

## **Tami Izko** ***Inventory***

*Curated by Ilaria Bonacossa*

**Inventory** is the new site-specific project by Tami Izko for the tenth anniversary, in 2023, of **Fondazione La Raia – arte cultura territorio**. A small cave along the entry road to the wine cellar becomes the ideal location for storing each individual piece, the pixels of the multi-coloured landscape of this biodynamic estate in the Gavi, with its unique biodiversity.

An inventory is a list of items that we collect and select, a book in which we register what we discover. An exercise that not only helps us organize things but also encourages us to look more closely. The Latin origin of the verb to find - *invenio* - has several meanings, the most obvious being to find, but it also conveys the need for imagination, knowledge, and discovery.

Tami Izko chooses to do exactly that: find, discover, and tell the visitor how she experienced La Raia's landscape and lingered in front of a small cave on the entrance road, imagining it as the chamber of wonders of her personal selection of this landscape, in the inventory of the surrounding territory.

The work is composed of thirty-two small coloured glazed porcelain and gres sculptures, some of them floating on the small pond that becomes a fountain, both natural and sculptural. These works recall elements taken from La Raia's natural kingdom and reinterpreted – vine trunks, lake reeds, pinecones, walnut shells, acorns, bunches of grape, shells

and shrubs -, and elements belonging to the farm's working life and its inhabitants: shoe soles, plastic cables, workwear.

The materials that were chosen for the works, as well as the elements that were found in this territory, go through a transformation process during which they detach themselves from nature, recalling it in its absence. The creation of each single piece was preceded by a specific cast that was filled with liquid porcelain. Moreover, Izko created some pieces entirely manually using gres, which allowed more ease in the definition of sizes and shapes. Each sculpture was then glazed using a pastel-coloured palette and fired at 1250 degrees.

**Tami Izko** explains: "An inventory is a list of things we run into, a book of the things we find. Like a pixel in La Raia's landscape, the small cave at the farm's entry isn't easily noticed among the many elements of this territory, in this fragmented region. This makes the cave an interesting space for collection and meditation: the area surrounding it contains very rich data about the different things that can be found in this place, about La Raia's biodiversity, and about the human presence in the property. Unless we linger over these things, they will remain hidden from our eyes or just lost in the many pixels that compose this landscape's image."

The installation includes a soundtrack by sound designer Davide Cairo, who recorded samples of the natural sounds inside the property all around **Inventory**. A video narrates the work's creation, with an interview to the artist by Thea Kleinhempel. Artist Federico Clavarino reinterpreted the work in a photograph exhibited at Locanda La Raia.

**Ilaria Bonacossa**, artistic director at Fondazione La Raia:  
“Tami Izko’s project, that we chose for Fondazione La Raia’s tenth anniversary, further develops the Fondazione’s mission: engaging artists from different practices who offer a critical look at Gavi’s landscape and will engage a wider audience in a space for meditation, recognition and awareness to the precious natural elements that surround us. In her **Inventory**, Izko focuses on the important theme of biodiversity and chooses to highlight our ability, always more at risk, to look, observe and systematize what our eyes see. The use of porcelain and the artist’s soft and light touch make this work both poetic and childlike, and carry us to a different space made of fleeting thoughts and vague images. Izko, whose works I saw for the first time at galleria Viasaterna and that I introduced during Artissima Unplugged in 2021, has always focused her search on elusive, sometimes fragile aspects of reality that she recreates through the unexpected use of porcelain, one of the most ancient and resistant materials in the world.”

**Giorgio Rossi Cairo**, President of Fondazione La Raia:  
“During these ten years of activity inaugurated with project *Nel Paesaggio* by artist Remo Salvadori, Fondazione La Raia has attracted always more visitors to Gavi region, thanks to its continuous high-quality artistic projects. This is a new chance for an articulated reflection on the value of landscape and the importance for us to understand all its components: natural, urban, artistic and historical ones. Furthermore, Tami Izko’s work will spark curiosity in a young audience interested in sustainability, biodiversity and environmental protection, thanks to its concept and production.”

**Inventory** joins the itinerary of nine additional works created by international artists for Fondazione La Raia since 2013, inside La Raia, in the vineyards, the wine cellar, and Locanda

La Raia. All year, the visit is open to the public and free of charge.

**Tami Izko** was born in Cochabamba (Bolivia) in 1984. Although she's still young, she lived in different cities for long periods of time, recently in Madrid, Lisbon, London, Milan, Schöppingen and Brussels. She currently lives and works in Athens. During her first Film and Creative Writing studies she mainly explored the autobiographic dimension, a theme that is constantly present in her works. Izko started to focus on sculpture, especially ceramic, when she lived in Lisbon. As it happens with her texts, her ceramic works are often a self-representation. The clay's plasticity is suitable to create organic forms as a reflection and abstraction of the Self and of the elements it is made up of. In her series *Wounds* (2019), she explores the connections between memory, trauma and resilience, whereas in her project *Bezoar* (2022) she focuses on the mechanisms behind magical thinking: sculptures are mainly made of glazed ceramics and crystals that are fired several times in order to accelerate the materials' mutations. The use of plaster casts to create porcelain, gres, latex or wax forms has become a central element in her approach to sculpture. In her latest production especially (*Via Spaventa*, 2021, *The Crab's House* with Federico Clavarino, 2022-ongoing, and her last work *Inventory* for Fondazione La Raia) she uses this process to remould pre-existing places, creating a constellation of objects extracted from their context, reinterpreting them to create a new personal space. Her works were shown in Geneva (Fondation Bruckner Parcours Céramique), London (Royal College of Art), Schöppingen (Stiftung Künstlerdorf), Brussels (Boghossian Foundation), Istanbul (Biennal 2017), Milan (Viasaterna Arte Contemporanea) and Turin (Artissima). During her research activity she often worked with photographer Federico Clavarino; their collaboration produced, among other works, the series *Eel Soup* – recently issued by Witty Books – that was shown in Brussels (Pinguin, 2018), in Lodz, Poland (Fotofestival, 2018), at the Istanbul Biennal (2019) and in Milan at Viasaterna Gallery (2019).

**Fondazione La Raia - arte cultura territorio** was founded in June 2013 with the aim of promoting critical reflections on the landscape in Italy and

*abroad, through contributions in a wide range of fields. The foundation develops artistic, cultural, educational and scientific activities and research, also with the objective of fostering specific knowledge of the Gavi area. To date, permanent works have been produced by Remo Salvadori, Koo Jeong A, Michael Beutler, Adrien Missika and Francesco Jodice (open to the public), a publication with Elio Franzini released by Corraini, and many public conferences on landscape, featuring (among others) Gilles Clément and the French group Coloco, Paolo D'Angelo, Adriana Veríssimo Serrão, Francesco Jodice and Francesco Zanot, Stefanie Hessler and Franco Farinelli. Fondazione La Raia, directed by Ilaria Bonacossa, was founded by Giorgio Rossi Cairo and Irene Crocco. The scientific committee is composed of Flavio Albanese, Marco Galateri di Genola, Vicente Todolí, Stefano Baia Curioni and James Bradburne.*

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