

Abandoned structures are a catalyst for cultural production. Such is the case for Pizzo Sella where walls of the once acclaimed illegal developments are now punctuated with 'street art'. It can be argued that the incompleteness and anonymity to which these constructions lie, bring forward pockets of compelling invitation in between cracks of fragmentation. Could the element of incompleteness that lingers over the city bring forward an approachability, an allurements?

Pizzo Sella today stands as a never completed illegal development of around 100 single-family houses, built on a geologically unstable hillside of Capo Gallo that has since been turned into a nature reserve in 2011. Started in 1978, it is one of the worst examples of illegal construction in Italy and is referred to as the hill of shame due to its history of Mafia association linked to the Sack of Palermo. Today, the unfinished and abandoned constructions of Pizzo Sella that have been stagnant since the end of the Sack now stand as an involuntary monument to dysfunctionality in Palermo.

Whilst balancing issues of legality, construction limbo and the notion of prohibition of demolition, Pizzo Sella's identity of shame and dishonour is challenged by the emerging Art village of 2013 that seek to create a sarcastic residence. Paintings on exteriors and interiors within the uninhabited constructions- initially read as vandalism or graffiti, became increasingly recognised as violent visual purposeful protest. These artworks act on the symbol of Pizzo Sella; its label as the hill of shame, its history of mafia regime, the lack of initiation and control by the municipality despite its ownership- Pizzo Sella land is under ownership of the city but yet remains unplugged from the political power that charges it. The Art Village serve pictorial interventions to denounce the period of Mafia, resensitise the people and stand as a provocation to the media, all whilst using art as the tool to convey a visual experience.

However, the scale of impact of landscape scarring from the Sack in the 80s surpasses the Art Village provocation in 2013. Remnants from the sack on Capo Gallo is clearly visible from Mount Pellegrino as compared to the Art village which is a visual experience only from within the vicinity of Pizzo Sella.

Thus the use of art as a tool must now be aided by architecture whereby the aims of the art village may be amplified even more effectively, to ride further this wave of sarcasm.

Through the investigation of (reimaging) Pizzo Sella, may the idea of incompleteness- something yet to be finished, be viewed in different light. The 'finished' may be challenged by the idea of subtraction, whereby something is partially deconstructed to become as in Pizzo Sella's case- an involuntary monument, which further leads to the question of how to amplify an involuntary monument now stagnant to that of a transitory body that may stand as a debate between a culmination abandonment or a permanent abandonment.

Qns:

- Incompletion as an abortion/ rejection = a monument to speculation, a narration of a history of failure.

- When is a building finished/ abandoned/ demolished?