Arte Studio Ginestrelle Residency, in Assisi, Italy

Description of Intended Project:
In June 2014, I was invited to a month-long residency at Arte Studio Ginestrelle in the Mount Subasio Regional Park of central Italy. Situated on the outskirts of the traditional pilgrimage site of Assisi, this competitive international residency selected artists to explore the nature, culture and history of this area as subject, setting and raw material for art making.

My plan was to create a series of non-harmful sculptural installations, within those areas of the bordering Mount Subasio National Park that hold some record of human presence. These were to be built from include the ruins of buildings, debris fields, fence lines, those tangible remnants of human structures, resulting from a series of earthquakes that struck the area in 1996 & 1997. Intended to serve as redemptive gestures, these were meant to honor both the site's history and its current state.

Description of Completed Work:
The situation upon arrival required a reconsideration of the proposed project. Due to strengthened restrictions instituted two months prior to my arrival, intended to help protect the natural habitat and sensitive archeological remains found within the park, I was asked to scale back physical manipulations on and within the landscape. This eliminated the possibility of creating the proposed sculptural earthworks.

After a period of reevaluation, I became intensely interested in the architecture of local cathedrals, and specifically how the painted imagery within has operated for viewers throughout history. Understanding that until the 1960's, the majority of Catholic sermons delivered worldwide were given in Latin, regardless of the language spoken by church attendees, and that there was a tremendously low rate of literacy when these were painted, encouraged a reconsideration of these spaces and images. Simply put, there was tremendous pressure on these works to serve as engaging, effective visual aids in the transmitting of important moral and theological narratives.
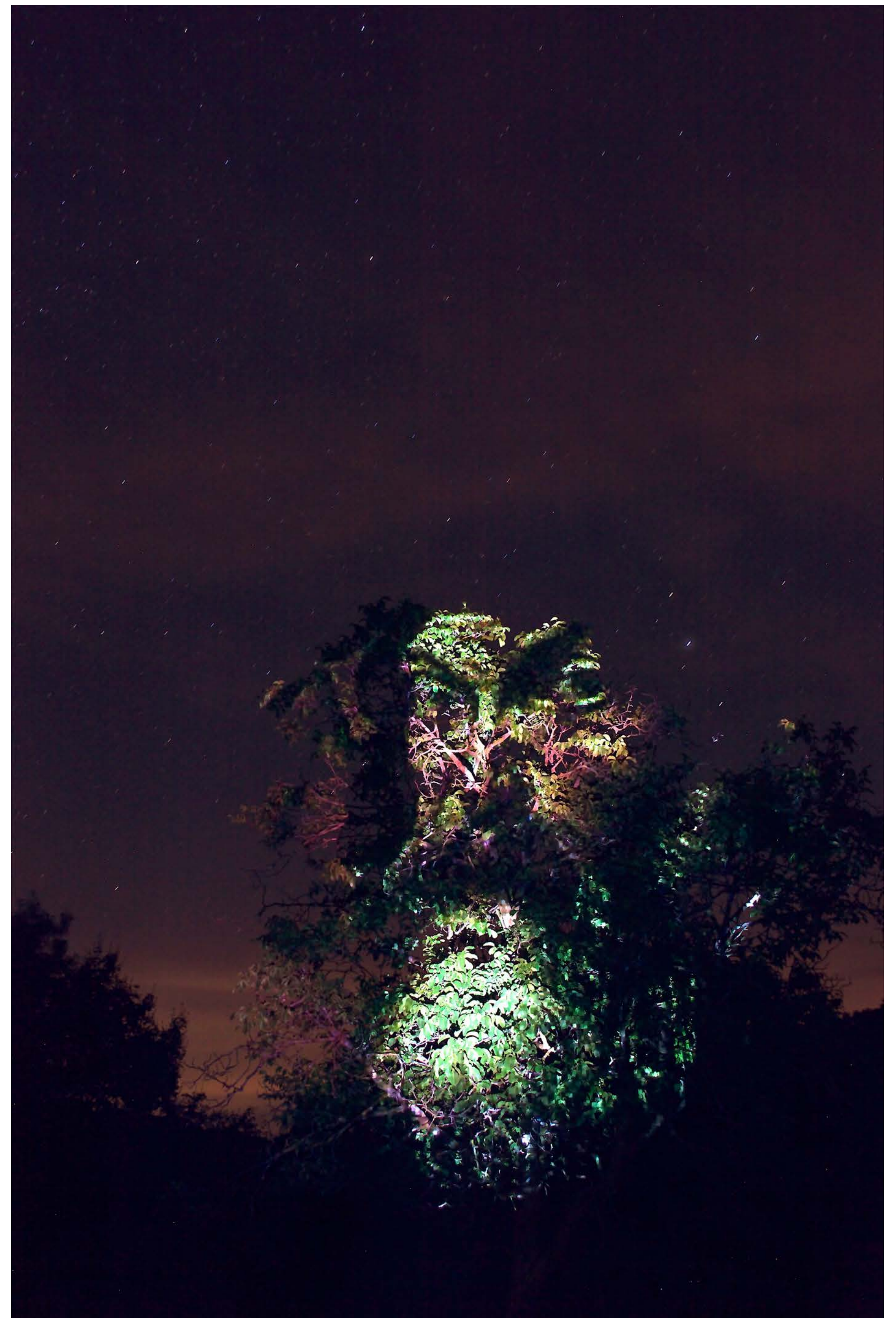
Assisi Projection #20, 2014

I spent my days taking photographs of the painted figures that stretched across the interior walls of these cathedrals, extracting them from the larger narratives of which they were a part. At night I used a digital projector to cast these figures onto the landscape of the residency grounds. These projections into the landscape I would then photograph. In this, I was interested in an overcoming of their intended function as illustrations of biblical narratives. By relocating these within the columns of trees and changing dome of the night sky, the ephemerality of image/setting invited a degree of mystery back in.

Related future research/creative activity:
Through the Assisi work, I developed a way of making that I have adapted toward other purposes. Most notably, with the support of an FSU Planning Grant, beginning summer of 2015, I will begin work on the *Battlefield Series.* This will be an exploration of memorialized conflict sites related to the U.S. Civil War, with specific attention paid toward the changes these sites have undergone in the intervening 150 years.

Photographs and battlefields are similar, in that they preserve a moment that would otherwise be lost in time. The irony and perhaps beauty of these sites is that the moments preserved are ones of tragic fragility, honoring a conflict that almost tore us apart. Though the goal of memorials is safeguarding, these sites have changed and have been changed to reflect the sensibilities and desires of those who have come along since. As a means to investigate these transformations, I will visit battlefields at night and photograph digital projections of archival Civil War images back into those locations where they were taken. In compressing these two moments (the archival past upon the present day), my intention is to investigate the depth of transformation these sites have undergone, as a means for visually exploring how we memorialize.

Assisi Projection #14, 2014

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