



Interactive installation by Elaine Whittaker and Roberta Buiani

Presented for the first time in Cervia, MUSA (Museum of Salt), 27-28 July 2018

Creating and Destroying: Salty reflections

Salt is a common and simultaneously precious substance, essential to the growth of life, yet able to destroy life; symbol of economic wealth and able to trigger environmental decline... salt has many functions: not only do they differ radically, but they are also often located at opposing ends.

Salt is the perfect *Pharmakon*: when skillfully used, it produces divine culinary experiences. When abused, it may cause deep disgust. In the Cervia context, salt is an important metaphor, it is the symbol of a delicate balance between conservation and tourism. That is, it stands at the cusp between the desire to preserve a very delicate and rich natural reserve constituted by the "Saline" and its surrounding territory, and the need to manage its tourism. The latter is a threat to this equilibrium. However, it also acts as an incentive to its preservation. The "Saline" constantly evoke the labor of the "salinari". Remembering this tradition is very important : it is not just a source of entertainment, but also brings back the ephemeral memory of a past long gone which will likely be forgotten soon.

This Installation is a collaboration between artists Elaine Whittaker (CAN) and Roberta Buiani (ITA CAN). It consists of a series of objects covered in, incrustated and embellished by, engulfed in, salt. Each of these objects tells a story and utter a sound. Together, they narrate the proper- ties of salt and the "Saline" as complex ecosystems.

For those who want to listen, the objects comprising this installation also reflect a series of contradictions calling for dialogues, questions, memories. Their function is evocative, rather than pedagogical.

But our goal is to think past salt and the saline. We want to think of these contradictions in the context of climate change: Is it possible to preserve both Saline and Tourism simultaneously? Is it possible to remember and recreate the past in spite of, or as an opposition to the environmental industrial and economic changes that have transformed our world in the past several years?

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