

Worldwide

Italy

Dolomiti Contemporanee revitalizes industrial sites through contemporary art

New paths to endorse the industrial heritage

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Created in 2011, not long after the inclusion of the Italian Dolomites region into the [UNESCO World Heritage List](#), [Dolomiti Contemporanee](#) is a project conceived and curated by the architect Gianluca D'Inca Levis [see the [interview on Archeologiaindustriale.net](#)].

Its mission is to fill the gap between the territory of the Dolomites' resources and the lack of valorisation of these assets themselves.

Starting from the identification of disused industrial sites on the territory, Dolomiti Contemporanee recovers the value of the place and time, giving them back to us through the codes of contemporary art.

There are seemingly recovered former industrial sites, that is to say where a certain investment for the restoration of the structure has already been placed, but which still haven't regained life because of the lack of planning and ability to actualize. Dolomiti Contemporanee tracks down these realities and after a careful analysis of the potentialities of the spaces and of the surrounding area decides whether to work on it or not.

The format consists of the temporary occupation of the detected compounds, which are turned into exhibition centres, setting up a kind of *creative citadel* integrated in the territory, in which the culture unfolds. The citadel is structured in a series of different functions, some of which are: residence, laboratories for artists, exhibition spaces and, obviously, lodging services (refreshment bar, guest quarters, offices, bookshops, utilities, etc.). After about three-four months, technically a season, Dolomiti Contemporanee leaves the location that has, this way, regained meaning, visibility and even a commercial appeal. Institutions, press, artists, visitors, a flow of thousands of people at a time reanimates the places for too long abandoned to uncaring laziness.

To give new life to the settlements is to bring back to life their history, their original productive purpose, replacing industrial productivity with artistic productivity in a temporary re-functionalization, this is what Dolomiti Contemporanee does to appraise the industrial heritage and its re-acquiring by the community.

The former chemical plant Montecatini of Sospirolo, located in the area of Sass Muss, in the Belluno municipality, is the first site of industrial archaeology on which Dolomiti Contemporanee has set its attention. The chemical centre of Sass Muss, once upon a time devoted to the production of ammonia, started its production in 1924 just to end it in the late 60s. Today, the industrial compound is made out of three recovered original buildings: the factory itself, a building for the production of energy and an edifice assigned to house offices and the abode of the director, plus two newly made buildings. Following the set-up of Dolomiti Contemporanee's *creative citadel* in the summer of 2011, over 10.000 people have come to this site, tremendous and delocalized, rediscovering it after decades of oblivion, and inaugurating a new season for the compound.

The former Sass Muss chemical plant, like the old glasses factory in Taibon Agordino, closed down for more than 10 years, are just two of the revitalizations managed by Dolomiti Contemporanee, and the aims are even higher for the future. Dolomiti Contemporanee is actively starting to work on two sites of enormous importance: the former mining village in the Imperina Valley (Rivamonte Agordino, Belluno) and the Eni Village of Borca di Cadore, realized by Enrico Mattei together with Edoardo Gellener in the 50s. Many other project, of a different variety, are in Dolomiti Contemporanee's agenda of territorial valorisation.

Dolomiti Contemporanee, because of its projects' vastness and complexity, is flanked by prestigious partners including the Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, the Dolomites Unesco Foundation, CNAPPC – National Council of Architects, Planners, Landscape Architects, and Preservers, Veneto Region, Natural Park of Friulian Dolomites, local authorities, cultural institutions and private companies.



Montecatini ammonia plant (1924) was Dolomiti Contemporanee's first project.