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Topic of the Year: Connective (T)issue

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INDEX

9 Editorial Cinzia Dal Maso & Luca Peyronel 13 Topic of the Year Hard times to plan: Challenges to restructure a working plan 15 during the pandemic, and other stories of #pubarchMED Jaime Almansa Sanchez Community archaeology 2021: building community 23 engagement at the time of social distancing Marta Lorenzon & Päivi Miettunen 35 Collecting memories, mapping places in the Covid era: a digital community map for Trinitapoli (Foggia, Apulia) Roberto Goffredo & Valeria Volpe University of Cagliari as a heritage community. A case of 49 "multivocal nudge" for sharing heritage in times of social distancing Mattia Sanna Montanelli, Martina D'Asaro & Antonio Giorri Museum connections during the COVID-19 pandemic 63 Chiara Zuanni 73 Satura Lanx Research Recruitment Using Facebook, Instagram and Twit- 75 ter Advertising: challenges and potentials

Sophia Bakogianni & Jahna Otterbacher

	Instagram streaming sessions as a form of archaeological communication: the case of the Colombare di Negrar project Chiara Boracchi	89				
99	Archaeotales					
	Ajax: life as a wingman Cinzia Dal Maso	101				
	Love during lockdown: Eros is spying on us from the Olympus Giorgia Cappelletti	103				
105	News					
	Discovery in Torcello: Venice Was Born Carolingian and not Byzantine Cinzia Dal Maso	107				
	A Thermal Sanctuary Dedicated to Apollo at San Casciano dei Bagni Cinzia Dal Maso	111				
	Podcast Museum: 7 Minutes on the Timeline Cinzia Dal Maso	115				
	Trump's wall threatens Native Americans Rasul Mojaverian	119				
123	Reviews					
	Archeologia pubblica. Metodi, tecniche, esperienze di G. Volpe, Carocci, 2020 Luca Peyronel	125				
	S. Knell, The Museum's Borders: on the challenge of knowing and remembering well, Routledge, New York, 2020 Cristina Sanna	129				
	Archeologia pubblica in Italia, a cura di Nucciotti, Bonac- chi, Molducci, Firenze University Press, 2019 Roberta Menegazzi	133				

Videogame. A Total War Saga: Troy (SEGA, Strategia a	137			
turni, Grecia pre-classica)				
Luca Lajolo				
Docufilm. Le tre vite di Aquileia, Sky Arte 2019				
Federica Riso				



Love during lockdown: Eros is spying on us from the Olympus

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Abstract

The quarantine has forced Eros, the young God responsible for "love at first sight", to lay down his bow and arrow. He is relaxing, he is happy, but...

∂ Open Access ■ Translated by: Michael Campeggi

Service Eros, love, Olympus, relax, feelings



Fig. 1. Bronze statuette of a sleeping Eros from the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York (https://www.metmuseum.org/it/art/collection/search/254502)

Ooh, finally a vacation!

It has been centuries since I relaxed a bit. Engagements, weddings, civil unions, golden and silver anniversaries, then divorces and new loves, and never a moment to relax. But don't you ever get tired? To not speak about St. Valentine's, with all those horrible inflatable hearts, pink cushions, and boxes of chocolates. Ugh! You really made me earn my pay!

Usually this is the most frenetic season of the

year. School trips, first kisses: in other words, work. So, they should pay me overtime.

Now, instead, I can fold my wings and take a nap. With schools closed, vacations rescheduled, no flirting at work, no romantic hand in hand strolls. I do not need to spend my days directing the traffic of smiles and looks, like a love traffic warden who is eager to retire. Really, I have always been clumsy at calculating the trajectories of glances. "Two points are crossed by one and only one line"; but

have these mathematicians ever tried to manage the interactions in a group of teenagers?

It is a nightmare! Sometimes the intended recipient bends down at the last second to tie his show, or he sneezes and closes his eyes, and the glance full of passion misses him and flies off to who knows where. At that point, I am forced to wiz like a rocket to capture it again before it hits the wrong person. At times — ehm — I lose it. Surely you all have at least a small unhappy love affair to blame me for...

Oh, please! You try if you think it is so easy! My wings are not like those of a condor!

And away again to shoot golden arrows with my bow, in the attempt to remedy the disaster I created. Try to visualize this: sweaty hands, heavy breathing, a fraction of a second to aim, draw and shoot. Really, are you amazed if I miss the target?

Go on, laugh! In the meantime #IstayontheOlympus, and you cannot count on me to figure out your sentimental messes.

However, you have surprised me. I have been doing this job for millennia, but to be honest, I never really have understood your feelings. They hide like fish on the ocean floor, buried beneath anniversaries, weddings, selfies with dazzling smiles and all the rest. And now what?

Now, with the background noise turned off, only silence remains. Only you remain, with your

looks, your gestures which you are forced to direct on your own and make sure they reach the right person in the right moment. You need to take care of it yourselves, find the exact words.

Not easy, eh? But I must say, you are doing well. I am watching you, slumped up here on my soft cloud (anyway, we are the generation of couch potatoes). Now I see those of you who have never gotten their hands dirty improvise themselves as chefs for the whole family – the yeast, for God's sake, where is the yeast?! And I see others who are used to turning their cheeks, be the first to kiss every morning and night.

You have learned to resolve your quarrels without my intervention. It was about time! Certainly, at times talking may reveal uncomfortable truths: loves bloom, loves wither. It is part of the game.

I see you rediscover old passions, I see you write, paint, play music and create, and not only to entertain the young ones. I find it hilarious when you draw rainbows so crooked to give shivers to the goddess Iris; I adore you when you sing from balconies, completely off tune.

Anyway, I just wanted to tell you this: good job! I am telling you as an expert.

Now, carry on like this. I, on the other hand, will return to my nap if you don't mind. As I await permission to finally kick the ball around in Mount Olympus' Garden, for God's sake!



