

# ABSTRACTS AND AUTHORS

## ENGLISH ANNEX

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### EDITORIAL

*Eva di Stefano*

Contemporary Egyptomania: in this issue, there is a wide-ranging and well-documented survey by Jo Farb Hernandez of the 'Egyptian'-inspired environments in Spain. She references decorative apparatuses and pharaonic fantasies, both naive and cultured, that lead to reflection on the reasons for such a deep-rooted attraction that perhaps also implies a superstitious will for power. Another important study is dedicated to the case of the recently rediscovered medium artist Willhelmine Assman. The issue is completed by previews and reports of exhibitions from Venice to Estonia.

*Eva di Stefano taught Contemporary Art History at the University of Palermo from 1992 to 2013; she founded the Outsider Art Observatory in 2008, which she runs together with the homonymous magazine published since 2010; among her many publications on 20th-century art, the volume "Irregolari. Art Brut e Outsider Art in Sicilia" (Kalòs, Palermo 2008) should be noted.*

### ENCOUNTERS

#### **Necessary Art. A meeting with Alessandra Ottieri**

*by Eva di Stefano*

'Necessary Art' is perhaps the most beautiful and fitting definition of Outsider Art: it is necessary for repairing life, an existence that could have been empty, imprisoned in an oppressive context, and instead, unexpectedly discovering the joy of inventing and expressing itself through shapes and colors. The definition is by Alessandra Ottieri, an art historian and the curator in 1997 of a pioneering exhibition in Italy. We met her to learn about that distant experience.

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### EXPLORATIONS

#### **By enchantment: the engravings of Claudine Goux**

*by Dino Menozzi*

The author, a veteran of Italian studies on Outsider Art, presents the engravings of a refined artist who can be counted among the 'singuliers', a French expression that means 'free hitters' outside the system. Encouraged by Dubuffet, with whom she has maintained a long correspondence, Goux combines fantasy and memory in surreal images, mythological references and oriental suggestions.

*Dino Menozzi (from Reggio Emilia) since the early 1960s has been a collector and one of the main promoters and popularizers in Italy of naïve art first and then of irregular arts; he founded and directed the magazine "L'arte naïve" from 1974 to 2002, opening it up to all expressions of marginal art.*

#### **In the Secret Drawers of Egidio Cuniberti**

*by Bianca Tosatti*

Cuniberti (Turin 1928-2000) is the creator of decorative furniture and fantastic furnishings made by expertly assembling waste materials such as ice cream sticks, plastic spoons and fruit crate slats. The author reconstructs the story of his life and examines his production and decorative taste, also in light of the aesthetic density of a city like Turin, the capital of Italian Art Nouveau.

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**Bianca Tosatti**, an art historian, authoritative expert on and promoter of Art Brut and Irregular Art, on which she has conducted pioneering studies in Italy and curated important institutional exhibitions, including *Figure dell'anima* (Genoa 1998) and *Oltre la ragione* (Bergamo 2006); she lives near Parma.

#### **Antonio Di Paola and the dream eaters**

by Eva di Stefano

The young artist belongs to a generation that grew up in the digital age and in the frenzy of video games and social media, in the predominance of the visual dimension but also under the sign of precariousness and the threat of environmental catastrophe. With a combination of techniques, including watercolor, acrylic, oil pastels, pigments, ecoline, pencil crayons, he gives life to a proliferation of mutant characters, monstrous figures, and colorful, fantastic but anxiety-inducing worlds.

#### **Apocalypse now. The shattered world of Santina Grimaldi**

by Domenico Amoroso

Santina Grimaldi is a ceramist who in her atelier in Caltagirone, alongside traditional production, creates hybrid sculptures by assembling fragments of broken ceramics but also scraps and objets trouvés, as if she wanted to give new life to ruins, existential and material, and transform chaos into possibility. Hers is an art of repair and survival that takes the decorative form of a baroque triumph or a fairy-tale ensemble.

**Domenico Amoroso**, an archaeologist, art critic and poet, the former director of the civic museums of Caltagirone (CT), conceived and founded MACC, Museum of Contemporary Art in Caltagirone, which – the only example of a public collection in Italy – exhibits both art brut and contemporary art

### **INSIGHTS**

#### **The Manduria Calvary: an 'irregular' site ante litteram**

by Giada Carraro

A well-documented essay that presents and reconstructs the singular discovery of a grandiose and almost unknown ensemble, the Manduria Calvary in Puglia, an irregular environmental work from the mid-nineteenth century created by a devoted craftsman with all the characteristics attributed to contemporary 'Babel-like' sites – like the trecandis and the assembly of heterogeneous materials, broken ceramics, stones, shells and other finds to create a rugged landscape dotted with biblical symbols and evangelical figures.

**Giada Carraro**, an art historian, lives in Bologna, and collaborates with public and private bodies on projects for cataloguing and digitising the cultural heritage, is an independent researcher in the field of irregular art and fantastic architecture, and has directed the multilingual electronic magazine "Bric-à-brac".

#### **Difficult protection. The Cammarata case in Messina**

by Pier Paolo Zampieri

The issue of the protection of sites and environments is at the center of the text, whose author has been fighting for years to save the ruins of Giovanni Cammarata's dream house in Messina and to revive the spirit of the place. It is a document that clearly indicates the questions of method. The text is illustrated by the unpublished photographic documentation by the anthropologist Sergio Todesco, which shows the site as it was before its partial demolition and subsequent degradation.

**Pier Paolo Zampieri**, a sociologist and a founding member of the Messina collective Zonacamarata, teaches Urban and Environmental Sociology at the University of Messina and deals with urban phenomena and imaginary and Outsider Art in an interdisciplinary way, engaging with the territory.

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## **Building, Weaving, Living: A Textile Memory**

*by Roberta Trapani*

Anticipating an upcoming exhibition in France of textile works blending Art Brut and Surrealism, the article focuses on the relationship between architecture and textile artifacts, which intertwine to create spaces of protection and projection, full of memory. From famous historical artists such as Maria Lai to recent experiences of irregular artists, there is no shortage of examples of habitable textile sculptures, rituals and performances on thread, weft and fabric.

**Roberta Trapani**, an art historian specializing in outsider environments and visionary architecture (PhD at the Universities of Paris-Nanterre and Palermo), lives in France, where she has taught on contract at some Parisian universities and co-founded several associations dedicated to Outsider Art, including PIF (Patrimoines Irréguliers de France) and CrAB (Collectif de réflexion autour de l'Art Brut).

## **EXHIBITIONS**

### **Seeing the invisible. A dialogue with Lucienne Peiry**

*by Eva di Stefano*

A focus on the exhibition *Voir l'invisible*, currently at the Musée de la Réforme in Geneva (until June 1, 2025), with an interview with the curator Lucienne Peiry on spiritual themes in Art Brut and its relationship with the afterlife. There are visionary, sometimes mystical practices, forays into parallel universes, hell or heaven, unpublished iconographies and spiritual research witnessed in the exhibition through the works of 14 artists from different countries and cultures of the world.

## **BOOKS**

### **Esoteric Cosmology: Visionaries**

*by Pilar Bonet Julve and María José González Madrid*

The Spanish volume *Cosmología esotérica*, published by Sans Soleil and edited by the Barcelona research group Visionary Women Art, features those visionary women, artists, mediums and healers who, in the 19th and 20th centuries, practiced spiritual and creative research of various kinds with an eye to the future. Among them are Emma Kunz and Hilma af Klint. The two curators present the many contributions that focus on general themes or individual artistic personalities.

**Pilar Bonet Julve**, a professor at the Department of Art History of the University of Barcelona, studies the creations of visionary artists, such as the Catalan medium Josefa Tolrà; she curated the exhibitions *ALMA. Mediums and Visionaries* (Es Baluard, 2019) and *The Guided Hand. Josefa Tolrà-Madge Gill* (MNAC, 2024); she is the president of the 'Josefa Tolrà-Visionary Art' Foundation and co-director of the 'Visionary Women Art\_Researches' group.

**Maria José González Madrid**, a professor at the Department of Art History of the University of Barcelona, has dedicated research and publications to the work of Remedios Varo, and especially to its links with magic and mysticism, as well as to its creative contexts; she is the co-director of the 'Visionary Women Art\_Researches' group.

## **PROJECTS**

### **Appeal for Chomo**

Roberta Trapani, Patrimoines irréguliers de France

'Reviving the spirit of the place' is what the Association Patrimoines irréguliers de France proposes in the Village d'Art Préludien, a singular environmental work immersed in the forest of Fontainebleau, where the artist Chomo (1907-1999) practiced a synthesis of the

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arts. We are pleased to publish the appeal to support the project of valorization and protection launched by the Association with actions or donations.

### **Homeless Art**

*by Lorenzo Penco*

The author, himself a workshop leader, presents the artistic workshops created in the 2000s by San Marcellino, a social organization of the Jesuits, aimed particularly at the homeless and based in Genoa. To understand its participatory and inclusive methodology, it is useful to narrate the different steps of the collective process that led to the creation of the work on a bed sheet exhibited at the IX Italian Outsider Art Festival held in Caltagirone (4-6 October 2024).

*Lorenzo Penco trained as an illustrator at the IED in Milan; since the 1990s he has worked in Genoa as a social educator holding painting workshops in schools and prisons; since 2009 he has been responsible for the painting workshop of San Marcellino and since 2023 for the SMacc cultural center, where he also curates the exhibition program.*

### **From Marco Cavallo to Cavallo Blu: art and social inclusion**

*by Alessandro Grasso*

The author presents the recent projects of 'Cavallo Blu', an association founded in Vigevano in 2023 on the initiative of a group of professionals united by the desire to fill an institutional void and promote social inclusion through art by encouraging creativity, activating artistic workshops, promoting exhibitions and cultural events on the subject, and creating connections through an online platform.

*Alessandro Grasso, a psychologist and psychotherapist, works in Milan and Vigevano; interested in the relationship between psychoanalysis and theater and in integration of expressive arts in the psychiatric field, he is a member of the Cavallo Blu association, and a member of SIPRE (Italian Society of Relational Psychoanalysis) and IFPS (International Federation of Psychoanalytic Societies)*