

## Marinella Senatore

(Cava de' Tirreni, Salerno, Italy, 1977)

How does a cultural community take shape? What does it mean to participate? How can the roles of artist and public be redefined? Starting from some crucial questions in current artistic debate, Marinella Senatore investigates processes on the basis of which contemporary art can reaffirm its social function, acting as an element that can bring people together, giving them back an active role in the process of the construction of culture.

After an early series of works in which she utilizes elements of film language to analyze aspects of daily life, Senatore's work, since 2006, has emphasized the social dimension, opening up new horizons related to the definition of so-called "participatory art." Following dynamic procedures, Senatore's works always emerge in contact with the context, but moving beyond the traditional tangible or self-referential aspects of the museum, the gallery or their respective architectures, to make the most of the human patrimony that inhabits the cities she encounters, interacting above all with micro-communities that often exist far from contemporary art discourse. Conceiving each work as an open process, where the production aspect is an integral part of the content, the artist encourages people's participation, highlighting their otherwise unutilized talents, abilities or potential. Open to a different definition of the role of the artist, Senatore observes "I feel I am part of those participatory processes that see the artist as an activator of energies, who has a score, through which the participants negotiate, or contest, their participation. In this sense I try to set in motion an affective exchange that passes from story to story, from voice to voice. The story itself becomes exchange and, V according to procedures that are inevitably modified depending on the contexts, very often a situation like an open laboratory is constructed, where those who are working learn something and take it with them, along with the memory of having been on the set."

Among the more than ten projects of "participatory" art that Senatore has created to date, *Rosas (Roses)* is the most ambitious. Realized in 2012, as an opera in three acts and articulated in three video projections, the artist conceived the work while involving a cast and troupe of over 20,000 participants. It was created over the course of a year, thanks to the production assistance from three international institutions: Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin, QUAD in Derby, and Matadero in Madrid. In *Perfect Lives*, the first chapter of a trilogy, hundreds of people - including an orchestra composed of BVG workers (retired public transportation drivers), actors, dancers (both professional and amateur), and representatives of associations active in the Berlin neighborhoods of Kreuzberg and Neukölln - collaborated on writing the libretto and creating the film. In *The Attic*, shot in England, the involvement of the public assumed an additional role, taking the form of free educational workshops, where more than 15,000 people were able to participate in specific courses on cinema, such as music for film, stage movement, editing, sound, directing, and writing. In the subsequent stage in Madrid, the process continued, and the community, which had taken shape gradually, traveled with the work, making it possible to create *Public Opinion Descends Upon the Demonstrators*, the final stage in a process that could continue to develop over time. (MB)

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