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Legarsi alla Montagna

Binding to the mountain

Elena Pontiggia

Piero Berengo Gardin

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- Commemorating the 40th anniversary of a legendary collective art event in a small Sardinian mountain town, conceived and orchestrated by post-war Italian artist Maria Lai (1919-2013)
- Photographs by Piero Berengo Gardin document the local population tying all the buildings and the local mountain together with nearly 17 miles of blue ribbon

The inhabitants of Italian artist Maria Lai's hometown of Ulassai live surrounded by mountains and a theater of rocks, far from Sardinia's famous coastline. This book documents Lai's best-known large-scale collective art project, *Legarsi alla Montagna* (Bound to the Mountain) which took place over 3 days beginning on September 8th, 1981. Harkening back to a Sardinian legend of a young girl saved from death by chasing a blue ribbon out of a cave, the artist convinced the residents of Ulassai to tie their homes and the mountain together with 17 miles of blue ribbon. A symbolic act of communal unity, the process was tempered by personal conflicts and ancient family feuds, resulting in ribbon that was knotted (for friendship), wrapped tightly (for conflict), or hung with bread (for love). This combination of land art, performance art, and sculpture was captured at the time by renowned photographer Piero Berengo Gardin, in images that the artist has worked with watercolors and markers. Art historian Elena Pontiggia has contributed the text.

Text in English and Italian.







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