



SORELLE POVERE DI SANTA CHIARA

A VIDEO & SOUND INSTALLATION

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30 OCTOBER - 30 NOVEMBER 2018

WORKS

Sorelle Povere di Santa Chiara 2015-2018 is a multi part installation made in collaboration with the community of Sorelle Povere (Poor Clares) in the monastery of Santa Chiara in San Marino.

The project consists of a number of documentary works in different forms and formats which are presented in a new way for the space in St. Augustine's church as part of the Austin Forum programme of Contemporary Art in Sacred Spaces.

CHAPEL

Video Diptych

Above the chapel altar is a LFD TV divided into two sections. These two works have been brought together for the first time in the form of a diptych.

On the left is a 16mm, black and white, silent film, showing the community planting, preparing lunch, sewing, ironing and other daily activities. The film runs for 12 minutes and is repeated continuously with a black interval in between.

On the right is an HD recording of to camera interviews with each of the ten nuns in the community. Each was asked to introduce herself by her baptismal name i.e., her name before joining the Order and to say where she was born i.e., her region, city or town. Thereafter the nuns had distributed among themselves the questions sent in advance which they were free to answer or add their own as they wished. Each spoke for as long or as little as she wanted to.

The nuns speak in their own Italian and the video was not subtitled in order to keep the directness of their own communication. Instead, a Transcript/Translation publication was produced as part of the work.

The viewer can identify the speaker by her name in the video and follow her interview in English translation in the publication. Facsimiles of the original artists' publication displayed in the niche are made available to the viewer.

The video of interviews is 40 minutes and has a longer repeat cycle than the 16mm black and white film which repeats more frequently.

In addition, the decision was made to present the interviews on headphones so that it is privately listened to and because the church has a steady flow of parishioners who seek quiet and a meditation, particularly at the entrance to the chapel

Both sides of the Diptych run continuously. See Programme Timings.

THE NICHE

In the chapel area, there are two artists' books displayed in the niche that are part of the installation. As described above, one is a Transcript/Publication 2015. Facsimilies are provided to use with the Video.

The second book titled *Sorelle Povere di Santa Chiara* 2018, predominantly reflects on the black and white 16mm film and Franciscan spirituality.

Visitors are requested to engage with these artists' books on site. They are not for removal from the church. The copy of *Sorelle Povere di Santa Chiara* can be taken to another space in the church to be read if wished but please return to the niche.

Audio – Church Audio System

This audio piece was originally made for 6-stand up speakers placed in a circle into which the listener stepped. It has been re-mixed for the spatially much larger audio system at St. Augustine's. It is a composition of recordings of the daily activities of the monastery interspersed by the nuns introducing themselves (from the video interviews), engaged in chat and banter as well as prayer. As the nuns speak in Italian the installation includes a number of lecterns dotted around the church where the audio is transcribed in A3 sheets. In addition A4 handouts also enable the listener to follow their exchanges.

The final section of the audio composition is of the nuns singing together. It was recorded by asking those nuns who wished to, to sing individually to a guide track of a hymn of their own choosing, the *Benedictus*, which we recorded with them as a group at morning Mass.

The audio brings them together as a choir but their individual voices both in and out of unison can be heard on the individual speakers.

PROGRAMME

Audio 13 minutes plays through the church Audio System

On weekdays at 9am, 10am, 11am, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm, 6pm.

On Saturdays at 3:30pm, 4pm, 4:30pm

On Sundays at 2pm, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm

Video Diptych: Left: 12 mins. 16mm film / Right Interviews 40 minutes. Continuous except during mass times: www.saintaugustineshammersmith.org/mass-times

Transcript/Translation Publication and *Sorelle Povere di Santa Chiara* two artists' books