

Documentary Project

# SUSHI & FRICO



Flavio Parisi - President of Fogolar Furlan Tokyo

agherose

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## INTRODUCTION

What does a Friulian from Tavagnacco do in the midst of the 'Great Japanese Orchestra'? What does a Friulian girl wearing a kimono do at a restaurant in Tokyo? How does a young Japanese – Friulian's family live their 'Fogolar'? Is it true that nowadays the East represents the same thing for the young people who emigrated to the United States in the XIX century? These are some of the questions this documentary aims to find an answer.

## GLOCAL

Between the 19th and 20th centuries, tens of thousands of Friulians migrated “ator pal mont” (around the world), mainly to the distant America with the classic cardboard suitcase.

At the beginning of the new millennium, the phenomenon repeats itself. We migrate by plane, with backpacks and trolleys, we've got degrees but the goal is always the same: the search for a job, the pursuit of better living conditions. Entrepreneurs, pizza makers, managers capable of starting up companies out of nothing, even high-qualified employees, artists and creative people.

Globalization has expanded the horizons of opportunities for job seekers abroad. Not only Europe and North America, but now also China and Japan.

It is on the East side that we focus our attention, those places where the West and being Western are distinctly “other than us”.

Some common elements strongly arise in the stories of young Friulian emigrants —the discomfort of living in an “other” country as for language and writing; the will to grow, to get a career and a salary that have practically become a mirage at home; commitments and difficulties faced with the typical Friulian tenacity.

Although technology has brought distances nearer and pragmatism now pervades our lives, in the young emigrants of today, as well as for their predecessors, there remains a strong, very strong bond with "their" Friuli. It is perhaps to not losing bond with their roots that the Friulian's communities abroad, since the Second World War, have created centers of aggregation, the 'Fogolars Furlans', where Friulian language, culture, wine and food are the cornerstones of a shared identity.



## THE FOGOLARS FURLANS

With more than 22,000 members and 150 offices across all continents, the 'Fogolars' are not only venues that recall the values of friulianism in social and cultural areas but also are a tool for the internationalization of Friuli's and its production system, for lobbying and exploiting the skills of the Friulian communities in the world. On July 19th, 2013 the Fogolâr Furlan Tokyo was officially established. At this meeting place of youngsters especially under 30, the glocal between East and West finds its particular fusion.

## SYNOPSIS

The main characters of the documentary are a trumpeter (Ottaviano Cristofoli), a young family Italo-Japanese (Flavio Parisi and Yuki) and 'The Fogolar Furlan' of Tokyo. Crossroads of stories, dreams and hopes of young Friulians in Japanese land.

Each of them pursues a small dream. Ottaviano wants to organize, with the Tokyo College of Music and some Japanese singers, a concert of traditional Friulian music arranged for a group of brass instruments.

Flavio, the president of the Fogolar, together with chef Paolo, is busy with the organization of the first Frico Festival in Japanese land.

We see in them the pride of their culture of origin, the desire to make it known, but also the desire to change old habits and the reputation they want to give to their's mother land. We follow them in their daily lives. We see them moving across the big city to meet later, through text messages and chats, in a gathering point with friends. But there is always someone who misses the coordinates or the metro stop ending up losing the appointment. During a TV broadcast with Flavio as a protagonist or hearing Ottaviano's jokes comparing frico against sushi or grappa against sake, we discover the many things these two cultures geographically so far apart have in common; such as interpersonal relations that request a similar pace but include a sense of trustworthiness and honor.

Social networks and Skype have reduced distances and favored the preservation of relationships with family and friends at home. However, there are things that technology can not replace: a ride through the morainic hills, a Sunday at the beach or a beer with some old friends. Ottaviano misses the homes's flavors of home, those which he has grown with, such as the smell of freshly cut hay or the scent of a Frico made with potatoes.

They seem like pathetic thoughts from old time, but that is not at all. The distance helps them rediscover their roots and the nostalgia of their 'Fogolar' emerges as an ancestral feeling. After his return from a holiday in Friuli, Flavio writes in his blog: *"It is not easy to readjust oneself, riding among the whiffs of sweet soy sauce coming out from the thousands of kitchens, among taxis and millions of red traffic lights..."*

## THE CHARACTERS

### Flavio Parisi - Udine

He has been living in Tokyo for about 9 years now. He moved to Japan without even speaking Japanese and has always had occasional jobs: he has taught Italian language and the history of Italian opera (melodramma), he occasionally writes for Italian magazines, he works on translations, he plays the sax.

Sporadically, he participates as a guest in a TV program on the national network NHK, in which eight foreigners living in Japan analyze subjects, habits or any cultural side of the country and discuss similarities and differences upon their own vision. He tries to compare Japan to Friuli. He married Yuki and they have a baby, Elena, who will soon begin to speak Japanese, Italian and Friulian. Flavio is an immigrant who loves very much the country where he lives.





## Ottaviano Cristofoli - Tavagnacco (UD)

He is not yet twenty-nine years old, as he likes to emphasize. A strong passion, the trumpet, and an unsought or unwanted destination, but held tight in the end. A “stave drain” from Udine, from Friuli and from Italy —all places where he couldn't realize his passion, which is also his job. "First trumpet" in various orchestras, he started traveling at the age of 20, first in Italy and then to Germany and the United States.

Within a few months he found himself in Tokyo, where he still lives. Not quite an easy choice that came almost by accident but turned out to be the only possible one. Ottaviano is principal trumpet at the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra. To him, Japan has certain "assonances" with Friuli as they are all hard workers, they commit seriously and act concretely in consequence.



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

I have produced documentaries in Friulian language and about Friulian culture over the years. I know the self-referentiality lying in an anachronistic culture of emigration as well as the new demands of Friulian youths. I like to tell people's stories, to seek for new perspectives in order to stimulate the audience to reflect on what surrounds them.



The idea for this project came out at Flavio and Yuki Parisi's wedding. I know Flavio since he was a child, as he is the son of a friend of mine. Thanks to him, I came in contact with the amazing universe of young Friulians who reside in Tokyo. Through them, I mean to know their acquaintances, their loves and their friendships.

It is a fascinating kaleidoscope, this intersecting of geographically distant identities yet surprisingly

closer than any other culture from our continent. It was through “the other” in Japan that our young heroes have come to know their roots, their culture and the values that represents them.

The small community of Friulians in Tokyo is a constantly growing microcosm of young entrepreneurs who run away abroad in search of work and better living conditions.

I am thinking about telling a light story that can grasp in depth the spirit of its protagonists and the habitat in which they live. I intend to describe them in their everyday life, from work to leisure to love. I would follow them discreetly, together with a small team, emphasizing the congeniality, irony and self-irony that usually represent them so that their tics and clichés would stand out in color among that very different context from the one they belong.

## MARKETING

The Regional Fund for Audiovisual works has resulted in a contribution to the development of the project.

Contacts with the television networks (RAI in Italy and NHK in Japan) will be established.

Contacts with the Chambers of Commerce, Regional Trade Associations and the Regional Association 'Friuli in the World' which coordinates Fogolars Furlans worldwide will be settled. We will also evaluate the interest of Friulian's companies including but not

limited to the wine and food industry, which already operate in Japan or intend to start their business there. A media-partner collaboration proposal will be extended to the daily *Messaggero Veneto* for the distribution of the DVD in conjunction with the newspaper.



## TEAM OF WORKERS

Organization in Japan  
executive production  
script and direction  
research  
music

Flavio Parisi  
Patrizia Di Lenardo  
Dorino Minigutti  
Manuela Daniel, Barbara Urbano  
VV.AA.

## ITALIAN NETWORK PARTNERS (TBD)

RAI – Regional Headquarters for FVG  
Fogolar Furlan Tokyo  
Ente Friuli nel Mondo  
Camera di Commercio Udine  
Confindustria Udine  
Confartigianato – Udine

## PROJECT DURATION

research and development: from April 2014 to December 2015

production / post-production: from April to December 2016.

