

## **EARTH'S MEMORY**

### **Glaciers: witnesses to the climate crisis**

Bard Fort, Aosta Valley

17 June – 18 November 2022

Glaciers tell us our past and our future. The **EARTH'S MEMORY** exhibition presents the world premiere of the results of the project "On the trail of glaciers", the photographic and scientific journey conceived and directed by the photographer **Fabiano Ventura**. Promoted and organised by the Bard Fort, the exhibition will be open from 17 June until 18 November 2022. The exhibition covers a 13-year journey, which aimed to document and showcase the shocking effects of climate change on the planet.

Thanks to the power of contemporary images and comparisons with identical shots captured by great masters of the past before the climate crisis, the exhibition unequivocally conveys the effects of global warming on ecosystems through photographic depictions of glaciers, offering visitors a profound reflection on the relationship between the human species and the natural environment.

From 2009 to 2021, **Ventura**, along with a team of directors and researchers, **conducted 8 expeditions to the world's largest mountain** glaciers: the Karakorum (2009), the Caucasus (2011), Alaska (2013), the Andes (2016), the Himalayas (2018), and the Alps (2019-2020-2021). Today, in the **EARTH'S MEMORY** exhibition, the **90 photographic comparisons** are displayed alongside **scientific data** collected during the expeditions and published as part of the exhibition. The content is presented using cutting-edge **interactive design and data visualisation techniques**: large screen projections, video installations, and immersive images that draw visitors into the magical world of ice and the complex topic of climate change. The exhibition is completed by **videos of the expeditions** and **interviews with the various researchers** involved, collections of clothing from the past and the present day, and collections of documents and maps of historical and scientific value.

"The Forte di Bard's aim with this project is to help raise public awareness of the impact that human activities have on the climate, highlighting the need to conserve natural resources in order to protect future generations", explains the Chairwoman of Bard Fort, **Ornella Badery**. "This is a field we have been working in for years on several fronts, supporting scientific and research projects that likewise help draw attention to the impact of climate change on glacial regions".

"Glaciers are not dead bodies, but organisms in a continuous state of transformation", writes **Enrico Camanni** in the introduction to the exhibition. "Glaciers are born, grow, transform, melt, and sometimes die. In a word: they live. At the end of a journey caught between nostalgia and indignation," – Camanni observes – "we discover that the only losers in this fantastic film are ourselves, the onlookers of what we have done. We the human species are the only victims who need to be saved in this epochal collapse, because the disappearance of glaciers is the result of our actions and a sign of the destruction we wreak".

"The idea for the **EARTH'S MEMORY** exhibition came from the desire to share an extraordinary journey," – **says Fabiano Ventura** – "consisting of various phases: from archival research on the photographs, maps, and travel diaries of the first explorers to

planning itineraries that would retrace the exact points where historical photographs were taken, from the emotions experienced when exploring new horizons to the indignation felt in the face of a dramatically altered landscape. Finally, the need to convey the idea that has taken hold in my mind over recent years: mankind is an inhabitant of the earth and is not outside nature. Protecting nature means protecting ourselves as a species and as human beings. Abandoning a totally anthropocentric vision, which seems almost trivial, has become one of the most important challenges of our time. The aim is to contribute to the knowledge and awareness that is needed today more than ever. The comparisons presented depict the changes that have taken place in a short period of time, while simultaneously leaving a testimony and a warning for future generations".

The exhibition is sponsored by **UNESCO** and is part of a science communication collaboration with the **ESA** (European Space Agency), which has created animated graphics specifically for the exhibition project at Bard Fort. These graphics present the scientific results on satellite images relating to the geographical areas covered by the expeditions for the project "On the trail of glaciers".

#### *The exhibition itinerary*

Due to the richness and complexity of its contents, the exhibition occupies several spaces within the Fort of Bard, covering about 700 square metres; in the Cannoniere, alongside the photographic comparisons, videos of the expeditions and interviews with the key figures of the project are projected and the scientific data are presented using data visualisation tools created by the ESA (European Space Agency).

Also on display is a valuable selection of maps and historical documents on the first geographical explorations, a large iconic image representing each mountain range, and examples of historical and modern mountaineering clothing.

In addition, there are 5 tables with 15 monitors where all the insights and the backstage material are displayed, including scientific texts by Claudio Smiraglia and Riccardo Scotti, several videos and interviews taken from the documentaries made on the expeditions, and over 150 backstage images telling the behind-the-scenes story of all the work carried out over the 13 years of the project.

The old military chapel will house photographic comparisons in panoramic format, set up on semi-circular structures to create an immersive effect; an interactive video-installation entitled *Walking Through Time* by video-artist Paolo Scoppola, which enables visitors to enjoy a sensory experience on the theme of time; and a display case with original documents by Vittorio Sella. Finally, a section will be dedicated to the extensive iconographic research that preceded each expedition and to the restoration work on historical photographs and the post-production work on all the photographic material.

#### *Find out more*

**"On the trail of glaciers"** is a photographic and scientific project that combines photographic comparisons and glaciological surveys to showcase the effects of climate change, thanks to observations of the changes in glacial masses over the last 150 years. The project represents the largest existing archive of comparative photography on the changes in glacial masses and encompasses 87 glaciers that led to the creation of 314 photographic comparisons. Alongside the photography work, scientific surveys were carried out on the state of glaciers, giving rise to 16 research programmes.

The project was organised by the non-profit association Macromicro and conceived and directed by Fabiano Ventura in collaboration with a creative technical staff and an international scientific committee. They collaborated with numerous public institutions, including the Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers, ministries, embassies, the National Snow Ice and Data Center, the World Glacier Monitoring Service, the State University of Milan, the Polytechnic University of Turin, and the Sapienza University of Rome. The project is funded by several companies and private foundations, including Enel Green Power, the Cariplo Foundation, Banca Etica, Montura, Ferrino, and many others.

[onthetrailoftheglaciers.com](http://onthetrailoftheglaciers.com)

### Opening hours

Weekdays: 10 am | 6 pm

Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays: 10 am | 7 pm

Closed on Mondays

### Rates

Full-price: € 8.00

Concessions (over 65): € 7.00

### Info

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