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Fragments of the Mediterranean: Narrative, Tactility, and New Geographies of Invisible Heritage

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Tactile-Narrative Pathway and the Recomposition of Invisible Cultural Heritage

The project Vis.In.Mus.A. (Visible and Invisible: Interdisciplinary Paths for a Widespread Usability of Museum Heritage), developed within the PIA.CE.RI 2020–2022 research programme at the Regional Gallery of Palazzo Bellomo in Siracusa, is situated. The project represents a significant experimentation in new modes of heritage interpretation and access.It has led to the development of a multisensory museum model based on tactile pathways, digital models, and touch-activated audio narratives, aimed at making accessible the "invisible repositories" of heritage, both **musealised and non-musealised ar**tefacts that have lost their connection with the sites, functions, and historical contexts that generated them.
In this framework, tactility, mediated through critically designed 3D prints, acts as a device for inclusive and embodied access to knowledge.



Regional Gallery of Palazzo Bellomo, Siracusa, Italy



Room 2



Carriage Room



Room 5



Room 10

Narration across Narrative Forms and the Reconnection of Cultural Places

The project integrates tactile experience through three narrative devices: black Braille tactile books, touch-activated microtags, and video-based reconstruction. The tactile model is itself a form of narration: smooth, light surfaces indicate reconstructive hypotheses, while rough, sand-coloured textures identify fragments repositioned within lost architectures. This system reconnects fragments and reconstructs networks of cultural circulation across the Mediterranean.

smooth / light → reconstructive hypotheses rough / sand → fragments





Palatine Chapel of San Michele, Noto Antica - Basilica of Santa Lucia di Mendola. From museum storage to site and exhibition.

Geographies of the Invisible and Mediterranean Connections

In eastern Sicily, Norman-Swabian architectural heritage survives today in a fragmentary state or has entirely disappeared, as exemplified by the bauplastik of Santa Lucia di Mendola and the Palatine Chapel of San Michele at Noto Antica, the latter understood not only as an expression of sculptural decoration, but as a key node in the circulation of architectural models across the medieval Mediterranean, both severely affected by







Palatine Chapel of San Michele, Noto Antica Basilica of Santa Lucia di Mendola, Noto

Through the study of architectural models, bauplastik, and workshops, Mediterranean cultural connections are recomposed.

Technologies for the Contemporary Museum

Technologies in museum pathways redefine the contemporary museum as a multisensory and inclusive space, where tactility, narration, and reconstruction activate new forms of knowledge.



Technologies supporting the project: from survey to 3D printing and audio-narrative devices.

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