

## The Garbage Patch State conquers Torvergata!



On April 19th in the afternoon, the first year's students of Global Governance had the pleasure to meet a very special guest: Maria Cristina Finucci, architect and artist.

M.C. Finucci has lived and worked in Moscow, New York, Paris, Brussels and Rome, before settling in Madrid.

During her career as an architect, the works she produced in different countries have been published in various magazines and books. Her artistic research, started at a very young age,

has encompassed painting, sculpture, architecture, design, video art, and film post-production. These experiences eventually came to be synthesized in a transmedia work currently embodied in the series **WASTELAND**. This work, which comprises all the actions connected to **THE GARBAGE PATCH STATE** – which she founded herself – worldwide, not only carries out an ethical and environmental commitment, but also outlines an innovative art form, in tune with current developments.

“Linking art with the landscape, archaeology, and, especially, with the most momentous questions that occupy the thoughts of the general public, is by no means a simple enterprise. This is precisely why Fondazione Terzo Pilastro, which has long strived to find answers to the vexing questions surrounding these issues, finds itself in perfect accord with the artistic proposal that Maria Cristina Finucci has made with her **Wasteland project**,” declared Professor F. M. Emanuele, President of Fondazione Terzo Pilastro – Italia e Mediterraneo, adding: “Finucci’s project is more than a simple protest, it is also a concrete act aimed at preventing the **Garbage Patch** from continuing to grow and destroy the ecosystem on which our civilization is founded. Not only does Fondazione Terzo Pilastro echo her cry for “HELP”, but it has also for many years advocated for the resolute defence of every aspect of the beauty, history and culture of the Mediterranean Basin. Personally, I feel deeply involved in this project, which dovetails with the principles of ethical behaviour in which I have been brought up to believe since my childhood in this very territory.”



Architect Finucci immediately started the conversation in medias-res showing us pictures of plastic garbage and asking us where do we think all these objects were going to end. She gave us the answer, starting to explain the aim beneath “The Garbage Patch State” project.

The plastic used in our daily life ends up in the ocean, creating 5 huge areas or “islands”, as Finucci describes them, having the extension of Russia. Since nobody really cared about this issue, the

artist founded her own State in 2012: The Garbage Patch State.

The State's process to be acknowledged worldwide began in 2013, at UNESCO's "Salle des pas pedus" in Paris, where with a massive installation reproducing the plastic island, Finucci planted the first flag of the State, in the presence of Irina Bokova UNESCO's director-general who officially acknowledged the new born State.

However, Finucci didn't stop there: she provided the new State all the proper features of a real state: a constitution, a website and even a pavilion at the Venice's Biennale, where she created a new installation made of plastic caps which climbed on the walls of Ca' Foscari University like a groundling trying to reach the lagoon. Finucci claimed that after the Biennale adventure press worldwide started to show some interest about the Garbage Patch State.

Given that it is almost impossible to capture images of the Garbage Patch because plastic become almost invisible due to sun erosion, Finucci started to provide some images and photographs herself, as her as an artist understands the astonishing communicative power of images.

She continued her work of spreading consciousness in Madrid (2014) and in Rome (2015) where she installed the first official Embassy of the State at MAXXI Museum and where it was possible to

"adopt" a citizen of the State, that is to say plastic objects that end up in the Garbage Patch areas.

Finucci continued showing us the path that the State has been following, and the next step was the UN's headquarter in NYC where a giant snake made of plastic caps entered the building, trying to capture the attention of heads of state, bringing the issue of environmental pollution at the highest level possible.

The path of the State continued in Europe: in Milan for EXPO 15, in Venice for the Bluemed Conference and in Paris where Finucci's

"animals" reached the stairs of the building that hosted the COP 21.

Last but not least, The Garbage Patch State planted its flag in Mozia, an island in Sicily: here a massive installation showed what an hypothetical archaeologist of the future will find out about our era doing an excavation. Our futurist archaeologist will find ruins of buildings made out of metal cages filled with plastic bottle tops in a variety of colours. The plastic blocks followed much the same contours as the ancient Phoenician ruins of the island but from an aerial view the plastic blocks spelled "HELP", as a cry of alarm of our society.



After Finucci answered some of our questions, Professor Piga suggested a collaboration between the artist and Torvergata University, as she has already been working with other major university all around Italy.

We strongly wait for this collaboration as Finucci's combination of arts and strong denounce of environmental pollution embrace perfectly Global Governance's interdisciplinary path.

MARCO SINISCALCO and LUDOVICA VALLATI