

# ABSTRACTS AND AUTHORS

## ENGLISH ANNEX

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*Eva di Stefano, Rosario Perricone*

### **Editorial**

This issue of the magazine inaugurates a new editorial synergy between the Osservatorio Outsider Art and the Associazione per la conservazione delle tradizioni popolari. The statement that an anthropological approach is important for the study of art proves to be even truer for Outsider Art, where individual creativity is often rooted in the memory of a weakening folk culture. The case of the Ghanese Ataa Oko, related in this magazine issue, is a prime example of this relation; the anthropological approach can also provide a key to understanding the works of Gino Gaeta from Sicily, Ezechiele Leandro from Apulia, and the Italian-Californians presented by Laura Ruberto in the magazine. Indeed, the reception of the "Other" art has been introduced in Italy in the anthropological field at first, and only after in aesthetics, as proved by the collection of the Museo di Antropologia of Turin – presented in this issue.

*Eva di Stefano* taught *History of Contemporary Art* at the University of Palermo from 1992 to 2013, and in 2008 she founded the *Osservatorio Outsider Art* that she manages together with its homonymic magazine.

*Rosario Perricone* teaches *Cultural Anthropology* at the Academy of Fine Arts of Palermo. He is the Director of the *Museo internazionale delle marionette Antonio Pasqualino* and President of the *Associazione per la conservazione delle tradizioni popolari* of Palermo.

### **EXPLORATIONS**

*Eva di Stefano*

#### **Painting like a puzzle. Fabric paintings by Mario Di Miceli**

The article presents the works, still unpublished, of the latest artist discovered by the O.O.A, Mario Di Miceli. Based in Palermo, the artist suffers from psychiatric problems for which he attends an art therapy atelier. He paints on recycled fabric, such as pieces of shirts, and uses bright colours to create irregular geometric formations in which anatomical elements, symbols, and forms are organized. Through a unique self-confident style – the crisp-edged lines of which suggest the influence of comics – he grapples with the inconsistencies of the world. He ultimately creates an interconnected structure with no narrative function, but mainly aimed to balance chaos and rational order.

*Laura Marasà*

#### **Gino Gaeta: mythological adventures gushing from stones**

During a research for her degree thesis, the author chances upon some unknown artists; among them is Angelo (nicknamed Gino) Gaeta who hails from Burgio, a small town in the Sicilian inland that is famous for its rich traditional craftsmanship, especially in the field of ceramics. Originally a tinsmith, Gaeta became a stonecutter and sculptor once he discovered his love for stone. After emigrating to Germany for a short time, he began to decorate his Sicilian hometown's roads and squares with bas reliefs and fountains. Sometimes his subject matter addresses political and social issues (e.g. historically oppressed groups), but more often they are totem-like compositions. In both cases, his inspiration is soaked from archaic, mythic, or legendary references.

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**Laura Marasà** has recently completed her degree at the *Accademia Abadir of Palermo* with a thesis on *Outsider Art in Sicily*, which led her to some research in the field.

*Francesca Neglia*

**The enigma of the castle of the twin sisters**

A fascinating unpublished and anonymous drawing, conserved in a private French collection and marked with the enigmatic title *Le chateau de deux soeurs jumelles*, is the subject of this survey that explores its mysterious origin. Beyond its naive workmanship, the drawing reveals some cultured references. The author accurately examines each detail of the drawing, tries to find clues about the artist, and makes hypotheses about its odd content. She finally presumes that this is a work of *Mediumistic Art*, a trend that swept Europe between the XIX and XX centuries, and was considered by Dubuffet and his successors one of the expressions of *Art Brut*.

**Francesca Neglia** is graduated at the University “*La Sapienza*” of Rome where she studied the *History of Art*. She has recently made an internship at the *Polysémie* gallery.

*Sarah Palermo*

**Orane Arramond. Drawing the world**

Orane Arramond is a young, self-taught French artist. Although still little known, her works have recently entered the *Neuve Invention* section of the *Collection de l'Art Brut* of Lausanne, and are now starting to circulate in specialized galleries. The author surveys the artist's temperament and education, her decision to leave school, and her discovery of drawing as an exclusive language to think and communicate one's inner being. The article continues with an analysis of the drawing's stylistic features – horror vacui, line twists, and obsessive and multiple use of eyes – and their symbolic and psychological function.

**Sarah Palermo** is an art historian and an exhibition curator. She works in Rome and Paris where she collaborates with specialized magazines. Her research focuses on women's art, memory and identity in contemporary art, and *Outsider Art*.

**FOCUS**

*Laura E. Ruberto*

**Beyond Sabato Rodia: Some Notes on Italian Californian Site-Specific Spaces**

This paper offers an introduction to the unplanned pattern of Italian American expressive vernacular culture in California. I explore a West Coast Italian aesthetic – rooted in the land, climate, material objects, and migration patterns – visible in six vernacular art and architecture sites and the men who made them. This essay presents Sabato Rodia's Watts Towers, Baldassare Forestiere's Underground Gardens, Romano Gabriel's Wooden Sculpture Garden, John Giudici's Capidro, Litto Damonte's Hubcap Ranch, and Theodore Santoro's Wood Carvings in order to highlight each men's structures in relation to their Italian ethnicity and place-making.

**Laura E. Ruberto** teaches at the *Berkeley City College, California*, where she co-chairs the *Department of Arts and Cultural Studies*. She focuses on *Italian American culture*, and *cultural theories of transnational migration*.

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## IN-DEPTHS

*Gianluigi Mangiapane, Giulia Fassio, Elisa Campanella*

### **The Art Brut at the Museo di Antropologia ed Etnografia of Turin: new perspectives**

Not only does the article introduce the interesting Art Brut collection of the Museo di Antropologia ed Etnografia of Turin, it also outlines the current research on the little-known and often forgotten artists of those artifacts as well as the Museum's cultural heritage. The collection is strictly related to the research activity of Giovanni Marro, founder of the Museum in the first half of the twentieth century. His research is documented by a rich photographic archive that includes more than 2000 photo plates in silver bromide mirror.

***Gianluigi Mangiapane** is a Ph.D in Anthropology from and a research fellow at the University of Turin. He manages research projects and the promotion and safeguard of the University Museum heritage, which includes the Museo di Antropologia ed Etnografia and the Museo di Antropologia criminale "Cesare Lombroso".*

***Giulia Fassio** is a Ph.D in Anthropological Sciences from the University of Turin, and in Contemporary History from the University of Grenoble. She has collaborated with the Museo di Antropologia ed Etnografia of Turin for the cataloguing of the Art Brut collection.*

***Elisa Campanella** is a contemporary art historian, who collaborates with the Associazione Arteco of Turin as a press officer. Within the "Never Seen and Other Stories" project ([www.maivisti.it](http://www.maivisti.it)), she was charged with the cataloguing of the works of the Marro archive.*

*Lucienne Peiry*

### **Ataa Oko's flute**

The imaginative graphic work of the elderly Ghanaian Ataa Oko (1919 – 2012) resulted from his encounter with the Swiss ethnologist Regula Tschumi. During her research on the unique funeral traditions of Oko's ethnic group, Ga, she asked him to make drawings about his past activity as a constructor of sculptural, figurative coffins. This request activated a creative process for Oko that was more imaginative than documentary, and led him to elaborate on legends and myths of his own tradition. The article highlights the maieutic function of anthropology and the slow genesis of an original and expressive language.

***Lucienne Peiry** is an international expert of Art Brut who directed the museum Collection de l'Art Brut in Lausanne from 2001 to 2011. She currently teaches at the University of Lausanne. Among her several books, the essential L'Art Brut (Flammarion, Paris, 1997) has been translated into many languages – including Chinese – and an extended and updated version edition has been published in 2016.*

*Sarah Lombardi, Pascale Jeanneret*

### **The collector's anxieties: Jean Dubuffet and Eugen Gabritschewsky**

This article corresponds with a great exhibition which re-evaluates Eugen Gabritschewsky's paintings (1893 – 1979), an exhibition that will travel from 2016 – 2017 (Paris, Maison Rouge; Lausanne, Collection de l'Art Brut; New York, American Folk Art Museum). A young Russian scientist, Gabritschewsky spent fifty years in a German

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psychiatric hospital, during which time he created thousands of paintings. His work displays his artistic and scientific imagination and ultimately garnered Dubuffet's interest. The manager and one of the curators of the Lausanne Museum uses archival documents to relate the collection's slow acquisition of the Russian patient's work, which now includes up to 87 works.

**Sarah Lombardi** has been director of the museum *Collection de l'Art Brut* of Lausanne since 2013, with which she has collaborated on a number of exhibitions since 2004. As a curator, she has also worked at the 'Fondation pour l'art thérapeutique et l'art brut du Québec' of Montreal, Canada. She has several publications under her belt, all of which focus on Art Brut.

**Pascale Jeanneret** is an art historian specialized in museology. Since 2002 she has been a conservator at the *Collection de l'Art Brut* of Lausanne, where she manages the collections and curates exhibitions.

*Pier Paolo Zampieri*

#### **Outsider Art e Street Art. Contaminazioni, genealogie**

A Messina gli studi e le azioni territoriali intorno all'opera totale di Giovanni Cammarata hanno generato una frontiera di contaminazione tra street art e outsider art. Sia con Gaetano Chiarenza, le cui opere sono conservate presso la sede dell'atelier terapeutico Camelot, che nel recente ripristino di Via Belle Arti, il segno outsider ha costituito la fonte e la cornice di senso degli interventi di street art. L'articolo racconta il processo analizzando le analogie e le genealogie tra i due fenomeni: ne consegue l'indicazione di un modello possibile di valorizzazione viva (non museale) dell'Outsider Art.

**Pier Paolo Zampieri** is a sociologist and one of the founding members of Zona Cammarata. He teaches Urban Sociology at the University of Messina and deals with urban phenomena, the imaginary, and Outsider Art.

## **REPORT**

*Eva di Stefano*

#### **Artistic migrations. The Museum of Everything in Rotterdam**

This is an account of the exhibition of James Brett's grand collection at Rotterdam Kunsthall. A huge exhibition with a fascinating labyrinthine layout, its record-setting size can hardly be surpassed. With 1500 works by 122 artists from all over the world, it presented out-of-law creation as a global, transversal and contemporary phenomenon. The massive presence of works by Sicilian authors (Francesco Cusumano, Gilda Domenica, Giovanni Fichera, Francesco Giombarresi, Sabo, Nicolò Scarlattella) confirms the effectiveness of the promotional strategy that Osservatorio Outsider Art has been pursuing.

*Eva di Stefano*

#### **In the new Outsider Art Museum in Amsterdam**

This new Museum, opened this year, results from the partnership between two institutions: Het Dolhuys of Haarlem – an interesting Museum for psychiatry that, in recent years, has collected works by outsider artists mainly produced in Japanese

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therapeutic ateliers – and the Hermitage Amsterdam – a branch-museum of Saint Petersburg’s Hermitage. Its unprecedented challenge is to make Outsider Art enter into a prestigious museum devoted to the great art of the past.

*Giulia Ficco*

**Reporting from the (out)front. Nek Chand vs. Le Corbusier**

The setting of the XV Venice Biennale of Architecture (July 28 – November 27, 2016), curated by Alejandro Aravena, includes the work of the Indian artist Nek Chand (1924 – 2015). His Rock Garden – a huge sculpture garden in Chandigarh – is a paradigm of the contradictions of rationalist utopia and its out-of-context architectural models that the self-taught artist wanted to react to and reject. Chandigarh proves that a good architectural practice cannot be handed down from on high, but it should rather balance project quality, local traditions, and the inhabitants’ involvement.

*Giulia Ficco graduated from the Ca’ Foscari University of Venice with a degree in History of Contemporary Art. Her master’s thesis was on Irregular Art. Since 2014 she has been working at the Musée Visionnaire of Zurich, devoted to Art Brut*

*Francesca Neglia*

**The multiple meaning of art: Polysémie and its artists**

Continuing the census of the galleries specialized in Outsider Art undertaken in the previous issues of this magazine, this essay presents the activity of the young Polysémie gallery in Marseille. Opened in 2013, it is devoted to international Outsider Art with an attentive eye to the production of the Italian market. Among the artists represented by the gallery are the renowned Azema and Nadeau, the debuting Orane Arramond, and the interesting author from Rome, Davide Cicolani.

*Rita Ferlisi*

**Ezechiele Leandro: a great retrospective**

Ezechiele Leandro (1905-1981) lived in San Cesario, near Lecce. A bicycle mechanic and dismantler, he had a strong artistic vocation that he started to express in 1984 through a multi-faceted practice (painting, sculpture, multi-material assemblage, painted furniture, poems and texts) that led to his Sanctuary of Patience. This is a complex sculptural and architectural environmental work in cement, iron, ceramics, and recycled materials that offers the admiring visitor a religious meditation on humanity. After many years of abandon and degradation, in 2014 the Ministero dei Beni Culturali issued a decree for its protection, the first one in Italy related to outsider artworks. Later, in 2016, a great exhibition has followed, which took place in three locations. Thus, the Apulian artist - “proudly non-educated” - has been legitimized among the best “outsiders” of XX century.

*Rita Ferlisi is an art historian at the Soprintendenza Beni Culturali e Ambientali of Agrigento. She deals with the safeguard of and makes scientific research on historic and artistic heritage; she collaborates with the Parco Valle dei Templi on the occasion of initiatives related to contemporary art; in 2015 she curated the conference Filippo Bentivegna. Storia, tutela e valori selvaggi and edited the related book*

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*Eva di Stefano*

**'Irregular' wonders – also from Sicily – in Cles**

This article provides a virtual visit to the exhibition Irregolari. *Sguardi laterali nell'arte italiana da Antonio Ligabue all'Atelier dell'Errore*, curated by Daniela Rossi (9 July – 9 October, 2016) and hosted in a splendid historical palace of Cles, a small town in the province of Trento. It is one of the most interesting cultural initiatives of Summer 2016. Through the work of canonical artists and new revelations, the exhibition outlines the Italian Outsider Art profile and raises fundamental issues. A lot are the new revelations highlighted by the exhibition sensitive and site-specific setting, where 200 miniatures stand out – they are the masterpieces of the Sicilian Francesco Giombarresi – together with the Baroque grace of the paper sculptures made by Annamaria Tosini, from Palermo.

**Translations by Monica Campo, in collaboration with Margaret Carrigan**