



La ragione nelle mani The Reason in the Hands

Presentation of the book and the project
Talk with Stefano Boccalini and Alessandra Pioselli

Sandefjord Kunstforening
Strandpromenaden 9, Sandefjord, Norway

Sunday 10th October 2021, 11.00-11.45 am.

Sunday 10th October 2021 – in occasion of the professional seminar 2021 *NowThen - Youth, contemporary art and historical-cultural heritage*, organized by the Norwegian Art Associations' network in collaboration with Sandefjord Kunstforening – the artist Stefano Boccalini e the curator Alessandra Pioselli will present the book and the project *La ragione nelle mani* (The Reason in the Hands), winners of the eighth edition (2020) of the Italian Council program supported by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture.

The project *La ragione nelle mani* is promoted by the **Comunità Montana di Valle Camonica** (Mountain Community of Camonica Valley) and **ART for The World Europa**, in collaboration with the partner institutions **Maison Tavel-Musée d'Art et d'Histoire** (Geneve), **Art House** (Scutari), **Sandefjord Kunstforening** (Sandefjord), **Fondazione Pistoletto**, **Accademia di Belle Arti of Bologna**, **MA*GA - Museo Arte Gallarate** and **GAMeC – Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea of Bergamo**.

The project

La ragione nelle mani comes from the research led by the artist Stefano Boccalini over time in Valle Camonica, a mountain valley in the heart of the Italian Alps. Attentive to the social and anthropological aspects of the contexts in which he operates, Stefano Boccalini has woven an intimate relationship with the Valle Camonica, where he come into contact with local artisans. In particular, his attention fell on some artisanal practices that today take an almost domestic form, which are no longer able to create significant economies and which risk disappearing.

The desire to work in a local dimension arises from the need to deal with a real and measurable context, as a metaphor for globalization. *La ragione nelle mani* focuses on language. In the work of Stefano Boccalini, the word is transformed into matter and, through the physicality of its new enactment, it becomes a communication and reflection tool on issues that concern the community. The word also becomes a place where diversities plays a fundamental role, becoming the medium to contrast economic value with that of the "commons".

Belonging to languages from across the globe, often minority ones, nine untranslatable words were created in the form of seven works-sculptures through four artisanal techniques: the "pezzotti" weaving with handloom, "stitch and cut" embroidery, weaving and carving of wood. The works were created during four workshops held in the valley by four artisans with eight young apprentices, selected by public call.

The workshops allowed not only to reflect on the value of "social sculpture" as a symbol of collective memory but also to reactivate a sustainable relationship with the local economy, allowing young people to rediscover the value of manual work and to become active custodians of precious techniques to be reinterpreted.



By drawing a connection between a local condition such as that of the Camonica Valley – with its artisan knowledge –, with some untranslatable words from different languages and cultures brings out territoriality and biodiversity as a new-found precious awareness against homologation.

The experience finds continuity through the opening of **CàMon - Centre for Mountain Art and Crafts**, of which Stefano Boccalini is appointed artistic director. CàMon opened in Monno – a small town in the upper Camonica Valley – on July 2021, with the aim of becoming a place for the exchange between intellectual and manual knowledge in relation with the territory, of training and of collaboration between artists, artisans and younger generations.

The book *La ragione nelle mani* is published by Archive Books (Berlin), Italian/English edition.

Stefano Boccalini

He was born in 1963 in Milan where he lives and works. In 1987 he graduated in sculpture at NABA (Milan), where he began teaching as assistant of Gianni Colombo in the Space Structure course. After inheriting the course in 1993, over the years he converted it into Public Art, a subject he still teaches. Boccalini was one of the founders of Isola Art Center (Milan) and has been a member of the board of Careof (Milan). He is the artistic director of Ca'Mon - Centro per l'Arte e l'Artigianato della montagna (Monno) and is scientific advisor of Archivio Gianni Colombo. His reference gallery is Studio Dabbeni (Lugano). In 2020 his project *La ragione nelle mani* was among the winners of the eight edition of Italian Council program supported by the Italian Ministry of Culture. His work has been exhibited in international museum and galleries such as: Mamco, Genève; Museo Pecci, Prato; Museo Marino Marini, Florence; Kunstraum Lakeside, Klagenfurt; Studio Dabbeni, Lugano; Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome; Sesc Paulista, Sao Paulo; Galerie im Kunsthaus Essen; Museo di Villa Croce, Genoa; Museo Cantonale d'Arte, Lugano; Palazzo Strozzi, Florence; Musée de Carouge, Genève; India Habitat Centre, New Delhi; Palazzo delle Stelline, Milan; Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Museo MuCEM Marseille; HangarBicocca, Milan. His works are part of the collections of: MuCEM (Marseille), Museo del Novecento (Milan), GAMEC - Galleria D'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea (Bergamo).

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Alessandra Piselli

She is art critic, curator and researcher in the field of contemporary art. She is director of the Accademia di belle arti G. Carrara of Bergamo. She teaches History of Contemporary Art and Art Criticism at the same academy, and Public Art and Postcolonial Art at the Master in Economics and Management of Art and Culture of 24Ore Business School, Milan. She collaborates with Artforum (NY). Her research focuses on the urban and territorial dimension of art practice through projects, exhibitions, publications and conferences. Among other texts, she is the author of the book *L'arte nello spazio urbano. L'esperienza italiana dal 1969 a oggi* (Art in the urban space. The Italian experience since 1986 to now) Johan&Levi 2015. In 2021 she curated the book of the project *La ragione nelle mani* by Stefano Boccalini (Archive Books, Berlin).