

# MNEMOSYNE

A site-sensitive project

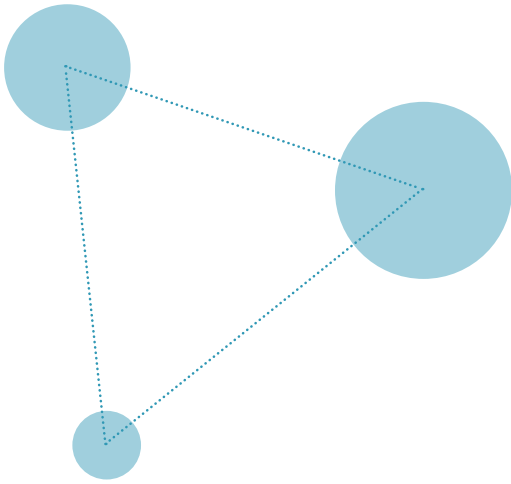
*The eye doesn't see things but figures of things that mean other things.  
Each city receives its form from the desert it opposes.*  
(Italo Calvino, "Invisible Cities")



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With the support of IN SITU, the network of artistic creation in public space. This project has been funded with the support of Creative Europe.



**Mnemosyne** is a project about emotional memories developed by [Effetto Larsen](#), a multidisciplinary working group that always focused its activity on human relationships.

**Mnemosyne** was the personification of memory for the ancient Greeks: daughter of Uranus and Gea, Sky and Earth, mother of the Muses. Art, in all its forms, arises from the past, or rather from what the past leaves on us. That is where the name of the project comes from: a modular, **site-sensitive**, flexible format that gathers individual and local memories in the wider idea of collective memory.

We **re-map** places on the base of the emotional life of the people living there, connecting locations with emotions to create an **emotional interface** with the spaces. Places that are normally ignored are in this way enhanced by the fragments of the story they contain. Even tourist destinations can be visited in a very unusual way.

The project's goal is to create an **emotional map** of a place, starting from memories and experiences of people living there. The starting point consists in a **survey**: collecting stories, voices, events and using them to create a path. The public takes in the materials' collection, and it is put in the condition of being conscious of passing through an **interactive journey** through universal parts of emotional experiences. **Mnemosyne** is a format, and it can be adapted on different levels: a district, a town, a building, an historic site, a flat.

The project is composed of different phases:

## 1) ON-SITE SURVEY

The first step is the **knowledge of the places**, both in terms of **spaces** and **communities** in question. We understand where we will work, adapting our approach. We identify our **partners** and **interlocutors**, finding them in the different groups on the territory: citizens, workers, communities, minorities, to build a captivating emotional experience. We show places through the eyes of locals. When necessary and appropriate, we integrate our info with **historical memory**, involving history and art experts.

## 2) MATERIALS' COLLECTION

To collect emotional memories we developed specific workshops, organized as **intimate amusement parks** for adults and called **Mnemo Labs**. During the workshops people can play different games: they can draw an emotional map, create stories with simple toys or prepared words, give an interview, share anecdotes. We learned that **adults are in a great need to play**, but they have very few opportunities to do it. In this way we collect stories, images, words, sounds, implicitly developing **the social value of a work about memory**. We can also integrate sources like social but also local networks (like bars, meeting-places, message boards...).

People are assisted when they share their memory or story: they are always free to say what they want, but playing games **we put them at their ease**. In this phase we also visit the places that are important to the workshop's participants and catalogue them using photos, video and sound recording.



Mnemo Lab at Assab One (Italy) and La Fabrique de Théâtre (Belgium).



### 3) PROCESSING AND CREATION OF THE EMOTIONAL MAP

In this phase we process all the materials and divide them into categories. **We match feelings with places**, and connect real places with emotional spaces. The result is an **emotional map of the area**, that is then edited and printed on paper. The map contains the pictures of the places discovered during the **Mnemo Lab** and fragments of the stories. Every place is connected to a feeling and a specific event.

This map becomes the starting point for the final event: the whole process is organized in the form of an installation. Historical sites and museums can also use the emotional map as a tool for visitors.



Creazione della mappa durante la residenza presso La Fabrique de Théâtre (Belgio) e Sura Medura (Sri Lanka).

### 4) INSTALLAZIONE E RESTITUZIONE

La mappa viene **realizzata su grande scala** in un luogo significativo per la comunità: disegnata per terra, su una parete, su un telo o proiettata, diventa il fulcro della restituzione dei materiali raccolti. Il pubblico viene guidato a scoprire i materiali raccolti attraverso **un percorso che è al tempo stesso fisico ed emotivo**. Come Narciso che si specchia in un lago la cui superficie sono le memorie altrui.

A seconda delle situazioni si possono preparare interventi più complessi, partendo da visite guidate da attori che raccontano episodi per arrivare fino a installazioni audio e interattive, performance, proiezioni video. Il punto è sempre mostrare i luoghi in base ai frammenti di vissuto, offrendo una visione differente degli spazi nel tempo.



Details from the installation at La Fabrique de Théâtre (Belgium) and Sura Medura (Sri Lanka).



Public openings at La Fabrique de Théâtre (Belgio) and Sura Medura (Sri Lanka).

## PARTNERS

The project is supported by:

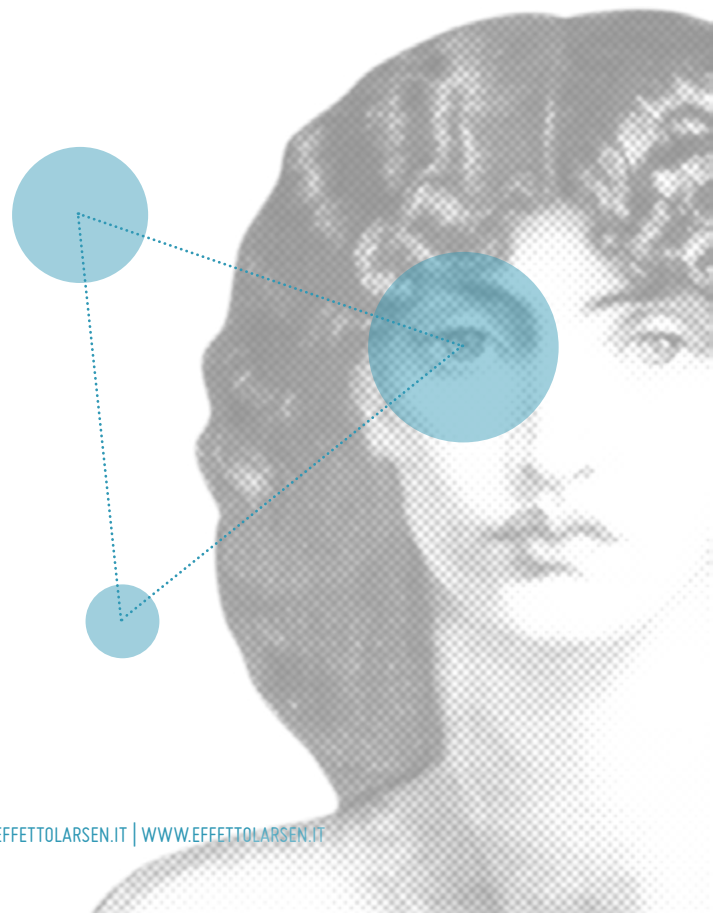
[In situ](#), European network of artistic creations in public spaces

[La Reggia Venaria](#), an historical site protected by UNESCO (Italy)

[Pergine Spettacolo Aperto](#) – progetto OPEN//Creazione Contemporanea, an international performing arts festival (Italy)

[Sura Medura International Artist Residency Centre](#) (Sri Lanka)

[La Fabrique de Théâtre](#) (Belgium)



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