

"From representation to action: Theory/Practice Workshop on Public Art. Experiences, practice and methods for designing in public space" is the name of the workshop that I have been running for several years in the Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna. During this workshop, I have invited young artists to take a stroll through the city, with their eyes and ears wide open, armed with cameras, notepads and whatever else they deem necessary, to train their gaze on the urban landscape.

These walks through the city are the essential method for preparing any kind of public art. From the strolls of our young artists, these new, or "other", maps are born. The aim of these maps is to document and comment upon the rituals and flows of the urban landscape, freely moving between sociology and anthropology: to depict and describe the emotional pathways that underly the normal bustling of the city, from past to present, smells, music, stories, sounds, noises, urban grids and fragments of architecture, green spaces, city centers, suburbs and new metropolitan areas.

These "other" maps, in perfect synergy with the streets and neighborhoods of Bologna, are an invitation to look around and see the city in a new light. They range from video (**Giorgia Addazio con Martina Trabucco, Alisia Cruciani, Francesco Cau, Sara Giovacchini**), to photography (**Martina Trabucco, Valeria Talamonti**), to story telling (**Silvia Iuorio, Giulia Vallese**), to sound (**Maura Vanzo**) and illustration (**Martina Marin**), to web art which requires playful interaction (**Holly Heuser**), all the way to interactive action with the Sala Borsa Library (**Laura Bisotti con Simona Paladino**), and conceptual installation (**Barbara Baroncini**), mixing with the permanent collection of the Urban Center.

In our workshop, there have been two essential starting points: one is the flaneur, a key figure from Baudelaire to the present day, he who crosses the contemporary city on foot with insatiable curiosity and a sharp eye, for whom the streets are a continuous creative stimulation; the other is the gradual opening of oneself, through the act of walking through and exploring the city, to an emotional mapping; to allow oneself to draw a heartfelt and real landscape of urban feelings. We have drawn from the 17th-century "Carte du pays de terre" by Madeleine De Scudery; from its subsequent reanalysis by the Surrealists; from Guy Debord and the situationists with their psychogeography, all the way to Land Artists and others, such as Annette Messinger and Sophie Calle, who try and connect *motion* and *emotion*. For this sort of geography, an important reference book was "Atlante delle emozioni" by Giuliana Bruno.

Some of our maps have gone on to become a part of the "Percorsi emotivi" geoblog project (*Emotional Pathways*). This project has been active and successful for several years, with a dedicated section especially for young students of the Accademia. In the 1970s, George Perec, with his project *Attempt of Exhaustion in a Parisian Place*, stands in the same place in a Parisian square and attempts to note down everything that he sees: people, cars, buses, animals, clouds, imperceptible variations in weather and light; seemingly useless details that make up the life, character and soul of a city. *"Many, if not the majority, of these things have already been described, inventoried, photographed, recounted and noted. My aim in the following pages is to describe the rest: everything that's usually not noticed, everything that isn't observed, everything that's unimportant: what happens when nothing happens, other than the passing of time, of people, of cars and clouds."*

Any attempt at exhausting a place is therefore impossible, and the city will always escape us. Every attempt at trying to fully describe and understand that bottomless and ever-changing reservoir that is the city can only be a slow, patient and self-aware attempt at "learning to see".