

EMILIA

ROMAGNA

N.3
2008

IN ALTO I CALICI

Internet rilancia
i vini dell'Emilia-
Romagna

RAISE YOUR WINE GLASSES

Internet
renews interest
in wine from
Emilia-Romagna

ECONOMIA
ECONOMY
Passione
Bio
Organic
Passion

STORIE
STORIES
I musicisti
di Borgotaro
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WINE ON THE WEB

by Silvia Saracino

Ruby red or straw-yellow, fruity, floral or pleasantly aromatic. Anything and everything wine guides throw up, you can find them all produced by Emilia-Romagna companies: there is a wide variety of wines with over 400 labels of whites (sparkling, still), reds (sparkling and still), sweet wines and *passito* wine, and also distilled wines and liqueurs. In 2008, production felt the effects of the 2007 drought, but if the quantity has dropped, the quality certainly hasn't: last year, about 6 million hectolitres of wine was produced, of which 26% is Doc or Cocg certified, 40% Igt and 34% table wine. A treasure-trove of wine enjoyed not only by Italian clients, but more and more by foreign buyers, as in all corners of the world, from Canada to Australia, wine made in Emilia-Romagna is a roaring success. Part of the merit for this is the powerful potential of internet, which allows people to hear about Emilia-Romagna wines and buy them on the web from any corner of the world. There are numerous sites, from the classic e-bay – which sells everything, and hence wine too – to esperya.com, one of the most clicked cellars on line for Italian food and wine products, right up to specialised websites like wineshop.it, everywine.biz and allacortedibacco.com. While on itineraridelgusto.it, you can see a wine map of all of Italy. So there's no lack of channels and there is certainly interest, as demonstrated by the multitude of foreign visitors who flocked to the Emilia-Romagna pavilion at the Verona trade fair for the last edition of Vinitaly. With over 100 companies showing their wares, the seven big names of regional production were under the spotlight from Piacenza to Rimini: Gutturmio, Malvasia, Lambrusco, Pignoletto, Fortana, Sangiovese di Romagna and Albana di Romagna. Each of the bottles has a story to tell because every land has its own particular aromas and traditions. The wine glass road-trip starts in the hills of Piacenza, where the Gutturmio rules the roost: with its sparkling, still and aged varieties, it is a multifaceted wine, uncontaminated by international varieties or the standardisation of wine-making techniques, and is widespread in many Italian areas. It is a joyful combination of the Barbera and Bonarda vine species, its dry or fairly sweet flavour goes very well with hearty dishes, especially meat like pork or roast meats. The Doc certified Bonarda wine is also produced in this area, which is allowed to be produced only in the Piacenza hills: producers here say that this white wine could also have been drunk by Julius Caesar, since his last wife had a "domus rusticanae" around this region.

Using via Emilia as a guide on our wine map, we arrive in Parma, where a wine was dedicated to this very road: it's called Strada Statale 9, which is what maps call via Emilia, and was produced by the Ceci di Parma company, leader in Lambruscos for three generations. Strada Statale 9 is the

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combination of two territories and two different cultures: a Lambrusco from Parma and a Sangiovese from Romagna (made as a white) combined to produce a sparkling rosé, which is then spumante-sized, which is ideal with fish but also to pop open in the many bars on the Adriatic Riviera.

Historical production from this area, though, is the Malvasia, both in the dry version and the *amabile* one, and the Fortana from lower Parma. Cabernet Sauvignon, Barbera and Bonarda are also produced here. Crossing through Emilia, we get to the hills of Reggio Emilia and Modena, where Lambrusco holds the position of incontestable supremacy. It's fresh, acidic, fragrant and has a low alcohol level. Starting from the Sorbara plains up to Castelvetro, the two main production zones around Modena, the wine becomes slightly stronger while still maintaining a distinct identity: it is the most drunk wine overseas, its features are easily identifiable and not being too complex a wine, it is ideal for many occasions. From bars to restaurants, perhaps enjoying it in a mini-bottle version: the Coltiva di Modena Group has just produced a 0.2 and 0.25 litre mini-bottle to bring back the custom of drinking wine during meals, in the right quantity. The Grasperossa Lambrusco (a typical wine in the Castelvetro region) is also produced around Reggio Emilia, alongside production of Cabernet and Marzemino.

Typical products from around Bologna are two very different wines: the white Pignoletto – delicate aroma and hot and harmonic flavour – and the red Cabernet Sauvignon, which is dry, soft and full-bodied. Barbera, Chardonnay and Merlot are

also produced in the area, as is Reno, a Doc certified wine which comes from the area between Bologna, Castelfranco Emilia and San Giovanni in Persiceto.

On the coast between Ferrara and Romagna, we have the Bosco Eliceo: they call it the "sand wine", after the area in which the grapes grow, where the land gives way to what remains of a century-old, lush pine forest. Wine was grown here as far back as the 10th and 11th centuries by the Benedictine monks from the Pomposa Abbey, who reclaimed the marsh. Farmers here grew the Fortana and Uva d'Oro vine species. Romagna merits special attention: its ability to renew itself while maintaining traditions never ceases to amaze. This combination has been highly successful, given that the Ravenna area is the one which produces more wine than any other area. One of the most interesting discoveries of recent years has been the Bursôn, a wine created in Bagnacavallo, near Ravenna, by a company which had saved a vine species on the verge of extinction. Bursôn is the nickname of the Longanesi family, who, at the beginning of the 1900s, purchased the land in Bagnacavallo: only one vine species – which was unique in that area – was grown on the farm, but hadn't been used for decades. At the beginning of the 1950s, the Longanesi family discovered that that small, abandoned plant could produce a high alcohol grape and resist fungus diseases: the first vineyard was planted and during the San Michele celebrations in Bagnacavallo in 1999, the first bottles were sold at stands. Today production involves 16 companies from the area who have

come together to form a consortium to protect the brand and the rules regulating its production are unequivocal: only Longanesi grapes can be used (after the name of the inventor), grown in the Bagnacavallo area or in surrounding areas. For having created Bursôn and saved a wine species which is a part of Romagna tradition, at Vinitaly, Daniele Longanesi was awarded the "Cangrande della Scala medal. For having contributed to the development of regional winegrowing and enhanced Italian enology". "Today there are 200 hectares of Longanesi grapes in Romagna – he explained – in some cases with the assistance of nursery specialists. Overall production by all of the consortium companies amounts to 60,000 bottles a year, which is sold not only in Romagna, but also in Japan, Romania and the Czech Republic.

Producers also let their imagination run wild with Albana, the only Docg (label guaranteeing the quality and origin of a wine) certified wine in the region. Albano has a light aroma, reminiscent of apricots, and a dry and warm flavour. The Leone Conti company, which has been in business since 1915, produces Albana in two "projects": version 1, which is traditional and dry and version 2, which is *amabile*, like the Alsatian wines and is harvested late with the grapes partially covered in mould. Leone Conti has even considered the young clientele: in an attempt to increase quality drinking, he has produced the "Pis & lov" bottle. Perhaps not as well known but equally as important, is Rebola, a white wine which in its *amabile* version goes well with tarts and fruit-cakes, and in the *passito* version with dried fruit and cheese. What with all this exciting news, one could easily forget about the "signore" of these hills: Sangiovese, the most widespread Italian vine species, both in Italy and abroad, often used in combination with other grapes. In Toscana, for example, it is an important component in the production of Brunello and Chianti. This geographical road-trip between Piacenza and Rimini to discover Emilia-Romagna wines, between the hills and the Great River, actually goes beyond these borders once the wine is bottled, bringing Emilia-Romagna to all parts of the world.

THE WORKSHOPS OF THE FUTURE

by Thomas Foschini

Emilia-Romagna is on track to face the economy of the future. This is thanks to funding to the tune of nearly € 350m from Europe through the 2007-2013 Regional operative programme, which is part of the European funds for regional development. "The goal – explains Duccio Campagnoli, the alderman for Productive activities – is to help create a new profile for our production systems, and shifting the focus from the historical production know-how system to one of knowing how to put new

knowledge-based products onto the market”. How? With a healthy injection of research and innovation.

Indeed, the 2007-2013 Por-Fesr focuses on innovation investment, applicable research and technology transfer. This choice is needed to ensure the region maintains its top position in the sector, a place it has held for a long time: Emilia-Romagna is the leader in most of the measured indicators. Per capita income is 33.5% above the EU average, the employment rate is about 70% - which is a Lisbon objective -, export figures are nearly three times the European Community average and the industrial system has high productivity.

The funding sum totals € 347m, including European funding and national resources, of which 120m are earmarked for the consolidation of the research network through the creation of “techno-hubs” for industrial research and technology transfer. The issue of regional “techno-hubs” has long been a high-priority for the regional Productive activities unit, for which it has earmarked a further € 120m of additional resources. The unit has put out a call for applications – the deadline for “expressions of interest” is next October – for universities, local public bodies and research centres.

In a couple of years at the most, there should be techno-hubs in the main cities in the region (all of the 9 provinces plus Faenza and Imola) and each one will have a particular specialisation, from automation to nano-technology, from mecatronics to ceramics, from foodstuffs to energy. Benchmark models – the best around –which Emilia-Romagna will work with, include the French innovation agency Adit and the prestigious Fraunhofer Institut in Stuttgart, which will work closely with the regional administration for the organisation and renewal of the new High technology regional network. These will be Innovation workshops, or as Campagnoli calls them, incubators for the future.

The resources are significant, to which we can add (in the Regional operations programme), a further €70m earmarked for the development of innovation-based growth, with a particular focus on the introduction of Ict and innovative tools for the organisational and financial organisation, even in small and medium business. Another important Por cost chapter is the type of development: it must be sustainable. Not only because Europe “forces” us to, but because it’s in the nature of the way Emilia-Romagna operates, to combine development, social cohesion and respect for the environment.

In this regard, for the environmental and energy improvements of productive activities – including sustainable mobility and better logistics for the movement of goods – the Por-Fest has earmarked € 80m. Plus a further € 70m to standardise even further the area which already boasts a quite high level of uniform distribution of productive activities – and hence wealth - compared to the national and European average. These resources

will be used to implement new and improved services, but particularly to adapt infrastructures, which is another hurdle to development and another area which Emilia-Romagna knows it can learn a lot about from the French models.

Finally, an antidote for Italian bureaucratic slowness, those ambitious plans which in Italy way too often never see the light of day: € 12m has been assigned to finance all the executive phases of the plan, in addition to a Supervisory committee formed ad hoc whose mission will be to keep an eye on the concrete and rational implementation of the Community interventions. 🍷

ORGANIC PASSION

by Gaia Levi

Ranging from wine to fruit, from meat to cheese, from pasta to preserves. To the extreme case, textiles using natural fibres. Nobody can stop Emilia-Romagna in the organic sector. With 4,102 certified products and 92,000 hectares of agricultural land on which organic methods are used, the Region boasts high rates of excellence at the international and Italian level: in Italy the Region is in first place for the number of school canteens (127) in which nearly 15% of the meals served every day in the country are organic (112,000 out of 924,000).It is no coincidence then that last June the world organic movement met here, in Modena to be precise, who came together under the banner “Coltivare il Futuro” (*Cultivate the Future*). Five days of study and in-depth examination organised by the Italian federation of organic agriculture movements. This international meeting took place in the Emilia city where, in the mid-1970s, the pioneers of sustainable farming gave rise to the first examples of organic agriculture.

From that time, research and experimentation, agro-environmental measures and increasingly advanced practices took a foot-hold in all of the area leading to the birth – in the 1980s – of Didactic farms (which now number 53), many of which are organic, and which open their doors every year to people who want to combine land and farmer’s methods. The latest available data (Source: Region), describes an increase of players: in 2007 organic farmers increased by 1.8% thanks to the fast growth in numbers of businesses who work or prepare products produced with organic methods (they number 1,016, an increase of 15.2% in one year), alongside 3,073 agricultural production companies (-2%), while organic breeding businesses number 560. Consumption of organic products is increasing at the same rate, which jumped in the first half-year of last year by +9.8% compared to the same period in 2006 (Ismea/AcNielsen study), with family product figures up 10% (+51% for infant products, +2.6% for rice and pasta and +28% for frozen items). Support in the sector has come from the Region to the value of € 150m

(18% of public resources available in the 2000-2006 Rural development plan) to 3,296 organic agricultural companies (4% of total regional businesses). Funding is under two categories: business competitiveness support, which means modernising and recruitment of young farmers, and environmental interventions.

The sector is an innovative one but it hasn’t turned its back on tradition. Very high standards are a characteristic of organic production of local products: from traditional balsamic vinegar to Parma ham, from Parmigiano Reggiano to Lambrusco wines. Organic fruit is the domain of Romagna and the Ferrara region; Vig-nola is the land of cherries, the Cesena region for its strawberries, while winemaking is in the hills of Piacenza, Castelvetro and the Reggio Emilia region. The wine market is booming which, while waiting for specific regulations on organic winemaking from the European Union, the stars of the European project Orwine (Organic viticulture and wine-making) are two companies from Modena: Bonezzi and Fattoria Moretto, where experimentation is the order of the day.

But it’s not only food which is being produced. Carpi, the local capital of ready-to-wear fashion, has converted to natural fibres from organic agriculture, for the sake of environmental protection and for the well-being of workers and buyers. The natural, organic cosmetics sector, however, is not well defined: as is the case for house cleaning products, buyers prefer traditional products which have a high concentration of synthetic active ingredients. But the requirements and guarantees are the same. And the governing body is Icea, Istituta per le cretificazione etica e ambientale (Institute for ethical and environmental certification). In Strada Maggiore, Bologna. 🍷

ECO-ADDICTS

by Alberto Nico

Sustainable mobility is “racing” ahead in Emilia-Romagna. Or rather, along via Emilia where there are dozens and dozens of successful initiatives and projects which combine daily movements of thousands of people with environmental compatibility. After decades of urban and motorway traffic jams, in the last couple of years, a certain section of public administrators and business-people in all the Region have begun to reflect on the phenomenon and have concluded that it is much better for everyone involved if their workers get to work as relaxed as possible and in good form.

Thanks to the application of the Ronchi Decree measures of 1998 (adopted to the letter in Emilia-Romagna more than in any other Italian region), sustainable movement plans from home to work were born, with the aim of reducing the impact on the environment of hundreds of workers travelling every day. The mainstay of sustainable movement plans is the company mobility manager, who, once appointed, works alongside the area manager (created by

Councils and Provinces) to coordinate and manage all the interventions and services for eco-compatible movement in the respective area. “The company mobility manager is thus the person who identifies the strategies and proposes technical and management solutions to organise movements of their own colleagues. His role is to find and suggest incentives and “organisational combinations”, explains Alberto Croce, the area mobility manager for mobility in Ferrara (Ami). These positions today, as included in the Ronchi decree for all companies with over 300 employees per subsidiary (or 800 employees if they are spread out in more than one subsidiary), have practically been all appointed for regional companies of this size. Which is an Italian record for Emilia-Romagna. Company mobility managers (both for public bodies and private firms) have increased from 82 in 2005 to 96 in 2007. Parma is the city which stands out, with the full number of appointments been made as foreseen by the legislation, based on a survey of the companies carried out by Euromobility (the national mobility manager association). While Bologna “wins” in terms of the number of companies surveyed and managers appointed. A “text book” case is that of Ciba Speciality Chemicals in Sasso Marconi (Bologna), whose home-work-place movement plan for its approximately 423 employees, most of whom take the Porrettana road, includes the adoption of carpooling using company vehicles, the promotion of incentives for LPG conversions funded by the Bologna Province, sharing of means of transport and special benefits for those who use 2 wheeled vehicles. Described as such, sustainable mobility seems like a pretty simple thing to put into place. In reality, it takes a long time to implement, with a lot of preliminary analyses. “We are the most advanced Italian region for various reasons”, explains Lorenzo Bertuccio, scientific director of Euromobility. “Firstly because of the most advanced levels of the excellent administrative culture here. The second reason is the long-standing tradition of bike use: in Emilia-Romagna, the use of bikes is more widespread than in other Italian regions, with 16 inhabitants for every 100 kilometres of bicycle paths. Bikes have, in fact, become the main alternative to public transport, after private vehicle use. The last reason is linked to the quality of the air, which is an emergency that has forced many mayors, acting as public health managers, to invest resources to implement all possible sustainable mobility alternatives”. 🍷

REQUEST FOR ASYLUM

by Giorgio Savona

They flee their country to escape persecution, human rights violations, wars and natural disasters. The official numbers – according to Police figures – are 2,571 people, but in reality are over 3,300. These are refugees and people requesting asylum, who often turn to local departments,

unions or associations to obtain information, orientation and advice.

The figures come from monitoring within the “Emilia-Romagna Terra d’Asilo” project (*Emilia-Romagna, Place of Asylum*), promoted by the Region and coordinated by the Parma Province, which also lists the origin country of the people: ex-Yugoslavia comes first (292 people), followed by Nigeria (265) and the Ivory Coast (117). New arrivals come predominantly from some of the most troubled nations over the last few years: Sudan, Afghanistan and Eritrea. “From 2008 all capital council cities and all Provinces have adhered to the project”, Anna Maria Dapporto, regional alderman for Social policies, stresses. “It is a demonstration of the heightened attention of local bodies which, in collaboration with organisations from the tertiary sector, operate to guarantee the right to asylum and a dignified first treatment for people who have escaped persecution. The 2008 study highlights an increase of people in the region: this requires a greater commitment, especially from the Government, both in terms of resources and of expanding the current national service protection structures. And greater recognition of the coordination and planning role carried out by the Regions”. At the end of December 2007, in nearly all of the provinces of Emilia-Romagna (excluding Rimini, whose Police has not supplied figures, and partly in Ravenna), there were 2,571 people who had obtained a permit to stay for political asylum and humanitarian reasons, and asylum applicants. This is an increase on figures from 2005 and 2006 which were, (excluding the Rimini province for comparison purposes) 1,626 and 1,887 respectively. Though to obtain a reliable estimate on the actual number of people seeking refugee status in Emilia-Romagna, we must add to the official Police figures the number of people who are in possession of a permit of stay issued by the Police in the south (in other words, not from Emilia-Romagna) who approached one of our offices in 2007. This brings the total up to about 3,300 people. These figures however are very low compared to the number of people who each year are forced to leave their country for reasons of persecution, human rights violations, war and natural disasters: refugees in the world are, in fact, over 10 million, according to the United Nations High Commission, and live in Africa and in Asia, which are crisis areas. 🍷

FUTURE MEMORY

by Renato Bertacchini

The words written by Attilio Bertolucci for the monument to the 1922 Barriades celebrate the collective resistance of the Oltretorrente suburb of Parma to Balbo’s fascist action squad: “Stavano di vedetta armati / con vecchi fucili novantuno / a difesa della libertà conquistata / da loro per la piccola patria / tenendosi svegli nelle notti afose / dell’agosto con i cori della nostra musica / con il vino fosco della nostra terra”.

(*The lookouts were armed / with old ninety-one rifles / to defend the freedom they had won / for their small homeland / staying awake during those muggy nights / in August with the chorus of our music / with the cloudy wine of our land*).

Inspired editorial work and the existence of the free, antifascist Formaggini, stands out in Modena, in Piazza della Torre, in the epigraph dedicated to him, 29 November 1938 – 29 November 1988: “Tvaio! (tovagliolo) ed Fumajin / così chiese ai modenesi che venisse / chiamato il piccolo spazio che c’era fra la Ghirolandina / e il monumento al Tassoni / ANGELO FORTUNATO FORMIGGINI / accingendosi a testimoniare con il suicidio / l’assurdità delle leggi razziali”. (*A napkin and Fumajin cheese / this is how he asked the Modenese to come / to the small area between the Ghirolandina (Tower) / and the monument to Tassoni / ANGELO FORTUNATO FORMIGGINI / one the verge of testifying with the act of suicide / the absurdity of the racial laws*).

We have quoted two inscriptions from epigraphs in Emilia-Romagna. There are many more, not only civil but also artistic, which can be seen while walking along roads, public squares and gardens in our region. The introduction to the book *L’Italia attraverso le epigrafi (Italy through epigraphs)* by M.B. Lùgari (Il Fiorino, 2008) is worth repeating here: epigraphs in vernacular, in place of those in Latin, were born here between the 1800s and the 1900s. From the historical greatness of the national unifying process to the fascist dictatorship, to opposition and democratic reconstruction. The slaughter in Ferrara, powerfully described in Giorgio Bassani’s *Una lunga notte del ’43 (A long night in ’43)*, is relived in the inscription 15 November 1945, placed by the Ferrara Town Hall in Corso dei Martiri: “Qui / con la sommaria strage / di undici cittadini / il dispotismo / d’un regime fazioso / iniziava / pronube e complice il nazismo tedesco / la serie esecranda dei suoi atti / di feroce rapresaglia / ufficialmente autorizzata / e / cinicamente esaltata” (*Here / with the summary massacre / of eleven citizens / the despotism / of a seditious regime / had started / aided and accomplice by German Nazism/ an abominable series of its acts / of ferocious reprisal / officially authorised / and / cynically exalted*) (to *Ferrarise* Italy; according to the rallying cry of the soldiers of the Republic of Salò from Verona).

The epigraph for the antifascist, partisan organisers - the Cervi brothers - transforms biography into civil martyrdom (Gattatico, Reggio Emilia, in front of the Cervi farmhouse): “Su questa terra in questa casa / i SETTE FRATELLI CERVI / vissero / il senso della loro vita / su quest’aria vennero presi / e portati alla morte”.

(*On this land in this house / the SEVEN CERVI BROTHERS / lived / the meaning of their life / and from this farmyard they were captured / and taken to their death*).

The moving and vindictory plaque in Forlì, in Corso Amando Diaz, commemorates the university lecturer ROBERTO RUFFILLI, who was killed by terrorists on 16 April 1988: “mentre intensamente operava / con fede cristiana e intelligenza politica

/ per il rinnovamento delle istituzioni democratiche”. (while working intensely / with Christian faith and political acumen / for the reconstruction of the democratic institutions). Going back to the 1800s, good use was made of epigraphical writings as a testament to Risorgimento events and freedom fighters: the Carbonaro Giuseppe Andreoli (Rubiera); Ciro Menotti (“rebel in the name of Italy and to freedom to Francesco IV”, Modena, Cordo Canal Grande); Ugo Bassi (“Italian citizen and priest of Christ”, shot in Bologna); Giuseppe Garibaldi (“hunted down over land and sea / by the Austrian militia / lay down his feet / with the dying Anita / on the Mandriole lido”, Sant’Alberto di Ravenna, on the façade of the Ravagli house).

Inscriptions for poets merit undisputed and captivating attention, from Tasso (Ferrara) to Leopardi (Bologna) to Carducci and Pascoli (“great poet of good will”, San Mauro Pascoli); and the plaques for painters, from Correggio to Morandi (“revived the glory of Bologna / in the art of Painting”, Bologna, via Lame). In particular, the Bologna Town Hall remembers that Giosuè Carducci, while living in via Broccaindosso from 1861 to 1876, “from here he gave Italy / *the Giambi ed Epodi* (Iambics and Epodes) / here for the death of little Dante / love and pain / they dictated *Pianto antico* to him”. Funeral testaments dedicated to foreigners take on a commemorative bent. De Montaigne, Stendhal (in his *Chartreuse de Parme* he set “the first assignation / between Fabrizio and Clelia”), Byron “the great English poet / friend of the Ravenna patriots”. In via del Pergolato, the 1960 Ferrarese epigraph reproduces a passage by Michel De Montaigne taken from *Viaggio in Italia* from 16 November 1581: “We stopped by all day / in Ferrara and we visited many beautiful churches, gardens and private houses and from all the things shown to us / of note by the Jesuits, we saw / a rose bush which blooms every month...”. 🍷

THE REBEL PLANT-LOVER

by Claudio Bacilieri

If there is one person who best represents the Romagnolo character, it’s Pietro Bubani. Thanks to his rebellious spirit, Bubani as a youth was a member of that Risorgimento of the 1800s which gave Italy patriots, scientists, men of letters and artists. Over time, the scientist Bubani accentuated his proud and decisive ways, and as a rabid anticlerical person and womaniser he increasingly became more surly and short-tempered, reserving the obstinacy of his unsavoury character to colleagues, family members and inhabitants of his town, Bagnacavallo. It was as though the obstreperous humanity of his fellow town folk, for whom he was “*e mat d’Buban*”, “the Bubani madman”, make him miss the silent world of plants, into which he had tipped as a boy. Pietro Bubani’s fortune was to have grown up in a well-to-do family thanks to his father Antonio, who, when he was born in 1806, had already moved up

the social ladder from his low social standing and had undertaken a brilliant career in public administration in Bagnacavallo, Forlì and Ancona, first as a cashier and collector, then as a collector of direct taxes.

Bagnacavallo, in lower Romagna in the Ravenna province, at the beginning of the 1800s had already taken on the appreciable look of a country village becoming a city, with elegant mansions in the neoclassical style and the main porticoed road, the numerous churches and convents. The arrival of French troops in the pontiff ruled area had ruffled the unflappable social hierarchy which was headed by the land nobility. Antonio Bubani had taken advantage of the suppression of religious orders, which allowed the more able members of the bourgeoisie to grab hold of the church’s lands. It was, in fact, his job with the National Assets Agency, which helped him purchase the ecclesiastical possessions for virtually nothing. During all his life, Antonio Bubani had been obsessed with buying, selling and bartering land, so much so that he ignored his family and was at odds with his four children and second wife (the first wife had died two years after the wedding). His children Pietro and Francesco’s revolutionary spirit clashed with the head of the family’s conservatism and popish style. Meanwhile, the oldest daughter Anna Morelli churned out 8 children and the youngest boy, Cesare, morbidly attached to his mother, lost a fortune to gambling.

After his studies in Bologna with his brother Francesco, in 1852 Pietro enrolled in medicine at University. Lessons at the university were held in Latin in those times and Pietro Bubani quickly became enthralled in botany: the head of the faculty was Antonio Bertoloni, to this day well-known for writing the monumental “Flora Italica”. His student Bubani graduated with the maximum score in 1829. In Bologna his brother Francesco also graduated, in law. It was the eve of the uprisings of 1831, which would see Modena, Bologna and the cities in Romagna, rebel against constituted power in the name of the unification of Italy. On 7 March Pietro Bubani was with a group of revolutionaries who were trying to reach Ravenna from Bologna when the papal and Austrian troops arrived and dispersed them, with the resulting reinstatement of the papal government. As soon as the Austrians had left, the Romagna legations formed provisional governments, with each one having its own civil guard, with Bubani heading the Bagnacavallo one. The intervention of papal troops halted the liberals at Bastia, a place on the Reno River, and ended the insurrectional attempt in Romagna. Having got a whiff of what was happening, Pietro moved to Bologna. Having ended up in the papal government’s blacklist, he also left Bologna, four days before the Austrian troops entered the city on 28 January 1832. Corsica, which could easily be reached from Livorno, was the obvious destination for Italian political exiles. From the first uprisings in 1821 to the Mazzinian

ones in 1853, the island hosted a colony of political expatriates, including our Romagnolo friend. Here Bubani seemed to have discarded his patriot hat and put on his naturalist one. Testimonials, in the form of letters written and received, talk of Bubani trying to carry our botanical excursions, as much as the government authorities allowed him to, given that they kept a constant eye on Italian exiles. He became fond of southern Corsica for the richness and variety of plants, but he soon got bored and in September 1832, he left Ajaccio by ship and headed to Toulon and Marseille, then continued on to Genoa and from there arrived in Pisa and then Florence, while making sure to stay far away from papal territories. He went on naturalistic excursions in the Apennines and at the beginning of 1834 he looked after the herbarium of the Florentine naturalist Antonio Targioni Tozzetti. Disagreement with the important scientist led Bubani to leave the Tuscan grand duchy and later Lucca too, because he - as he wrote – “showed himself to be very fond of women and no friend at all of the priestly rabble”. In October 1835 he was in Livorno, with Marseille as his destination. His discovery of the Pyrenees was born, where he fully immersed himself in botany. As his friend Niccolò Tommaseo – another protagonist of the Risorgimento – noted, Bubani “went to the Pyrenees on laborious wonders to gather herbs and build up a precious herbarium”. Tommaseo had already grasped Bubani’s “bizarre and odd” character, but could not fault his scientific rigour, which he had learned by consulting Ulisse Aldrovandi’s herbals from the 1500s in Bologna.

Twelve summers spent in the mountains, in gathering excursions and studies of the local herbals, produced the most complete catalogue of Pyrenee flora. When he returned to Italy in 1847, he had with him 14 boxes of plants and a 2,500 page manuscript of the *Flora Pyrenaea*, his greatest work, which was published posthumously in four volumes, the first one in 1897. 2,802 species are described, subdivided into 770 genii, of which 85 are mentioned for the first time with imaginative names like *Capidonia*, *Vulvaria*, *Nymphona*. He had collated so much information that today it can be found in herbals in all the world: in addition to the botanical gardens of the Universities of Genoa and Bologna, we can find specimens in numerous other parts of Italy and Berlin, Budapest, Leyden, Geneva, Paris, Vienna, Saint Petersburg and Washington. For every species he described the flowering and fruit bearing period, the area in which it can be found, the date and the place of picking and the ancient and modern writers who had mentioned it. There are many species which today bear the name of the Romagnolo botanist, from *Armeria bubanii* to *Viola bubanii* from the Pyrenee alpine pastures. Bubani encountered mishaps of all kinds during his excursions: run-ins with armed bands, being mistaken as a spy or conspirator. He hiked over wild mountains, travelled along the banks of rivers and ravines. In the Aragonese

Pyrenees he climbed like a mountaineer up to Peña de Mondaruego, putting his life at risk. He dressed eccentrically, with a cord shooting jacket, a white, felt hat and a red Catalan style belt. He had a huge moustache to the extent that everybody knew the moustachioed Italian. “Women and children are afraid of me and make many people laugh”, he said about himself. And he chased after Basque women. In the summer he gathered herbs and in the winter put the plants into order and studied them. Availing himself of the amnesty conceded by the new Pope Pio IX, Bubani returned home. On 2 April 1847, he reached Bagnacavallo after 15 years of exile. In the years from 1848 to 1849 – which are crucial to the Risorgimento – Bubani didn’t commit to his homeland, unlike his brother Francesco who was arrested and had to serve a 5 years’ prison sentence. Pietro passed the time holed up at home editing his manuscripts and setting up his herbarium while dreaming of returning to his beloved Pyrenees. He did so in 1850, leaving Toulouse to reach the Aragonese Pyrenees, where he spent the summer studying the flora. In the winter he went to Madrid, and then returned to Italy via the Mediterranean coast of Catalonia. His stay in Girona was cheered up – he wrote in his diary – by “some ordinary women”. His 1851 excursion ended in Toulouse after abundant gatherings in the eastern Pyrenees. Other botanical explorations took him, in 1853, from Toulouse to the Atlantic via the *Midi Canal*; he then returned to Toulouse after having made a full trip around the Pyrenees.

In Bagnacavallo between November 1854 and February 1856, he wrote in Latin the first version of *Flora Pyrenaea*. He left again at the beginning of 1857, this time across land, and came back to Italy in the spring of 1859. Again in 1860 he set off on another campaign, in the lower Catalan Pyrenees. He was in Paris in the winter of 1862, from where he left for another wander in the spring. The last expedition, the 21st, would be carried out in 1878 at the age of 72 years.

While living in Bagnacavallo between excursions, in addition to scientific work, he spent his time arguing with his fellow city-folk, especially in the two-year period from 1863 to 1965, during which he went back into politics as a town hall councilor. Bubani lamented the lack of civic courage, the countryside overrun by thieves, the military barracks and disrespectful youth. The inhabitants of Bagnacavallo responded by writing offensive messages on the walls of his house or by occupying the theatre stage while he was out of town. He retaliated each time by printing material giving his version of the facts. We still have all the expressions of opinions aimed at his enemies, as well as the many leaflets written on various themes, like “Advice foe getting married”, while he himself destroyed the “female calendar” in which he noted his amorous conquests.

Full to the brim with legal cases and his bundles of plants, he left us an enormous manuscript, spread out in various

places like the Archiginnasio Library and the Risorgimento Museum in Bologna, where letters to family, diaries and correspondence allow us to understand the character of this person who described himself for an epigraph to be used on his tomb: “Here lie the bones / of Pietro Bubani of Bagnacavillo / frank, loyal, active, a philosopher, a liberal / he loved and hated with all his heart: grateful and vindictive / of a violent nature; a methodical life / harsh in character and of word / he tried many things, music, gymnastics and medicine / Botany at the end took hold of him / in which he acquired rare erudition / revolutionary, in 1831 he lived for more than 15 years in exile / went around the Pyrenees botanically for 15 years / fervent in his love of women / in his love of his Homeland / and the extreme hate for his tyrants...”.

In 2006, for the bicentenary of his birth, the Bagnacavallo Council, in collaboration with the Institute for Cultural Heritage of the Emilia-Romagna Region, dedicated a book to him: “Dagli Appennini ai Pirenei, Pietro Bubani: un botanico nel Risorgimento” (*From the Apennines to the Pyrenees. Pietro Bubani: a botanist in the Risorgimento*). An exhibition with the same title was held in 2007 in the Risorgimento Library in Bologna, the city in which he was buried. 🌿

The sand at the bottom of the sea

THE SAND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

by Anna Maria Martina

A new, extended, underwater sand deposit, 60 kilometres from the Rimini coast at a depth of 50 metres, between 150 and 200 million square metres, has been found. This is in addition to the sand which had already been discovered in Ravenna and the Ferrara Lido and which can prove to be of great use for future refurbishments against erosion of the Adriatic coast.The deposit was found thanks to Beachmed-e, the European Union project for the defence of the Mediterranean coastal area. “This is a very important repository – said the regional alderman for the defence of the ground and coast Marioluigi Bruschini – which could form a very high quality strategic stockpile for future coastal refurbishment interventions, for other Regions too”. Fossil sand refurbishment today is the fundamental and least environmentally damaging alternative for coastal erosion problems. In Emilia-Romagna, calculations show that refurbishment interventions are required every five years on average.Bruschini underlined the importance of a national policy of integrated management of the coastal areas, while today only some Regions and Europe are active. “A national strategic plan for the coast is needed”, he added. “Tourism and the wealth that it produces cannot be divorced from the problems that all the coast faces in our country too”.Beachmed-e is a European programme which involves the Lazio,

Liguria, Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna Regions for Italy, the Conseil General de l’Herault e Direction Regionale de l’E-quipement Languedoc-Roussillon for France, the Generalitat de Catalunya for Spain, the Region of Crete, the Region of Eastern Macedonia-Tracia for Greece. The aim is to come up with coordinated intervention strategies at the European level, to preserve and protect a coastal habitat which is ever-increasingly fragile and at risk in all of the Mediterranean.

The results of Beachmed-e presented today in Bologna spoke also of the installation last May of a wavemetre float to monitor wave movement 8 kilometres off the coast of Cesenatico. The float sends data non-stop to the Cesenatico Marine Research Centre on wave size, height, frequency and intensity, in addition to water and air temperature. Its target user group is not only technicians, but also the general public, who can consult the data in real time on the Arpa site (www.arpa.emn.it/sim/?mare%2fbga).

The last refurbishment intervention with underwater sand was carried out in the spring of 2007, costing € 13,562,000 (€ 11,562,000 from civil protection funds from the Region, and 2 million from the Ravenna Council) in 7 different parts of the coast: Misano Adriatico, Riccione, Rimini nord-Igea Marina, Cesenatico, Milano Marittima, Punta Marina, Lido di Dante, in the provinces of Forlì-Cesena, Rimini and Ravenna. The intervention, which involved nearly 9 kilometres of coast onto which over 800 thousand square metres of sand was poured, which came from 2 underwater repositories, followed a similar one – again carried out by the Region – which was completed in the winter of 2001-2002. 🌿

The sand at the bottom of the sea

EVERYBODY CALLS ME BLONDE

by Claudio Bacilieri

Originating in the 1820s between Berlin and Vienna, with both cities vying for first place position, the accordion took no time in being adopted by Italians. Rising from ancient pastoral roots, the instrument encompasses the sound of the land, that spontaneous dancing which arouses simple life movements. The natural disposition of Italians to sing means that even in the mountains in Parma, young men in love would sing love verses in front of their paramour’s house accompanied by the accordion. Played by ear or aired during cultured musical scores, the accordion had to work hard to debunk the myth that it was an instrument only to accompany folk dancers and casual fun, within the perimeters of our soul. Giuseppe Verdi was the first among the great composers to reserve it a part in the tavern scene in his *Simon Boccanegra* of 1857.

At the beginning of the 1900s, Italian factories exported accordions all over the world, but the centre for the music was a town in the Apennines around Parma, Bor-

gotaro. For mysterious reasons, this town in Val Taro gave rise to all types of talented musicians, from Giovanni Pacolini, lute player in the court of the duke in the 1500s, to Giuseppe Brugnoli, known as “Toscanini’s flautist”, up to virtuosos of the accordion. Indeed it was these musicians who spread the name of the town and valley in New York bars and restaurants, and in the embankments along the Seine in Paris.

One of the pioneers of the Italian style in the US is **John Brugnoli**, the founder of the Val Taro Musette Orchestra. His accordion playing accompanied the “radio days” of many Italo-American housewives in the 1940s, who, while ironing or tidying up the house, learnt the tunes. John was nicknamed Giano d’*Scud’lein*, after his grandfather who used to drink wine from a bowl. Born in Borgotaro in 1898, he was trained in the accordion by his younger brother Luigi, who was one of the first musicians to play the accordion and the piano-style accordion. Widespread poverty in the Apennines condemned many families to emigrate at the time. In 1928 the grandson of Scud’lein chose to go to America. At first, as an illegal immigrant, he made ends meet by selling mushrooms. After becoming legal after living in Canada for a while, he was joined in New York in 1935 by his wife and children. Here John found work as an accordionist for the Francino cabaret. The desire to make it big as a musician pushed him into looking for somebody with whom he could try to open a club, where he could play and people could dance. He chose **Pete (Pietro) Delgrosso** as his partner: people called him *Filumena*, he had known him in Borgotaro, he too an immigrant to New York, where he earned his pay by playing the accordion in the Bel Tabarin on the West Side. Having obtained a loan to open the club of their dreams, *Scud’lein* and *Filumena* inaugurated *The Valtaro Restaurant* on Christmas Eve in 1936 at 869 Second Avenue, between 46th and 47th Streets. With Joe Cerina on guitar, they created a recognizable style, which used northern Italian popular tunes – polkas, mazurkas and waltzes - as the basis of their dance music. What came out was a sound which you could whistle while walking among the Midtown skyscrapers. When they played *Tutti mi chiamano bionda*, their biggest hit, the urge to dance was uncontrollable. The *Valtaro sound*, if we can call it that, was formed using two accordions: one that played the melody and the other the harmony. At the beginning of the 50s, the Val Taro Musette Orchestra had already produced various records on important labels. In the meantime, John Brugnoli had sold his share of the Valtaro and had opened a new cabaret club with his friend Emilio Spagnoli, the *Terrace Café*, between Second Avenue and 59th Street. He then went back to the Valtaro, which closed up in 1961. The following year, the album *Sing Along in Italian* was released on Colonial Records and in 1973 John Brugnoli and Pete Delgrosso were given honorary awards by the American Accordionists’ Association.

Another of the Italian musette-style icons was **Peter Spagnoli**, born in 1921, emigrated from Borgotaro with his family at only 2 years of age, and son of Emilio Spagnoli, who, in his house on 60th Street, on the East Side of Manhattan, put John Brugnoli up for a period of time. So it was *Scud’lein* who taught Peter how to read the music and secrets of the accordion. The repertoire consisted of folk songs from Val Taro and Peter, who now is hovering around 90 years old and lives in Queens, remembers when he was 11 years old and was put on a stage with an accordion in his hands and played for the army on Governor’s Island. For the occasion he was made to wear – he still doesn’t know why – a Spanish costume. The boy later scraped up a bit of money playing at night at *The Emiliana* bar and other “holes in the wall”, as he calls them. When his father Emilio and John Brugnoli bought the Terrace in 1939 in the suburbs, Peter moved up in the world. That cabaret bar, in fact, hosted musicians like the black West Indian pianist Norma Mc Feeters and Jewish drummer Willy Wohlman, who seemed to have the Parma Apennine blood in his veins. They had jam sessions in which everybody contributed: the result was an always crowded bar, where people came to listen to music, to dance and to find the love of their life.

After the break due to the war, in which he was in the air force as a bomber navigator, Peter went back to playing the Terrace, where he met Dilma, the woman he married in 1947. He then became an accordion teacher in a school in Brooklyn and then worked for himself, and kept on playing at the Terrace up until the 1960s, accompanied by Norma on the piano. Peter Spagnoli was synonymous with the accordion in New York: alone, or with his 10-piece orchestra, he was constantly invited to play at receptions, weddings, political dinners and charity events, even at Bar mitzvahs. He left the scene in 1995 after having recorded various albums of Valtaro Musette and tried all genres, from Latin American to rock to big band. His last appearance was a few years ago at his niece’s wedding, where he opened the musical entertainment with *Tutti mi chiamano bionda*.

These names which today say little to most people - John Brugnoli, Pete Delgrosso, Peter Spagnoli – are remembered affectionately on the Valtarese Foundation website by their biographers, Dominic Karcic and Carol Schiavi, Peter Spagnoli’s daughter. The story goes on: every year, on a Sunday, there is a party organised by the *Valtaro Accordionists’ Reunion*, where accordionists from Val Taro are reunited.

Between the 1920s and the 1970s, the valse *musette* - also called “the people’s waltz” - was widespread in France, as opposed to the Viennese one, which is seen as the dance of the nobility and the bourgeoisie. While the Viennese waltzes played by big orchestras had become only music to listen to, the musette, which got its name from an ancient instrument which looks like the bagpipe, had become the dance of the French proletariat. It was a dance

which demanded simple words and composition, as people loved humming and whistling the tunes. The best instrument to accompany the singing was the accordion, which had superseded the musette. This is where the musicians from Borgotaro come into the picture in Paris: at least three of them had been the greatest writers of the genre, which boasted Edith Piaf as one of the people who interpreted their songs.

Many of the musette waltz players were vagabonds, who, with their accordion would stop and sing in the squares, as we have seen in many films. The songs they played were about love or poverty experienced as immigrants, street songs which, from farmyards in the Padania plains or from Apennine paths, could reach the Parisian crossroads in the *quais de la Seine* – which was also the title of a track by **Louis Ferrari** (Borgotaro 1910 - Nizza 1987). Composer and accordionist, a naturalised French citizen, Ferrari is the writer of what connoisseurs consider one of the most beautiful musettes of all time, *Domino*. Ferrari could combine refined techniques with heightened sensibility, and get couples to dance to the harrowing rhythm of his waltzes. Louis Ferrari was also an excellent bandoneón player, the Argentinian version of the accordion and the main instrument in tango orchestras.

Louis Ferrari also had the merit of launching his cousin **Antonio “Tony” Murena** onto the world of cabaret and music-hall. A musician of exceptional virtuosity and rare elegance, Murena emigrated from Borgotaro with his family in 1923, at the age of 5 years, to Nogent-sur-Mame, a council area of the Parisian *banlieue* where for some time an Italian community from the Piacenza and Parma valleys had settled. At the age of 9, little Tony already played the chromatic accordion given to him by his uncle. He would go to *faire les bals*, as they used to say, to make people dance in clubs. After a few engagements with the Le Chantilly and L’Ange Rouge cabaret clubs, in 1932 he focused on the bandonéon and, with the tango explosion, began to play in various groups, including Rafaël Canaro’s and Eduardo Bianco’s, who were the best tango orchestras in Paris. With his quintet he played at La Silhouette, La Boule Noire, La Java, Pré Catelan and da Ciro’s: he can be considered the main proponent of French *swing musette*. Indeed, right from the beginning of the 1940s, he had been a convert to jazz, having grasped how the accordion could even adapt to a sophisticated context. Now it is normal to see Richard Galliano, the most famous accordionist in the world, playing the musette tradition in a jazz style, but in his day, Tony Murena was ahead of his time. And even though recently (he died in 1970) he gave way to commercialism, his desire to broaden the instrument’s confines brought him face to face with musicians like Astor Piazzolla, Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli: the last two were often guests at the Le Mirliton jazz club he bought in 1949 in rue de Courcelles. Tony Murena had a great career: the sudden death of Glenn Miller

in 1944 was the only reason why he didn’t get to play with the most popular orchestra in the US. In 1947 he played for the Cambodian king Norodom Sihanuk; in 1958 he set up Radio-Luxembourg’s l’Orchestre Musette; finally, he left us songs like *Passion* and *Indifférence*.

The youngest of the three Borgotaro musicians in Paris is **Lino Leopardi**, born in 1928. Music had already got into his bloodstream in his home town, where musical bands have a tradition of excellence. After emigrating to Paris, he soon got himself noticed as an accordionist and then as a composer. He recorded several soundtracks for films – from *Le cinéma du papa to Pile ou face, from Mandrin to Cauchemar* – and music for theatre. A meeting with the singer Monique Morelli, who would later become his partner, brought him back to the ancient calling of the accordionist: of accompanying, or supporting the song. The song is not idealized, it is realistic, and draws on the joys and pain of life: what poets see before others do. So Leonardo threw himself headfirst into putting the poems of Louis Aragon, Tristan Corbière, François Villon and others, into music, which Mordli performed and sang in her cigarette and wine-stained voice, dressed always in white and wearing a long red scarf. “What I feel for Léonardi - Louis Argon wrote – is a strange sentiment I have when I listen to what he did with a poem, as though a magician held up a mirror to me in which I see myself as I never have. The mirror which hides nothing of what was hidden in my lines of poetry, and perhaps it is not a mirror, but a magical trick through which intimate feelings are visible”. Aragon was one of the greatest French poets of the 1900s.

Today, the heir of the Borgotaro accordion tradition lives in London, where he was born in 1966. His name is **Romano Viazzani**, who has dedicated a concert for accordion and orchestra to his mother’s mother-land, the Val Ceno, an Apennine valley next to Val taro. The concert was held in December 2001 with the BBC Orchestra during the London Accordion Festival which Viazzani and his wife Janet organised at the Wembley Complex to promote the accordion. Viazzani plays in theatres, composes soundtracks, does concerts as a solo artist and, of course with his beloved accordion, has played on records by, and done tours with, the bebop saxophonist Gilad Atzmon and his group The Orient House Ensemble, which plays a multi-award winning mixture of music which combines jazz, tango and Middle Eastern and Balkan influences.

While in Borgotaro, internationally renowned jazz musician **Giorgio Gaslini** from Milan writes, composes and studies. The maestro adopted this city for his pleasant retreat over 30 years ago: first in a stone monastery from the 1500s in the small village of Gorro and now in the silence and light of a house in the outskirts of the town. Because, as everybody knows, music is in the air in Borgotaro. 🌿

di Claudio Bacilieri

PROFILI

IL RIBELLE CHE AMAVA LE PIANTE

Stravagante, donnaiolo e mangiapreti, il botanico Pietro Bubani da Bagnacavallo trascorse dodici estati sui Pirenei, tra campagne di raccolta e studi degli erbari locali, per produrre il più completo catalogo della flora dei monti tra Francia e Spagna.

Translation at page 49

THE REBEL PLANT-LOVER

Extravagant, a womaniser and rabidly anticlerical, the botanist Pietro Bubani from Bagnacavallo spent 12 summers in the Pyrenees, amongst crops and studies of the local herbaria, to produce the most complete catalogue of the flora of the mountains between France and Spain.

Se c'è un personaggio che rappresenta bene il carattere romagnolo, questi è Pietro Bubani. Grazie al suo spirito ribelle, Bubani in gioventù è stato parte di quell'Ottocento risorgimentale che ha dato all'Italia patrioti, scienziati, letterati e artisti. Col tempo, lo scienziato Bubani ha accentuato i suoi modi fieri e decisi, e da mangiapreti e donnaiolo è diventato sempre più burbero e collerico, riservando a colleghi, familiari e agli abitanti del suo paese – Bagnacavallo – le impuntature del suo pessimo carattere. Come se la chiassosa umanità dei suoi concittadini, per i quali era “*e mat d'Bubani*”, il matto dei Bubani, gli facesse ogni volta rimpiangere il silenzioso mondo delle piante, nel quale era entrato in punta di piedi da ragazzo. ➤



La fortuna di Pietro Bubani è stata di crescere in una famiglia resa agiata dall'intraprendenza del padre Antonio, il quale al momento della sua nascita, nel 1806, aveva già riscattato la bassa estrazione sociale e intrapreso una brillante carriera nell'amministrazione pubblica tra Bagnacavallo, Forlì e Ancona, prima come cassiere e esattore, poi come ricevitore delle imposte dirette.

Bagnacavallo, nella Bassa Romagna in provincia di Ravenna, ai primi dell'Ottocento stava già assumendo quell'aspetto apprezzabile che da borgo di campagna l'avrebbe innalzato al rango di città, con palazzi eleganti in stile neoclassico e la strada principale porticata, le numerose chiese e i conventi. L'arrivo nei domini pontifici delle truppe francesi aveva smosso l'imperturbabile gerarchia sociale al cui vertice stava la nobiltà terriera. Antonio Bubani aveva approfittato della soppressione degli ordini religiosi, che consentì ai borghesi più capaci di accaparrarsi le terre del clero. Fu, infatti, grazie al suo impiego all'Agenzia dei Beni Nazionali che riuscì a acquistare a prezzi stracciati i possedimenti ecclesiastici. Per tutta la vita Antonio Bubani fu preso dall'ansia di comprare, vendere, permutare terreni, tanto da trascurare gli affetti familiari e porsi in conflitto con i quattro figli e la seconda moglie (la prima era morta due anni dopo il matrimonio). Al capofamiglia conservatore e papalino si contrapponevano i figli Pietro e Francesco animati da sentimenti rivoluzionari.

Dopo gli studi a Bologna insieme al fratello Francesco, nel 1825 Pietro si iscrisse all'Università, scegliendo la facoltà di medicina. All'Alma Mater le lezioni allora si tenevano in latino, e Pietro Bubani si appassionò subito alla botanica: il titolare della cattedra era Antonio Bertoloni, noto ancora oggi come autore di un'opera monumentale, *Flora Italica*. Il suo allievo Bubani si laureò a pieni voti nel 1829. A Bologna anche il fratello Francesco divenne dottore, ma in legge. Era la vigilia dei moti del 1831, che avrebbero visto Modena, Bologna e le città della Romagna ribellarsi al potere costituito in nome dell'unità d'Italia. Pietro Bubani il 7 marzo era insieme ai rivoluzionari che da Bologna cercavano di raggiungere Ravenna, e che l'arrivo delle truppe pontificie e austriache disperse, rimettendo in sella il governo papale. Appena gli austriaci se ne andarono, le legazioni di Romagna si costituirono in governi provvisori, dotati ognuno di una guardia civica, a capo della quale, a Bagnacavallo, c'era Bubani. L'intervento delle truppe papaline fermò i liberali alla Bastia, una località sul fiume Reno, e chiuse il tentativo insurrezionale in Romagna. Fiutata l'aria, Pietro si ritirò a Bologna. Finito nella lista nera del governo pontificio, fuggì anche da Bologna, quattro giorni prima dell'entrata delle truppe austriache in città, il 28 gennaio 1832.

La Corsica, facilmente raggiungibile da Livorno, era il naturale approdo dei fuorusciti italiani. Dai primi moti del 1821 fino a quelli mazziniani del 1853, l'isola ospitò una colonia di espatriati politici, nei quali si inserì anche il nostro romagnolo. Qui, però, Bubani sembrava aver dismesso i panni del patriota per indossare quelli del naturalista. Le testimonianze, sotto forma di lettere scritte e ricevute, ci dicono che Bubani cerca di compiere delle escursioni botaniche, per quanto gli è consentito dalle autorità governative, che tengono d'occhio gli esuli italiani. Apprezza il sud della Corsica per la ricchezza



In queste pagine e nella precedente, due ritratti dell'eclettico Pietro Bubani (tratti dal libro *Dagli Appennini ai Pirenei* di Pietro Bubbiani un botanico del Risorgimento). On this page and the page before it, two portraits of the eclectic Pietro Bubani (taken from the book *Dagli Appennini ai Pirenei* di Pietro Bubbiani un botanico del Risorgimento).

QUANDO
TORNÒ IN
ITALIA, NEL 1847,
AVEVA CON SÉ
QUATTORDICI
CASSE DI
PIANTE E UN
MANOSCRITTO
DI 2500 PAGINE

e varietà di piante, ma si stanca presto e nel settembre 1832 si imbarca ad Ajaccio per Tolone e Marsiglia, poi prosegue per Genova e da lì arriva a Pisa e quindi a Firenze, sempre tenendosi alla larga dai territori pontifici. Fa gite naturalistiche sull'Appennino e all'inizio del 1834 cura l'erbario del naturalista fiorentino Antonio Targioni Tozzetti. Per dissapori con questo importante personaggio, deve lasciare il granducato di Toscana, e poi anche Lucca, per essersi – come scrive – “mostrato molto amante delle donne, e per niente amico della pretaglia”. Nell'ottobre del 1835 è a Livorno, destinazione Marsiglia. Comincia allora la sua scoperta dei Pirenei, dove si dedica totalmente alla botanica. Come annota il suo amico Niccolò Tommaseo, altro protagonista del Risorgimento, Bubani “andava sui Pirenei a faticose peregrinazioni per coglier erbe, e comporsi un erbario prezioso”. Già il Tommaseo aveva colto il carattere “bizzarro e bislacco” di Bubani, cui però non faceva difetto il rigore scientifico, imparato consultando gli erbari cinquecenteschi di Ulisse Aldrovandi a Bologna.

Dodici estati passate tra i monti, tra campagne di raccolta e studi degli erbari locali, produssero il più completo catalogo della flora pirenaica. Quando tornò in Italia, nel 1847, aveva con sé quattordici casse di piante e un manoscritto di 2500 pagine della *Flora Pyrenaea*, la sua opera maggiore, che sarebbe stata pubblicata postuma in quattro volumi, il primo nel 1897. Vi sono descritte 2802 specie suddivise in 770 generi, di cui 85 nominati per la prima volta da lui, con nomi fantasiosi come *Cupidonia*, *Vulvaria*, *Nymphona*. Aveva messo insieme tanto materiale che oggi ce lo ritroviamo negli erbari di tutto il mondo: non solo negli orti botanici delle Università di Genova e di Bologna, ma con esemplari in molte altre parti d'Italia e a Berlino, Budapest, Leida, Ginevra, Parigi, Vienna, San Pietroburgo, Washington. Di ogni specie annotava il periodo di fioritura e quello in cui fruttifica, la zona in cui è presente, la data e il luogo di raccolta, gli autori antichi e moderni che

l'avevano citata. Diverse sono le specie che oggi portano il nome del botanico romagnolo, dalla *Armeria bubanii* alla *Viola bubanii* dei pascoli alpini dei Pirenei. Tra una spedizione e l'altra, gli capitano disavventure di ogni genere: incappa in bande armate, è scambiato per spia o cospiratore. Percorre montagne selvagge, costeggia fiumi e burroni, nei Pirenei aragonesi si inerpica come un alpinista fino alla Peña de Mondarugo, rischiando la vita. Veste in modo eccentrico, con cacciatora di velluto, cappello bianco di feltro e cintura rossa alla catalana;

porta due enormi baffi, così che ormai tutti conoscono quel buffo italiano. “Faccio paura alle donne e ai ragazzi e faccio ridere molta gente”, dice di sé. E corre dietro alle donne basche. In estate erborizza e in inverno riordina e studia le piante. Approfittando dell'amnistia concessa dal nuovo Papa Pio IX, Bubani prende la via del ritorno. Il 2 aprile 1847 è a Bagnacavallo dopo quindici anni di esilio. Gli anni 1848-49, cruciali per il Risorgimento, non lo trovano impegnato per la patria, a differenza del fratello Francesco che, arrestato, dovrà scontare cinque anni di carcere. Pietro passa il tempo chiuso in casa, a rivedere i manoscritti, sistemare l'erbario e sognare di ripartire per gli amati Pirenei. Lo fa nel 1850, raggiungendo da Tolosa i Pirenei aragonesi, dove trascorre l'estate a studiare la flora. L'inverno è a Madrid, quindi intraprende il viaggio di ritorno in Italia attraversando la costa mediterranea della Catalogna. Il soggiorno a Gerona è allietato - scrive nei diari - da “qualche donnetta”. La campagna del 1851 termina a Tolosa dopo un'ampia raccolta sui Pirenei orientali. Altre esplorazioni botaniche lo portano nell'estate 1853 da Tolosa all'Atlantico attraverso il *Canal du Midi*; ritorna quindi a Tolosa dopo aver compiuto un giro completo intorno ai Pirenei.

A Bagnacavallo tra il novembre 1854 e il febbraio 1856 scrive in latino la prima versione della *Flora Pyrenaea*. Riparte all'inizio del '57, questa volta via terra, e rientra in patria nella primavera del '59. E' di nuovo in viaggio per una

WHEN HE
CAME BACK TO
ITALY IN 1847, HE
BROUGHT WITH
HIM FOURTEEN
CRATES OF
PLANTS AND
A 2500-PAGE
MANUSCRIPT

nuova campagna nel 1860, nei bassi Pirenei catalani. L'inverno 1862 lo coglie a Parigi, da dove parte per una nuova peregrinazione in primavera. L'ultima spedizione, la ventunesima, la farà nel 1878 a 72 anni.

La permanenza a Bagnacavallo tra una partenza e l'altra, oltre che nel lavoro scientifico lo vede impegnato a litigare con i suoi concittadini, soprattutto nei due anni, dal '63 al '65, in cui torna alla politica come consigliere comunale. Bubani lamenta la mancanza di coraggio civile, le campagne infestate

dai ladri, gli alloggiamenti militari, la gioventù irrispettosa. Gli abitanti di Bagnacavallo gli rispondono con scritte offensive sui muri di casa o occupandogli il palco a teatro quando è fuori paese. Lui si vendica mandando in stampa ogni volta la sua versione dei fatti. Ci rimangono così tutte le esternazioni rivolte ai nemici, come i tanti opuscoli su temi vari, tra i quali i “Consigli intorno all'ammogliarsi”, mentre da lui stesso è stato distrutto il “calendario donnesco” in cui annotava le conquiste amorose. Carico di contenziosi oltre che dei suoi fardelli di piante, ci ha lasciato un'enorme produzione manoscritta, dispersa in vari luoghi tra cui la Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio e il Museo del Risorgimento a Bologna, dove le lettere ai familiari, i diari, l'epistolario fanno ben comprendere il carattere di questo personaggio che così si definiva in un'epigrafe concepita per la sua tomba: “Qui giacciono le ossa / di Pietro Bubani da Bagnacavallo / franco, leale, attivo, filosofo, liberale / amò e odiò di cuore: grato e vendicativo / di sentire violento: di vita metodico / di carattere, e di parola severissimo / provò più cose, musica, ginnastica e medicina / se l'ebbe infine la Botanica / nella quale acquistò rara erudizione / rivoluzionario nel 1831 fece 15 anni e più di esilio / corse botanicamente per 15 anni i Pirenei / nell'amore alle donne ardentissimo / nell'amore della Patria / e nell'odio contro i suoi tiranni estremo...”. ☘

STORIE

TUTTI MI CHIAMANO BIONDA

(EVERYBODY
CALLS ME BLONDE)

Uno dei più
conosciuti
fisarmonicisti
della "dinastia"
di Borgotaro:
Pete Del Grosso.
One of the best-
known
players of the
Borgotaro
"dynasty": Pete
Del Grosso.

*Per ragioni misteriose, il piccolo centro
parmense di Borgotaro ha dato origine
a talenti musicali di ogni genere,
da Giuseppe Brugnoli, noto come
"il flautista di Toscanini", fino
ai virtuosi della fisarmonica
che hanno diffuso il nome
della loro valle nei bar
di New York e lungo
la Senna di Parigi.*

Translation at page 50

*For mysterious reasons,
the small town of
Borgotaro near Parma
has given birth to
musical talent of all
types, from Giuseppe
Brugnoli, known as
"Toscanini's flautist",
up to the virtuosos of the
accordion who spread
the name of their valley
in bars in New York
and along the Seine
in Paris.*

Nata negli anni Venti
dell'Ottocento tra Berlino e Vienna,
che se ne contendono la paternità,
la fisarmonica ha cominciato presto
a parlare italiano. Sorta da radici pasto-
rali antichissime, abbraccia i suoni della
terra, il ballo spontaneo che suscitano i
semplici moti della vita. ➤



La naturale predisposizione italiana al canto ha fatto sì che anche sulle montagne di Parma i ragazzi innamorati, davanti alla casa della loro bella, intonassero parole d'amore accompagnandosi con questo strumento. Suonata a orecchio oppure fatta respirare tra partiture colte, la fisarmonica ha faticato a smentire il pregiudizio che la voleva adatta solo ad accompagnare balli popolari e divertimenti alla buona nelle periferie dell'anima. Giuseppe Verdi è stato il primo tra i grandi compositori a riservarle una parte nella scena della taverna del suo *Simon Boccanegra* del 1857.

PIONIERI IN AMERICA

All'inizio del Novecento le fabbriche italiane esportavano fisarmoniche in tutto il mondo, ma il centro di irradiazione della musica era un paese nell'Appennino parmense, Borgotaro. Per ragioni misteriose questa località della Val Taro ha dato origine a talenti di ogni genere, da Giovanni Pacolini, suonatore di liuto presso la corte ducale nel Cinquecento, a Giuseppe Brugnoli, noto come "il flautista di Toscanini", fino ai virtuosi della fisarmonica. Sono stati proprio questi musicisti a diffondere il nome del borgo e della valle nei bar e nei ristoranti di New York, come nei *quais* lungo la Senna a Parigi. Tra i pionieri dello stile italiano negli States c'è **John Brugnoli**, il fondatore della Val Taro Musette Orchestra. La sua fisarmonica ha accompagnato i "radio days" di tante massaie italoamericane negli anni Quaranta, che stirando o rassettando la casa imparavano i suoi motivi. John era soprannominato Giano d'*Scud'lein*, per via del nonno che era solito bere il vino da una scodella. Nato a Borgotaro nel 1898, fu istruito all'uso dello strumento dal fratello minore Luigi, uno dei primi musicisti a suonare la fisarmonica a piano. Le scarse risorse dell'Appennino condannavano a quel tempo tante famiglie all'emigrazione. Nel 1928 anche il nipote di *Scud'lein* scelse la via dell'America, dove all'inizio, come immigrato clandestino, sbarcava il lunario vendendo funghi. Regolata la sua posizione dopo una permanenza in Canada, si fece raggiungere a New York nel '35 da moglie e figli. Qui John trovò un ingaggio come fisarmonicista al cabaret Francino. La voglia di farsi valere come musicista lo spinse a cercare un compagno con cui intraprendere l'avventura di un locale in proprietà, dove suonare e far ballare la gente. Scelse come socio **Pete (Pietro) Delgrosso**, chiamato *Filumena*, conosciuto a Borgotaro, e anche lui emigrato a New York, dove si guadagnava da vivere suonando la fisarmonica al Bel Tabarin nel West Side. Ottenuta in prestito la somma necessaria per aprire il locale dei loro sogni, *Scud'lein* e *Filumena* inaugurarono la vigilia di Natale del '36 *The Valtaro Restaurant* al numero 869 della Second Avenue, tra la 46esima e la 47esima Strada. Con il chitarrista Joe Cerina crearono uno stile riconoscibile, che utilizzava come base per il ballo le melodie popolari dell'Italia settentrionale, quali polke, mazurche e valzer. Ne usciva un impatto sonoro che si poteva fischiettare tra i grattacieli di Midtown. Quando attaccavano *Tutti mi chiamano bionda*, il loro più grande successo, l'impulso al ballo diventava irresistibile. Il *Valtaro sound*, se così possiamo chiamarlo, era costruito utilizzando due fisarmoniche, una che creava la melodia, l'altra l'armonia. Nei primi anni Cinquanta la Val Taro Musette Orchestra aveva già all'attivo diverse raccolte con importanti

case discografiche. Nel frattempo, John Brugnoli aveva venduto la sua quota del Valtaro e aperto un nuovo cabaret con l'amico Emilio Spagnoli, il *Terrace Café*, tra Second Avenue e la 59esima Strada. Poi fece ritorno al Valtaro, che cessò l'attività nel 1961. L'anno seguente uscì per la Colonial Records l'album *Sing Along in Italian* e nel 1973 John Brugnoli e Pete Delgrosso ottennero il premio alla carriera dalla American Accordionists' Association.

Un'altra icona dello stile musette italiano fu **Peter Spagnoli**, classe 1921, emigrato da Borgotaro con la famiglia a soli due anni, e figlio di Emilio Spagnoli, che nella sua casa sulla 60esima strada, nella East Side di Manhattan, ospitò per un certo periodo John Brugnoli. Fu quindi da *Scud'lein* che Peter imparò a leggere la musica e i segreti della fisarmonica. Il repertorio era costituito dalle canzoni popolari della Val Taro e Peter, che ora veleggia verso i novant'anni e vive nel Queens, ricorda che a soli undici anni fu messo su un palco con una fisarmonica in mano, per suonare per l'esercito a Governor's Island. Per l'occasione gli fu fatto indossare - ancora non sa perché - un costume spagnolo. Più avanti il ragazzo raggrinellò qualche soldo suonando la notte nel bar *The Emiliana* e altri piccoli "buchi nel muro", come li chiama. Quando il padre Emilio e John Brugnoli acquistarono nel '39 il Terrace nei quartieri residenziali, Peter ebbe modo di fare un salto di qualità. In quel cabaret, infatti, si esibivano musicisti come

Norma Mc Feeters, una pianista nera delle Indie Occidentali, e il batterista ebreo Willy Wohlman, che sembravano avere nel Dna la musica dell'Appennino parmense. Si facevano delle jam session in cui ognuno metteva del suo: il risultato era un locale sempre affollato, dove la gente veniva per ascoltare musica, ballare e cercare l'anima gemella.

Dopo la parentesi della guerra, che lo vide in aeronautica come navigatore dei bombardieri, Peter tornò a suonare al Terrace, dove conobbe Dilma, la ragazza che sposò nel '47. Divenne poi insegnante di fisarmonica in una scuola di Brooklyn e quindi maestro in proprio, continuando a esibirsi al Terrace fino agli anni Sessanta, accompagnato da Norma al pianoforte. Peter Spagnoli a New York era sinonimo di fisarmonica: da solo o con la sua orchestra di dieci elementi, era continuamente invitato a suonare a ricevimenti, matrimoni, cene politiche, serate di beneficenza, fino ai rinfreschi in occasione dei *Bar mitzvah* degli ebrei. Si è ritirato dalle scene nel '95, dopo aver registrato diversi album di *Valtaro Musette* e provato tutti i generi, dalla musica latina al rock, al repertorio delle big band. L'ultima apparizione qualche anno fa al matrimonio della nipote, dove ha aperto le musiche con *Tutti mi chiamano bionda*.

Questi nomi che oggi ai più non dicono niente - John Brugnoli, Pete Delgrosso, Peter Spagnoli - sono ricordati con affetto sul sito della Valtarese Foundation di New York dai

loro biografi, Dominic Karcic e Carol Schiavi, figlia di Peter Spagnoli. La storia continua: ogni anno, una domenica, negli Stati Uniti si fa festa con la *Valtaro Accordionists' Reunion*, il raduno dei fisarmonicisti della Val Taro.

Tra gli Anni Venti e i Sessanta del Novecento, ebbe grande diffusione in Francia il *valse musette*, detto anche il "valzer del popolo", in contrapposizione a quello viennese, identificato come il ballo della nobiltà e della borghesia. Mentre i valzer viennesi suonati dalle grandi orchestre si erano trasformati ormai in musica d'ascolto, la *musette*, che prendeva nome da un antico strumento simile alla cornamusa, si radicava sempre più tra gli strati più umili, divenendo il ballo del proletariato francese. Un ballo che esigeva parole e semplicità compositiva, perché le persone amavano canticchiare e fischiettare i motivi. Lo strumento più adatto ad accompagnare il canto era la fisarmonica, che aveva soppiantato la *musette*. E' qui che entrano in scena i musicisti di Borgotaro a Parigi: almeno tre di loro sono stati tra i più grandi autori del genere, che vantava tra i suoi interpreti Edith Piaf.

Molti suonatori di *valse musette* erano vagabondi che con la loro fisarmonica si fermavano nelle piazze a cantare, come si è visto in tanti film. Parole di amore o di miseria finite in bocca a emigranti, canzoni di strada che dalle aie della pianura padana o dai sentieri d'Appennino potevano arrivare nei crocicchi parigini, nei *quais de la Seine* - che è anche il titolo di un brano di **Louis Ferrari** (Borgotaro 1910 - Nizza 1987). Compositore e fisarmonicista, naturalizzato francese, Ferrari è l'autore di quella che è considerata dagli intenditori una delle più belle musette di ogni tempo, *Domino*. Sapeva unire tecnica raffinata e sensibilità, e far ballare le coppie al ritmo struggente dei suoi valzer. Louis Ferrari è stato anche un bravissimo suonatore di bandoneón, la versione argentina della fisarmonica e strumento principe delle orchestre di tango.

Louis Ferrari ha avuto anche il merito di lanciare nel mondo del cabaret e del music-hall il cugino **Antonio "Tony" Murena**, musicista di eccezionale virtuosismo e rara eleganza. Emigrato da Borgotaro con la famiglia nel 1923, a cinque anni, a Nogent-sur-Marne, un comune della *banlieue* parigina dove da tempo si era radicata una comunità italiana originaria delle vallate piacentine e parmensi, il piccolo Tony a nove anni suonava già la fisarmonica cromatica regalatagli dallo zio. Andava, come si diceva a *faire les bals*, a far ballare la gente nei locali. Dopo alcuni ingaggi nei cabaret Le Chantilly e L'Ange Rouge, nel 1932 si dedica al bandoneón e, scoppiata la moda del tango, comincia a suonare in varie formazioni, tra cui quelle di Rafaël Canaro e di Eduardo Bianco, le migliori orchestre di tango a Parigi. Col suo quintetto suona a La Silhouette, a La Boule Noire, a La Java, al Pré Catelan, da Ciro's: si può dire sia stato lui il maggior interprete del *swing musette* francese. Infatti, fino dai primi anni Quaranta anni si era convertito al jazz, avendo compreso come la fisarmonica potesse adattarsi anche all'ambito colto. Oggi è normale vedere Richard Galliano, il fisarmonicista più noto al mondo, rileggere in chiave jazz la tradizione musette, ma ai suoi tempi Tony Murena era un precursore. E anche se negli ultimi anni (è morto nel 1970) ha ceduto alle mode commerciali, la sua voglia di allargare i confini dello strumento l'ha portato a confrontarsi con musicisti come Astor Piazzolla, Django Reinhardt e Stéphane Grappelli, gli ultimi due spesso ospiti nel jazz club da lui acquistato nel 1949 in rue de Courcelles, Le Mirliton. Una bella carriera, quella di Tony Murena: solo la morte im-

Alcune immagini dei fisarmonicisti che hanno trovato fortuna in America. A fianco e sotto, John Brugnoli: con i suoi studenti (tra cui Pete Spagnoli, il primo da destra nella fila centrale) e da bambino. Sotto: Joe Cerina, Emilio Chiesa e Pete Del Grosso. Some images of accordion players who found their fortune in America. At the side and below, John Brugnoli: with his students (among whom Pete Spagnoli, first right in the middle row) and as a child. Below: Joe Cerina, Emilio Chiesa and Pete Del Grosso.



provvisa di Glenn Miller, nel '44, gli ha impedito di suonare nell'orchestra più popolare degli Stati Uniti; nel '47 si è esibito davanti al re di Cambogia Norodom Sihanuk; nel 1958 ha fondato l'Orchestre Musette di Radio-Luxembourg; infine ci ha lasciato canzoni come *Passion e Indifférence*.

Il più giovane dei tre borgotaresi di Parigi è **Lino Leonardi**, nato nel 1928. La musica gli entrò nelle vene già nel paese natale, dove la banda musicale ha una tradizione d'eccellenza. Emigrato a Parigi, si fece presto notare come fisarmonicista e quindi come compositore. Realizzò per il cinema diverse colonne sonore – da *Le cinéma du papa* a *Pile ou face*, da *Mandrin* a *Cauchemar* – e musiche di scena per il teatro. L'incontro con la cantante Monique Morelli, che poi sarebbe diventata la sua compagna, lo

restituì all'antica vocazione del fisarmonicista: quella di accompagnare, di sostenere il canto. Un canto non idealizzato ma realistico, che attinge alle gioie e ai dolori della vita: quelli che i poeti vedono prima degli altri. E così, Leonardi si è buttato con dedizione a musicare le poesie di Louis Aragon, Tristan Corbière, François Villon e altri, che la Morelli portava in scena, e cantava con la sua voce arrochita che sapeva di fumo e di vino, vestita sempre di bianco e con una lunga sciarpa rossa. "Io devo a Léonardi – ha scritto Louis Aragon – un sentimento strano, quando ascolto ciò che ha fatto di un poema, come se un mago mi tendesse uno specchio in cui mi vedo come mai prima. Lo specchio cui non sfugge nulla di quel che era nascosto nei miei versi, e forse non è uno specchio, ma un'operazione di magia attraverso la quale i sentimenti intimi diventano visibili". Aragon è stato uno dei più grandi poeti francesi del Novecento.

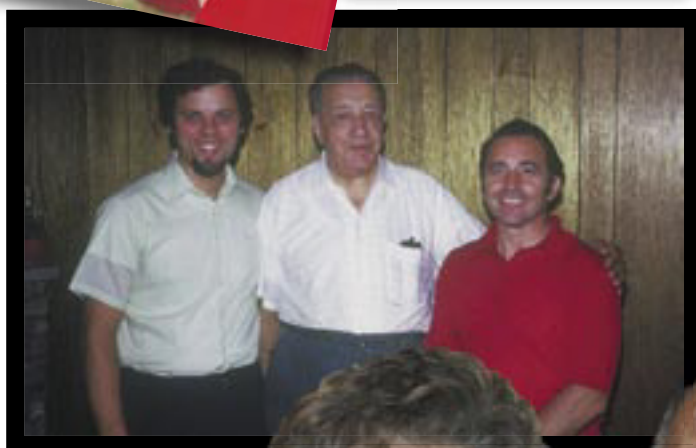
L'EREDE È A LONDRA

L'erede, oggi, della tradizione borgotaresa della fisarmonica vive a Londra, dov'è nato nel 1966. Si chiama **Romano Viazzani** e ha dedicato un concerto per fisarmonica e orchestra alla terra natale della madre, la Val Ceno, vallata appenninica prossima alla Val Taro. Il concerto è stato eseguito nel dicembre 2001 con l'Orchestra della BBC durante il London Accordion Festival che Viazzani e la moglie Janet organizzano al Wembley Complex per promuovere la fisarmonica. Viazzani suona in teatro, compone colonne sonore, tiene concerti da solista e, sempre con la sua amata fisarmonica, partecipa ai dischi e alle tournées del sassofonista bebop Gilad Atzmon e del suo complesso The Orient House Ensemble, votati a una miscela musicale pluripremiata che mette insieme jazz e tango, influenze mediorientali e balcaniche.

Intanto a Borgotaro, scrive, compone e studia un musicista jazz di fama internazionale, il milanese **Giorgio Gaslini**. E' qui che il maestro da oltre trent'anni ha posto il suo buen retiro: prima in un monastero in pietra del Cinquecento nel piccolo borgo di Gorro, e ora nella quiete e nella luce di una casa ai margini del paese. Perché a Borgotaro – si sa – la musica è nell'aria.

L'epopea dei fisarmonicisti continua in Francia, come testimoniano le copertine di alcuni successi discografici. Sotto: alcune recenti immagini di Pete Delgrosso.

The epic deeds of the accordion players continue in France, as shown by the covers of some recording successes. Below: some recent images of Pete Delgrosso.



Si ringrazia Dominic Karcic, per il suo contributo nella ricerca delle immagini d'epoca pubblicate a corredo di questo articolo. We thank Mr Dominic Karcic for his contribution in searching for the images of that time that accompany this article.

