



FAI – Fondo Ambiente Italiano

presents

Robert Wilson for Villa Panza. Tales

from 4 November 2016 to 15 October 2017

Villa Panza & the Panza Collection, Varese

At **Villa Panza in Varese**, from 4 November 2016 to 15 October 2017, FAI – Fondo Ambiente Italiano (the National Trust for Italy) is staging the exhibition “**Robert Wilson for Villa Panza. Tales**”, curated by Noah Khoshbin and Anna Bernardini.

Robert Wilson has designed a rich and complex exhibition for **Villa Panza**, that engages both the interior of the villa with an important **selection of Video Portraits** and the exterior of the villa with a **permanent site-specific sculpture titled *A House for Giuseppe Panza***.

Wilson's aesthetics and artistic practice finds **synergy with Giuseppe Panza's legacy**. Shared interests surrounding mind-body relationships and other universal themes are approached by both men via a highly sophisticated aesthetic that transform great moral questions into perfected visions. The works exhibited are positioned, as is the Villa Panza collection, by the **constant juxtaposition of objects** and ideas emblematic of both classical and contemporary worlds. These relationships, and both men's particular sensitivity to light and interior time, work to create a tension capable of establishing a **dialogue** between different eras and cultures.

The House for Giuseppe Panza was designed for the second parterre in the grounds as a structure in the American Shaker style to create a striking counterpoint to the ornate architecture of the villa. Within the sculpture Wilson has created a **tableau vivant** surrounding the **life of Giuseppe Panza** that is accompanied an audio recording of Wilson reading extracts from Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet* (1929), a work that was also very dear to Giuseppe Panza. This installation highlights the creative and aesthetic elements that Wilson shares with the collector, such as a **love for study, contemplation, and the pursuit of silence**.

Robert Wilson's Video Portraits might be best described as a medium which uses an **advanced digital technology** to display the slow mutation of the subject's inner world. The video exhibition extends through the villa and works in dialogue with the architecture, furnishings, and Panza collection. These relationships and counterpoints create an atmosphere that alternates between moments of **timelessness and contemplation** and moments of **stark contrast**, an effect which reveals possible new affinities. The seamlessly looped videos portray figures from the world of art, literature, theater, and entertainment, as well as specimens of the **animal kingdom**. Occupying the entire south wing of the first floor of the villa, the exhibition will also highlight the **Lady Gaga Portraits**, a powerful and hypnotic series created in 2013 for Mr. Wilson's solo exhibition that year at the Louvre. The series draws on three iconic masterpieces in the history of Western art: the *Portrait of Mademoiselle Caroline Rivière* (1806) by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, Jacques-Louis David's renowned *Death of Marat* (1793), and the *Head of John the Baptist* (1507) by Andrea Solari. Wilson's *Flying*, the work that closes the Lady Gaga series, is a moment of counterpoint inspired by the ancient Japanese bondage practice of Shibari.

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The exhibition is made possible thanks to the generous support of **JTI (Japan Tobacco International)** that since 2012 is a partner of FAI in producing major exhibitions aimed at enhancing and promoting the cultural heritage of Villa and Collezione Panza.

With the support of **The Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MiBACT)**, the **Lombardy Region**, the **Province of Varese**, **City of Varese**.

Villa and Collezione Panza is a Museum recognised by **Regione Lombardia**.

Robert Wilson for Villa Panza. Tales

4 November 2016 – 15 October 2017

Villa e Collezione Panza

Piazza Litta 1, Varese

Opening hours:

Open Tuesdays - Sundays from 10.00 to 18.00 and bank holiday Mondays from 10.00 to 18.00

Admission:

Free admission for those who join FAI (or renew their membership) at the entrance;

Full price **€ 13**(**€10**Tuesdays and Wednesdays); FAI members and children (aged 4 to 14) **€6**

Students (aged 26 and under) **€8**weekdays, **€10**weekends and bank holidays

Family Ticket (2 adults and 2 children) **€ 30**

Info: www.villapanza.it



In November 2016, FAI starts “Bene FAI per tutti”, a cultural project for people with intellectual disabilities - developed by L’abilità Onlus and Fondazione De Agostini and thanks to the support of JTI - that offers the chance to discover the permanent collection of Villa Panza with a special guided tour. This project is also running at Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan.

Ufficio Stampa FAI

Simonetta Biagioni – stampa - 02.467615219; s.biagioni@fondoambiente.it

Novella Mirri – radio e tv - 06.68308756; n.mirri@fondoambiente.it