



ITALY

REDISCOVERING TIME

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Elia Rollier is a videomaker and the creator of the Cinevan project that projects films in Italy's town squares and the courtyards of apartment buildings. To celebrate 25 April, Italy's Liberation Day, seeing as it was impossible to hold outdoor processions Elia organised a group of people to show a series of projections from the windows of their homes onto the façades of buildings opposite.

REDISCOVERING TIME

Artists and intellectuals: a moment for creativity

- ▶ The lockdown has been a very particular time for artists and intellectuals, obliged to spend time far from events and the gaze of the public
- ▶ Many have used this rediscovered time in a productive and creative way, to conclude projects that have been stuck on standby and to work on new ventures.
- ▶ Digital platforms and social media have also been used imaginatively to share art and culture in different ways

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Riccardo Paternò Castello is a Sicilian painter now living in Milan. Prior to the quarantine, Riccardo had already been taking time out from all social relationships in order to concentrate on his work. At the beginning of the pandemic he created a huge canvas depicting Milan from above. Working with pencil and eraser, he consciously chose to use materials that he had at home in abundance. The work he has produced in this period, together with those of another 10 artists, will be going on display at the virtual gallery Noli Me Tangere that will also hold an auction. Part of the proceeds will be donated to the LaSpes medical research association.



Rocco is a DJ based at the cultural centre Il Tempio del Futuro Perduto. During the first phase of the lockdown, between 19 March and 3 April, alternating with other DJs he helped set a new record for an uninterrupted live-streamed DJ set, which lasted 340 hours, far longer than the previous record of 240 hours.



Visual artists Maryam and Saba are originally from Iran but are based in Milan. They hold courses in Art Therapy and Art Coaching at their studio space, Spazio Punto. The lockdown period led them to reconsider the concept of therapy – a term that they have now decided is no longer appropriate to describe their activities – and have moved their work online, also holding virtual workshops in Iran. These have been a resounding success. The hugely positive response to their online work is such that they are now considering leaving their studio to save on rent and management costs.



Lazare Ohandja is a dancer and choreographer. In the first phase of the lockdown Lazare felt disorientated and struggled to manage his art and creativity. Then he began to review all of his old works, imagining how to recreate them. Being forced to stay at home also enabled him to spend more time with his family and to better appreciate his wife's work as an artistic housewife.

How many times have you wished that you had more time? The coronavirus emergency has meant that the luxury of time has been forced upon us all, and with it comes a great opportunity. For artists and intellectuals, obliged to spend time away from events and the gaze of the public, this rediscovered time also provides space to use productively and an opportunity to reinvigorate their creativity.

We knocked on the doors of artists and intellectuals to see how they have been spending this time while normal events have been placed on hold and whether they have been concentrating on developing new ideas and works. We enquired if they have been working on old projects or creating new ones, and in what other creative ways they've been spending their time. We also wanted to know if they have been using digital tools and social media to share their art and whether they feel that these could also be useful in the future, opening up new ways of experiencing culture.



Milan. Raffaele Kohler, musician with the group Ottavo Richter. During the lockdown every day at 6 pm he would hold mini concerts, which he also broadcast via streaming, at his window for the inhabitants of nearby buildings. These became a highly popular event and his image at the window has even been used in a commercial for Barilla pasta.



Massimiliano Cividati, artistic director of the theatre group Aia Taumastica. During the quarantine he streamed his performance of the play Ghiaccio, the 300th performance of which had been scheduled to take place at the theatre Out Off, Milan. The performance was broadcast on Facebook with an experimental collaboration between actors, musicians and technicians, each performing from their own home. Furthermore, during his two months at home, he wrote seven stories based on the treatment protocol for dealing with bladder tumours in order to distribute to patients to familiarize them with the therapies that they would have to face.



Young French painter Sebastien Notre used the experience of being stuck at home to create a series of collages, which he then pitched to a number of brands around the world. His initiative has been successful and today he is working full time on this new creative technique.



Nicola Kithartzis, musician and founder of Magazzino Musica, a multifunctional space selling classical music, sheet music and specialist books, musical instruments as well as housing a violin-making space and a performance venue for concerts, presentations and "loft opera & aperitivo". Nicola plays the cello and directs a choir and orchestra, in which his daughter Mara, a violinist at Milan's Scuola Civica di Musica, also performs. During the lockdown he put on virtual concerts that have been edited on the computer, and also created an online sales archive, an immense project that he had been postponing for months because of his daily commitments.



Sharon Hecker, art historian, curator, founder of "The Hecker Standard", a system of rules to certify the authenticity of works of art. Originally from Los Angeles, Sharon lives in Milan with her half-Italian family. She is one of the leading experts on the sculptor Medardo Rosso and curated an exhibition of his works at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St Louis, USA. During the lockdown she finished writing the book that she had been meaning to complete for some time and she has continued to hold online workshops. She has also continued to work on the exhibition of ceramics by Lucio Fontana for the Peggy Guggenheim Museum in Venice.



Actress Anna Zapparoli and musician Mario Borciani are the parents of Beniamino and Benedetta (both actors) and the founders of the Dual Band project. Since March they have been stuck at their home in Lecco on Lake Como, where they have a wonderful terrace. For two months they subscribed to a streaming platform dedicated to Shakespearian theatre in order to watch and draw new inspiration from the works of the British playwright performed by some of the world's leading companies.



Harpist and composer Vincenzo Zitello has used this period in which all of his concerts have been cancelled to complete a recording work on the theme of a "Medieval Bestiary" creating sound portraits. The work, which spans world music, classical and ancient music, had been on hold for a long time due to concert commitments.



Iranian photographer Niloofar Yamini was once a student of Abbas Kiarostami but then distanced herself from her former maestro. She came to Italy to study at the Brera Academy but then fell in love and stayed here. From artistic photography she slowly moved more towards photo reporting and began to work as the Italian correspondent for some Iranian newspapers. The Covid-19 pandemic coincided with the beginning of her pregnancy, which has been her main commitment during these months of home quarantine.



Poet Francesca Genti has a small publishing house and hand binds the books that she publishes. During the suspension of normal life because of the lockdown she has finished binding a backlog of books and has created new projects.



Barbara Pietrasanta is a member of the board of the Fondazione Achille Castiglioni and serves on the governing board of Milan's Society of Fine Arts and Permanent Exhibition. She is the founder of the communications and marketing agency Anyway. Also a painter, Barbara is painting a new series entitled "Risvegli" (Awakenings) that she began before the lockdown, which has given her even greater inspiration and motivation.



Gaia Manzini, scrittrice e sceneggiatrice. Lasciamo a lei la parola: "La chiusura ha coinciso con la chiusura del mio romanzo. È stato positivo perché dover lavorare alle ultime pagine, concentrarsi sul chiudere, mi ha concesso di dimenticarmi per qualche ora di quello che stava accadendo fuori".



Alessandro Vaccari (Marthial) is a DJ based at the cultural centre Il Tempio del Futuro Perduto. During the first phase of the lockdown, between 19 March and 3 April, alternating with other DJs he helped set a new record for an uninterrupted live-streamed DJ set, which lasted 340 hours, far longer than the previous record of 240 hours.



Beniamino, Benedetta and Lucrezia are actors belonging to the Dual Band theatre group that puts on performances in Italian and English. The group is based at Cielo Sotto Milano, the underground performance space located at the Porta Vittoria stop on the Milan Passante railway. The lockdown has been a time for reflection, study and the development of new projects. Among the ideas in the pipeline is a project to create a new performance format in the courtyards of Milan's apartment buildings and institutions.



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