

P420 is proud to present the first solo show in the gallery by Francis Offman (1987, Butare, Ruanda).

He moved to Italy in 1999, and after studying Science of Administration at the University of Milan, he then moved to Bologna where he now lives and works, after completing the Academy of Fine Arts, attending Luca Bertolo's painting course and winning the ArtUp critics' award in 2018 as part of OpenTour.

As Davide Ferri notes, "Francis Offman's practice, which seems to be organised around a single rule: buy nothing, and take care of waste". Everything he uses to create his works – the supports and canvases, the paper, the paint itself – is in fact recovered or found, and even the initial decision not to use a frame is part of this logic. Inevitably then, as Simone Frangi notes in the text accompanying the exhibition, "every material that passes through the hands of the painter faces us, in fact, with its own more or less violent story of extraction. Its treatment, its modification".

Offman retrieves and stores the coffee grounds from his mocha pot; he asks friends to put it aside theirs and bring it to him. He then sifts it, dries it and mixes it with glues to transform it into painting material. "A packet of coffee represents a map, Jessica Sartriani, a coffee expert, once explained to me" says Francis Offman, since the myth of the purity of the colonial product par excellence has fallen by the wayside – each container carries a blend: the coffee powder is therefore a trans-colonial cartography that links places of expropriation and cultural levelling.

Among his favourite materials, always recouped and never really purchased, cement and plaster from Bologna also tell the story of his relationship with the landscape that welcomed him, so unlike his one of origin.

"Offman's paintings are undoubtedly abstract. – continues Davide Ferri – But they can make vague allusions to landscape (with certain yellows, browns and greens that suggest the vitality of the earth, or certain blues that are wedged into things like fragments and portions of sky and waterways), but there is nothing – a horizon line, a reference to definite figures – that can really characterise them as such. Let's put it this way: Offman's works are abstract, but for me they seem to evoke, though without description, the image of an exuberant and contrasted landscape, a landscape of continuous movements, tremors and telluric subversions".

Exhibition opening

Saturday 9 October 2021, h 10.30–20.00

Tuesday–Saturday: 10.30–13.30 and 15–19.30
exhibition open until 8 January 2022

In 2022, Francis Offman will take part in the exhibition *Espressioni. L'Epilogo* at Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, IT.

He has recently taken part in:
Francis Offman, Herald St | Museum St, London, UK (solo, 2021); *You might know*, Museo MAGA, Gallarate, IT (solo, 2021); *Painting Stone*, Villa Lontana, Rome, IT (2021); Baleno International, Rome, IT (solo, 2021); *Gettare il sasso e nascondere la mano*, MAD, Le Murate, Florence, IT (2021); *Mediterranea 19 Young Artists Biennale*, School of Waters, Republic of San Marino, SM (2021).