

## REFLECTIONS

Ecole\_IG workshop

Erasmus+ Strategic Learning Partnership

Odaia, Brezoi, Romania, 5 – 9 May 2016

Reflections written by Aloardi members, a Peruvian / Dutch artist initiative, as part of the Aloardi Exchange Programme 2016. Thanks to Wapke Feenstra and myvillages.

By Christian Galarreta

“During my experience in the Ecole\_IG, I had the opportunity to know how some Romanian families live in the fields with a strong contact and respect for the wild life. Their way of life reflects a rich and diverse local culture with a historic line that oversteps and questions our urban customs, which are more related to anthropocentric visions of comfort.

One of the things that impressed me more is how the Romanian shepherds interact with the animals and the territory. For example their horses are raised living free in the mountains. I find also shepherds that have respect for the wolves even when their domestic animals are attacked by them. As some native communities in the Amazon, some shepherds don't attack the wolves. They assume that the shepherds are living in the territory of the wild animals, and not the opposite –how is usual in the way of thinking in our industrialised world. It is evident that these attitudes have an influence in the conservation of the local ecosystem and their biodiversity.

Living in the Odaia of APTNV, I encountered an alternative way of living in the fields: domesticating the wild nature but without separating it from their potential wildness. Echoes of this vital relation with the environment can be found in the design of shapes, rhythms and signs in their old textiles, music and dance. Here they extrapolate the feeling of the life in the fields, for example using the monotony in music to give the sensation of continuum that the shepherd life keeps, or using curved long lines in some textiles that represent the water, the serpents, the hair, and the trend of life. All these ideas come to my mind after having some talks with local inhabitants and with members of the family of the Odaia that host us.

Using a local solution to scarecrows as an acoustic instrument After some walks in the area I saw that some shepherds build handmade scarecrows with flexible metal wires and recycled cans –cans that were containing beer, fish, etc. One of the neighbours of the Odaia where we were hosted,



Photo-detail of the 200 meter long structure that is around the field and also attached to one Odaia house. It is a scarecrow that can be used as acoustic instrument.





built one big scarecrow which's structure occupies around 200 meters in his fields. The tension of the wire makes it possible to catch the vibration caused by the movement of anything that rubs or shakes the wire, or is hunting on it. Rain drops, wind, birds, and metal cans swaying against the wire, generate sounds that are normally not perceptible: they are hiding in the structure of the scarecrows. Using some simple contact microphones, builded by myself, I was able to make audible and record this phenomena. We found a nice acoustic instrument that reacts to the dynamics of the life around the field where it is, but not in a literally way. Because normally we listen to the environment with the typical soundscape of the field, but listening through the physical structure of the scarecrow, we can enjoy other intense sounds that come from an artificial structure, created as a solution to protect the fields from the animals. At the same time this object wakes up other dimensions to perceive the same environment. \*

\* Attached are some sounds of the experiment with the scarecrow. The tracks are selections of raw material with little equalisations and fades, without overdubs or effects. The position of the transducer (contact mic), as well as the spatial conditions, influenced the acoustic dynamics of these sounds. \*



By Cesar Gabriel Castillo Agüero

"This experience has allowed me to have contact with self-managed initiatives, a process that I experienced in a constant appreciation of nature – understood as a peaceful and violent variable. Showing life honestly, the cold, the shade or the blood dripping from an animal; all this detonates in me maternal memories that make light and poetry.

Particularly this international experience displays and allows breaking paradigms of social character.

Romania and specifically this place are luminously vital as their music, language and sound; they don't miss sincerity, and on the contrary there is a drive persisting in its people that defines a beautifully alive character, like the space around them.



In this place knowledge about diversity is shared, and I learned about plants, flowers, roots, fruits, and trees. I also learned about cultural events such as literature and music. I've been lucky and surprised to know about my own country (Peru) with people in this place. Allowing me to rediscover and appreciate many aspects of my own culture, in various ways; it made me realise my culture's originality and power. "







By Janneke van der Putten

"The Odaia Wool Processing and Wool Techniques workshop was a special experience in Romania with a learning method based on empirical knowledge and full integration into the local culture of the organisers. Through their strategy of social engagement they maintain a living oral tradition that is grounded within their habitat and Odaia region. Because of their way of life and their sense of community, I was received not as a workshop participant, but I was included as a welcomed-guest. My overall experience overcame the main theme and I gained much more knowledge than expected. What I find important to point out is that the workshop-theme is like a trigger, to share and exchange much more –valuable moments and things that go beyond a formal organisation, institutional structure, or even that go beyond words.

Coming there was a way to get to know a group of people, animals, nature and aspects of life itself, that are all especially unique because of their ability to deal with each other in a basic, coherent and sustainable manner. I am very thankful I could join these few days, and get introduced in things I never saw, knew and did before, such as: sheering

sheep and the conversations about wool; regional- and national culinary; animal – human relations and modes of survival; Romanian dance, music, clothes, textiles and artisany; and the local Odaia housing architectures, in relation to the landscape.

New ideas that I got are that a way of life based on sharing knowledge, experience and goods can be aimed at, instead of a more individual, materialistic and economically driven way of life. It is an example of how to learn from our families, friends and neighbours, support an intangible heritage and cultivate a fertile ground for a more independent and self-sufficient way of life, within a globalised modern society. It is an example where the local culture and ancestry are preserved, but also where new ideas and (technical) developments are embedded. I believe the Odaia region can grow in an intelligent way and future through APT-NV's initiative, while maintaining a healthy communication and exchange with (inter)national partners and interested ones."



#### About Aloardi

Founded in Peru in 1998, Aloardi started as one of the first labels and independent platforms in South and Central America diffusing and producing experimental music, media art, sound related interventions and alternative acoustic research. We support and generate collaborations between people with self-managed associations and institutions on local, national and international level. We organise events and transdisciplinary exhibitions, initiate actions and share knowledge: the association is engaged in approaches towards (non) technological resources, sustainable work and exchange with local communities. Based in Lima, our space serves since 2004 as venue for workshops, a residency program, and a mediatheque.

In the Aloardi Exchange Programme 2016, Peruvian artists Gabriel Castillo and Frau Diamanda were invited to present their work in Europe. This was a 3-month project, curated by Janneke van der Putten.

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