

PRESS RELEASE

**Art and rights: right to wellbeing and healthcare**

***The transmission of gesture***

This meeting is part of the series of talks of *nctm e l'arte* dedicated to the topic of healthcare and the right to wellbeing.

We will see internationally renowned dancer and choreographer **Virgilio Sieni** in conversation with curator and contemporary art theorist **Pietro Gaglianò**.

Virgilio Sieni sees dance as a practice capable of welcoming diversity and “the archaeological complexity of the gesture”, a gesture that incessantly develops in relation to a physical and social context.

Sieni’s work covers both personal and stage research as well as participatory performances involving non-professional dancers, often carried out in an urban space with or without historical connotation, and therefore results in an extended vision of living the city.

An important part of Sieni’s practice consists of collective and choral actions based on the concept of “community of the gesture”, in a process aimed at stimulating the awareness of one's own position in space and with respect to the other.

The concept of care, transversal to his practice, translates into attention, neighborhood practice, emotional geography, permeating both the audience of spectators and participants, who become protagonists and whose bodies are aesthetically awakened and enhanced in their plasticity.

Pietro Gaglianò is a critic, curator and theorist of contemporary art. His main areas of interest are the relationships between visual art practices and the theoretical systems of performing art and research theatre, the urban, architectural and social context as a scene of contemporary artistic practices.

Gaglianò encountered Virgilio Sieni's research on several occasions, writing texts (among others, *Nel bosco*, Maschietto Editore, 2008), curating exhibitions (from the solo exhibitions of Loredana Longo and Maura Banfo for Oltrarno Atelier, Florence, 2007 to the exhibitions for Palazzina dell'Indiano with the works of Renata Boero, Laura Pugno, Luca Lupi, Michele Guido, in 2018 and 2019) and participating in the Academy of the Art of the Gesture as a professor.

The talk will be held on March 3 at 6:30 p.m. as a webinar, moderated by Gabi Scardi.

***nctm e l'arte***

via Agnello, 12

20121 Milano

t +39 02 72551 1

f +39 02 72551 501

### Virgilio Sieni - biography

VIRGILIO SIENI is an Italian dancer and choreographer, an internationally active artist who collaborates with top international theatre and music institutions, art foundations and museums. His research is based on the idea of the body as a place of acceptance of diversity and a space in which the archeological complexity of gestures develops. He creates his language springing from the concepts of transmission and tactility, with an interest in the haptic, multi-sensory dimension of the gesture and the individual, exploring themes of resonance, gravity and the poetic, political, scientific and archeological multitude that is the body.

While studying arts and architecture, he dedicated himself to experimenting with languages of the body and dance. He explored modern dance, ballet and release techniques with Traut Streiff Faggioni, Antonietta Daviso and Katie Duck. In 1983, after four years of study on improvisation in the languages of contemporary dance in Amsterdam, Tokyo and New York, he became one of the founders of the Parco Butterfly company and, in 1992, created the Compagnia Virgilio Sieni, coming to the forefront as a leading figure on the international contemporary scene.

He has since 2003 been directing, in Florence, CANGO Cantieri Goldonetta, a national centre for production of dance and research on and transmission of languages of the body, a space hosting artist residences as well, in an interdisciplinary program blending dance, music and visual arts.

In 2007 he founded the Academy of the Art of the Gesture, conceived to create and explore training contexts for people of all ages, backgrounds and ability levels on the idea of the community of the gesture. The Academy develops programs in cities and territories based on ideals of participation, listening to the body and regeneration of the territory.

In 2018 Sieni founded the School of the Gesture and the Landscape, a training context in which to explore the relationship between the body and the land, from nature to the gesture, and vice-versa, from the memory of movement to the creation of new urban geographies. Following a process of regeneration and renovation of the structure, he founded and directed a space at Parco delle Cascine, Florence, called PIA | Palazzina Indiano Arte. The building hosts the school, and most importantly, a recreation space and permanent workshop for dancers, citizens, researchers, students, amateurs and the general public.

Sieni is a three-time winner of the UBU Prize (2000, 2003, 2011), in 2011 he was awarded the prize Lo Straniero and in 2013 he was made Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et de Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture.

He was the Director of the Biennale Danza from 2013 to 2016, developing a four-year plan focusing on the concept of inhabiting the world and the idea of polis and democracy, envisioning the city through his metaphysics.

In 2017, Sieni embarked on a shared artistic process with Mimmo Cuticchio, exploring the relationships between body and marionette, dance and puppet opera, which led to the show *Nudità* (2018), the culmination of a three-year period in Palermo.

In 2019, resuming a ten-year-long process of creation with visually impaired people, Sieni created *Danza Cieca*, a duet with Giuseppe Comuniello, a performance based on the idea of tactile space that explores the perceptive relationships between gesture and encounter, waiting and touching. Sieni's most important city-based projects include: *Arte del gesto nel Mediterraneo* (2010-2013), a four-year project developed as a journey through territorial identities and the ages of man, created for the Theatre du Merlan Scène Nationale in Marseille and Marseille 2013 European Capital of Culture; *Diario fisico di un viaggio* (2011) in Santiago, Chile, focused on the idea of democracy and resistance in relation to the body and the gesture; *Atlante Del Gesto* (2015) at Fondazione PRADA in Milan, a work in the foundation's spaces where "*the study of fragments and details of the body unfolds into an archeological investigation offering glimpses of the present*"; *Thauma | Atlante Del Gesto* (2019) for the city of Matera, 2019 European Capital of Culture, an intimate contemplation of lost gestures springing from the study and exploration of materials from archives in Basilicata and other Italian regions, with a view to creating an "*evolving archive of the gesture*".

### Pietro Gaglianò - biography

Pietro Gaglianò (1975) is an art critic, educator, independent curator. He deals with community-based artistic practices, participatory projects, art and public sphere. Graduated in architecture, he has been exploring in depth the relationship between the aesthetics of power and the counter-narratives of art, preferring the urban and social context as a stage for contemporary languages, with a special focus on the theoretical systems of performance art. His books and exhibitions focus on the experimentation of hybrid forms between art and social sciences to cultivate the political perception of public space and community. On this topic he published, besides a number of essays, *La sintassi della libertà. Arte, pedagogia, anarchia* (Gli Ori, 2020) and *Memento. L'ossessione del Visibile* (Postmedia Books, 2016).

Gaglianò teaches in Italian and US institutions and is involved in international projects and networks experimenting with non-formal art practices and pedagogy. He has developed experimental pedagogy projects, implemented in marginal communities.

He is co-founder and artistic director of Scripta Festival, a book festival for contemporary art theory in Florence. He is a member of the board of the Forum per l'Arte Contemporanea Italiana, of the scientific committee of Nesxt - Festival degli spazi indipendenti (Italian non-profit spaces) of Turin, of the scientific committee of Fondazione Smart of Rome, and of the board of governors of Associazione Centro Creazione Cultura. He is co-director of Srisa Art Gallery, a non-profit space of Santa Reparata International School of Arts. He has since 2016 been curating "Studiovisit", involving a series of short residencies, exhibitions and meetings on young Italian art at Museo Casa Masaccio, San Giovanni Valdarno, Arezzo. He is a member of the design team of Madeinfilandia ([madeinfilandia.org](http://madeinfilandia.org)) a space for creation, confrontation and discussion about art. He has since 2018 been cooperating with the project Stand Up for Africa, a platform between art and human rights founded by Paolo Fabiani and Rossella Del Sere.