

**FEBRUARY 2012**

# fao Casa gazette



**Carnival in Viareggio**

**Swaminarayan Akshardham**

**Let's start the New Year by  
Telling Beautiful Stories!**

**Archeologia misteriosa e  
ricerche di frontiera**

**The Pool on the Hill**

**Valentine's Day History**



## FIRENZE

di Armando Bettozzi

Quel Genio tuo, tutto in te traspare  
e per le strade e piazze si respira.  
Madonna, ognun che viene ti rimira  
e l'occhio più non sa dove posare

com'è pel bimbo intento al suo giocare  
con troppi giochi intorno e ognun l'attira.  
Dei tanti Grandi tuoi ancor s'aggira  
lo spirito, e ognuno si fa amare.

per quanto entusiasmante ed imponente  
a chiunque vuol sentirsene l'erede  
ha dato, pel suo cuore e la sua mente

in tele eterne, in pietre, e bianchi marmi,  
nei fogli scritti a mano o a stampa, e fede  
nell'Arte Bella, e in immortali carmi.



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# CARNIVAL IN VIAREGGIO

The Carnival of Italy in the world  
4 February to 3 March 2012

The Viareggio Carnival was established in 1873 when some of the local “signori” decided to organize a Sunday a little different from the rest, by inventing a procession of decorated floats which travelled up and down the main street of the city. The first proposal of a Carnival procession of carriages, filled with flowers and laden with masks, was discussed by the frequenters of the Cafe Casino. The idea quickly won the people, who mingled in the years immediately following the carriages and wagons of the lords of the farm wagons.

On that occasion a masked protest was also organized by a number of citizens, as they were forced to pay too many taxes and as a result the chief tax collector was certainly made fun of!! The parade was liked a lot not only by the patrons but also by the citizens and the idea of

mache. These floats are true works of art to which the local float makers dedicate an entire year of workmanship. There is not one politician, entertainer, or intellectual that has not been a target (protagonist) of one of these floats which almost comes to life during the parade by the moving arms, opening and closing mouths and rolling eyes. On every float young people and children find a place from which to throw confetti and shooting stars to the crowd. During the entire period masked balls and parties in the various “rioni” (quarters, districts) are organized as well as numerous sports and cultural events i.e. “Torneo Internazionale giovanile di calcio”.

The official Viareggio Carnival mask is the “*Burlamacco*“, a clown which wears clothes taken from other Italian masks: checkered overalls, taken from the Harlequin’s costume, a



making floats that interpreted humour and dissatisfaction of the people came about in that year.

Since then Viareggio has become the home of the Italian Carnival, with its masked parades characterized by allegorical floats in papier-

white ponpon stolen from Pierrot’s big puffy blouse, a white gorget - “Captain Scary” style, a red headband and a black mantle. The name *Burlamacco* derives from Buffalmacco a Florentine painter and a character in the “*Decamerone*“. However, it is also said to be linked to the Lucchese surname Burlamacchi.

Viareggio Carnival is a 16-day period of fun during the Mardi Gras festivities. It takes place in February and March. During this period many Italian cities and towns celebrate this time of fun in their own specific way, creating festivals each with its own local colour. It is the most important and spectacular in Tuscany, and one of the most famous in Europe. The Versilia sea avenues of the town parade with floats made of papier-mâché, which are of two categories, large and masked groups, each consisting of eight items about three meters high.

In addition to the floats, other smaller displays follow in a circle, as well as *mascherate*, i.e. lines of people wearing on their heads masks made of papier-mâché, and marching brass bands, one of which is Viareggio's own band, *La Libeccciata*. The parade of the Carnival of Viareggio is accompanied by the official band, the "*Maschereide*" (which in 1989 replaced the previous "Libeccio"), and its characteristic form, "Burlamacco", created in 1931 by Hubert Sonnets.

Besides the *corsi mascherati*, which take place on 3 successive Sundays during Carnival and on the day of Mardi Gras, the various areas and neighbourhoods of Viareggio organize local street parties, le feste rionali. So, the *corse* of the wagons is not the only attraction of the Carnival of Viareggio: in the evening the party continues in the streets of the city districts, which are filled with people in costume and music until late at night. Several balls are also organized in the premises of the city, along with several cultural events and recreational activities, among which the "Feast of the Canzonetta".

The Foundation of the Carnival of Viareggio awards a prize to the best tank of each category and one of the most beautiful masked group. On each wagon visible to the public, a masquerade made up of an average of 200 elements and a complex band with a minimum of 10 players. The movements of the figures of the wagon is operated by a team of 20-30 people. From the 1970s onward, the dominant theme was the allegories of political satire, beside which are fantastic and escapist themes. The carts are made during the year in the Carnival Citadel, an

imposing structure launched in December 2001, where it also hosts the Museum of Carnival.

### The 2012 calendar of events

The Carnival float parades on the following Sundays all starting at 15.00 hrs: 5 February, 12 February and 19 February. Then there will be a parade on Tuesday 21 February (Mardi Gras) starting at 14.50 hrs and shown on Italian national TV, which will be free until 17.00 hrs; followed by a night float parade starting at 21.00 hrs and fireworks at 23.00 hrs. The final parade will be on Sunday 26 February starting at 17.00 hrs, followed by award ceremony for the best float in each category and, starting about 19.30 hrs, then fireworks closing the 2011 Carnival of Viareggio.

For further information:

[www.viareggio.ilcarnevale.com](http://www.viareggio.ilcarnevale.com)

Foundation of the Carnival of Viareggio

info @ ilcarnevale.com

### Getting there

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# *Swaminarayan Akshardham: A Contemporary Marvel in Art and Architecture*

*by Fahmi Bishay*

*It is sometimes thought that world marvels in art and architecture, such as: the Pyramids in Egypt; the Taj Mahal in India; the everlasting works of Michael Angelo and Bernini in Italy etc., belong to earlier centuries when societies attached higher priority to art and religion. But, Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument in New Delhi is a contemporary marvel in art and architecture that defies that thought.*



*Figure 1. Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument at night in New Delhi. The Monument was built during the period from 2000 to 2005.*

## **Introduction**

**India**, along with a few other countries like China and Brazil, are currently labeled as “**emerging economies**”. An emerging economy is an economy that is moving quite fast on its development path. In a relatively short time, emerging economies will assume prominent places among the world developed countries. On the move along that fast developmental track, an emerging economy faces the challenge of preserving its national heritage, culture and identity. On a recent visit to India (November 2011),

the author of this article was intrigued by how India has been addressing this challenge. To this end, he visited a number of India’s arts and cultural institutions to see whether the country’s objective of attaching high priority to its traditional arts and culture has been maintained. One of those visited magnificent places was Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument in New Delhi. What he observed was that, India, as an emerging economy, has indeed retained its priority to art, religion and tradition.



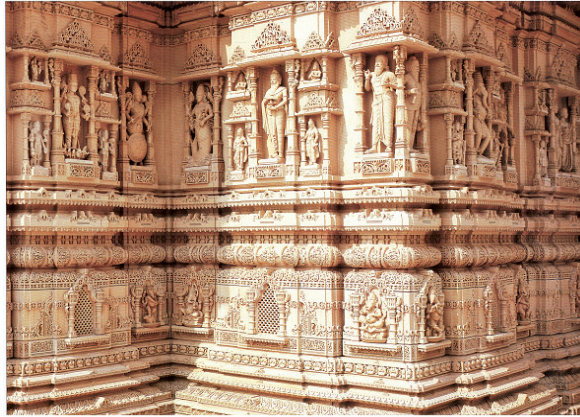


Figure 2. A side of a wall at Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument: A masterpiece in sculpture.

The following are some highlights and reflections of the author's observations on the Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument: A contemporary marvel in art and architecture

### *The Patronage*

Swaminarayan Akshardham means the eternal abode of "**Bhagwan** (God) **Swaminarayan**" (1781-1830): A torchbearer of Indian culture and spirituality. Swaminarayan Akshardham is a fabulous Monument built **in honor and obedience** of Swaminarayan who inspired people to lead a life of faith, love and high morality. He strongly rejected the rigid Indian caste system and the untouchability concept. He fought for women's rights; and called for social justice. He preached to the masses not to kill animals, to be vegetarians and to avoid all sorts of addictions. During his life on planet earth, He had over three million followers; and far more after His departure.

### *Contemporary Achievement*

The Swaminarayan Akshardham is a relatively new construction in New Delhi. It was built during the period from the **year 2000 to the year 2005**. It took five years to complete. The monument is surrounded by

"holy" water. That sacred water comes from 151 rivers and lakes of India creating an ambiance of a place of pilgrimage where visitors pray for spiritual progress, peace and human development.

### *The Structure*

Swaminarayan Akshardham's Monument covers an area of about 100 acres of cultural complex. It is a manifestation of India's glorious tradition of **art, architecture and spirituality**. It took about **300 million man-hours** to carve over **300 000 stones** to create the magnificent complex. Swaminarayan Akshardham's **foundation pit** covered a volume of about: **90 meters wide, 75 meters long and 5 meters high**. The Monument was built of pink sandstone and white marble. It is about **47 meters high** (equivalent to 15 stories); **105 meters wide and 120 meters long**. It has **234 great carved pillars; 9 outstanding domes**. At the center of the Monument is a **4-meter high Gold-plated statue of Bhagwan Swaminarayan** (Figure 1).

### *Sculptures, Precious Stones and Paintings*

There are more than **20 000** small and large **statues** in the Monument. All were designed and sculptured following in-depth studies and analytical work of Indian art



Figure 3: Sculpture in one of the Monument's dome ceiling.

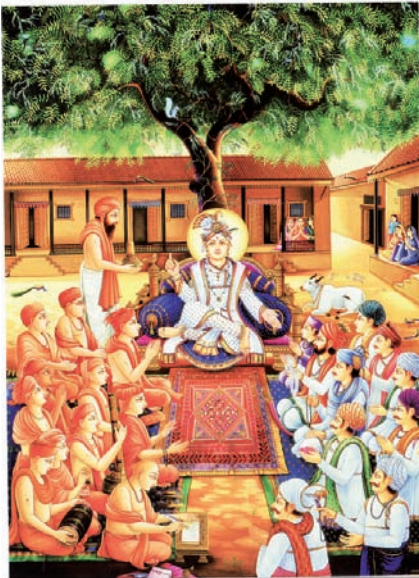


Figure 4. A painting of Bhagwan Swaminarayan preaching His message of love and faith.

between the Eighth and Twelfth centuries and beyond (Figure 2). Those magnificent statues cover the walls, the columns, the ceilings and the gates of the Monument (Figure 3). Of those great statues, the above-mentioned 4-meter gold plated statue of Swaminarayan weighs 2.6 tonnes and is placed at the centre of the Monument (Figure 1). That statue is placed on a platform that is made of white marble which is decorated with very colorful precious stones.

There are also a number of very large and colorful paintings of *Swaminarayan's* life and deeds (Figure 4). Those paintings depict His childhood encounter with friends, austerities as a child-yogi, social and spiritual services in Gujarat and his preaching of love, faith and morality.

In addition, along with Bhagwan Swaminarayan, very colorful statues of other deities are also displayed in the Monument.

All the construction design, building activities, art work, fabulous decoration, and continuing services of the Monument were (and are) performed voluntarily, with devotion, love and faith by Swaminarayan's Followers and devotees. ***The making of Swaminarayan Akshardham was, thus, an act of love, worship and thanksgiving.***

### ***The Elephants***

Elephants, in the Hindu religion, assume a prominent place. The head of the Hindu God: Ganesha is that of an elephant. The presence of elephants in a landscape implies the existence of ranges of grass in abundance symbolizing wealth, prosperity and goodness. Elephants are not only vegetarians, but also they are not vicious predators. The elephant is a symbol of endurance, patience, wisdom and power.

There are **80 elephant stories** from Hindu's heritage particularly between the Eighth and the Twelfth centuries. Those stories depicted bravery, sacrifice and the continuing fight between the good and evil.



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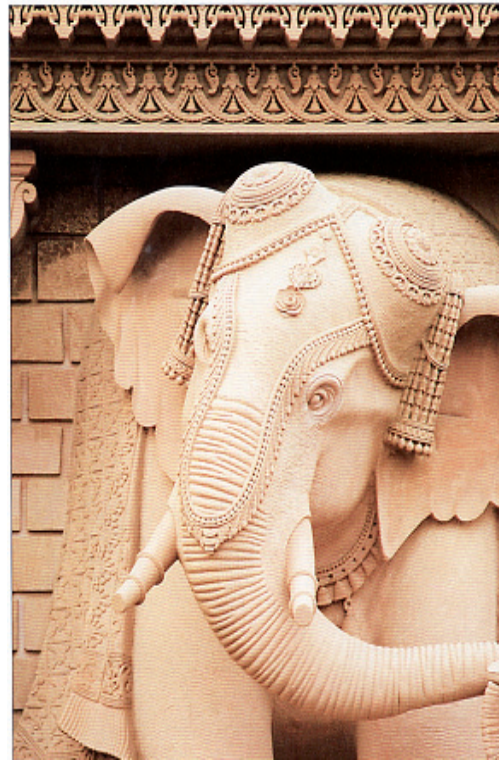


*Figure 5. Part of the elephants' external corridors.*

Many a lesson of experience are drawn from those stories. Those stories were researched and carefully casted in stone. Each story was drawn and its *life size* clay model was made in Gujarat. The models were next transported to Pindvada in Rajasthan, where they were carved into **148 stone elephants, 42 animals and 125 human figures**. The elephants and their demonstrated stories in stone were next fixed into the outer corridors of the Monument (Figures 5 and 6). It took almost four years to create the entire setting of more than **250 meters long and more than 3000 tonnes of elephant passages** around the Monument. *That elephant passage symbolizes mankind's love towards other living and towards nature.*

### *The Landscape*

The Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument's landscape covers 22 acres of beautiful gardens. There are 65 bronze statues of India's famous personalities: philosophers, intellectuals, politicians, historians and other thinkers. There are also very well maintained lawns, trees, plants and shrubs in the Monument's gardens.



*Figure 6. A life-size elephant cast in stone.*



Figure 7. The 8-petalled lotus-shaped structure in the foreground of the Monument.

In the Monument's foreground, there is a huge **8-petalled lotus-shaped structure** that displays prayers and words of wisdom (Figure 7). Each petal presents quotes of distinguished scientists, philosophers and statesmen from India and beyond inspiring faith in God and faith in man.

### Concluding Remarks

When visiting Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument in New Delhi, the author of this article was overwhelmed and exceedingly impressed with the beauty, magnificence and the most remarkable contemporary miraculous achievement in art and

architecture. He could not imagine how it was possible that such an outstanding world landmark could have been completed in only five years.

*However, appreciating the enormous devotion, love and worship that were extended in building and preserving the Monument, he reached the conclusion that with love, faith and devotion, marvels can be realized; and in record times. And that was, indeed, the case with the Swaminarayan Akshardham Monument in New Delhi* ■

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## LET'S START THE NEW YEAR BY TELLING BEAUTIFUL STORIES!!!

*If you don't know the trees you may be lost in the forest,  
but if you don't know the stories you may be lost in life...*  
(Siberian Elder)

by Enrica Romanazzo



During the last season I attended a few Storytelling performances and I was very captured by them. I always thought that Storytelling was a prerogative of the world of international business and marketing communication whereas, thanks to Raccontamiunastoria Storytelling Company, I discovered a wonderful way of international and intercultural communication through art. Storytelling belongs to the very fascinating world of oral tradition and really represents the most effective, lively and straightforward way to pass on knowledge and communication. Since creation men and women have been telling stories to communicate their culture and their values.

**Raccontamiunastoria** was founded in Rome in 2004 by a group of young artistes who graduated from the best Drama schools of the Nation, with the focus of exploring, experimenting and spreading to a wide audience the treasures of the oral tradition. The Company brought to Italy the first International Storytelling Festival (now at its 3rd edition), gave birth to the Federation for Italian Storytelling (FIST) and is now a member of the Executive Committee of FEST (Federation for European Storytelling). **Raccontamiunastoria** has a wide repertoire of performances both in Italian and English and travels with them all over the world. Besides this, I discovered that **Raccontamiunastoria** is also involved in social projects to enhance the art of communication beyond the borders, such as peace and bridge building projects in Kosovo (commissioned by OSCE), or collaboration with African Storytelling organizations and Festivals in Gambia, Burkina Faso and Congo with the aim of making available to Europe the amazing African oral tradition and the values it transmits.

I once had the chance to get involved in one of the most peculiar events organized by **Raccontamiunastoria** called "Salotto Raccontamiunastoria". It is a unique happening of

Storytelling where people spend together a very relaxing evening sharing food (home made by the Company members!), drinks and stories. Each evening has a theme and after “the ice is broken” by the experienced tellers, everyone can get up and tell a story in a fun open-floor. Taking part in a Storytelling event is truly fascinating as it provides an opportunity to rediscover the forgotten pleasure to listen and tell stories. Storytelling is a chance to talk about ourselves and share our experiences, in a multicultural environment where everyone can create a bridge of images between his/her own emotions and the ones of the listeners.

These projects seem to be in line with what is basically one of our main objectives, namely to promote understanding and socialization among different cultures in the global village of our organization.

My suggestion is to try and organize some events such the ones described in the near future.



[www.raccontamiunastoria.com](http://www.raccontamiunastoria.com)

Tempo fa ho partecipato ad un evento di STORYTELLING.

Quest'arte mi incuriosiva e credevo fosse prerogativa del mondo del business internazionale. Invece, grazie alla Compagnia di Storytelling RACCONTAMIUNASTORIA, ho scoperto essere un universo stupendo e un metodo splendido per metter in comunicazione varie culture.

Lo storytelling è l'antico mondo della narrazione orale, il modo più affascinante, più semplice e più vivo per trasmettere qualcosa a qualcuno, l'arte di raccontare le storie: le storie, che da sempre, fin dalle epoche più remote, sono state un veicolo di trasmissione di cultura e conoscenza.

Fin dalla sua fondazione avvenuta nel 2004 ad opera di un gruppo di giovani artisti provenienti dalle migliori accademie di recitazione d'Italia, **Raccontamiunastoria** ha basato la sua attività sul recupero della tradizione orale, ha portato in Italia il primo Festival Internazionale di Storytelling (giunto nel 2011 alla sua 3° edizione), ha fondato la Federazione Italiana per lo Storytelling (FIST) ed è entrata a far parte del comitato organizzatore del FEST (Federation for European Storytelling). La Compagnia ha al suo attivo un vasto repertorio di spettacoli, sia in Inglese che in Italiano, con cui è stata spesso impegnata in tour di portata europea e mondiale.

Ho scoperto altresì i loro progetti volti a valorizzare l'arte della comunicazione senza confini, ma anche di grande utilità sociale e culturale come i progetti a sostegno per esempio delle donne del Kosovo in collaborazione con l'OSCE o del patrimonio della cultura orale africana attraverso collaborazioni con realtà e Festival locali con simili finalità in Gambia, Burkina Faso, Congo ed altri, con l'obiettivo di far conoscere anche in Europa la tradizione Africana, nei suoi aspetti più rappresentativi e meno conosciuti.

Ed è quindi qualche tempo fa che ho avuto l'opportunità di prendere parte al "salotto raccontamiunastoria", uno dei loro eventi in cui i partecipanti trascorrono una serata in un'atmosfera accogliente e rilassata tra cibo e bevande (da loro preparate) e tante storie. E quando il "ghiaccio è rotto", ognuno dei presenti può raccontare la propria storia sul tema della serata.

Insomma è affascinante partecipare a simili eventi che offrono la possibilità di riscoprire il piacere di ascoltare, di raccontare e di raccontarsi, in un contesto multiculturale in cui ognuno può, attraverso l'arte di raccontare le storie, creare un ponte di meravigliose immagini fra le proprie emozioni e quelle degli altri.

Questi progetti ci sembrano in linea con quello che è in fondo uno dei nostri obiettivi, cioè favorire la comprensione e la socialità in questo villaggio globale delle culture che è la nostra organizzazione. Ci riproponiamo di organizzare presto eventi in questo senso.



Il ya quelques temps j'ai assisté à un événement de STORYTELLING.

Cet art m'a intrigué et j'ai pensé qu'il était prérogative du monde des affaires internationales. Au lieu de cela, grâce à la Société de storytelling RACCONTAMIUNASTORIA, j'ai découvert un monde merveilleux et une merveilleuse façon de mettre en communication différentes cultures.

Le STORYTELLING est un ancien monde de la narration orale, le moyen plus attrayant, plus facile et plus vivant de transmettre quelque chose à quelqu'un, l'art de raconter les histoires, qui ont toujours, depuis les temps anciens, été un véhicule de transmission de la culture et de connaissances.

Depuis sa fondation en 2004 par un groupe de jeunes artistes sortis des meilleures académies de théâtre d'Italie, la compagnie Raccontamiunastoria a fondé ses activités sur la récupération de la tradition orale, qui s'est traduite en Italie par le premier Festival international du conte (qui a atteint en 2011 sa 3ème édition), elle a fondé la Fédération italienne de STORYTELLING (FIST) et fait partie du comité organisateur du FEST (Fédération des contes européens). La société a à son actif un large répertoire de spectacles, à la fois en anglais et en italien, elle a été souvent impliqués dans des tournées européennes et mondiales.



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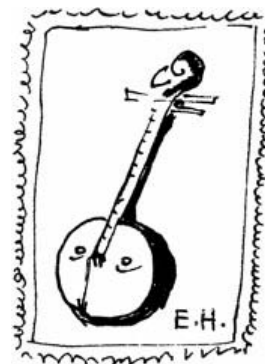


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J'ai aussi découvert leurs projets pour améliorer l'art de la communication sans frontières, mais aussi d'importants projets sociaux et culturels comme par exemple l'appui des femmes au Kosovo, en coopération avec l'OSCE ou de l'héritage de la culture orale africaine à travers collaborations avec des festivals locaux ayant des objectifs similaires en Gambie, au Burkina Faso, au Congo et dans autres pays, avec comme but de promouvoir la tradition africaine en Europe, dans ses aspects les plus représentatifs et les moins connus.

Et finalement il y a quelque temps j'ai eu l'occasion de prendre part à un "salotto raccontamiunastoria", un de leurs événements dans lesquels les participants passent une soirée dans une ambiance "conviviale et détendue" avec un buffet (préparé par eux) et de nombreuses histoires. Et une fois que la "glace est brisée", chacun des présents peut, si il le veut, raconter son histoire sur le thème de la soirée.

En bref, il est fascinant de participer à des événements similaires, qui offrent la possibilité de redécouvrir le plaisir d'écouter, de raconter et de se raconter, dans un environnement multiculturel dans lequel chacun peut, à travers l'art de raconter des histoires, créer un pont entre les propres émotions et celles des autres.

Ces projets nous semblent en ligne avec ce qui est fondamentalement un de nos objectifs, à savoir promouvoir la compréhension et la culture sociale dans ce village planétaire qui est de notre organisation. Nous proposons d'organiser bientôt des événements dans ce sens.



Hace un tiempo asistí a un evento de "Storytelling".

Este arte me cautivó y pensé que era una prerrogativa del mundo de los negocios internacionales. En cambio, gracias a el Grupo de Storytelling RACCONTAMIUNASTORIA, descubrí un mundo maravilloso y una maravillosa manera de poner en contacto diferentes culturas.

El "Storytelling" es un antiguo mundo de la narración oral, el más atractivo, más fácil y el más vivo para poder transmitir algo a alguien, el arte de contar historias: las historias, que desde siempre, desde tiempos antiguos, han sido un vehículo de transmisión de cultura y conocimiento.

Desde su fundación en 2004 por un grupo de jóvenes artistas provenientes de las mejores academias de teatro de Italia, Raccontamiunastoria ha basado sus actividades en la recuperación de la tradición oral, ha llevado hasta Italia el primer Festival Internacional de Storytelling (que en 2011 ha tenido su 3ª edición), ha fundado la Federación Italiana de Storytelling (FIST) y ha llegado a formar parte del comité organizador del FEST

(Federación Europea de Storytelling). La Compañía cuenta con un amplio repertorio de actuaciones, tanto en inglés como en italiano, con los que ha participado a menudo en giras a nivel europeo y mundial.

Al mismo tiempo, he descubierto sus proyectos para mejorar el arte de la comunicación sin fronteras, así como importantes proyectos sociales y culturales, como por ejemplo en apoyo de las mujeres en Kosovo, en cooperación con la OSCE; o del patrimonio de la cultura oral africana a través de colaboraciones con las realidades y festivales locales y con fines similares en Gambia, Burkina Faso, Congo y otros, con el objetivo de promover la tradición africana en Europa, en sus aspectos más representativos y menos conocidos.

Y es desde hace algún tiempo que he tenido la oportunidad de formar parte en la “salotto raccontamiunastoria”, un evento en el que los participantes pasan una noche en un ambiente acogedor y relajado entre comida y bebida (preparadas por ellos) y muchas historias. Y cuando el “hielo está roto”, cada uno puede contar su propia historia sobre el tema de la noche.

En pocas palabras, es fascinante participar en eventos similares que ofrecen la oportunidad de redescubrir el placer de escuchar, contar y contarse, en un contexto multicultural en el que todo el mundo puede, a través del arte de contar historias, crear un puente de imágenes maravillosas entre las propias emociones y las de los demás.

Estos proyectos parecen estar en línea con lo que básicamente es uno de nuestros objetivos, a saber, promover el conocimiento y la cultura social en esta aldea global que es nuestra organización. Nos proponemos la organización eventos en este sentido lo antes posible.



Algum tempo atrás participei de um evento de STORYTELLING.

Essa arte me intrigava e acreditava que fosse uma prerrogativa do mundo dos negócios internacionais. Por minha surpresa, graças à Associação de Storytelling “RACCONTAMIUNASTORIA”, descobri um mundo maravilhoso, e uma maneira criativa e divertida para unir a comunicação de várias culturas.

O storytelling é a antiga arte de contar histórias de tradição oral, um jeito mais atraente, mais simples e mais vivo de transmitir mais sentimentos aos outros, a arte de contar histórias: as histórias, que desde os tempos antigos, foram um veículo de transmissão de cultura e conhecimento.

Desde a sua fundação em 2004 por um grupo de jovens artistas provenientes das melhores academias de atores da Itália, Raccontamiunastoria baseou suas atividades na recuperação da tradição oral, trouxe para a Itália o primeiro Festival Internacional de Storytelling (alcançando em 2011 a sua 3ª edição), fundou a Federação Italiana de Storytelling (FIST) e se tornou parte da comissão organizadora do FEST (Federação de Storytelling Européia). A Companhia tem a seu crédito um amplo repertório de performances, tanto em Inglês quanto Italiano, na qual esteve muitas vezes em turnê Européia e Mundial.

Descobri também seus projetos voltados na valorização da comunicação sem fronteiras, mas também de grande importância social e cultural, como por exemplo, o projeto em apoio às mulheres no Kosovo, em cooperação com a OSCE ou também o projeto de herança da cultura oral Africana, através de colaborações com festivais locais com finalidades semelhantes na Gâmbia, Burkina Faso, Congo e outros, com o objetivo de promover a tradição Africana na Europa, em seus aspectos mais representativos e menos conhecidos. E é por isso, que algum tempo atrás eu tive a oportunidade de fazer parte na “salotto raccontamiunastoria”, um de seus eventos no qual os participantes passam uma noite em um ambiente amigável e descontraído com comidas e bebidas (preparadas por eles) e muitas histórias. E quando o “gelo é quebrado”, cada um pode contar a sua própria história sobre o tema da noite.

Contudo, é fascinante participar de eventos similares que oferecem a oportunidade de redescobrir o prazer de ouvir, contar e contar-se, em um ambiente multicultural em que todos possam, através da arte de contar histórias, criar uma ponte de maravilhosa imagem entre as próprias emoções e as dos outros.

Esses projetos parecem em sintonia com o que é basicamente um de nossos objetivos, ou seja, promover a compreensão e a socialização nesta aldeia global que é a nossa organização. Propomo-nos a organizar os primeiros eventos neste sentido.





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# Archeologia misteriosa e ricerche di frontiera

di Flavia Carbonetti

*Enigma-X*, questo il titolo della conferenza internazionale tenutasi a Fiumicino (Roma) il 21 e 22 gennaio 2012. Un appuntamento di nicchia, per appassionati e ricercatori di verità; verità scomode e a volte dolorose perché intaccano, grazie alle prove presentate dai ricercatori, certezze profondamente radicate nella mente e nell'animo. Misteri archeologici insoliti, che aprono parentesi impossibili da chiudere lasciando i partecipanti sospesi in una sorta di limbo e a volte quasi sgomenti. Pareri dei relatori, a volte anche contraddittori, che lasciano perplessi e stupiti. In breve, ricerche storiche, indagini, studi approfonditi del sapere portati all'attenzione di un ristretto e interessato gruppo di persone. La partecipazione di ospiti internazionali e italiani, di eccellenza, ha permesso la presentazione di argomenti difficili nel modo più semplice ed efficace; sono state fornite prove e non deduzioni; studi e non intuizioni; ricerca sul campo non letture; applicazione del sapere e dello studio nella ricerca della storia alternativa, quella che non ci è mai stata raccontata, quella che quasi tutti i ricercatori presenti al convegno hanno confermato debba essere riscritta. Quasi tutti i relatori, qui di seguito in ordine alfabetico con la precedenza agli ospiti internazionali, hanno presentato gli argomenti trattati nei loro ultimi libri.



*Tempio di Gobekli Tepe (Turchia)*

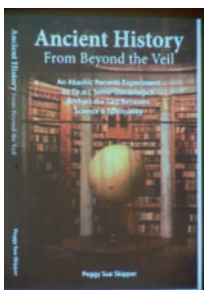


*Piramide del Sole (Bosnia)*



**Andrew COLLINS**, è un famoso e apprezzato ricercatore e scrittore inglese che indaga i misteri della storia, della scienza e dell' archeologia. Durante la conferenza il relatore ha presentato con dovizia di particolari e prove fotografiche uno dei più grandi misteri dell' archeologia: il sito archeologico di Göbekli Tepe, 9 500 a.C.(7 500 anni più antico delle piramidi di Giza) considerato il tempio più antico del mondo, prodotto di una cultura molto avanzata e situato nell'attuale Turchia sud orientale. Nel suo libro "*Il Mistero del Cigno*" tratta di diversi argomenti fra i quali rivela che i nostri antenati già sapevano ciò che la

scienza oggi sta per confermare: la vita ha avuto origine fra le stelle; mostra che la costellazione del Cigno è alla radice di tutte le religioni del mondo; fornisce prove inoppugnabili che le particelle subatomiche ad alta energia sulle pareti delle antiche grotte derivano da un sistema stellare binario conosciuto come Cygnus X-3 sorgente di potenti raggi cosmici che con molta probabilità hanno raggiunto la Terra ed hanno accelerato l' evoluzione umana durante l' ultima Era Glaciale; e molto altro.



**Samir OSMANAGICH**, antropologo e archeologo bosniaco, ha condotto i partecipanti nel misterioso mondo dell'archeologia. Grazie alla sua preparazione e al sostegno fotografico i partecipanti hanno visitato tutte le principali piramidi presenti sul pianeta e non solo, visto che molte strutture si trovano anche sott'acqua, terminando il loro viaggio virtuale nel più grande complesso mondiale di strutture piramidali: la Valle delle Piramidi in Bosnia dove ve ne sono presenti 5: la Piramide del Sole, la Piramide della

Luna, la Piramide del Dragone, la Piramide della Madre Terra e la Piramide dell'Amore. Il Dott. .Osmanagich, Direttore degli scavi, ha informato l' assemblea che la scoperta delle Piramidi in Bosnia potrebbe cambiare la visione della storia umana e riscriverla. Infatti la Piramide del Sole in Bosnia non solo sarebbe la più grande del mondo (supera in grandezza e altezza quelle Egizie e Maya) ma sarebbe anche la più antica, 12 000 anni. Il sito archeologico Bosniaco è in questo periodo il più attivo nel mondo e richiama migliaia di turisti ogni anno. Dott. Osmanagich, nel suo libro "*Ancient History from Beyond the Veil*" presenta le risposte alle consultazioni fatte da 6 sensitive agli Archivi Akasici, sulla storia delle Piramidi in Bosnia e su quella di altri siti archeologici.



*Raggio di energia della Piramide del Sole (Bosnia)*



**Maurizio BAIATA**, giornalista investigativo, esperto nel settore ufologico, ricercatore, scrittore, conferenziere internazionale, già relatore nel 2006 presso il dopolavoro FAO, ha parlato della realtà delle abduction (i rapimenti alieni), degli incontri con esseri provenienti da altri mondi, di quali sono le fasi del contatto, di come sono vissute, quello che viene provato dagli adottati. Entrambi gli “Experiences” (coloro che fanno esperienza di qualche cosa la cui visione è positiva) che gli “Abductees” (gli adottati o rapiti la cui visione è negativa) dicono di avere visto qualche cosa di assolutamente straordinario. Perché questi esseri diversi da noi vogliono interagire con la razza umana? Il contatto è come un catalizzatore per il nostro risveglio spirituale. Non dobbiamo averne paura. Nel suo libro “*Gli Alieni mi hanno salvato la vita*”, Maurizio Baiata, in un mosaico quasi autobiografico di 40 anni di esistenza conferma la presenza degli alieni in diversi momenti della sua vita e incita a non avere paura delle esperienze. Questo libro ha comportato un grande lavoro di introspezione e di autocoscienza.



**Mauro BIGLINO** è uno studioso di storia delle religioni e traduttore di ebraico antico. Proviene da molti anni di traduzione dell'ebraico masoretico per conto delle Edizioni San Paolo per le quali ha tradotto 19 libri dell'antico testamento di cui 17 pubblicati. Utilizza per le sue traduzioni i dizionari aramaico biblici pubblicati negli Stati Uniti e curati dai Rabbini. Sapendo di trattare un argomento molto sensibile durante il suo intervento chiarisce che parlerà della Bibbia, dunque anche se sembra una contraddizione, non parlerà di Dio e racconta ciò che vi è scritto; infatti il suo compito è tradurre letteralmente senza fare interpretazioni. Mauro Biglino nel suo libro “*Il Dio Alieno della Bibbia*” sostiene che la Bibbia, tradotta letteralmente dall' ebraico antico, racconta del primo contatto dell'umanità con gli alieni. Chi sono gli Elohim? Sono immortali? Chi sono i Malakim dell'Antico Testamento? Chi sono i Cherubini? Ed il paradiso terrestre? Ed il peccato originale? Ipotesi, riflessioni, analisi, tutte derivanti da un certosino lavoro di traduzione letterale della Bibbia Stuttgartsia redatta sulla base dal Codice masoretico di Leningrado.



**Adriano FORGIIONE**, giornalista investigativo, si occupa di simbolismo, alchimia spiritualità; relatore a convegni nazionali ed internazionali dirige la rivista Fenix che si occupa di archeologia misteriosa e del sacro. Studia da molti anni il fenomeno dei cerchi del grano e nella sua relazione “*2012: i Segni del prossimo cambiamento*” pone l'accento la veridicità dei cerchi nel grano mostrando immagini di magnifici pittogrammi; ne interpreta la simbologia; ipotizza come si formino; sottolinea l'importanza della crescita spirituale dell'essere umano per manifestare la propria divinità.





*Dettaglio di un'affresco dal Monastero  
Visoki Dekani (Jugoslavia).  
Prima metà del IV secolo.*

**Pino MORELLI** giornalista investigativo, scrittore, insegnante e praticante di Theta Healing e direttore responsabile dei mensili X-Times e Fenix ha tenuto una relazione sulle Presenze Aliene nelle opere d'Arte. Il relatore, ha voluto sottolineare come l'uomo può avere rappresentato nei millenni della sua storia vari oggetti che sono oggi interpretabili come UFO ma che potrebbero solo avere a che fare con la sua conoscenza dimenticata.



**Mike PLATO** scrittore, gnostico, esoterista, studioso di spiritualità, ha presentato il suo nuovo libro "Melkizedek l'Immortale". Dieci anni di studio hanno portato Mike Plato alla stesura di questo libro molto interessante che restituisce alla figura di Melkizedek l'onore del ruolo e l'importanza centrale di questo "Messaggero Divino" e "Grande Mediatore della Luce Universale (così come è definito dagli Esseni di Qumran). Nella sua relazione Mike Plato ha posto l'accento sull'importanza per l'essere umano di entrare in uno stato di "sacerdozio" e cioè di diventare una proiezione della supercoscienza. Per fare questo sarebbe necessario sacrificare i propri istinti bestiali in modo da risvegliare la particella divina presente in ogni uomo.

Il giorno dopo la conferenza, le sfide di tutti i giorni. Gli argomenti ascoltati con tanto interesse sembrano così lontani dalla realtà e poi magari si cerca di rimuovere informazioni scomode e che mettono in dubbio molte certezze. Ma un convegno come questo non può lasciarti indifferente, non può non avere toccato tasti sensibili e nel profondo dell'animo l'informazione rimane e silenziosamente lavora. I misteri sussistono ..... e la ricerca dei liberi pensatori continua ■



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# The pool on the hill (of my dreams)

*by Fabio Perfetto*



Last summer I spent nice holidays with my family in the Shetland Isles.

In spite of the period (August), the weather was not very pleasant. Speaking to the local people, we were informed that it was a particular season.

Nevertheless, I cannot forget the cliffs of Sumburgh with thousands of birds, as gannets, fulmars, arctic skuas, gulls, petrels and puffins. We sailed to the isle of Mousa to see the Broch, the best preserved Iron Age fortification in the British Isles and the two seals-pools. We got to the northernmost isle of the United Kingdom, Unst, where we slept in the charming hostel of Uyeasound, not far from the little castle of

Muness.

During a particularly windy and rainy day, Caroline, a girl working in the hostel, suggested that we could spend the afternoon in the swimming pool of the Leisure Centre in Baltasound. We played with a ball and I tested my new water-resistant camera.

On the board of the pool I noted some press clippings, I got closer to the wall and I read some interesting reportages of the local junior swimming team. They had gone to Inverness and to Edinburgh where these little heroes were able to get several medals. In the black and white picture all of them were smiling.

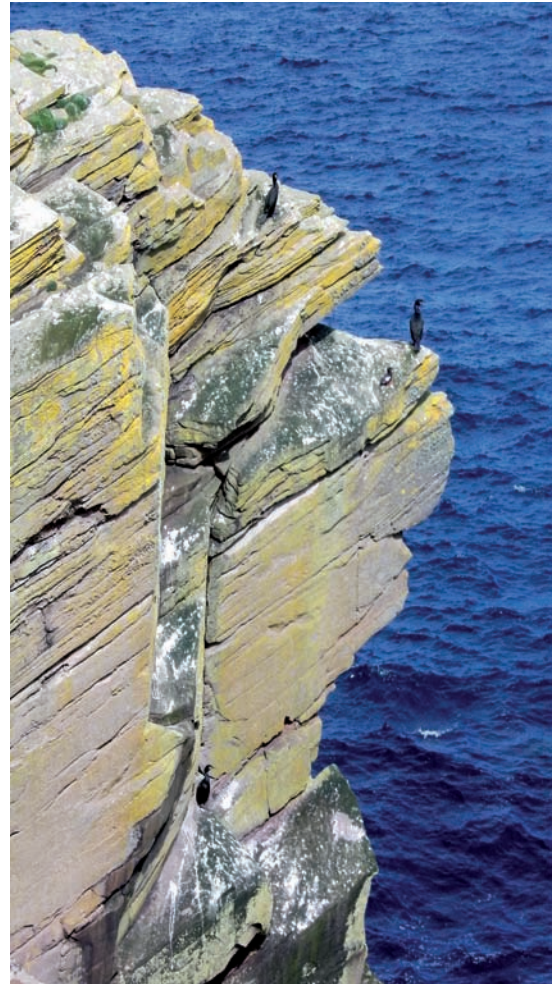
At once I thought of when I was working as swimming trainer remembering our little travel to the other pools. I analyzed the performances of those young champions, as there was also a summary-table. I realized that they really swam fast.

As already told, in spite of the fact that I was here in summer, I found a fall weather, my mind flew to their winter, when the sun (clouds permitting) is over the horizon only for a few hours. The rain and the wind are every-day-live fellows, it is difficult to meet people outside, you must catch the bus to go to school (and I noted the well-protected bus stations).

In this situation a swimming team could be an incredible means of aggregation, the three lanes of twelve metres and half (just a sixth of the pool where I swim) are enough to train a group.

I spoke to a swimming trainer and I was told that actually they did not have a swimming team any longer. After a little while, I had an idea.

I have written this little article, I hope it can get them a little bit of enthusiasm. They can re-organise the little swimming team, why? I have never been a champion, sometimes I got some medals, nevertheless I regularly swim three times a week, it is good for my health and I really like to join competitions as I can meet a lot of nice people.



We want to go back to Unst as we could not make the trip from the bleak headland of Hermaness to the lighthouse of Out Stack. I hope that we will see that a new swimming team will be again trained to get medals in Scotland and maybe in the future they could come to Rome where they could swim in our great Swimming Olympic Stadium. Is it only a dream? I do not know...

# Valentine's Day History

## Pagan festivals, Christian saints, Chaucer's love birds, and the Greeting Card Association of America

by Borgna Brunner for Google



### Roman Roots

The history of Valentine's Day is obscure, and further clouded by various fanciful legends. The holiday's roots are in the ancient Roman festival of **Lupercalia**, a fertility celebration commemorated annually on February 15. **Pope Gelasius I** recast this pagan festival as a Christian feast day circa 496, declaring February 14 to be St. Valentine's Day.

### Valentines Galore

Which St. Valentine this early pope intended to honor remains a mystery:

according to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, there were at least three early Christian saints by that name. One was a priest in Rome, another a bishop in Terni, and of a third St. Valentine almost nothing is known except that he met his end in Africa. Rather astonishingly, all three Valentines were said to have been martyred on Feb. 14.

Most scholars believe that the St. Valentine of the holiday was a priest who attracted the disfavor of Roman emperor **Claudius II** around 270. At this stage, the factual ends and the mythic begins. According to one legend,



Claudius II had prohibited marriage for young men, claiming that bachelors made better soldiers. Valentine continued to secretly perform marriage ceremonies but was eventually apprehended by the Romans and put to death. Another legend has it that Valentine, imprisoned by Claudius, fell in love with the daughter of his jailer. Before he was executed, he allegedly sent her a letter signed “from your Valentine.” Probably the most plausible story surrounding St. Valentine is one not focused on **Eros** (passionate love) but on **agape** (Christian love): he was martyred for refusing to renounce his religion.

In 1969, the Catholic Church revised its liturgical calendar, removing the feast days of saints whose historical origins were questionable. St. Valentine was one of the casualties.

### Chaucer’s Love Birds

It was not until the 14th century that this Christian feast day became definitively associated with love. According to UCLA medieval scholar Henry Ansgar Kelly, author of *Chaucer and the Cult of Saint Valentine*, it was **Chaucer** who first linked St. Valentine’s Day with romance.

In 1381, Chaucer composed a poem in honor of the engagement between England’s **Richard II** and **Anne of Bohemia**. As was the poetic tradition, Chaucer associated the occasion with a feast day. In “The Parliament of Fowls,”

the royal engagement, the mating season of birds, and St. Valentine’s Day are linked:

“For this was on St. Valentine’s Day,  
When every fowl cometh there to  
choose his mate”.

### Tradition of Valentine’s Cards



Over the centuries, the holiday evolved, and by the Eighteenth century, gift-giving and exchanging hand-made cards on Valentine’s Day had become common in England. Hand-made valentine cards made of lace, ribbons, and featuring cupids and hearts eventually spread to the American colonies. The tradition of Valentine’s cards did not become widespread in the United States, however, until the 1850s, when Esther A. Howland, a Mount Holyoke graduate and native of Worcester, Mass., began mass-producing them. Today, of course, the holiday has become a booming commercial success. According to the Greeting Card Association, 25% of all cards sent each year are valentines.

Read more: [Valentine’s Day History — Infoplease.com](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/valentinesdayhistory.html#ixzz1kczn7Fik)  
<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/valentinesdayhistory.html#ixzz1kczn7Fik>

## Saint Valentine's Biscuits



### Ingredients

125 gr butter

6 gr baking powder

1 egg

100 gr sugar

250 gr flour

grated rind of half lemon

1 packet Vanillin

### Filling

Strawberry marmalade

Icing sugar for dusting

### Method

Cut up butter in pieces and leave to soften at room temperature. Place flour in heap on working surface, make a hole in centre and place the butter, baking powder, grated lemon rind, egg, vanillina and sugar. Mix well and knead to form a smooth homogenous dough. Wrap dough in cling film and leave to rest for a half hour in a cool place.

With the aid of a rolling pin roll out dough to form a sheet  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm thick, then using heart-shaped cookie cutters (1 larger and 1 smaller one) cut out as many heart shapes as possible with the larger cutter. In half of the hearts use the smaller cutter to cut out the centre. Place a sheet of oven paper on a baking tray, arrange all the hearts on this and bake in a moderate oven at  $180^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 15-20 minutes. The biscuits should not become brown but only slightly coloured.

When they are cooked and still warm place on each whole heart some strawberry marmalade, leaving the edges free, then place the cutout hearts on top to fit over the free edges. For the finishing touch dust lightly with icing sugar, using a sieve.

# My Potato Soufflé

*by Elvira Bonacci*

This recipe is very filling and made with more or less whatever leftovers you have in the fridge.

## Ingredients

1 kg potatoes  
50 gr butter  
2 eggs  
Cooked ham  
Milk  
Cheese\* ( whatever you have)  
Salt, pepper



## Method:

Boil the peeled potatoes in salted water and then mash them while still hot. add the butter, the diced ham (or salami or prosciutto crudo), a couple slices of cheese cut into little pieces, the beaten eggs, and a little milk - just a little as it depends on the consistency of the potatoes, some are more floury while others can be full of water, therefore you may need less milk). Season with a little salt and black pepper and mix delicately all together.

Heat oven to 180°C. Pour the above mixture in a greased cake tin dusted with a little breadcrumbs. Sprinkle some bread crumbs on top and bake in the hot oven for about 20 mins until it is golden on top Serve warm and buon appetito!

Variation: \* I also at times just use mozzarella and a handful of grated parmesan cheese.



## Time after time

There are forms of co-operation that almost become a new tradition

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