



*Basilica Santa Maria in Montesanto*

Chiesa degli Artisti

NANCY  
LORENZ



For Immediate Release:

“CIELI E TERRA NUOVA”:

ARTIST NANCY LORENZ TO CREATE INSTALLATION IN ROME’S FABLED  
“CHURCH OF THE ARTISTS” ON PIAZZA DEL POPOLO

American artist Nancy Lorenz will present a site-specific installation at the Basilica di Santa Maria in Montesanto, Rome, opening April 17, 2023. The exhibition of four large works will be on view until June 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Basilica known as *La Chiesa degli Artisti* (the Church of the Artists) was designed by Carlo Rainaldi and completed under the supervision of Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Carlo Fontana in 1679. It is one of the twin churches in Piazza del Popolo, along with Santa Maria dei Miracoli. In 1951 the basilica was established as the Church of the Artists by Pope Pius XII. Each Sunday from the end of October through June, the Mass of the Artists is typically celebrated with readings by prominent local actors or music by well-known performers.

In a program initiated by Monsignor Ennio Francia in 1953, the Basilica presents exhibitions by artists designed to create a dialogue between sacred space, creativity, and culture. The Church offers itself as a catalyst for artistic expression, designed to bring an elevated awareness of beauty both for the artists and those who come to reflect and worship. The program is currently under the direction of Father Walter Insero, under whose leadership it has recently hosted exhibitions by Shay Frisch, Jwan Yosef, Sofia Atlantova and Oleksandr Klymenko. Lorenz’s installation will incorporate a dialogue between the church’s Baroque history and the legacy of Arte Povera artists, such as Jannis Kounellis whose work was featured at the church in 2013.

“Nancy’s work and quest for beauty through her use of sacred materials like gold combined with a humble backdrop of burlap speaks to the mission of this program,” said Monsignor Insero.

“It is such an honor to be included in the ongoing tradition of this remarkable program and the story of this Basilica,” explained Lorenz.

### **About the Basilica di Santa Maria in Montesanto:**

The church is named after a smaller one belonging to the Carmelites of the Province of Monte Santo in Sicily. It was built in 1662, on the initiative of Pope Alexander VII, by Cardinal Girolamo Gastaldi. The original design was the work of Carlo Rainaldi. Construction of the church was interrupted upon the death of the Pontiff in 1667, then resumed in 1673 under the supervision of Gian Lorenzo Bernini and the cooperation of Carlo Fontana. It was completed in 1679, with the addition of a belfry in the 18th century.

Since 1953 the church has become the seat of the Mass of the Artists, a singular initiative conceived in 1941 by presbyter and art historian Ennio Francia. Every Sunday, for over sixty years, this Eucharistic celebration has been celebrated with representatives of the world of art and culture. The church is also the site of numerous funerals for prominent cultural figures. For these reasons, it is also known as the Church of the Artists.

### **About Nancy Lorenz:**

Nancy Lorenz is visual artist and John Simon Guggenheim Fellow who lives and works in New York City. She spent a graduate year in Rome in 1987 at the Tyler School of Art with a studio just blocks away from the Piazza del Popolo. Lorenz's work has been exhibited at numerous museums and galleries, including a mid-career retrospective at the San Diego Museum of Art in 2018. Her most recent gallery exhibitions were at Gavlak Gallery (Los Angeles and Palm Beach), R and Company (New York), and PDX Contemporary Art (Portland). Lorenz frequently collaborates with leading international architects and designers including William Georgis, Peter Marino, Brian McCarthy, Michael Smith, and William Sofield. Her work can be seen in public spaces around the world - including Chanel, Dior, and Tiffany's stores - as well as in numerous private collections.

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