

Feedback. The Environments of Franco Vaccari

28.03.2026 – 13.09.2026

Press preview: 26.03.2025, 11:30 am

Opening: 27.03.2026, 7 pm

Curated by Frida Carazzato and Luca Panaro

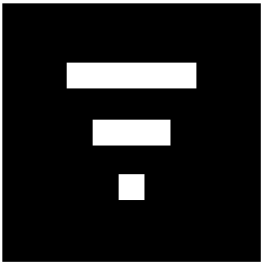
Exhibition design by Fosbury Architecture

Produced by Museion



Franco Vaccari, *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 21, Bar Code - Code Bar*, 1993. Courtesy of the Artist's Archive.

Bolzano, 26.03.2026 — Museion presents *Feedback. The Environments of Franco Vaccari*, a major exhibition dedicated to one of the most distinctive figures in postwar and conceptual Italian art. Bringing together photographic works, videos, artist's books, and archival material, the exhibition is the first comprehensive institutional exploration of Vaccari's *environments* as the core of his artistic practice. Designed to celebrate what would have been the artist's 90th birthday, the exhibition also marks the first major presentation of his work since his death in December 2025.



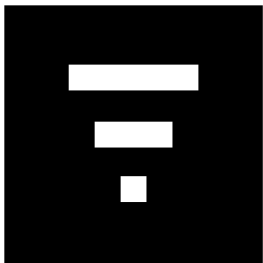
Although widely associated with photography, Franco Vaccari developed a radically expanded artistic practice that foregrounds the artwork as a social construct, formed through participation, context, and collective behavior, rather than as a fixed or autonomous object. Trained as a physicist, and only turning to art in the late 1960s, Vaccari introduced the concept of “Esposizione in tempo reale” (Real-time exhibition), in which the work unfolds over time and is shaped by the presence and actions of its audience. Today, Vaccari serves as a point of reference for younger generations of artists who recognize his early anticipation of the artwork as a collective process grounded in ordinary actions and shared behaviors. By critically engaging with the role of technology and exploiting its potential, he developed multimedia environments that activate everyday gestures, such as writing, recording, responding, and gathering; transforming audiences into co-participants whose cumulative presence and actions bring the work to life and continuously redefine it. This approach not only underpins the creative and generative process of Vaccari’s entire oeuvre, it also links him to Marcel Duchamp, who he dedicated both works and essays to, John Cage, the Situationists, and more recent perspectives that highlight the spectator as an active agent and producer of meaning.

Bart van der Heide (Director, Museion):

“When I look at the work of Franco Vaccari, I inevitably think of artists such as Tino Sehgal, Alicia Framis, or Anri Sala. What is striking is not only how clearly his work anticipates their concerns, but that he articulated these ideas as early as the 1960s. Despite this, Vaccari remains relatively under-recognized within international critical discourse—particularly in relation to recent re-evaluations of postwar and contemporary art history. This project seeks to address that gap, foregrounding his work as both foundational and urgently relevant today.”

Vaccari’s *environments* are the most complete expression of this practice. Often conceived as temporary structures, and built without conventional design intent, they transform exhibition spaces into experiences rather than displays. Meaning does not reside in form alone but emerges through interaction, chance, and collective presence. In his influential writings, including *Fotografia e inconscio tecnologico* (1979), Vaccari described this strategy as an “*occultamento dell’opera*”, a concealment of the work, in which lived experience becomes more important than the artwork itself.

The exhibition unfolds thematically through a sequence of *environments* and related works that address key concerns in Vaccari’s art, including traces of human presence, collective memory, and shared experience. The exhibition design by Fosbury Architecture supports this structure, creating continuity throughout the presentation while allowing each *environment* to function as an active situation rather than a static reconstruction. In doing so, these *environments* remain faithful to the artist’s original intentions while also speaking to contemporary audiences and contexts.



The initial sections of the exhibition explore darkness as a perceptual and psychological condition, inviting visitors into slowed-down, heightened modes of attention. *Environments* such as *Scultura buia* (1968) or *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 20. Ambiente grigio multiuso – Scatola per sondare lo spazio vicino e lontano* (1987) establish spaces in which a personal and intimate experience of darkness becomes inseparable from both a shared spatial condition, and an awareness of one's own body and being. Subsequent *environments* focus on social interaction and traces of collective behavior in public space. Beginning with *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 4. Lascia su queste pareti una traccia fotografica del tuo passaggio* (1972) and its later development *Photomatic d'Italia* (1972–75), Vaccari focused on spontaneous encounters, participation, and the formation of temporary communities. These dynamics resurface in *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 21. Bar Code, Code Bar* (1993), presented at the XLV Venice Biennale, where a functioning bar became a space for informal exchange and public discussion, an experience echoed in the current exhibition.

The Museion Collection includes approximately twenty works by Franco Vaccari, most of them part of the *Archivio di Nuova Scrittura*, donated to the museum in 2020. The inclusion of early verbo-visual works in the exhibition underlines the continuity between Vaccari's beginnings as a visual poet and his later *environments*, revealing language, traces, and presence as enduring concerns both in his art and in Museion's heritage and research line, *The Softest Hard*.

Frida Carazzato (Research Curator, Museion):

“To be confronted today with Vaccari's long career and approach means drawing attention to the present moment, exploring the confusion generated by the overproduction and overexposure of the self, and promoting an art that opens the way to triggering a “short-circuit of the ego.”

Institutional partners



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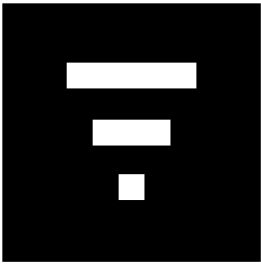
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General Information:

Feedback. The Environments of Franco Vaccari

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Museion, 3rd + 4th floor

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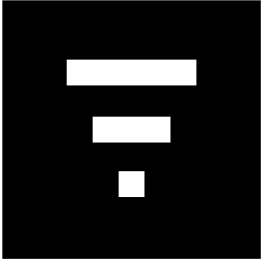
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Franco Vaccari

Franco Vaccari was born in Modena on June 18, 1936. His school education was science-based, and he followed it with a degree in physics. After beginning his artistic career as a visual poet, he produced his first *Esposizione in tempo reale* work in 1969, introducing the concept of the “real-time exhibition” that would become central to his art. His work spans several approaches but is often described as conceptual realism. One of his best known works is *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 4 Lascia su queste pareti una traccia fotografica del tuo passaggio*, which was presented in a solo room in the Central Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 1972. He returned with other solo rooms in 1980 and 1993. Alongside his artistic production, Vaccari was also an influential art theorist, publishing key texts such as *Duchamp e l'occultamento del lavoro* (1978) and *Fotografia e inconscio tecnologico* (1979). His work has been presented internationally in major exhibitions and institutions, including the Gwangju Biennale in South Korea, Kunsthalle Basel, Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne, Mostyn in Wales, Fondazione Morra Greco in Naples, and the Milan Triennale. Franco Vaccari died in Modena in December 2025.

Museion

Museion is the museum for modern and contemporary art in Bolzano. At our core, we are committed to fostering international art, culture, and innovation in South Tyrol. As the region continues to evolve, we aim to enrich cultural life by fostering creativity, exchange, and critical thinking. We believe that our cultural heritage is not set in stone but a dynamic force that evolves through conversations with artists, thinkers, and creators, guided by a foundation of inclusive civic values. This is reflected in our exhibitions, our collection, and our public programs. Museion serves society by collecting, preserving, researching, interpreting, and exhibiting tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Our audience spans the globe, and we place strong emphasis on building meaningful relationships with artists. We aim to be a museum that evolves in line with the changing social dynamics of our time. Our vision of sustainability seeks to support growth and empowerment, while as an employer we encourage every team member to play a pivotal role.



Institutional Thanks

Museion wishes to thank Elisabetta Vaccari for her trust and collaboration; Luca Panaro for his help with our research and curatorial work; and the Ministry of Culture – Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity (DGCC) for its support through the PAC2020 – Piano per l'Arte Contemporanea, which made the acquisition of *Esposizione in tempo reale n. 4* (1972) by Franco Vaccari possible.