



8 albe

Between The Ripples: Reflections of an Oceanic History

Video Art Program | Second Edition

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The ocean is a complex entity, an immense abyss that resists singular definitions. In continuity with the previous edition of 8 Albe, this video series seeks to explore the ocean as a natural force, a cultural construct, and a stage for infinite exchanges.

The ocean is not merely a vast body of water covering most of our planet. It is a symbol of immensity and mystery, a realm that embodies both the generative and destructive powers of nature. Throughout history, it has inspired myths, legends, and narratives, serving as a metaphor for the unknown and the infinite. Artistic and literary representations of the ocean reveal contrasting visions: at times, a place of peace and contemplation; at others, a theatre of danger and adventure.

The global ocean is a symphony of interconnected seas, each with its own identity, yet all part of a single, dynamic system. Among them, the Mediterranean holds a central role, touching the shores of Italy and, more specifically, Sicily. Culturally and historically, it has been a crossroads of civilizations, a bridge between East and West. Its waters have witnessed the rise and fall of empires, enabled trade and cultural exchange, and shaped the course of human history. But the *Mare Nostrum* of the Romans has also been a setting of domination, colonial expansion, and slavery. Today, it stands as a stage for humanitarian crises tied to migration routes, a miniature reflection of the ocean's broader complexity.

Despite its vastness and significance, the ocean remains one of the least explored environments on Earth. It is estimated that only 5% of the seafloor has been thoroughly mapped and studied. These depths host extraordinary biodiversity and invaluable natural resources, but they are increasingly vulnerable to human activity and climate change.

Marine pollution, in fact, represents a global emergency. Every year, an estimated 8 million tons of plastic enter the ocean, with devastating consequences for marine life. Microplastics particles smaller than 5 mm have been found everywhere, from Arctic ice to the ocean's deepest trenches. Additionally, chemical pollutants from pesticides, heavy metals, and industrial waste contaminate marine ecosystems and food chains, with serious implications for human health.

Through a chorus of voices and artistic languages that blend documentary, essay, and speculative fiction, this video series weaves together multiple possible oceanic narratives, inviting the viewer to consider not only the ocean's beauty, but also its mysteries and challenges.

The ocean is a vital element of our world, a crossroads of cultures and a stage for human stories, but also a crucial indicator of the health of both our politics and our planet.

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