



CAN ART

100 PERSPECTIVES

AID

- AMINA YELAN BOGA
- ANI FRYER
- SPRADMAN ELIZ
- CHANUKA SHUKLA
- DANIEL ABREU
- DAN COLE
- ALISA A. STRONGBOND
- ANTONIO PROSPEL
- AZIZ & COOPER
- CHRIS KANE
- DANIEL LARSON
- EDUARDO HERRERA
- ANASTASIA ALKHOVA
- ANTONY MICHALY
- BEN HENRY
- DANIEL FORCZEK
- DANIEL HERRERA
- ANETTE SALLERBERG
- ANNA ANGEL
- CARLA STEWART
- DAN LARSON
- DAVID TARTAKOVY
- DANA CAPRIGLIO
- DAVID BRIGMAN
- ELIZABETH WELLS SCOTT
- JAMES DE BOER
- JAMES DE BOER

CONFLICTS?

CAN ART AID IN
RESOLVING CONFLICTS?

100 PERSPECTIVES

FRAME

RESOLVING

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RESOLVING

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IN YOUR OPINION COULD OR SHOULD ART PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN RESOLVING CONFLICTS? COULD OR SHOULD ART HELP IN BUILDING BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING AMONG CONFLICTING VIEWS? HOW?

The Floating Bridge. A Project for Lampedusa

The theme of conflicts and wars has always been present in the consciousness of every true artist, even more so in those belonging to younger generations. The latter, in particular, do not accept in any way that in a globalized, interconnected, technologically advanced society, things such as injustice, poverty, persecution, inequality, and violence may still exist. The young students of an art school in Bergamo have recently obtained huge success and media attention for an art project, whose aim was to defiantly and directly tackle the topical issues of conflicts, persecution, and refugees, which have been affecting the Mediterranean area between Africa and Europe for a number of years.

The Floating Bridge. A Project for Lampedusa was born from the reflection of some students (coordinated by Cecilia Rizzi and Simone Assi) from the Giacomo e Pio Manzù Art School in Bergamo. This project centers on the visionary power of art, and on the ability of art in general (and in particular of contemporary art), to provoke reflections and reactions and to show the unusual and unforeseeable aspects of reality.

The recent, spectacular and highly imaginative installation The Floating Piers (June 18 – July 3, 2016) by the Bulgarian artist Christo, which in just 2 weeks drew 1,200,000 people to Lake Iseo (Bergamo), is another sensational testimony to the extraordinary power of art and to its capacity to stimulate the imagination and open minds towards horizons that reason alone could never reach.

Indeed, great art is art which is able to open up before our eyes scenarios that are otherwise unimaginable, thanks to its utopian and visionary character. During his long career, and through works such as Running Fence (1976), Surrounded Miami Islands (1983),

and Wrapped Reichstag (1995), Christo has demonstrated his ability to carry out projects which on paper seemed impossible, due to his unshakable faith in art and to the collaboration of many people who, like him, had faith and worked to achieve this goal. Much like the Gothic cathedrals of the medieval period, Christo's endeavors are the result of a collaboration between hundreds of people with varied professions, and of great collective work and effort.

Trying to emulate the visionary spirit of this artist, the students of the Manzù Art School (working with me, their professor of art history), conceived of a utopian project involving the 'magical' transfer of Christo's installation to another, much more dramatic location: the stretch of sea between the coasts of North Africa and Sicily, where in recent years thousands of people have died (5000 in 2016 alone!) while on the run from war, hunger and misery. The students imagined that, instead of being onboard the infamous 'wrecks' on the sea, the refugees, with their families and their burden of pain and hope, could arrive in Europe (via Lampedusa) by comfortably strolling along an imaginary golden bridge. In a completely unpredictable way, The Floating Bridge: A Project for Lampedusa was met with huge success, attracting the attention of the local and national media (newspapers, radio, television) and sparking a heated debate on the World Wide Web. Posted on Facebook, the photos of the students were reported and commented on by the national newspapers La Repubblica, Il Venerdì di Repubblica, La Stampa, as well as by L'Eco di Bergamo, Bergamonews, Bergamopost, Il Giornale di Brescia, Brescia-Oggi, and Artribune, followed by radio interviews with the students on Radio24, Radio Rai 2, and Radio Popolare.

