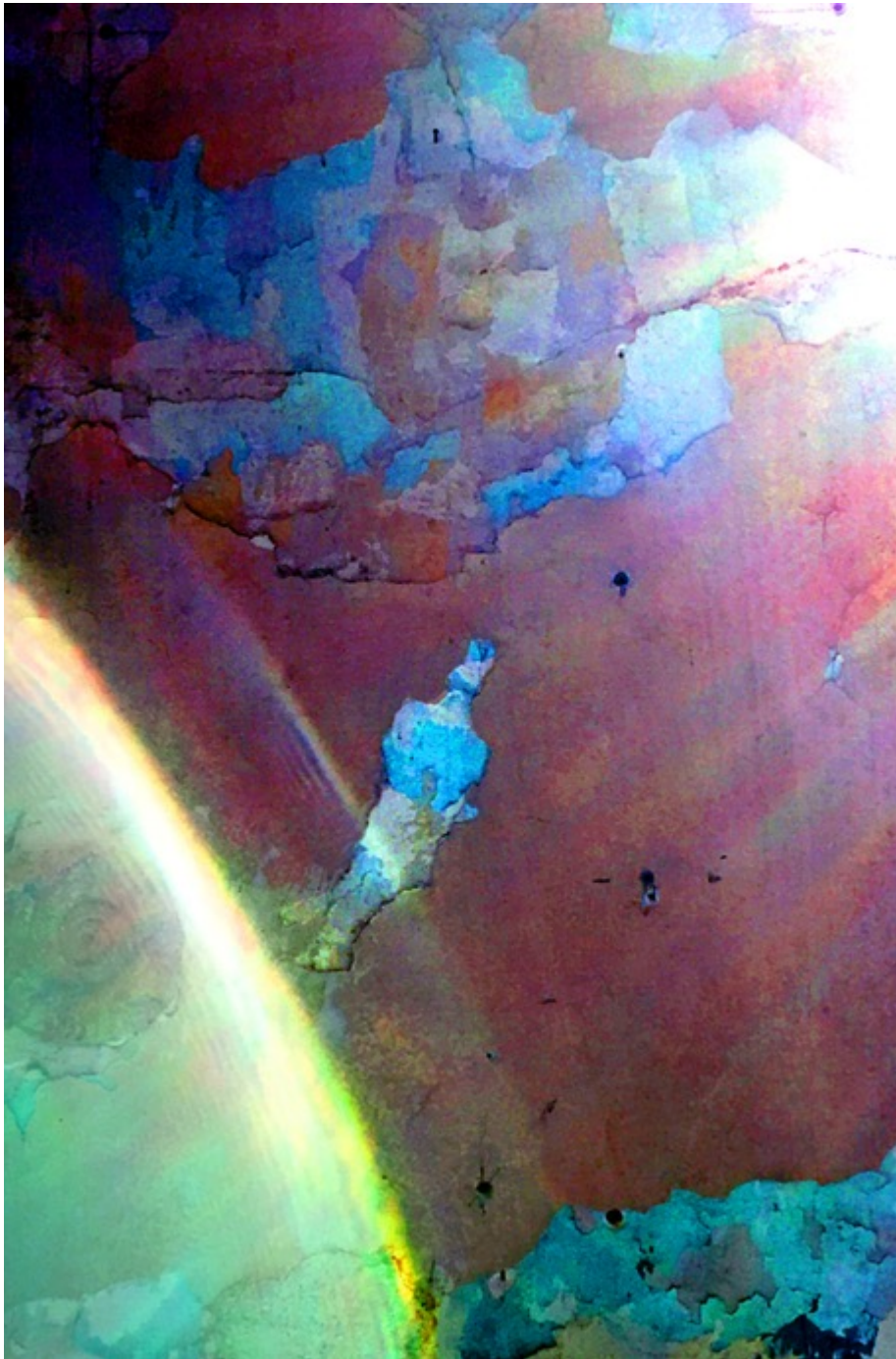
Suggestions, sayings, and imperatives respond to images and vice versa: a mirror where texts and visuals merge, strictly linked to each other without the possibility of autonomy.

They dialogue in the same social chronicle.

The terms "survival and existence", both synonymous and antithetical, constitute the very essence of this manual. As it is with the very essence of humans and their journey: complex, altered, non-binary, harmonious in their contradictions, lucid in their denials, invisible in their emotions.

Sharp, ironic, light, and deep at the same, MANUAL OF SURVIVAL IN CASE OF EXISTENCE is a collection of possibilities to the right to survive and the merit to exist.

See the complete series [here](#).



MIGRATIONS

Photographs, assemblages, reliquaries, video, 2019
Multiple dimensions

MIGRATIONS is a visual and plastic project on the cyclic flux permeating biological and social bodies. An artistic experience which studies the breadth of movement and mutation phenomenon's affecting the living beings. Migrations are then set as a condition of existence, as well as a form of evolution of the living organisms, in a quest of new functionalities with a better grip in an ever-recomposed world.

Biology and politics not being governed by the same laws, the movements of non-humans (plants and animals) and those of humans cannot easily overlap. Nevertheless, they both share the same goal: survival. Be it of the species or of the spirit. If life is a network of emotional and organic flux, then perpetual migration is life itself.

MIGRATIONS is a cyclic tale where the creative process aims to create a network of meanings which echo and reverberate inside a dialectic always combining and confronting documentary and allegory. The installation, primary cornerstone of the artwork, is ephemeral and hybrid. Formats, material, and scenography of visual sequences change according to each new positioning in space, recreating lanes both unknown and cyclic at the same time. Any live migration is only a timely expression of a contingency. Just as well as there is no migrating species per se, there is no migrating human population.

This plural and multimedia project invites to refocus our vision of migrants and their passages, a reform of our modes of production and our ways of thinking.

See the complete series [here](#).



LAMPEDUSA MA(D)RE MIA

Video & photographs

2018



Indistinctly and with no faces attached, the voices of migrants and residents of Lampedusa mingle.

Lampedusa is a symbol of these displacements of populations wishing to reach the free European land. It is a place that crystallizes the problems linked to this topicality which has lasted for decades. As a border island between Africa and Italy, it is the sole landing ground for those who come by the Libyan Sea or North Africa. The people of Lampedusa are today the only ones welcoming immigrants, since the law of the sea obliges it.

Superimposed on the paradisiacal waters of the island, the voice-overs express all the anger and distress in the face of these unwanted out-of-control migrations. The sea is no longer a place of hope and rescue but a space of danger and death.

In their original languages and dialects, the experiences and powerless testimonies of foreigners and natives are revealed.

See the video and photographs [here](#).





CURRENT RELICS

Unique pieces ; Reliquaries, 2015

Mix media, collage on shells, royalty-free visuals, pearls, sand

Relics : 8 x 5 cm

Reliquaries (under a glass dome) : 18 (Ø) x 30 (h) cm / 14 (Ø) x 26 (h) cm

CURRENT RELICS is an aesthetic tribute to the victims of the migratory flow occurring in the last years. In choosing a practice unrelated to direct photography in the field, far from the usual media repertoire, the principle of reliquaries builds a document where the photography is at the same time testimony and material.

The artwork derives from anonymous pictures, extracted from web archives, integrated within shells in a craft practice which echoes the religious and baroque reliquaries. Being both symbolic and recollection processes, these objects twist the relationship associated with worship and comfort appropriate to the sacred relic.

CURRENT RELICS freeze the presence of the anonymous immigrant. The subject therefore contradicts its disappearance to occupy a living space, one of a watchful memory and active testimony.

See the complete series [here](#).





TOPEAUGRAPHIES

Photographs, 2018

Mix media, photographs & digital filters

10 x 15 cm / 20 x 30 cm / 35 x 42 cm

Watching oneself in a mirror, checking conformity, recording differences which mark an identity: the passing of time on skin traces the signs of a relentless advance.

Inscribed in the daily history of our bodies, transmutations of our intimacy are absorbed or rejected according to temporary norms becoming more and more virtual. In an age where touch and experience vanish in the unlimited field of social networks, sharing and interacting become anonymous, and individuals fuse into an acceptable shape to overcome the most natural limits. A sublimated identity is therefore transplanted into a manipulated image, an aesthetic metamorphosis reaching beyond appearance or embellishment.

A reflection of the self, devoid of personality, synthesized and sanitized, the fantasy of an avatar looking for appreciation and consensus, equally virtual. In *TOPEAUGRAPHIES*, the reality of skin is ironically framed by patterns and digital effects drawn from computer software (Snapchat, Facebook) and inserted during the photographic act.

Within these bucolic and happy scenography, the passing of time on anonymous skins exhibits itself without sublimation or retouching, revealing the nature of physical mutations and further, the unique variety of all identity.

See the complete series [here](#).





AUORE'S DANCE

Video & photographs, 2017

50 x 60 (h) cm / 13 x 18 (h) cm

Aurore is a being of three ages.

She was born eight years ago. She has intellectual capacities of a two-year-old child, and she lives in the body of a teenager of fourteen.

Aurore does not speak. She will never make love and will never be autonomous.

Aurore likes the wind, the water, and pears.

Her being lives in a slow and fast spatio-temporal dimension at the same time.

The time and its flow do not participate in the existence of Aurore because her mental state will know no evolution.

If her brain is blocked, Aurore's body flies, dances, laughs, fights, turns, falls and roars. The fervent movement of the hands and her shrill cries are her only possible alphabet.

Aurore is affected by a slight [Rett Syndrome](#).

Rett Syndrome concerns 1 birth out of 10-15 000. This syndrome represents approximately 2 to 3 % of all the cases of severe intellectual deficiency and 10 % of the cases of deep intellectual deficiency in the women.

See the video and photographs [here](#).



DEVOUT FLESH

Unique pieces ; photographic sculptures, 2014

Mix Media, sewing on photographs, objects

Framed in wooden boxes

130 x 100 (h) x 12 cm / 250 (h) x 150 x 16 cm

DEVOUT FLESH draws its origins from a plastic study of the human anatomy and the hand-made processes of photographic material.

The narrative is constructed through metamorphosis, and the practice of manual sewing and digital collage. The pictures depict statues with classical shapes, and a mystical appearance that harbors anatomical illustrations, and ordinary stitched objects, anchor points of a chronicle, one thing leading to another.

DEVOUT FLESH is a polysemous work which approaches the relation to the sacred. The work confronts the feeling of creed, and earthly and organic dimensions of faith.

See the photographic sculptures [here](#).





BIRTH

Photographs, 2012

Staged

100 x 100 cm / 70 x 70 cm

BIRTH is a work where life and death, staged funnily and self-mockery, echo each other like shadows, or alter egos.

Pictured as grotesque and strangely seductive creatures, those women guide us in the exploration of dream and fantastic images, emphasizing individual condition. Hybrid, altered, they play a tense narrative at the fringe between reality and fiction, questioning archaisms and what is at stake regarding gender.

A strange farce that mocks traditional clichés, and the inescapable passages of life when a woman turns into a mother.

See the complete series [here](#).



FAMILY X RAY

Photographs, 2010

Mix media, photographs & radiographs

37 x 50 cm / 150 x 110 cm

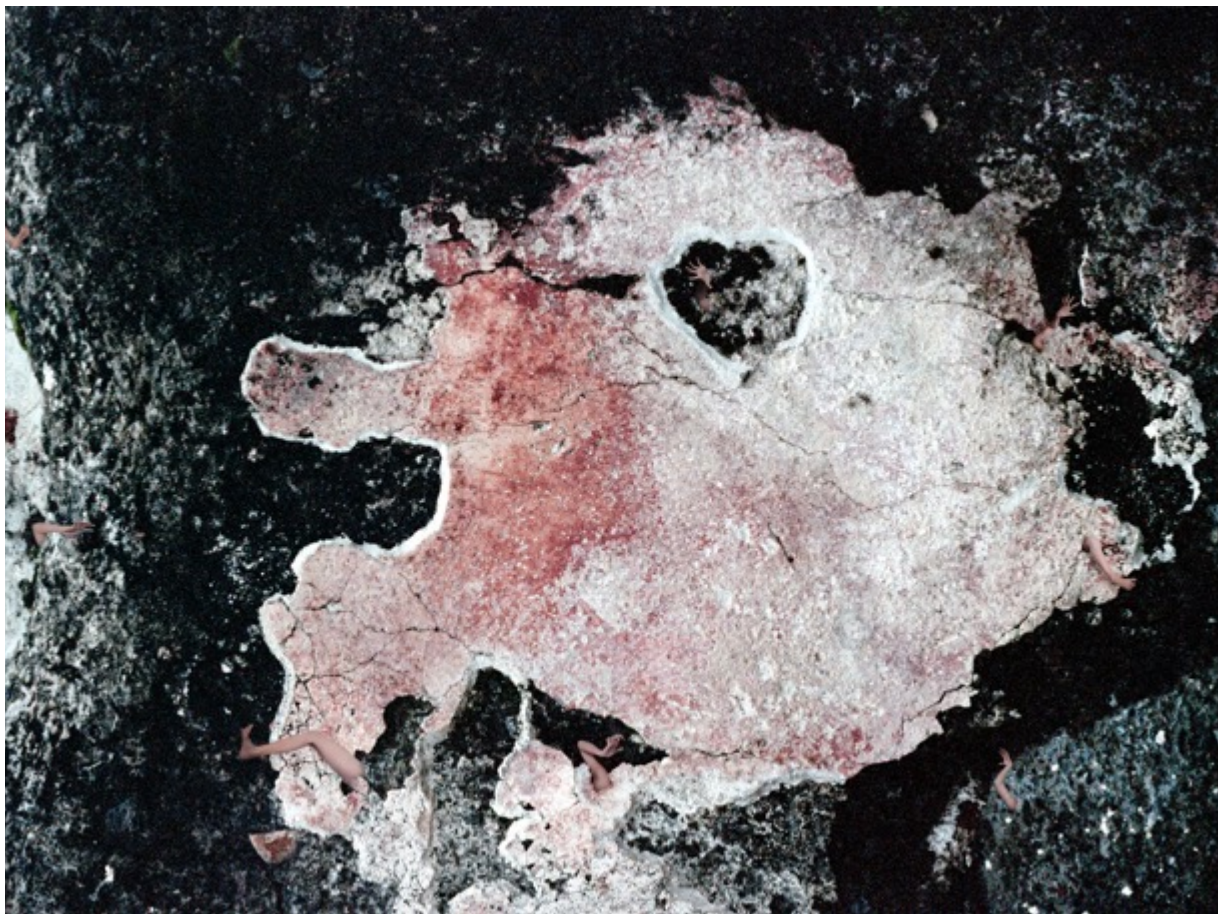
X-rays fragments unravel down to the skeleton the intimate world of a family photo album. Loaded with emotions and life experiences, those photographs tell a story, capturing both time and its passing. A life story wherein past, present, and future get inexorably superimposed.

Armature of the being, gross and impersonal essence of the human, the skeleton is what will remain. Protagonists of the *Feast of the Dead*, those figures proclaim absence on a surface redolent with the statement, as said Roland Barthes, of *what one is*.

Characters and memories that, in this everlasting instant, reveal the vanity of things and beings.

See the complete series [here](#).





EMANCIPATION

Photograph, 2010

Mix media, photograph & digital collage

120 x 77 cm

EMANCIPATION is a digital collage onto a film photograph. From a section of an old wall stick out small women's limbs. This picture combines the abstract and the figurative, as well as several layers of reading that unsettle the merely figurative to bring out women's difficult and endangered social position.

In this series of unusual frameworks, one can see the wish for change and the progress in some aspects of the human and artistic condition, the wish to free oneself from several rules and codes involved in the issues of genre and visual research.

See the piece [here](#).

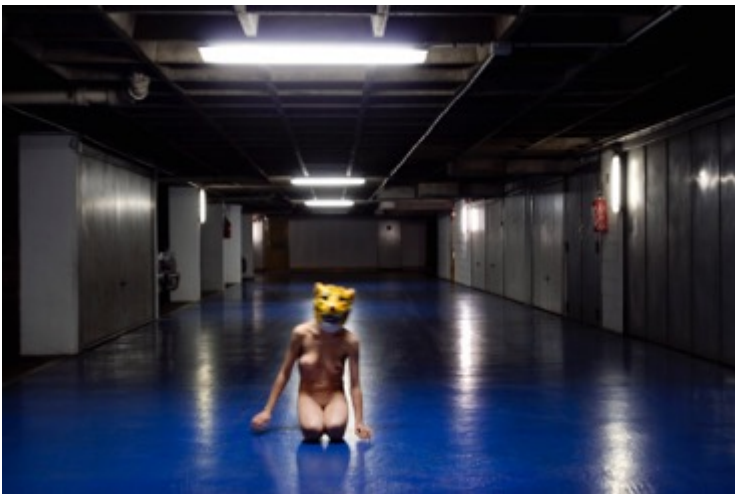


SORTIE FAUVE

Photographic triptych, 2009

Performance

70 x 47 cm

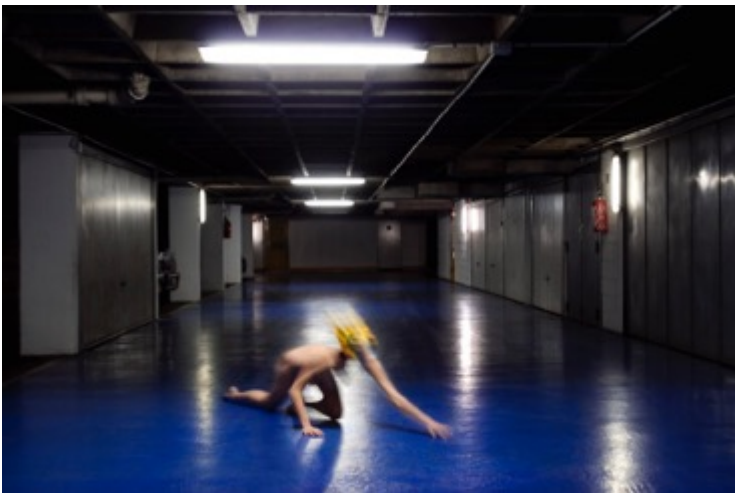


The photographic recording of the performance SORTIE FAUVE thus highlights the fragile border between civilisation and animality on the one hand, between the still and the moving picture on the other hand.

Like the extracts of a film shot statically and played in loop, those three images blur and upset the limits between visual genres.

Taking the shape of a visual phantasmagoria, this work contrasts the highly rigid framework of our civilization that is so car-ridden and stacks people on top of each other, with a feminine model, the latter showing the fiction of life wild and thwarted by this subterranean environment. Reflecting the real state, and the state as it still is, of woman's role in modern societies.

See the triptych [here](#).





WAITING

Photograph, 2007

Staged

100 x 70 cm

In this apartment room under construction, with cold and impersonal light, an hybrid woman – half body, half brick – is dressed in a leather jacket but has no face. Massive and solid, in the middle of spatial landmarks that are reconstructed or deconstructed, she stands up, with her perfectly manicured hands. Fantasized and ghostly woman, she continues to fulfill her role in the midst of chaos.

Living body and stone sculpture, she grants herself a moment of waiting and rest, after the fatigue of building home and self.

Through the installation of an allegorical staging where the subject is metamorphosed with humour, WAITING evokes a spatial and existential condition at the same time.

See the piece [here](#).

FRANCESCA DI BONITO

Visual arts - Photography
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EXHIBITIONS

Selection

- 2023 9-9BIS Art Center, Lens, France
- 2019 FOTOFEVER, Louvre Carrousel, L'ANGLE Gallery, Paris
- 2019 PAN, Contemporary Art Museum, Naples, Italy (solo show)
- 2019 L'ANGLE Gallery, Hendaye, France (solo show)
- 2018 « Les Chemins d'Ascaïn » Festival, Basque Country, France
- 2018 FOTOLIMO Festival, Spain & France
- 2018 Archivio Storico di Lampedusa, Sicily, Italy
- 2017 « Les Photographiques » Festival, Le Mans, France
- 2015 LAB44 Gallery, Paris (solo show)
- 2014 European Photography Festival, Arles, France
- 2013 Photissima Price, Torino, Italy
- 2012 Emmanuel Fremin Gallery, New York
- 2012 Cachan Contemporary Art Biennial, France
- 2011 MIA - Milan Image Art, Milan (solo show)
- 2011 Capazza Gallery, Nançay Castle, France
- 2010 La Galerie, Paris (solo show)
- 2006 Photo Off Month, Beaurepaire Art Space, Paris
- 2004 KALZ'ART Festival, Palermo (solo show), France
- 2004 Hoepli Gallery, Milan, Italy

CAREER

- 2023 Artistic residence; 9-9BIS Art Center (Lens), Regional Office for Contemporary Art, The Hauts-de-France Region
- 2023 - 2010 Solo show and collective exhibitions in contemporary art and photography centres. Artistic interventions in the private and institutional cultural sector.

Partners & sponsors:
 - Regional Office for Contemporary Art : the Hauts-de-France Region, Haute-Normandy Region, Pays-de-Loire Region (Artistic residences)
 - *La Source* Foundation, France
 - City of Paris
 - Academies (PEAC/EAC projects)
 - MEP - Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris
- 2011 - 2008 On-set photography for Canal+ programmes
- 2008 - 2003 Photographic reportages for the French and international press (Le Monde, Le Point, Elle, Marie Claire, etc.)

STUDIES

- Master 2** Visual Arts & Art Science, La Sorbonne University
Research: *Socio-political information in Fine Art Photography*
- Licence 3 Visual Arts - Photography, Paris 8 University
Research : *Photographic action in 1960s performance Art*
- Licence 3 Photography, IED (European Institute of Design), Roma

LANGUAGES

French	bilingual
English	fluent
Spanish	fluent
Italian	native language

PROFESSIONAL TRIPS (research and artistic production)

South America (Honduras, Mexico, Argentina, Cuba, Costa Rica)

Asia (India, China, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand)

North America (Montreal, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles)

Africa (Senegal, Mali, Morocco, Tunisia)

Europe

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→ [ARTISTIC PORTFOLIO](#)

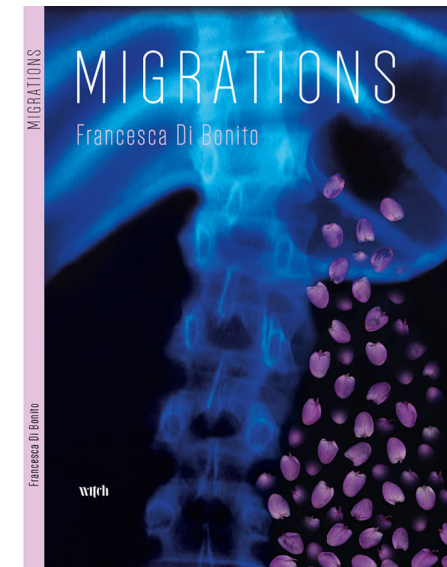
→ [INTERVIEWS AND CRITICAL TEXTS](#)



LA PHOTOGRAPHIE C'EST RE-GARDER
L'ÉTINCELLE D'ÉTERNITÉ ENFOUÉE
DANS L'ACTUALITÉ.
Maud Fée - Editions Witch, Mémoires Funambules



witch



Migrations, Witch Mémoires Funambules edition, 2019
[EBOOK version.](#)

