

## Concetta Modica. The North Passage, 2009

Concetta Modica

(<http://www.concettamodica.com>) (b. 1969 IT)

Rauma Lace Week 18<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> July exhibition  
space Kerttu Pruutmestarska



Concetta Modica and Rauma Marthaorganization group  
Lännen Martat embroidering The North Passage –tapestry



Details

During July Concetta Modica has been embroidering a tapestry with Rauma Martha Organization group Lännen Martat. Modica wanted to collaborate with grandmothers, because starting point for this project is her grandmother's bedcover.

Sicilian grandmothers prepare the bedcover for their grand-daughters as a gift for the marriage. They crochet it for the whole period of a childhood, using a wool which is beloved, because it is the wool retrieved from old and used clothes. Modica untied her bedcover and ever since she has been using the yarn for her installations, animations and paintings in Italy. Doing so she feels united with her grandmother, making a continuous and inverted work, as did Penelope.

Now the yarn of the ex-bedcover has been travelling to Finland to be transformed in other artworks. Modica wanted to draw a Finnish landscape joining together the yarn of her grandmother with the traditional Finnish yarn. In this way, Northern and Sicilian culture – North and South Europe are meeting each other. Traditional handicraft culture and history of art, a painting of history of art, and an artist are meeting each other as well.

For this project Modica chose Hugo Simberg's (1873–1917) etching from a private collection. Simberg shows symbolist and surrealistic aspects; moreover, there are provoking and ironic elements in his work. He is a very popular artist in Finland, but the etching which Modica proposed "The Queen Fishing" (1895–1896) is somehow unknown, but it shows Finnish landscape (physical and mental) well.

Concetta Modica writes: *"From the very beginning Lännen Martat were very enthusiastic to collaborate with me and to teach Finnish way of embroidering. But my idea also created confusion: such an unknown drawing, not very decorative, not very representative (typical), not very scenery and very ironic, almost irreverent and not very close to the tradition of embroidery! For me, this meeting and this dispute with a drawing from Modern Art seemed to be interesting. The meeting with contemporary art creates always a difficult and harsh meeting which needs to be prepared and to be reflected. Art requires an effort, art does never do what you are expecting. Quite the contrary, art does the opposite you are expecting and functions only if it gives rise to questions."*

*My first meeting with the Lännen Martat broke the ice. Working together solved a lot of problems and gave rise to a nice reciprocal collaboration. For this reason, after the choice of the picture and of the adequate material the emboirders could decide the colours and the techniques to be used. Within the dialogue and within the decisions to take, we talked about Simberg, about his paintings, about his colours, about the spirit of his ideas. In this way, we created a new way of talking. Without noticing we created a new language, which had to be explored through a drawing, tracing the feature, passing through the sign of the original drawing, interpreting again in our way, following the yarn which unites and sews them in some way to the history of art.*

*Afterwards these lovely embroiders asked me about my grandmother, of her history, of her very old wool with a lot of knots. I explained them that in the culture of the farmers of Sicily there was a habit to weave a bedcover using the rests of old stockings and of old jumpers. They told me that they too use again the old wool to make carpets.*

*Thus, we started to work with lightness and with a nice sense of closeness, despite our distances in space and in time and in history, in an easy manner. Art should do this sometimes: arrive to the people, speak more without losing mystery, belong to all people, become "public", giving rise to emotional processes, helping man in his relation to the world, creating relations and experiences and not only objects or images."*

(<http://www.vakka-suomennuorisosaatio.fi/>)



(<http://kordelin.fi/en/frontpage/>)

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(<http://lastenkulttuuri.fi/>)



(<http://rosenlew.net/>)



(<http://www.raumantaidemuseo.fi/>)