

L'ATLANTE DELLA MEMORIA

The Atlas Of Memory

A road-movie following the tracks of a man that a century ago travelled through Italy to discover the signs that unite and divide our culture.



Director: Dorino Minigutti

Screenplay: Dorino Minigutti, Lorenzo Fabbro

DOP: Debora Vrizzi

Production Company: Agherose srl, Italy

Genre: Creative documentary

Language: Italian, Friulian, Sardinian

Length: 52' - 75'

Format: DCP

Aspect ratio: 1,33:1

Principal shooting locations: Friuli Venezia Giulia, Sardinia (Italy)

Budget: €. 160.000

Financing in place: €. 92.000

Completion/delivery: december 2019

Partners involved: Friuli Venezia Giulia Film Fund, Sardegna Film Commission, Friuli Venezia Giulia Film Commission, Società Filologica Friulana

Contact: Lorenzo Fabbro

Tel. : +39 347 0324708

Email: lorenzo.fabbro@agherose.com

SYNOPSIS

It is the passion for vintage photos mixed with coincidences that led Lorenzo to discover the photos and the researches of Ugo Pellis. It is his desire to go looking for the children of those pictures, instead, that leads him to take a journey in the places photographed by Pellis in the '30s.

Lorenzo travels through Friuli Venezia Giulia, the place where Pellis started his researches, and Sardinia, the place where he took the most of the pictures. Mainly exploring small villages, the only objects he has to pursue his research are the almost hundred years old photos. His investigations usually starts from elderly houses, senior centers, bars. Sometimes, though, the research becomes door-to-door. All the vehicles are allowed for the purpose of research: sometimes he has a car, sometimes he takes a bus, some other times hitch-hiking is a perfect method to seek for informations.

The journey becomes a carousel of experiences, encounters, twists of fate and surprises, where people and their memories are the real protagonists. As a true search is all made of successes and failures, sometimes unexpected encounters turn out to be the most incredible experiences: like the one with an old lady living alone in an abandoned Sardinian village, who made up a personal museum to save the memory of her family and her community.



Sometimes it is still possible to find direct witnesses, like two old cousins that still live in the same house where they were photographed as children in 1930, in a small village in the mountains of Friuli. Some other times, instead, it is difficult to find the right evidence after so many years. The landscapes have changed, people have passed out, an earthquake destroyed the buildings forever. It is impossible to find any direct connection with the pictures, but why not making new ones opening up to new characters? An old photographer retiring after having turned 80, for example, or an old man who became blind but still has a vivid memory of how life used to be in small villages once ago.

Pellis' journey is a pretext to allow ourselves to "wander" around comparing the traces of the past with the signs of the present. Most of all, is a catalyst to talk about memory through different perspectives: community, identity, love, death.

The documentary is an initiatory journey in time and space, in which the original difficulty of finding evidence becomes the difficulty of knowing how to distinguish and choose the right one. To find, in the middle of chaos, the exact trace, contaminated by a hundred years of history.

UGO PELLIS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Ugo Pellis (1882 - 1943) was one of the main authors of The Atlas of Italian Linguistics (Atlante Linguistico Italiano – ALI). ALI is an orderly and systematic collection of maps on which, for each location explored, the corresponding dialectal translations of a word or phrase are collected by the living voice of the speaking by one or more researchers.

ALI is the highest national dialectological enterprise and one of the largest ever among European and non-European countries.

Ugo Pellis carried out alone, from 1925 to 1942, 730 dialectological investigations on the whole Italian territory, thus passing on an exceptional linguistic and ethnographic archive made up of millions of cards and over 7.000 photos.

THE NARRATIVE FORM

We want to suspend the viewer's expectations about genres and film style and push people to walk that fine line joining the world of things and the invisible world of imagination that feeds and sustains our presence on earth. Our story starts from an intimate curiosity of looking for unknown people, but at the same time its "public" quality compels a wider reflection on society. The aim is to defamiliarize the worn-out grammar of the documentary (frontal take, voice-over, question-answer) and open reality to a dreamlike dimension. To turn the actual landscapes of Friuli and Sardinia into a mental space, giving rise to a complex performance of "public intimacies".

Contamination of styles will lead sometimes to make the real surreal, the document into allegory.

Our camera itself will play a role on our cinematic stage. Never taken for granted, never objective, it will have a transactional and dialogic relation with the reality, different engagements delivering different interactions. It will be the mean to offer a constant invitation to open up, to remember, to be in the world, even as they amplify a call to another world presently missing. It will mediate a boundary between the here-and-now and elsewhere. It will work as an opening to another world of evoked interlocutors, experiences, and memories, becoming literally a telecommunication across time.

NOTE OF INTENTION

The sparkle of every research is always curiosity.

My own curiosity towards Ugo Pellis, a heroic and pioneering figure from 19th century, turned quickly into pure fascination. From a photograph found by chance I discovered an entire archive. The archive revealed the story of a huge and revolutionary project, that nowadays has almost been forgotten.

While examining all those photographs, I felt like the faces of the people were still talking to me despite so many years have been passed through. I wanted to know more. I wanted to go seeking for informations about those people. I wanted to go looking for those children, to see if they are still alive.

Pellis was not a professional photographer. Nevertheless, as a support to his linguistic investigations, he consciously photographed everyday life in 'lesser Italy'. In the past years, that very Italy would have quickly disappeared and swallowed up by the economic boom and the new industrialization of the country in the immediate post-war period.

Guided by Pellis' researches and tracks, I imagined a modern journey to compare his research with today's reality. A journey through small villages of Italy that could give us new paradigms to understand the change of society in the last hundred years. A journey that can question our contemporary understanding of the social sphere, exposing the



conflicted and distracted relation that our late-modern, post-industrial, digitalized culture entertains with the past and the present. A path that inflects the theme of memory both in past and present.

As a middle-age person, I partially felt connected to the past portrayed by Pellis. At the same time, I was interested to find a complementary narrative form that could allow me to tell my story in a modern perspective. For this reason, in the documentary it is a young protagonist, Lorenzo, who discovers and decides to follow the tracks of Pellis. As a co-author of the script as well, the young protagonist brings an additional point of view. Belonging to the so-called "liquid modernity" theorised by Zygmunt Baumann, he is completely detached from the past of Pellis. Being myself like a bridge, in the middle between that past and the present of Lorenzo, I want to use this combination of gazes to connect them in a unconventional and stimulating way.

This documentary is neither a criticism of contemporaneity nor a nostalgic memory towards what no longer comes back. The aim is rather to bring out continuity and discontinuity in the irreversible anthropological transformation, to offer the viewer some food for thoughts on the meaning of research. To transmit the same values of curiosity, passion and commitment to the study of our society that Ugo Pellis has handed down to us.

PROJECT STATUS

The project has obtained funding from Friuli Venezia Giulia Audiovisual Fund.
The film has the support on develop from Sardinia Film Commission.
The teaser filmed in Friuli Venezia Giulia and Sardinia is completed.
We are looking for a co-producer, distributor.

COMPANY PROFILE

Agherose is an independent production company based in Udine (IT). It has always been specialised in the production of documentaries regarding historical and current topics, characterised by a strong creative spirit and social commitment.

The company's documentary production includes: 'Over the line' (2012) directed by Dorino Minigutti coproduction Agherose (ITA), Zavod Kinoateljje (SLO) and Focus-Media (HR); 'What remains' (2012) directed by Maria Silvia Bazzoli coprod. Agherose (I), Cinédoc (F); 'Parole povere' (2013) directed by Francesca Archibugi; 'INT/ART' (2016-2018) a series directed by Dorino Minigutti.