

Among — When the Sea Comes In
For National Research Council of Italy (CNR)

Fabio Barile

Rewriting of a Wave

The surface of the sea is completely flat. Only slight variations in height are perceived along the sandy shore. Mr. Array is sitting on the beach, with his back turned to the sea. That imperceptible movement of the tide is not indifferent to him. He is not distracted, nor is he fully aware of what he is doing: he wants to ignore the sea, in favor of what lies behind it.

He is contemplating. Absolute neutrality requires a temperament he does not possess and which, nonetheless, at this moment he would like to have more than anything else.

It is not what lies before him that he wants to contemplate, but the multiplicity of elements: he seeks vague sensations, ignoring the sea as object in favor of an indirect gaze.

A series of images appears in his mind: waves wearing away the cliffs, rain slowly carving stone, what seems solid yielding over time. As if everything pointed to a more general principle that he believes he has understood. He stands up and leaves, without once turning to look at the sea. Behind him, a wave reaches the shore and dissolves, the water draws back carrying with it a small portion of sand. The surface closes again. Nothing indicates that anything has happened.













































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Graduating from FSM in Florence with a degree in photography in 2007. He started his photographic research in 2005 with a project about coastal erosion, which affects 1500 km of Italian costline. The resulting project, “Among” aimed to investigate natural processes of the landscape. Over the last few years Barile’s work has been driven by an interest in science in relation to art - both conceived as tools for a better understanding of reality. His long-term project, “An Investigation of the Laws Observable in the Composition, Dissolution and Restoration of Land,” examines the manner in which geomorphology acts upon the land, serving as testimony to the vastness of geological time. The work employs photography to stimulate a deeper understanding of the landscape and our connection with the natural environment.

“At first glance, Fabio Barile’s practice could be said to follow in the long tradition of Italian landscape photography which includes practitioners such as Luigi Ghirri, Guido Guidi. On closer inspection, however, the images in An Investigation hew to a tight conceptual framework that belie their simplicity, asking deeper questions about the nature of Time, and geologic time questions whose philosophical implications underpin scientific endeavor, human perception, and the unknowable forces of creative destruction at work in Nature”I. I.Naomi Itami

Selected exhibitions

2026
No Place like Home — Italian photography since the 1980s,
SCHAUWERK Sindelfingen, Germany

2025
No Place like Home — Italian photography since the 1980s,
Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Germany
On the Edge of the Eyelid,
Nivola Museum, Orani (Nu)

2024
The Secret of the Deep Time,
Verwey Museum, Haarlem, The Netherlands
Works for a Cosmic Feeling,
Witty Books, Turin

2023
Tre-di-ci ,Sguardi sui musei di Lombardia (Group exhibition)
Palazzo Reale, Milano, Italy

2022
Fabio Barile & Domingo Milella — Le Forme del Tempo
Terme di Diocleziano, Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, Italy
Regeneration (Group exhibition)

American Academy in Rome, Italy
Di Roccia, fuochi e avventure sotterranee (Group exhibition)
MAXXI, L'Aquila, Italy

2021
Di Roccia, fuochi e avventure sotterranee (Group exhibition)
MAXXI, Rome, Italy
Works for a Cosmic Feeling
Matèria, Rome, Italy 2020
Group exhibition, On Earth - Imaging, technology and the natural world
FOAM Museum, Amsterdam.

2019
Group exhibition, On Earth - Imaging, technology and the natural world
50th edition of the Rencontres d’Arles, in collaboration with FOAM Museum.
Fabio Barile & Domingo Milella - The shape of time
Centro Arti visive Pescheria, Pesaro, Italy

2018
Osservare la terra — a dialogue beetween contemporary photography and the historical archive of ICCD about photography as a tool for observation
ICCD — Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione, Rome, curated by Benedetta Cestelli Guidi

2017
An Investigation of the laws observable in the composition, dissolution and restoration of land,
Matèria, Rome

2015
Homage to James Hutton
Matèria, Rome, Italy

Publications

Among (When the Sea Comes In) — Witty Books 2026
Ashes — Aniene 2026
Works for a Cosmic Feeling — Witty Books 2024
Di roccia fuochi e avventure sotterranee — Quodlibet/Ghella, 2020
Fabio Barile & Domingo Milella, The shape of time — Fondazione malaspina edition, 2019
Fabio Barile & Francesco Neri, Middle-Earth a journey inside Elica — Fondazione malaspina edition, 2014
Vision And Documents Box, — Documentary Platform, 2010
Diary N° o - Things that do not happen — 3/3, 2009