

An Archipelago of Ecological Care Venice, Its Lagoon and Contemporary Art

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Abstract This essay situates Venice and its archipelago among the small islands that, despite the uncertainty of the future and the emergency given by extreme climate scenarios, provide effective examples of local sustainability that can also be replicated in other parts of the world to promote positive and collective change on a global scale. Being aware of the changes that Venice is facing as a consequence of the environmental crisis, learning from them, and taking care of the city and its lagoon is an increasingly ethically and politically urgent action to try to guarantee its survival. Venice's few but tenacious inhabitants – a small community, where vernacular knowledge has been handed down and where conscious citizens, including activists, cultural workers, artists, and researchers, promote a renewed ecological awareness – are the actors involved at the forefront of what can be addressed as 'curatorial activism'. By taking as case studies some recent projects and practices – such as walking the lagoon – the article explains how contemporary art can effectively contribute to the ecologies of care, protecting the dignity of life and human rights on par with the rights of nature, encouraging critical thinking, emotional involvement, ethical responsibility, and public imagination for the well-being of the Earth.

Keywords Venice. Contemporary art. Curatorial activism. Small islands ecologies. Ecologies of care. Climate crisis.

Summary 1 Sustainable Worlds in Miniature. – 2 Ecological Care and Curatorial Activism in Venice. – 3 Walking the *lacuna* as an Act of Caring for the Environment (Giorgio Andreotta Calò).



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I still believe that the future lies not with the great powers, but with the little islands, lands, and cities
Édouard Glissant
(Glissant, Obrist 2021, 98)

1 Sustainable Worlds in Miniature

The report of 28 February 2022 from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations states that small islands are among the places most threatened by the environmental crisis (Mycoo et al. 2022). Despite serving as extraordinary examples of resistance, adaptation, and both cultural and biological diversity - in their unique equilibrium between land and water - small islands have been rendered vulnerable by climate change. Subject to dual threats - frequent flooding, induced by rising sea levels and extreme rainfall, and drought, caused by the converse issue of water scarcity - these conditions, along with pollution, contribute to the gradual decline of the rich ecosystems that characterise them. These ecosystems include, among others, coral reefs in tropical oceans and salt marshes in lagoons. The ultimate risk facing these small islands is complete submergence, whether as individual entities or as entire archipelagos, like contemporary Atlantis.

However, despite the uncertainty of the future and the emergency given by extreme climate scenarios, islands provide effective examples of local sustainability that can also be replicated in other parts of the world to promote positive and collective change on a global scale (Pugh, Chandler 2021).

As Édouard Glissant, the well-known theorist of archipelagic thought,¹ claims in his book dedicated to the coast of Lamentin (*La Cohée du Lamentin*, 2005), a small town in Martinique, his homeland: “We can start from a tiny corner of the world, a real place. We can start from this real little place located in an archipelago, a small archipelago of the world, and from there live the life of the world in a global sense” (Glissant, Obrist 2021, 111).² This apparently utopian vision is in all respects concrete and applicable from the Caribbean

1 For a definition of this concept, see Glissant’s following quote: “We need archipelagic thinking, which is one that opens, one that confirms diversity - one that is not made to obtain unity, but rather a new kind of Relation. One that trembles - physically, geologically, mentally, spiritually - because it seeks the point, that utopian point, at which all the cultures of the world, all the imaginations of the world can meet and understand each other without being dispersed or lost” (Glissant, Obrist 2021, 164-5; see also Glissant 1997; 2020).

2 It is interesting to note that the conversation between Glissant and the curator Hans Ulrich Obrist from which this quote comes was published by Isolarii, a small publishing house whose books “revive the ‘island books’ that emerged in Venice at the start of the Renaissance”. These books - as it is further explained - collect poems, stories, and

to the Mediterranean Sea. For Glissant utopia is neither an object, nor a goal, nor even a dream, but rather “what is missing to us in the world [...], it is about accepting the idea of change” (Glissant, Obrist 2021, 58, 67) – therefore fully achievable.

Let’s take an example close to us, Venice and the islands of its lagoon. It is a fact that the Venetian archipelago is among those globally most at stake. Although it has always had to deal with the phenomenon of the so-called *acqua alta* (high tide), in recent years, exceptional floods have occurred more and more frequently. The maximum peak, after the historical *acqua granda* (big flood) of 4 November 1966, was reached on 12 November 2019, as the apocalyptic images that were broadcasted worldwide have extensively documented. These extreme weather events have tested both the ecosystem of the lagoon and the centuries-old negotiation between the natural environment and the anthropic landscape that Venetians have engaged in. Nevertheless, Venice appears more resilient than ever. It has thus become not only a privileged place for observing how planetary changes manifest locally but also a paradigm for understanding how to confront future challenges.

Undoubtedly, Venice is not the only example of virtuous insularity that can be taken as a large-scale adaptable model. The biogeographer Sietze Norder sees islands, each with its own local specificity, as microcosms; that is, worlds in miniature, where good practices, which are determined by more sustainable relationships between human beings and nature – from energy autonomy and food independence to ecotourism – take root faster than elsewhere (Norder 2021).

Despite being an ecosystem in danger, where exceptional floods – currently mitigated by the MOSE mobile dam system – along with the passage of large cruise ships and overtourism represent peak levels of environmental and social crisis, Venice also functions as a microcosm. Within this context, one can observe, imagine, and adopt sustainable attitudes and solutions that arise from a constant rebalancing of the relationship between humans and nature.³ Being aware of the changes that Venice is facing as a consequence of the climate crisis, learning from them, and taking care of the city and its lagoon is an increasingly ethically and politically urgent action to try to guarantee its survival. Those involved at the forefront are its few but tenacious inhabitants: a small community, where vernacular knowledge has been handed down and where conscious citizens – including activists, cultural workers, artists, and researchers – promote a renewed ecological awareness, in order to rethink

artworks like ready-to-hand islands, each dedicated to a specific topic but forming, altogether, an archipelago. <https://www.isolarii.com/>.

3 For a study of Venice in relation to both climatic and social and cultural changes in the Anthropocene era, see Baldacci et al. 2022.

(environmental, social, cultural) adaptation practices in the present for the future - because "Venice lives" (Vettese 2017).⁴

2 Ecological Care and Curatorial Activism in Venice

The themes of care and of what have been called, from various disciplinary perspectives - including medical humanities, feminist and gender studies, environmental humanities, and visual and performing arts - "ecologies of care",⁵ are more pressing today than ever; especially after the COVID-19 pandemic raised awareness of how necessary it is to invest more time, attention, and resources in every different relationship that defines our being-in-the-world or, to say it with Donna Haraway, *with the world* (Haraway 2016).

As it has been pointed out, in the artistic and cultural fields in particular, the prevalence of themes of care - specifically in curating - is not just mere fashionability, it is rather:

a response to a dual crisis: the crisis of social and ecological care that characterizes global politics and the more recent professional crisis of curating. The convergence of these two developments has resulted in both a call for 'curating care' - an invitation to give curatorial attention to the primacy of care for all life - and a call for more 'caring curating' - a change in the practices of curating to foreground caregiving as framed through social and political analysis. (Kransy, Perry 2023, 1)

To initiate and make this change effective, by turning curating into an ethical and political set of practices able to contrast the still widespread capitalist, colonialist, racist, and sexist attitudes, care must be elected as a method. Caring with mutual respect, by protecting the dignity of life and human rights on par with the rights of nature, means being able to use institutions and infrastructures in a more sustainable way, by making them (eco)cultivated; that is, updated and informed with respect to today's pressing issues. And, even before that, it implies freeing our collective imagination from stereotypes through art and culture, and granting bodies and ideas a space for action as broad, participatory, and inclusive as possible.

⁴ Similar to a motto, this is the title of a book that describes a dynamic Venice, experienced by somebody, like the author Angela Vettese, who lives and works there, respecting and loving the city's uniqueness and beauty, despite its paradoxes. Vettese's ode to Venice can be read as a response to the *memento mori* written by Salvatore Settis (2016).

⁵ Among the many recent volumes released on the subject, see, for example: Bauhardt, Harcourt 2019; Buser forthcoming; Kleinman 2020; Kransy, Perry 2023; Miller, Coombs 2022; Ndikung 2021; Wendt 2021.

This is a specific “curatorial activism”⁶ that calls to action the curator and the artist, the researcher and the cultural worker. All roles which, not surprisingly, often intertwine in field work, by contributing to a continuous redefinition of practices – albeit in the specificity of individual knowledge and experiences – and establishing profitable collaborations.

From this perspective, Venice serves as a particularly interesting case study. Numerous artistic and cultural projects, focused on care, awareness, and empowerment towards local environmental concerns – experiences that are also widespread among islands and cities on water on a global level – have taken root, promoting more responsible interactions with the environment.⁷ As an insular community, therefore ‘in miniature’ but with relationships that extend internationally, Venice is also particularly prone to collaborations, which actually take place among the many organisations, groups, and individual actors involved in the various initiatives that have been arising in town.⁸

One of the most recent projects that can be considered an exemplary case, although it is too soon to detail its future activities and developments, is the reclamation of the Island of Sant’Andrea. This serves as a space for sharing and research among nature, culture, and public commitment.⁹ Located in the Northern Lagoon, Sant’Andrea is among the smallest ‘atolls’ of the Venetian archipelago. At the forefront of the redevelopment project are the Microclima collective, founded in

6 The expression is usually used to describe an ethical approach to curating museum collections and exhibitions (Reilly 2018) and is taken up here to extend it to a wider context, meaning, and set of practices. Among the many examples of recent curatorial projects focused on care that could be mentioned in this direction, see in particular (it is significant that the initiators of these projects are all women): *The Bureau of Care*, by State of Concept Athens (iLiana Fokianaki), <https://thebureauofcare.org/>; *Ecologies of Care*, by Igor Zabel Association (Urska Jurman and Elke Krasny), <https://ecologiesofcare.org/>; *How Do We Curate For a Broken World?*, by Collective Rewilding (Sara Garzón, Ameli M. Klein, Sabina Oroshi, Sofia Shaula Reeser del Rio), <https://www.collectiverewilding.com/>; *The Firsts Solidarity Network* at the 2022 Venice Art Biennale, promoted by Yuki Kihara, <https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/450780/firsts-solidarity-network/>.

7 Presented here are some emblematic examples of an obviously much richer constellation of experiences.

8 Among the Venetian collectives that have been promoting alternative cultural production models and projects, in contrast to neoliberal ideology, involving citizens and institutions, it is worth mentioning S.a.L.E DOCKS. Founded in 2007 as an independent space for contemporary arts in one of the former Magazzini del Sale overlooking the Giudecca Canal, it is led by a group of activists, among which cultural workers, artists, and students. Undeniably S.a.L.E DOCKS is rather a unique paradigm of ‘curatorial activism’ in Venice. <https://www.saledocks.org/>.

9 The word ‘reclamation’ is here used with reference to the ecological actions pursued by land artists in the 1960s and 1970s, such as Robert Morris, Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, and Robert Smithson. See Morris 1979 and Ryan 2007.

2011 by Paolo Rosso, and the artist Giorgio Andreotta Calò. With civic sense and love for their city, they have joined forces to both try to make the life on the island sustainable and prevent it from becoming prey to building speculation and tourist appetites - as it has already happened with other abandoned lagoon islands, which cannot be reached other than with private boats. Despite being an initiative that has only recently been officially launched, through the winning of a public competition, it has already a long history behind it. The initial idea dates back to more than ten years ago, when the land artist Richard Nonas was invited to rethink the anthropic landscape of the island. Historically, de facto, Sant'Andrea was an important military fortress built in the sixteenth century to defend Venice, and its ruins are still there, although partly reconquered by native vegetation.¹⁰

The project for the Island of Sant'Andrea is in line with another non-profit regeneration initiative with environmental and cultural purposes, which saw the nearby Island of the Lazzaretto Nuovo - first site of a Benedictine monastery, then destined to a hospital (whose methods of treatment and prevention of infections were so effective to be known abroad) and to an Austro-French military fortress - to become an ecomuseum open to the public, as part of the wider redevelopment project of the Venetian Lazzaretti.¹¹ The highlight of the naturalistic visit is the walk along the so-called 'Sentiero delle Barene' (The Salt Marsh Path). For about a kilometre, this path immerses the ecotourist in what is both the most precious and the most threatened lagoon habitat. As semi-submerged lands, these salt marshes not only showcase unique fauna and flora but also play an essential role in naturally maintaining the level and circulation of the lagoon waters.

Another collective, Barena Bianca, formed by the artists-activists Pietro Consolandi and Fabio Cavallari,¹² has chosen these characteristic intertidal areas as its symbol. Through exhibitions, workshops, talks, and publications, Barena Bianca has been establishing collaborations on ecological and social issues since 2018, involving citizens, artists, activists, and academic-scientific research institutions, such as The Institute of Marine Sciences of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR-ISMAR) and THE NEW INSTITUTE

10 Nonas' journey on the island of Sant'Andrea in 2011 was documented in a film presented at the 94th young artists collective of the Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation in Venice. Cf. *Nonas, 5'45"*, 2011, documentary film, HD; directing and editing: Enrico Casagrande; photography: Alessandra Messali; co-editing: Leo Cabiddu. The project is also mentioned in Paolo Rosso's master's thesis *Microclima: an Independent Cultural Project*, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, 2012-13, an analysis of the already numerous activities of what at the time was a nascent Microclima. <https://microclima.net/en>.

11 <https://lazzarettiveneziani.it/en>.

12 <https://www.barenabianca.earth/en/>.

Centre for Environmental Humanities (NICHE). The duo's outputs include also photographic and video works, e.g. Consolandi's visual poem *De Crea e de Paltan* (Of Clay and Mud), which gives voice, endowing them with personhood, to the salt marshes of Campalto, an area located near the Venice airport (Baldacci et al. 2022, 157-60).

The need to study, understand, and talk about Venice and its lagoon, both as a physical environment and as a metaphorical milieu, as well as a place for sharing inhabited by different communities and traditions, is a starting point for another ambitious project, *Metagoon*. This is a digital, open archive, initiated in 2015 by the artist Matteo Stocco, that on a daily basis collects information through direct observation and testimonies, which are partly oral (interviews) and partly visual (photographs and videos), in an attempt to physically and conceptually map the Venetian ecosystem, by identifying its uniqueness, secrets, fragility, and urgencies. As such, it is a shared knowledge tool, which, following the description on its website, comprises high and low knowledge held by

scientists engaged in research, university professors working on projects to protect the ecosystem, local inhabitants going about daily activities closely linked to the aquatic environment, and pilots of boats, both large and small.¹³

This self-reflective attitude, which is highlighted by the title's portmanteau between 'meta' and 'lagoon', is essential to understand how to take care of Venice, learning from the long experience of its inhabitants and from the monitoring of the changes produced, more and more, by the climate crisis.

These are transformations that primarily impact the fauna and flora of the lagoon, and consequently have repercussions on eating habits as well. The gastronomic collective Toccia focuses its study on the altered food needs arising from the climate emergency.¹⁴ Its name derives from the vernacular word 'tocio', namely a sauce comparable to a 'compost' that is produced and preserved as a common good. *Toccia* and therefore Toccia become synonymous with care and sharing. The founder of Toccia, Marco Bravetti, invites the community to follow a more sustainable and conscious diet. Toccia's philosophy extends from the selection of raw materials - where utilising waste (nothing is discarded) and invasive species like the blue crab is encouraged - to the methods of preparation, among which

¹³ <https://metagoon.net/>.

¹⁴ To find out more, see the Instagram page "TOCIA! Cucina e comunità", where the project is described as a "convivial collective that investigates the time and place of the landscape, and the relationships that inhabit it, through cuisine and its rituality".

fermentation stands as one of the most employed practices.¹⁵ Bravetti describes his cuisine as an interdisciplinary and essentially humanistic practice. As a nomad-activist, he navigates the lagoon's environment, unveiling it to his followers through both sight and taste. The eco-gastronomic walks he organises with intimate groups serve dual purposes: they are opportunities for learning to identify edible species not facing extinction, and they are moments for social interaction. This is further evidenced by the travelling banquets he arranges, either autonomously or in partnership with local organisations and institutions.¹⁶

3 Walking the *lacuna* as an Act of Caring for the Environment (Giorgio Andreotta Calò)

Walking as a re-enactment, as an action that is always the same but also always different - in relation to both the environment in which it takes place and the psychophysical state of the person who performs it - and, more specifically, as a crossing and a re-appropriation of the landscape, which establishes a close connection between man and nature, is also at the core of the artistic practice of the fore-mentioned Giorgio Andreotta Calò.

Andreotta Calò situates himself within a long tradition that spans from the eighteenth-century painters and illustrators of the Grand Tour to the intrepid explorers of nineteenth-century naturalistic and ethnographic expeditions. This tradition culminates in contemporary artists - most notably, conceptual and land artists attuned to environmental issues - who have elevated the practice of walking to an art form (Adams 2017; Mueller 2023). Among them is the walking artist par excellence, Hamish Fulton.

As a philosophy, cultural practice, and form of healing, walking has a far-reaching and interdisciplinary tradition, both Western and non-Western. This touches on numerous domains, including religion,

15 In terms of methods and objectives, while intentionally remaining a more local and situated project, Tocia is close to international experiences such as that of the artistic duo Cooking Sections (Daniel Fernández Pascual and Alon Schwabe), who have developed the Climavore project, a sustainable diet that follows the food needs of “the new seasons of the climate emergency” (<https://www.climavore.org/>). One of the main initiatives promoted by the duo is the removal of salmon, as the most requested and eaten fish - hence its intensive farming and genetic modification - from the menus of restaurants and cafes of cultural institutions worldwide (see Tate in London) and its replacement with a more sustainable dish from the Climavore diet. Cf. Cooking Sections 2020.

16 See for example the Convivial Tables that Bravetti conceived together with TBA21-Academy-Ocean Space as “the perfect avenue to discuss the complex ties between what we eat and its ecological impact, with a particular focus on its effect on bodies of water”. <https://www.ocean-space.org/activities/convivial-tables>.

anthropology, geography, and sociology – with particular issues concerning disability – as well as medicine, straddling the domains of both physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, sport and leisure are implicated, and, not to be overlooked, literature as well (De Certeau 1984; Solnit 2000; Phillips 2005; Seger 2022).

In the last years, walking has been studied from a more specifically ecological perspective, which has highlighted its agency as an “embodied encounter with/in nature” (Blades 2021), even when reciprocity in the nature-human relationship happens at the level of the microbiome, with all the resulting implications for the interaction between species and for human health (Robinson, Mills, Breed 2018).

As brilliantly described by Rebecca Solnit, who has written an exhaustive history on walking across centuries and cultures:

Walking, ideally, is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord. Walking allows us to be in our bodies and in the world without being made busy by them. It leaves us free to think without being wholly lost in our thoughts. [...] The rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it. (Solnit 2000, 5-6).

This description of walking as a “passage through” a landscape that is both physical and mental is well suited to the thought and practice of Andreotta Calò, who among his most recent actions includes *lacuna* (2021), a solitary journey around the entire perimeter – a distance of 270 kilometres – of the Venetian lagoon. The Latin word that he chose as title, ‘lacuna’, refers by assonance to the term ‘laguna’ (which in Italian stands for ‘lagoon’) and is etymologically synonymous with emptiness.¹⁷ The lagoon as a void, thus, as a space which marks an interruption of the ground that can be crossed on foot, which can only be experienced by walking around it, or – as the artist did – by immersing oneself up to the ends of the legs wearing the typical fisherman’s boots that Venetians use for exceptionally high tide.

17 Another artwork that reflects on the etymology of ‘lacuna’ is Elena Mazzi’s 2014 video project *Lacuna: Land of Hidden Spaces*, in which she seeks to find possible solutions to the increasing environmental issues affecting the lagoon. Although not Venetian by birth and not based in Venice, Mazzi’s relationship with the city and its lagoon is long-standing (she received her MFA in Visual Arts from IUAV University of Venice in 2011). For an in-depth analysis of *Lacuna*, see Guaraldo 2021 (in particular 116-19).

As Andreotta Calò says, referring both to his personal experience of the lagoon, which he knows intimately, since he was born in Venice, and to the relationship that each of us establishes with this particular aquatic environment:

We are instinctively led to imagine a crossing of this liquid space via water. This is how I have always lived the lagoon: as an extension of Venice and its canals, and at the same time as an enclosed, protected space, separated from the sea. I was interested in re-considering this place from what lies outside of it, that is, from a dimension of bodily crossing, by moving along its boundary lines. I was interested in considering it as a void, a gap to be gradually filled, slowly circumscribed and observed. To walk...¹⁸

To the solo experience, a month later the artist also associated a shorter group walk (*Walking a Wavy Line*)¹⁹ on the stretch of coast where the water of the lagoon joins the Adriatic Sea. This is a particularly significant place from an oceanographic and climatological point of view, as the balance of the lagoon ecosystem depends on the quantity of sea water that enters it.

Sharing with others, is not only an integral part of Andreotta Calò's work, it is also a custom of the organisation that commissioned *lacuna*, the TBA21-Academy, whose Venetian headquarters, Ocean Space, was significantly opened in 2019 as a place of "care and action for the Ocean".²⁰ Among its many activities, Ocean Space organises walks to get to know and learn to respect the lagoon in the broader context of the aquatic environment, following an interdisciplinary approach between Marine Sciences and Blue Humanities, where art plays a central role.²¹

Lacuna is closely linked to a previous walk, a poetic and epic undertaking that Andreotta Calò completed between August and October 2019 along the stretch of the fault (a distance of more than 500 kilometres) that from Venice leads to L'Aquila, the city in the Abruzzo region which was heavily hit by a violent earthquake three years

18 Giorgio Andreotta Calò. Cf. <https://tba21.org/lacuna>.

19 As part of the project, see also the conversation "In Girum (A Dialogue on Walking)" between Andreotta Calò and the curator Barbara Casavecchia, held at Ocean Space also in 2018. Cf. <https://www.ocean-space.org/activities/in-girum-dialogo-attorno-al-camminare>. Another talk on walking, which the artist held more recently (2021), is "Motus (On walking)", addressed to students of the Academy of Fine Arts in L'Aquila. Cf. <https://www.abaq.it/notizie/2021/09/incontro-con-giorgio-andreotta-calò/>.

20 Cf. <https://www.ocean-space.org/>.

21 As a first compendium of an ongoing thinking, see the catalogue, which accompanied the exhibition *Territorial Agency: Oceans in Transformation* (Ocean Space, Venice, 3 May-29 August 2021). Cf. Zyman 2021.

earlier (2016). This walk is certainly also an empathetic, personal homage to the territory and the population affected by the earthquake, but it is first and foremost a geographical and experiential mapping performed through the body and carefully described, in diaristic form, in the artist book *Gloria* (Andreotta Calò 2021). The title takes up the name of the fault that crosses Italy underground, connecting the European plate to the African one, and causing most of the telluric movements of the Peninsula. It is another void, similar to the “lacuna”, to be walked along and observed in order to fully understand a territory, with its natural and cultural features.

Andreotta Calò’s work and poetics, which are inspired by the leit-motifs of time and the double (Tenconi 2020), are in close relationship with the environment even when they take the form of sculptural installations, as in his main series *Carotaggi* (Sample Core), *Meduse* (Medusa), and *Clessidre* (Hourglass). All of them are *Ersätze* of geological and cultural elements that are present in the lagoon. As such, they contribute to integrating the ecosystem, between art and nature: the *Carotaggi* as extractions of *caranto*, the deepest and most solid layer of submerged mud; the *Meduse* and the *Clessidre* as reproductions of the particular shapes that the *bricole* - namely the oak-wood posts that regulate the traffic on water in Venice - take due to the erosion produced by the rising and lowering of the tides (the *bricole* usually erode at the mean sea level).

At the beginning of the 1970s, a visionary Gyorgy Kepes had already anticipated - in the introductory essay of his *Arts of the Environment* (1972), which he eloquently entitled “Art and Ecological Consciousness” - the role that the artist, moved by the concern of caring for others and for the environment, would conquer between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, facing the various challenges of an era characterised by profound “displacement, disillusionment, and social upheavals”:

He [the artist] has had to cut through the ego-tangled scene to reach the free horizons that held a promise of the new “common” of man-environment. Clearly, the artist’s sensibility has entered a new phase of orientation in which its prime goal is to provide a format for the emerging ecological consciousness. The tasks he assumes differ from previous tasks in kind as well as in scale. The values he uncovers become the values of us all, giving sharpness and definition to the need we sense for union and intimate involvement with our surroundings. Thus the artist has moved from a marginal role to a more central position. (Kepes 1972, 9-10)

Although Giorgio Andreotta Calò escapes both the definition of land artist and of ecoartist, he can undoubtedly be counted among those contemporary artists who care about the environment and produce

works and actions that give rise to an ecosystem of thought. These artists, with an experimental and free approach, explore and challenge different fields of knowledge, encouraging critical thinking, emotional involvement, ethical responsibility, and public imagination on urgent contemporary issues for the well-being of the Earth (Guaraldo 2023).

What can we hope for the future well-being of Venice? In the first place, that initiatives and practices such as those described continue to increase, through both private and public initiative, encouraging – locally as well as internationally – the collaboration and involvement of different communities (Mollona 2021), to give rise to ever greater effective (and affective) forms of responsibility.

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