

# ***Matter as Experience***

## **MENTOR**

andrea caretto | raffaella spagna

## **GUEST**

Attila Faravelli

## **DATES**

26-30<sup>th</sup> October (deadline for application submission **26.09.2015**)

## **LANGUAGE**

English

## **PARTICIPATION FEE**

€ 570 (including accomodation and half-board)

## **TOPICS / TAGS**

*temporality, aesthetic experience, perception, ecology, sensibility to complexity, morphogenesis, Chreod concept, form, ecology of matter, materials, responsibility, participation*

## **MODULE OUTLINE**

Through a combination of field trips and fieldwork, the mentors set out to share with participants some first-hand experiences of aesthetic encounters with *materials* and *landscape*, experimenting a non-hyerarchical ontology where animate and inanimate, organic and inorganic are on the same level. Here, the classic dualisms of form/material, organic/inorganic, man/animal etc., loosen up, leaving room for movements of material aggregation, differentiation and individuation within an all-encompassing cycle in which essence is the *life of the matter*, through its own cycles and relationships.

From this angle, what really matters are passion for, knowledge of and *care* towards matter – intended in its morfogenetic becoming – and the relationships between all the different elements originated by matter itself in a specific context. Thus, mankind is only one of the many possible manifestations of matter, a portion of all interrelated life forms. Such vision certainly leads to a radical rediscussion of the antropocentric paradigm.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, several philosophers, physicists, biologists and anthropologists – amongst others – have brought forward models based on the essential relationship between *materials* and *forces*, rather than *matter* and *form*. Not only objects or organisms have a form: landscape does as well, as much as cities,

social structures, and even thoughts. Studies on complexity have shown how fundamental formal aspects are to systems, relationship configurations, to the organisation and “functioning” of reality.

How are things shaped? Which are the constituting principles governing their development? Which the relationships between forms and their contexts? What is the artists’ role and responsibility in shaping things? The module *Matter as Experience* proposes a series of immersive and shared experiences and individual actions reflecting upon processes of growth, erosion and transformation of matter at different levels, and upon the interactions between these processes and human beings, in their subjective, social and political dimensions.

## **SCHEDULE**

### October 26<sup>th</sup>

#### *morning*

Guided tour to Cittadellarte, including the Pistoletto, Arte Povera collections and temporary exhibitions (curated by Luca Furlan).

#### *afternoon*

Presentation of the participants: motivations, expectations

Each participant and the mentors will introduce her/himself through a short story on her/his own life experience.

Workshop presentation and introduction to the main topics of the workshop: Perception of environment/Form as an emergent property vs. Hylomorphic model/Epigenetic Landscape (C. H. Waddington)/Vitality of matter/Art as quality of experience.

Group discussion

### October 27<sup>th</sup>

*Mineral Matter, Relationship with mineral, Landscape, Perception of the environment*

#### *morning*

Field trip and fieldwork:

Serra di Ivrea (Andrate), Piedmont

Monti Pelati Natural Reserve (Baldissero Canavese), Piedmont

#### *afternoon*

Brosso Mines (Val Chiusella), Piedmont

Cittadellarte, group discussion

### October 28<sup>th</sup>

*Pebbles and riverscapes*

#### *morning*

Field trip and fieldwork:

Lame del Sesia Park - Sesia’s riverbanks

#### *afternoon*

Workshop session, guest: Attila Faravelli

October 29<sup>th</sup>

*Vegetable Matter, Gathering instinct, Means of nourishment*

*morning*

Field trip in the neighbourhood of Cittadellarte, gathering wild plants (edible and medicinal)

*afternoon*

Workshop session:

Collective experimentations from the projects Epiderma and Esculenta.

October 30<sup>th</sup>

*morning*

Workshop session: individual and group elaboration on the materials collected and the experience matured in the previous days.

"All art is environmental art", group discussion.

*afternoon*

Final discussion and public presentation of the works/ documents produced during the workshop sessions.

*evening*

Party

## **REFERENCES**

*The mentor will prepare a reader for participants with key texts, some of which will be discussed during the week*

Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Duke University Press Books, 2014

Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida*, Columbia University Press, 2008

Roger Caillois, *Writing of Stones*, University of Press Virginia, 1985 (translation of *L'écriture des pierres*, Genève, Editions Albert Skira, 1970)

Roger Caillois, *Pierres et autres textes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1970

Daniel Chamovitz, *What a Plant Knows. A Field Guide to the senses*, New York, published by Scientific American/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2012

John Dewey, *Art as experience*, Perigee, New York, 1934

Giuseppe Di Napoli, *I principi della forma*, Giulio Einaudi Editore, 2011

James J. Gibson. *The ecological approach to visual perception*, Houghton Mifflin, 1979

Tim Ingold, *The perception of environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, Routledge, 2000

Tim Ingold, *Making. Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*, Routledge, 2013

Sanford Kwinter, *A Discourse on Method* in "Explorations in Architecture", ed. Reto Geiser (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2008), 46

Edgar Morin, *The Method: Towards a study of humankind. The Nature of Nature, Vol. 1*, Princeton University Press, 1977 (translation of *La méthode 1. La Nature de la Nature*, Seuil, 1977)

Edgar Morin, *The Method: Towards a study of humankind, The Life of Life, Vol. 2*, Princeton University Press, 1980 (translation of *La méthode 2. La Vie de la Vie*, Seuil, 1980)

Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*, Harvard University Press, 2009

Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought*, Harvard University Press, 2012

Alfonso Ottobre, *Arte, Esperienza e Natura. Il pensiero estetico di John Dewey*, Albo Versorio, Milano, 2012

Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman*, Yale University Press, 2008

#### *Videos*

Michelangelo Frammartino: *The four times* (2010) e *Trees* (2013)

Werner Herzog: *Desert Apocalypse* (1992)

## **MENTOR**

### **BIOGRAPHY AND STATEMENT**

Andrea Caretto (Turin, Italy, 1970) and Raffaella Spagna (Rivoli, Italy, 1967) explore the profound relationships linking human beings to the environment. They conceive art as inquiry, a tool to investigate the multiple dimensions of reality: formal, qualitative and physical quantitative aspects of matter but also philosophical and social ones. In keeping with their educational backgrounds – Landscape Architecture for Spagna, Natural Sciences and Scientific Museology for Caretto – their projects generate complex installations that simultaneously present the study, demonstration and experimentation of their relationship with nature. They investigate the links between human beings and other organisms and inorganic matter, developing long-term projects. They have been working together on a regular basis since 2002, exhibiting in

public and private institutions in Italy and abroad.

They are among the founders of the artist collective "Diogene" ([www.progettodiogene.eu](http://www.progettodiogene.eu)) and collaborate with the research Center IRIS (Interdisciplinary Research Institute on Sustainability) of the University of Turin and Brescia. They live and work in Cambiano (Turin, Italy).

[www.esculenta.org](http://www.esculenta.org)

Among the institutions with which they have collaborated: AIR Krems and kunstrau-  
marcade, Austria, *FieldWorks\_Wachau* (2015); Domaine de Chamarande, France, *Vivre/s*  
(2014); Merz Foundation, Turin and Riso Museum, Palermo, Italy, *Meteorite in giardino*  
(2014); GAM-Civic Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, Turin, Italy, *Collezione Sis-  
temica* (2012); Khoj International Artists Associations, New Delhi, India, "In Context,  
food edition I", *Delhi Hand Cart* (2012); Mudam, Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean,  
Luxembourg, *Sketches of Space* (2010); Marino Marini Museum, Florence, Italy, *Azioni  
2000-2006* (2006); MART Museum, Rovereto, Italy, *Eurasia, Geographic Cross-overs in Art*  
(2008); PAV-Living Art Park, Turin, Italy, *Sic Vos non Vobis, Internaturalità, Village Green,  
Ecosoft Art, Living Material* (2014, 2013, 2009, 2008, 2007); CAIRN-Centre d'Art Informel  
de Recherchesur la Nature, Digne-les-Bains, France, *1Arbre\_Populus nigra; De La Trans-  
formation Des Choses* (2011, 2008); Centre d'Art Le Parvis, Ibos, France, *Matières Pre-  
mières* (2007); Obra Social Caja Madrid, Spain, *Los Limites del Crecimiento* (2007); T1  
Turin Triennial, Castello di Rivoli Contemporary Art Museum, *The Pantagruel Syndrom*,  
(2005); Villa Croce Contemporary Art Museum, Genova, Italy, *Empowerment* (2004);  
Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, Turin, Italy, *Exit and How Latitudes Become  
Forms* (2002; 2003).

## PROJECTS (selection)

*De la Transformation des Choses*-CAIRN (Centre d'Art Informel de Recherche sur la  
Nature), Digne-les-Bains (France), 2008

[www.esculenta.org/Cairn.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/Cairn.pdf)

*De la Vallée de la chimie au Port de Valence*, une expérience artistique à l'échelle du  
paysage - art3 Valance - CAP Saint Fons (France), 2010-2011

[www.esculenta.org/Caretto\\_Spagna Rhone Project.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/Caretto_Spagna Rhone Project.pdf)

[www.esculenta.org/Cap.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/Cap.pdf)

*Aperto 2011\_art on the border*, Valle Camonica, 2011

[www.vallecamoniacultura.it/aperto2011/carettospagna.php](http://www.vallecamoniacultura.it/aperto2011/carettospagna.php)

"In Context: public.art.ecology-Food Edition 1" - Khoj International Artists' Association-  
New Delhi (India), 2012

[www.esculenta.org/Khoj.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/Khoj.pdf)

- *Epiderma* - workshop and public happening, Stupinigi Park, Nichelino (Torino) Italy, June-September 2014

[www.stupinigifertile.it/?p=2368](http://www.stupinigifertile.it/?p=2368)

[www.stupinigifertile.it/?p=2731](http://www.stupinigifertile.it/?p=2731)

- *Esculenta* - collective action of gathering and alimentary consumption of natural materials - since 2002

[www.esculenta.org/esculenta.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/esculenta.pdf)

#### *Workshops*

*1arbre\_Populus nigra*, Musée Gassendi, Digne-les-Bains, France (2011)

[www.esculenta.org/1arbre\\_Populus%20nigra\\_Book\\_selection.pdf](http://www.esculenta.org/1arbre_Populus%20nigra_Book_selection.pdf)