

WHY NON!

PROJECT FOR VAL DI NON, ITALY

THE LOCALS AND THEIR STORIES

The philosopher

L. works and lives in an alpine cottage (“*malga*” in Italian) at 1800 meters above sea level, on the Maddalene mountain range, with his family and his animals.

He chose to get involved in working for what he loves most: his territory and his mountains, producing cheese and other food products in a natural and quality way.

Having the alarm rings at 4 o'clock may seem like a radical choice, until you see a sunrise at the top of the mountains, surrounded only by animals and the sound of the wind. He did all this without giving up his other great passion, philosophy.

In fact, L. is studying, preparing to become a personal coach; contrary to what one might think, life in the mountains is not isolation and closure. Those who truly live in the mountains have a free spirit, and are open to collaboration with each other.

In “malga”, L. can count on the help of some guys, coming from foreign countries, who support him in every day work in the stable and with whom the opportunities for discussion and dialogue are never lacking.

Integration is important, L. teaches them a job and the value of work and sacrifice, and in return collects life stories from around the world, which enrich him and put him in touch with different cultures and ways of thinking.

These are the values of our “malgaro” philosopher: commitment and dedication, an open mind, the desire to grow, and, above all, help others to find their own path to happiness, just as he did with his family.

****Shooting period: first half of July 2019.***

The physician boatman

G. grew up in the plain, but ever since he was a child he loved Val di Non, where he spent summers with his family.

He studied medicine and after a few years managed to move to the valley, becoming the chair of Orthopedics at the local hospital.

Even when he worked in the hospital he always had a passion for wood, which he nurtured with the knowledge acquired in the Alpine area, a place where wood is not lacking and that has always been a resource for the construction of boats in the past.

Since he has retired, he is dedicating himself to the construction of carts and catamarans, in his garage. For him, it is not only a question of reproducing classic models of boats, but also giving space to the imagination.

Once completed, he transports the boats to the shores of Santa Giustina Lake and tests their functionality, resistance, and exploration opportunities. The lake is an important place for G., he has been canoeing it since the 80s, he was one of the pioneers.

The lake is an artificial basin (the largest in Trentino), embellished by the presence of stupendous (but little known) canyons. It has never really been lived by the villagers, who "feel" it as a dam. His way of enjoying the lake allows him to open it to the imagination of many others.

G. is also part of the Santa Giustina Naval League, a group promoting a sustainable and conscious use of the lake through meetings, explorations, sharing of boats and artistic activities. This is his way of encouraging others to enjoy the lake.

****Shooting period: June 2019.***

Extreme archaeologists

A. and L. are two brothers who grew up together in Val di Non. They have always been passionate about computers and archeology, in a time when being a young nerd was not as cool as it is now, and in a place where being young nerds was even worse.

After graduating in archeology they established Arc-Team, a small company that challenges the multinational corporations operating through free, open source software and through open hardware.

They are among the developers of the ArcheOS operating system, based on the Linux platform and optimized for archaeological work, as well as the founders of ArcheoFOSS, a festival that deals with these issues.

Since 2006 they have started a new branch of research, the archeorobotica: they develop aerial drones and submarines for archaeological exploration. With these tools they did research in Georgia and Iran.

Another of the branches that they deal with is the forensic archeology: starting from skeletal remains or mummies, they obtain craniofacial reconstructions of the person after centuries or millennia after their burial.

Their curiosity for the past and new challenges has also pushed them to specialize in extreme operations of glacial archeology, high mountain archeology (on the Dolomite front of the Great War), speleoarchaeology and underwater archeology (which allowed them to identify submerged forests).

It's kinda like Indiana Jones did not limit himself to the whip and jump from one jeep to the other, but he also put on the diving suit, used crampons and, as if that were not enough, started driving drones and developed computer programs and new languages that help us to see the future, by interpreting the past.

****Shooting period: Autumn 2019 (probably November).***

The artist innkeeper

A. was born and grew up in a town of 700 inhabitants at almost one thousand meters above sea level in the Alps. Her parents are both farmers.

In the summer his family runs an alpine cottage (“malga”) where they bring cows to eat mountain grass. Her mother, who is passionate about cooking, opened a small restaurant in the malga and offers a few typical dishes, cooked with love.

A. helps her mother in the kitchen, she learned to prepare dishes for many guests, sets the table and serves, and has run the cashier since adolescence.

At 14 she moved to Trento, the nearest city, to study advertising graphics, in an apartment she shares with older students. Here she entered in contact with music and in particular the local hardcore punk scene.

Then she moved to Venice where he attended the Academy of Fine Arts. Here she had the opportunity to confront herself with the world of contemporary art and at the same time to approach the graphics art, becoming a passionate and knowing artists from all over Italy.

Throughout the university period, while experimenting with other techniques, she deepened the art of serigraphy, managing the Academy's laboratory until her departure. Through this technique A. resumes contacts with the world of music, printing t-shirts and cards for different underground groups. She started spending time in the valley again by organizing a festival of psychedelic music which can only be accessed by invitation in the woods close to home

After 13 years spent far from Val di Non, A. decided to return. She rented a house in her native village and used it as a residence. A. invites different artists with the desire to put them in contact with local artisans and the landscape (from there you can see the Brenta Dolomites). The intent is to create collaborations, innovations and new mountain narratives.

****Shooting period: August 2019.***

The "tortel" pioneer

M. has always lived in Mione di Rumo, a small town of 300 inhabitants in a small valley perched on the Maddalene chain

Once she carried on her small farm. Her days were marked by the rhythms of cows, hay and the cultivation of potatoes. In the evening she gave her best in the small home kitchen where she elaborated childhood recipes for the small group of people who occupied her dining room.

One day there was the opportunity to host a group of students of geology in Padua who had to spend a period exploring the morphology of the area. M. offered sparse accommodation and prepared the dishes she has always prepared.

M. discovered that being an innkeeper was something she loves. The students were enthusiastic about her cooking and her extroverted nature, M. was glad to feed them and talk with them.

She decided to open the first farmhouse in the area: a few tables available in her "stube" (a traditional stove), dishes prepared with local ingredients, good Teroldego (italian wine) and talk at the end of the evening. We must consider that, while now places like this are very popular, at that time they were an absolute novelty.

Soon, having dinner in the home of someone who cooked aroused curiosity even among the VIPs who stayed in Madonna di Campiglio. Little by little, Agritur Mirella has become increasingly popular, and M. has also ended up in a television program.

M. has a very big and amusing sample of anecdotes of these thirty years that she tells with great pleasure after dinner. On a New Year's Eve, she had to leave her guests to help a cow to give birth, the guests interrupted their own dinner to help out.

Now that her son is a professor and struggling to help her as a waiter, sometimes M. is tired of the frenetic pace of the kitchen. Then she looks at the calendar full of bookings for a lot of time to come, thinking about people who can nurture and entertain and cannot be more proud of it.

****Shooting period: February/March 2019.***

From marketing manager to bee-keeper

M. worked for years as a marketing and communication manager for a local company that produced raw materials for construction. He deals with office hours, office space, long internet searches, endless phone calls, meetings with professionals and events around Italy to promote and consolidate the product.

At one point his company was in trouble and M. stayed at home for a while. In this period he was passionate about his family activity, and agriculture. When it was time to get back to work, M. decided to leave the office career and go back to basics.

In the meantime, M. was also passionate about bees. He appreciates the slow and relaxed movements that the beekeeper puts in place to handle the parts of the hive. He enjoys the condition of becoming part of a bee cloud that others consider dangerous, but in which he stays serenely and satisfied.

M. loves bees not only for the honey that they produce and give to men for their health (as well as for their taste), but above all for the organizational model that is the base of their coexistence and their collaboration, in which each community element is aware and an advocate of its role.

For M. the metaphor of the organization of the hive is also important for its other activity, that of a trainer. The combination of environment and fruit growing is a highly debated topic in a valley with an agricultural vocation such as the Val di Non. The sustainable management of the interaction between the two elements (each in its own way essential) is the key to the future of mountain valleys.

Today's farmers and fruit growers no longer respond to the stereotypes through which we often describe them. People like M. carry on a reflection on a territory necessary for the future.

****Shooting period: April 2019.***