

An eerie feeling of desolated tension pervades the empty streets on several towns in Western Sicily. It seems as everything is upheld, temporarily suspended mid-air as people suddenly left without previous notice.

A devastating earthquake in 1968 caused thousands of deaths and levelled to the ground many rural villages in the Belice area. Salaparuta, Montevago, Vita, Gibellina, Partanna, Poggioreale, Santa Margherita are some of the villages affected by the sudden shock that permanently changed the livelihood of farmers and local entrepreneurs, who overnight found themselves homeless, jobless and displaced. Failure to ensure a prompt structural recovery, intensified the problems of an already stumbling economy, leading to mass emigration from the region.

Fifty years on, several villages still remain almost vacant, struggling with a sluggish and partial recovery. New towns have been constructed, often miles away from their original location, to rehouse the displaced. Brutalist utopian designs become home to a shrinking and ageing population, alienated in and by their environment, built without considerate planning and to satisfy the opportunistic mob of corrupted politicians colluded with the underworld.

*In Limbo* explores the aesthetics and social dynamics of the void overbearing the postmodern architecture and human landscapes in this part of Sicily.