

# Istituto Svizzero

**Hannah Villiger**  
Works/Sculptural

Spring/Summer  
2021

Via Ludovisi 48  
Roma

Art  
Solo Exhibition

Press Release

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**Istituto Svizzero, for the first time in Italy, presents a major solo show by renowned Swiss artist Hannah Villiger (1951-97). The exhibition explores the full breadth of her ground-breaking work, also in relation to her stay in Rome during the '70s.**

Hannah Villiger gained prominence in the 1980s with the large-format photographs of her own body, often showing close-ups of fragmented and abstract body parts. The artist, who viewed herself as a sculptor rather than a photographer, was a fellow at the Istituto Svizzero in Rome from November 1974 to the summer of 1976. These 'Roman years' were decisive in shaping her artistic practice: in her studio and in the garden of Villa Maraini, Hannah Villiger began developing simple objects inspired by the materials of Arte Povera. She then gradually shifted to photography perceived in her eyes as a more "sculptural method", including her iconic photo series featuring palm leaves burning.

Through her works, the exhibition provides a comprehensive overview of the artist's remarkable career, with a particular focus on Villiger's stay at the Istituto Svizzero. Alongside the works, her working diaries and part of her research material are on display.

The exhibition will be complemented by a compelling book released with Mousse Publishing in summer 2021, containing the photographs of the work diaries as well as text contributions by Elisabeth Bronfen, Gioia Dal Molin, Quinn Latimer, and Thomas Schmutz.

## Notes to Editors

### About Hannah Villiger

Hannah Villiger (1951-1997) was a Swiss postwar and contemporary artist. Her artistic work is recognized in Switzerland and internationally. In 1975, she represented Switzerland with other major Swiss artists such as John Armleder or Martin Disler at the 9th Biennale de Paris. In 1985, her work was presented in a solo exhibition at Kunsthalle Basel. Following this, she presented several solo shows in institutions such as the Centre culturel suisse in Paris, the Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel and the Kunstverein Frankfurt. In 1994, she represented the Swiss pavilion along with Pipilotti Rist at the 22nd Biennial de São Paulo. After her death, her work was exhibited at the Kunsthalle Basel and the Kunsthalle Bonn (2001), at the nGbK Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst in Berlin (2002), at the MAMCO Musée d'art moderne et contemporain in Geneva (2007), at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst in Basel (2008), and at the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (2012). Between 2020 and 2021, her work will be part of group exhibitions at Kolumba in Cologne and the Museum zu Allerheiligen in Schaffhausen.

## Istituto Svizzero

Istituto Svizzero acts as an interdisciplinary platform bringing together artistic and scientific research. From Rome, Milan or Palermo, it facilitates connections both between Switzerland and Italy, as well as internationally. Istituto Svizzero offers residencies to emerging artists and researchers who wish to contribute to the future of art, science and innovation. Each year, the Institute presents a public programme aimed at promoting forward-thinking events and projects, experimental practices and excellence in research. Istituto Svizzero seeks to actively participate in the global discourse on arts and society, envisioning new paths and looking beyond the boundaries of disciplines.

### Acknowledgments:

THE ESTATE OF HANNAH VILLIGER, Basel