



THE PROJECT

ArtB, editions of necessary art

ArtB is an editorial project originating from an encounter between Big Sur - the site of creation and production of images and visions - and the fragility of being in this world, from a desire for contact and exchange with the social realities which require to be heard.

ArtB means **gathering** signs, traces, and small sediments of Life. It means **receiving** all that is buried and hidden in the depths of tradition and in the 'wrong direction' of Life. It means to **reveal**, become a means of clamour and silence, and bring to the world secret visions, dreams, obsessions, irritations, different syntony and different looks, to discover an immense richness of meanings and emotions in those uncontrolled and gratuitously 'rough' signs and drawings.

For this first collection, ArtB has chosen to reproduce some works of art realised by people who attend **La Tinaia**, a centre for expressive activities located in the ex psychiatric hospital San Salvi in Florence, on their t-shirts. In this 'place of free expression/communication', the rehabilitation of people with psychiatric problems using artistic activities has been obtaining surprising results for over thirty years.

The works of art collected and preserved in La Tinaia's archives is evidence of an important cultural legacy which **ArtB intends to give greater value** to with the production of communicative reproductions, object used every day like t-shirts, exercise books, posters and furniture accessories.

ArtB declare their acknowledgment of the forms of "necessary art" and pay tribute to the artists who, with their works, were able to **create an opening in communication** between feeling and expressing a reality otherwise ignored.

This is not a T-Shirt

"**This is not a t-shirt**" is the provoking title of ArtB's first t-shirt collection which is derived from a paradox in order to shift the attention from support to content. This is not a t-shirt because it comes from the ephemeral logic of the fashion world, and is, instead, fundamentally a work of art you can wear, a revelation which you can slip on, a creation born in the silence that demands meeting, visibility, delicate glance.

It is a vehicle for the necessary art which, as Dubuffet had put it, "It is a totally primordial need, as is, if not more, the need for bread".

The artists, creators of the designs used for the ArtB's first production, are **Marco Raugei, Claudio Ulivieri and Franca Settembrini**. Their works of art have been exhibited in some of the most important exhibition centres of the world for "brut art", from New York, to London, to Chicago and some of these works are now part of the collection of the Museum of Brut Art in Lausanne.

Part of the proceeds from the sales of ArtB's production is directed towards the supporting of La Tinaia's activities.



THE LOCATIONS

Big Sur Images and visions

Big Sur, a seaside resort on the coast of California, is one hour's drive south of Monterey. As it was the chosen refuge of Henry Miller, it became pilgrimage destination of the Beat Generation... A hybrid name, a mixture of English and Spanish, Big Sur is also a place of invention and the production of images and visions which then took form in Salento in the 1990s.

Created as a cultural association and meeting place for young Salentine artists, what was conceived as a very liberal experience has transformed into a working opportunity bringing about the transition from a "creative limbo" into the market.

Today Big Sur is pointing towards being a creative multiform union, a laboratory where regional projects are elaborated, always open to meetings and to the exchanging of ideas through graphic production, photographs, magazines, film-documentaries, handmade articles and the conceiving and realising of cultural events.

Within this creative and planning space graphic artists, photographers, illustrators, copywriters and filmmakers come together.

Since 1998 Big Sur has realised projects of visual identity for public companies, institutions, non profit organisations, private companies, has produced film documentaries which have won awards in numerous festivals in Italia and abroad working together with film production houses such as Fandango and Indigo Films, and has conceived and organised events for social and cultural promotion.

La Tinaia In the ex psychiatric hospital of Florence, a "place of free expression"

Operating since 1964 and located in the heart of the psychiatric hospital San Salvi in Florence, "La Tinaia", the centre of expressive activities, fully inscribes in the scheme of the initiatives aimed at appreciating the human and artistic resources of people with psychiatric problems.

The laboratory, realised by two artist-nurses, represented, for that period, an innovation in two senses: on one side, there was the attempt to shatter the "inhuman" logic of traditional psychiatry by proposing the way of creative rehabilitation; on the other side, the artistic practice stressed the role of autonomous communication, which was not strictly subject to psychiatric therapy.

Communicating the individual subjectivity through the liberal interpretation of reality and giving importance to the profound contents of the subconscious in full respect of the expressive freedom are the two essential elements of La Tinaia's activity.



THE COLLECTION'S ARTISTS

“The artists, as you will see, are mostly people who are not professional artists but who dedicate only part of their lives to this activity; their works are only created for their own satisfaction. They don't inspire to a greater goal but they are moved by their own need to express their joy and celebration which take place in their spirit. Modest Art! Which is often ignored to the point that it is not called art”.

(JEAN DUBUFFET)

Claudio Olivieri

Claudio is a versatile self taught artist who creates the major part of his works using a marking pen and paper, following the rhythmic notes and chords of great purity, both expressive and sonorous. “I often draw things which don't exist in reality or that man can't see”, says Olivieri, one of the most refined and complex artists of the Florentine laboratory. Faces, shaped or geometrised figures of animals and plants all appear in Claudio's works: his hand is capable of flying around the paper for entire hours. Of a unique beauty his works created through tiny minute points which come together in harmonic sonority and, often, represent subjects of extraordinary poetry.

Marco Raugei

What characterises Raugei's works is the repetition of the one theme or figurative subject in elegantly stylised forms: every day objects, miniature characters or settings are repeated with slight variations in horizontal sequences. The most striking aspect is the attention the artist dedicates to the “small things”; buckets with spades, clocks, shoes, cosmetic containers, jars reproduced one next to the other on a white sheet, with extreme care. The sensations which have contemplated these drawings are similar to dizziness up to the state of vertigo: It almost seems as if the objects depicted are talking to the observer via a ciphered code.

Franca Settembrini

“A prodigious series of graphic calligrams”, this was the definition given to Franca's creations, of which the majority of her works were prevalently created with a marking pen and paper. The figure of the female is the protagonist of her works: the artist produced a self portrait, giving vent, through a clever game of lines and the rhythmic division of the internal surface, to the actual state of mood and emotions.

Of a splendid beauty the heads of women are framed by flowing hair, as intricate as the ways of the subconscious and capable of invading and concealing the character's face. A parallel effect is obtained by the richly coloured extravagant hair, which gives the impression of weight on the head as if wanting to compress the thoughts, imprisoning them to prevent their escape.



THE FILM

Nella prospettiva della chiusura lampo

Nella prospettiva della chiusura lampo is a documentary released in 1997 by director and filmmaker Paolo Pisanelli, member of the cooperative society Big Sur.

The film explores the areas of art and mental illness during the period in which all the public psychiatric hospitals throughout Italy were closed.

The Law Act 180 decreed this closure should be carried out by 31 December 1996. The closing of the mental hospitals had been a fundamental objective of the successful battle by Franco Basaglia and the anti-psychiatric movement, since the 1960s but occurs in a confused and uncertain way generating great fear and anxiety among the treated patients.

The people depicted and interviewed are artists from the artistic laboratories found inside the ex psychiatric hospitals of Rome and Florence («La Tinaia» laboratory of expressive activities at the Ex Psychiatric Hospital S. Salvi, Florence - Ottavo Padiglione Ex Psychiatric Hospital S. Maria della Pietà. Rome). In the 22 portraits-interviews which make up this documentary the opinions and the individual stories are told with words, gestures and the artistic expression of everyone the artists.

DIRECTION AND PHOTOGRAPHY Paolo Pisanelli

EDITING Aline Hervé, Letizia Caudullo

SOUND Gianluca Costamagna

PRODUCTION Big Sur

YEAR OF RELEASE 1997

FORMAT Beta SP - Color

DURATION 52'