

WHISPERS

Francesco Cavaliere, Adelaide Cioni, Benjamin Hubert, Jim Lambie, Liliana Moro, Jonathan Olivares, Micaela Pinero, Margherita Rui, Remo Salvadori, Michele Zaza

a project by **Giorgio Galotti e Claudia Pignatale**

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TFH – Tennis Family House

Nitto ATP Finals

Fondazione Teatro ragazzi e giovani – Turin, Italy

Turin, the magical city.

Turin's connection to the world of magic has been known since ancient times. It is the only one city in the world to belong to the two triangles of magic: white, with Prague and Lyon; black, with San Francisco and London. On the occasion of the **Nitto ATP Finals**, Teatro dei Ragazzi e Giovani in Turin hosts the **Tennis Family House**, the hospitality format designed to welcome the event's institutional guests.

Within this context, *Whispers* takes shape, a project that pays homage to the dual soul of Turin, a city suspended between rationality and mystery. According to some esotericists, good and bad forces coexist in Turin, divided into an area of "light", represented by Piazza Castello, and an area of "darkness" centered in Piazza Statuto.

From here, a reflection on the dialogue between these two forces, and their relationship with the city, begins, through a journey that highlights a symbolism that can be translated into a new narrative, interpreted and articulated by the works of the artists and designers involved.

The exhibition begins outside, where **Remo Salvadori's** work, *No' si volta chi a stella è fisso* (*No one turns who looks at a star*, 2024), welcomes the public with an aphorism by Leonardo da Vinci, which inspired the title of the piece, and which Salvadori uses to revisit his own practice.

The work stems from a process begun some time earlier with two pieces of paper that the artist kept with him and, on occasion, arranged in a similar way. This composition, which often recurs in his work, lives through the statement as an end in itself, like a title to be practiced. On this occasion, the work, positioned in front of the entrance, becomes the starting point, a North Star pointing the way, almost casually revealed to the public, marking a meeting point and a starting point.

Proceeding toward the Inalpi Arena, which houses the playing field, one encounters two vertical brass sculptures by **Francesco Cavaliere**, an emerging artist based in Turin who also works with voice and sound. The two works, titled *Otto doppio cono maschera* (*Otto double cone mask*), 2022, and *Otto doppio cono lingua!* (*Otto double cone tongue!*), 2024, stand out accompanying visitors to the stadium. Two sisters meeting themselves for the first time and to challenge each other. Both works are, in fact, two sound amplifiers that, for the inauguration, are activated by the artist and a performer in a new action—imagined for the 2025 Nitto ATP Finals—that whispers words and sounds to visitors.

In the Foyer, the environmental work *I portali di Gea* (*The portals of Gea*) by **Margherita Rui**.

Every magical culture has had its own invisible alphabet: from alchemical glyphs to ritual geometries.

The system of signs communicates not through meaning, but through the ritual of arrangement and repetition: a visual rhythm that transforms waiting into contemplation.

A large ceiling sail, six vertical canvases set on lava stone bases and decorated with embroidered or hand-painted symbols, and an inlaid carpet floor mark a rhythm of esoteric symbols, guiding the gaze through the space and becoming the backdrop to a visual narrative.

The heart of the project is the site-specific mural, composed of hand-painted terracotta tiles created by **Ninefifty**, which echoes the theme of the sign engraved in the material.

Each element restores value to the space through manual skill and craftsmanship, blending tradition and contemporary research. The mural is created using *Maniera*, an innovative modular system conceived and designed by **Incalmi** to decorate walls in a non-invasive way, allowing for assembly, disassembly, and reuse, with a fully sustainable and circular approach to materials. The system, made entirely of aluminum, is also 100% recyclable.

On the side walls, interventions and works by Jim Lambie, Micaela Pinero, and Michele Zaza complete the foyer.

British artist **Jim Lambie** presents a series of works made with sun lenses mounted on lead frames, forming a series of optical kaleidoscopes. *More light*, 2018, *The seen*, 2018, *Light box*, 2018, and *I see you in my dreams*, 2018, are works capable of activating a plural perception of the world, the different visual identities that, grouped together, form a sort of honeycomb or beehive, a symbol of plural life. The wall is completed by a sculptural work titled *Closer (Isolation)*, 2018, which alludes to a recognizable architectural element, stripped of its function. An object that draws attention to the magic and power of art to allow us to perceive an aspect of everyday reality through small details.

On the opposite wall, a historic work by **Michele Zaza**, *Ritratto magico (Universo segreto)*, 2004-2005, stands out as a dreamlike element. A blue-painted face, in a conventional pose, recreates in a few elements the power of the cosmos, the magic of the night and the universe revealed through the nocturnal celestial vault. A surreal and theatrical landscape that recalls life on planet Earth.

On one side, *Mirada ojos*, 2024, the two silver, brass, and nickel silver eyes by Argentine artist **Micaela Pinero** reveal themselves to the visitor as a visual alternative to the observation points that envelop the entire foyer. Complementing Jim Lambie's lenses and Michele Zaza's eyeballs, the South American artist offers an esoteric escape, like a presence from a cult of the past. The two walls are a tribute to the vision of Carol Rama, a Turin-based artist who passed away in recent years, whose poetics revolved around the mystery of esotericism.

Upon entering the theater, a large environmental installation by Adelaide Cioni, conceived for the stage, was conceived as a comprehensive observation point on her imagery, composed of visual codes, simple elements, and symbols that compose a complex scenography and visually connect the stage to the foyer.

Against a natural fabric backdrop, five paintings arranged across the entire surface become a horizon that aims to span a portion of the artist's career.

The works, arranged vertically, become gateways to her world but also references for our memory. Stylized elements that lead back to reality, emphasizing childhood memories. Through simplicity, the artist's message is addressed to everyone, as part of a unique world where reality and imagination merge to represent a lighter present.

The tour concludes in the hall of the little theatre, which, as usual, houses the bar area.

Here, two neon works by **Liliana Moro**, produced for the occasion, coexist in an inherently convivial environment, enlivening it and nourishing it with the power of neon's visual communication.

Cin Cin, 2003-2025 reveals itself as a pure sign, a moment of leisure that, in its communicative simplicity, reminds the audience of the importance of social moments, shifting the perception of the message from signal to whisper. It indicates an activity through another, metabolized visual code.

Similarly, *Ascolto*, 2025, reduces one of humanity's most important themes to a punctuated visual message: knowing how to listen and listening to oneself. Two semantic traces, themselves symbols, that enter a new dimension, far from commercial messaging and pertinent to the human sphere, where one encounters the other, or becomes other.

The room's layout features *Tape* sofas by Benjamin Hubert and *Square* armchairs by Jonathan Olivares for **Moroso**. The *Tape* sofa by **Benjamin Hubert** was born from the idea of combining compositional freedom and material exploration. It is a system of modernist blocks that can be combined in infinite configurations, creating contrasts or harmonies depending on the space and style. Each module is defined by a series of fabric panels joined by a polyurethane tape, the distinctive element that gives the collection its name. This technique, inspired by the sports industry, recalls the precision and durability of adhesive tape used for snowboards, skis, and waterproof garments. The result is a bold graphic design that runs across surfaces like a contemporary stitching, both functional and decorative.

The *Square* upholstered armchairs, designed by **Jonathan Olivares** for **Moroso**, are born from the idea of transforming the square unit, the basis of the warp and weft of a fabric, into an extended formal language.

"Enlarged and abstracted, the chair reflects the fabric covering it: square at both the micro and macro levels. And precisely because fabrics are among the most flexible materials, the chair becomes an object capable of adapting to different contexts" explains Olivares.

Finally, presented here for the first time are the *Across* game tables in enameled copper, designed by Claudia Pignatale for **Incalmi**, an Italian company that focuses on research, design, and product development with the aim of creating unique objects.

Here, the boards of classic games: chess, ludo, backgammon, and snatch, made of enameled copper with the "champlevé" technique (an ancient technique dating back to Roman times), become the tops of the *Across* tables, which thus take on a dual function.

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