

copertina / cover

Ospedale a mare, by Andrea Napolitano

“Seaside Hospital” [Ospedale a mare] gathers a set of dismissed and abandoned medical-scientific instrumentations belonging to an old health facility in the Lido of Venice. Among the gathered instrumentation I decided to fix, appropriate and re-enact only those devices whose sound and use made them employ for medical monitoring and reanimation. More in detail the installation is composed by:

Two blood pressure monitors, CRITIKON8100 and AO3316; two ECG monitors, KONTRON 105 and SOXIL 8570; one oxygen concentrator, COMPANION 492A.

Through these tools I assembled a totem of machines able to track electrical impulses at a close distance and elaborate sounds within a computer based video interface. The operation of reactivation and transition from a former health facility to an artistic performance made those machines “reanimated”, passing from a state of abandonment to a “recovery” which gives them a new function. Any impulse recorded by the totem is transformed in an audio-video signal projected on the wall of the room. The projection, inspired at the devices original interface, takes place in five different visual settings every 5 minutes: starting from a setting closer to the primary devices use, the projection goes on gradually toward a more abstract interface in order to retrace the two life paths of these objects.

“Seaside Hospital” is a site specific installation, realized for the Bevilacqua La Masa Foundation in Piazza San Marco in Venice. It aims to rise the interest of the audience, showing an often unknown or overlooked feature, yet fundamental: the urban change taking place in Venice over time, which has stressed its spectacular dimension, erasing history and ordinary experience. The public health facility of the Seaside Hospital, built during the ‘30s of the last century in the Lido of Venice, has been closed in 2003. The estate has been sold to privates for the construction of the latest touristic resort. Thus, at the moment the hospital has become a sort of abandoned city museum, where filing cabinets, microscope’s slides, obituaries and medical relicts display themselves and inhabit a surreal reality of recent antiquity. By showing the abandonment in which various sites and buildings lie in town, the installation becomes a cue for critical reflection as well as civic tribute to public spaces in the Venetian area.