

Landscapes, memories and nations.

A series of lectures on environmental history and environmental humanities.



September 7th, 6 p.m.

Climate, soil, landscape: How to stop the race towards the precipice. (In Italian)

Luca Mercalli, President of the Italian Meteorological Society

October 6th, 6 p.m.

Can Humanists save the world? (In English)

Round table with: Sverker Sörlin, professor of Environmental History at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Marco Armiero, Director of the KTH Environmental Humanities Laboratory
Moderator: Björn Wiman, Chief Editor Cultural affairs at Dagens Nyheter

November 9th, 6 p.m.

The City. Memories of conflicts and conflicts of memories. (In English)

Federica Giardini, professor in Political Philosophy at the Università di Roma 3

December 8th, 6 p.m.

A trip to the front lines of the Great War. (In Italian)

Paolo Rumiz, writer and journalist

A landscape is by definition a concept, or if you prefer, a hybrid space. It does not have the scientific presumption of the ecosystem, nor is it all-encompassing as the environment. The landscape is perhaps the most "humanist" of the possible names we give to the world in which we live. It's not a coincidence that the landscape implies the presence of an observer; it is virtually the very act of observation that creates the landscape. However, the landscape is never alone in front of the observer, nor is it observed only with the observer's eyes. There are other ways to observe, that also produce landscapes. We all bring a variety of readings, ideas, experiences and concepts to our observation of the landscape, which guide and sometimes alter our way to see what is in front of us. A landscape is always made up by a set of memories and nature, stories settled into what we observe, at least when they are settled inside our head. The narrative of the landscape is written with words and concrete, with the work of the pen and the machine, with the bombs of the war and with advertising and declarations, but also with the strength of the rains and the power of the biochemical cycles. The American geographer Laura Pulido wrote that the landscape can easily cheat the observer, hiding the how and why it was formed in a certain way from economic and political powers; in short, making something seem natural, even though it isn't. It is as if the landscape was populated by ghosts of people and places that no longer exist, but which nevertheless inhabit the world that surrounds us. Very few countries have the extraordinary layering of memories inscribed in the landscape that Italy has. What are the travelers crossing the peninsula looking for? Art, good food, sun, historical town centers, sea and breathtaking views are the ingredients that make up the image of the Bel Paese. However, too often those characteristics are viewed as independent parts and not as unique pieces that complement the mosaic. Even our university education is largely designed following dividing lines that work well in our university classrooms, but are much less clear in the landscape. Learning to read the landscape as a collection of memories and nature is the challenge of new disciplines such as environmental history and the environmental humanities. In this series of lectures, scholars and scientists from different disciplines will lead us by the hand to discover unusual aspects of Italian landscapes and also to ask ourselves if new disciplinary approaches can lead to a better understanding of our lands and teach us to coexist.

Marco Armiero

This event is organized by the Italian Cultural Institute "C.M. Lericci" in collaboration with KTH Royal Institute of Technology - Environmental Humanities Laboratory and is part of the Educational programme supported by the "C.M. Lericci Foundation".

Free entry.

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