

Datasheet of the exhibition

Mega Mecca

Luca Locatelli

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Luca Locatelli

Curated by
Arianna Rinaldo

Produced by
Associazione Culturale ONTHEMOVE
in occasione del Festival Internazionale di
Fotografia Cortona On The Move 2016

Prints
Bottega Antonio Manta

Materials
SPsystema

**CORT
ONAO
N THE
MOVE**
fotografia in viaggio

bam
bottega antonio manta

SP SYSTEMA

MEGA MECCA

In recent years Mecca, the spiritual centre of Islam, has become one of the most sought after and luxury destinations in the world.

The soaring economic growth of Muslim countries has exponentially increased the number of people who want to, and can afford to visit Mecca, both for the grand Hajj pilgrimage and, above all, for the minor Umrah pilgrimage, which is a less demanding, year-round occasion for visits to the holy sites and for general family entertainment. The pressing demand for visas has stimulated the kingdom of Saudi Arabia to invest millions and millions of dollars on improving and increasing the infrastructure and hospitality of the religious centre. And this has transformed the sacred city into a sacred metropolis.

The 1,970 feet high Bell Tower complex detains several world records: the highest hotel in the world, the highest clock tower, the clock with the biggest face and the largest surface area of skyscrapers in the world. In 2011, Hotel Tower became the 3rd tallest building in the world, exceeded only Burj Khalifa in Dubai and the Shanghai Tower in China. Roads, health centres and public transportation have been added to the large construction sites for renovation of the Great Mosque and for building super luxury hotels with five stars and above. These luxurious new buildings will complement the more than 500 shops that already exist in the area surrounding the Kaaba, where they sell top Western brand names such as Rolex, Ferrari, H&M, Burger King, Starbucks, and many more can be purchased in the shopping centres near the Masjid al-Haram (the largest mosque in the world) and the Kaaba, the most sacred Muslim site in the world.

But this is just the beginning. The combined business turnover of Mecca and Medina is considered to be 120 million dollars a year, a figure which is destined to grow even more. Twenty billion dollars will be invested over the next ten years on projects already underway, causing a real estate market explosion that has pushed the average price up to 15,000 dollars per square meter, with record peaks for locations with a view of the Kaaba. If you still think pilgrims arrive at Mecca on the back of a camel, you'd be as disappointed as you would be surprised to see a Christian pilgrim arriving in St. Peter's square on horseback. By the same token, anyone who imagines Mecca to be the epicentre of Islamic terrorism would be disappointed to discover the peaceful family picnics and copious scent of flowers that pervade the square in front of the Great Mosque.

What we find at Mecca is precisely what we can find in any other major religious centre around the world: souvenirs, impressive architecture, museums with endless queues to get in, and classy restaurants alongside the common rites and practices of a religion whereby spirituality, humanity and the needs of our consumer society peacefully coexist.

Luca Locatelli

Luca Locatelli is an Italian photographer based in Milan.

He turned to photography after a career in IT and that is perhaps the reason why he likes documenting stories in which the interaction of people and technology can change the environment and our general surroundings. Some of the areas he has explored in recent years include nuclear power stations, ocean current generators, renewable energy installations, technological research hubs, large manufacturing industries and war simulation. One example is The War Game, a multimedia project examining the business of post 9-11 conflicts which is to be included in a larger project entitled United Colors of War, which won him the Aftermath Grant in 2014.

Luca proposes and produces stories for big international media like The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, Bloomberg Business Week, Wired, Geo France, L'Espresso and many others. As of 2015 he began working on energy transformation projects for publication in the National Geographic family.

His work has been exhibited at various international festivals and events.

Luca's work is promoted by the Institute for Artist Management, an agency based in the U.S.A.

Title		Mega Mecca
Photographer		Luca Locatelli
Number of Pictures	38	Prints, different sizes
Type		Colors, (printed on dibond)
Size of Images	15 13	110x82 60x45
Linear Development	24mt	without spaces
Set Up		Rigid plastic hooks hidden on the back We provide biography and introduction texts (must be printed at the expense of the hosting)
Shipping		Pluriball envelope

15 PRINTS 110x82



13 PRINTS 60x35



CONTATTI

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