ARCHEOSTORIE® JOURNAL of PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY

VOLUME 4 / 2020
Topic of the Year: Connective (T)issue

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ISSN: 2532-3512

How to cite this volume:

Please use AJPA as abbreviation and 'Archeostorie. Journal of Public Archaeology' as full title.

Published by:

Center for Public Archaeology Studies 'Archeostorie' - cultural association via Enrico Toti 14, 57128 Livorno (ITALY) / ✓ archeostorie@gmail.com

First published 2020.

Archeostorie. Journal of Public Archaeology is registered with the Court of Livorno no. 2/2017 of January 24, 2017.

ARCHEOSTORIE JOURNAL of PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY

VOLUME 4 / 2020

www.archeostoriejpa.eu

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Podcast museum: 7 minutes on the timeline

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Abstract

With the podcast "7 minutes on the timeline", the Pile-dwelling Museum of Lake Ledro answers all our questions.

∂ Open Access *■* **Translated by:** Michael Campeggi

Neywords: podcast, Ledro, museum, pile-dwelling, bronze age



Fig. 1. Alessandro Fedrigotti in the studio: the recording of the podcast "7 minutes on the timeline" can start.

"I must admit: if there had been no lockdown, we all would have continued carrying on with our ordinary lives and it would have been difficult to think of something different. We have been collaborating with a Webradio for some time, although we might have never experimented with podcasts". Alessandro Fedrigotti of the Pile-dwelling Museum of Lake Ledro, local venue of the Muse of Trento, is a realist. It is

true, however, that necessity sharpens ingenuity since he created two wonderful things with his colleagues: first, the video *Quattro passi nella Preistoria* ("Four steps in Prehistory"), then, the podcast series *7 minuti sulla linea del tempo* ("7 minutes on the timeline"). Thanks to these videos, I literally fell in love with Alessandro & co. (please watch them!) and now, as I am beginning to explore the relationship between

podcasts and museums – I had been thinking about this for a while – I knew I had to start from them, the "boys from Ledro".

Podcasts and museums, in this order

Few Italian museums use podcasts, and the majority have started during the lockdown. However, it has become a trend that is destined to continue. But how many really take advantage of their full potential? How many truly exploit the intimacy that is created between the narrating voice and the listener to create a dialogue even with those who have never entered the museum? How many use podcasts to tell stories different from the museum narrative and design a free space for collective thinking? The answer is simple: very few.

Even fewer have explored the podcasts' narrative universe, their complex web of witty words, music, and sounds. Those who were able to build true and fascinating stories which touch the heart and allow imagination to run free. Authentic narratives that generate trust and transmit the message that the museum is not a distant entity but is "one of us".

My project is this: to search for these podcasts, find them wherever they may be hiding, and ask their authors about their choices, about the creative process, which obstacles they had to overcome, their failure and successes, and the value they attribute to podcasts. In other words, I want to discover the stories of the storytellers. The title says it all: Podcast Museum implies that I will start from podcasts to discover and get close to museums, and not the other way around. I will exclusively trust and follow their voices.

7 Minutes, the idea

With 7 minutes, the Ledro team decided to do just this: satisfy our needs and curiosity in order to stimulate our interest in the museum. They told us about art, why we fight wars, how we began to explore the world and represent it, and how we started to fly. In the first episodes, they answered questions which emerged during the lockdown: what epidemics are, how we measure and perceive time and what the origins of our domestic objects are. "We wanted to tell intriguing stories that kept people company" says Alessandro. "Stories dealing with the origins of who we are and how we think. Our museum is dedicated to a pile-dwelling village dating to the

Bronze Age, but during our activities, we invite visitors to sit in the shoes of our ancestors, to live as in Prehistory in order to truly understand where we come from. With the podcast, we were able to extend this "method" to all the "timeline".

7 Minutes, coincidences

They started from zero: they had never experimented with podcasts and some of them had never even heard of them. It all started with Alessandro's decision to follow an online podcasting course. The first three episodes of 7 minutes developed from Alessandro's coursework. "After that, a series of events unfolded" says Alessandro. "The Muse was opening an audio channel, Muse on air, and the idea of 7 minutes fit perfectly into the project. It was something we could easily do from home. So, we started this way and shortly after an individual idea developed into a collective mission. At Ledro, we are a big family, and we plan everything together. All team members contribute to the projects".

But why precisely 7 minutes? "Because ten minutes felt like too many: it is tiring to listen for a long time to a narrating voice. Five minutes are too few to tell a story spanning millennia. Seven is the number of completeness and we set the challenge: tell a complete story in such a little time". A story destined to an adult public since videos were already available for kids and schools.

7 Minutes, a tough job

Eventually, 20 episodes were released weekly from April 4th to August 15th. During the summer, it was difficult to find time to work on the project, since the museum was open and the lines at the entrance were always long, but the project was up and running and had to keep going. Everyone wrote their own episodes and occasionally Alessandro's voice was replaced, but all the sound design and the editing were curated by him. "It was exciting but long and tough, and I know that on many occasions I should have worked better, especially in terms of sounds. But I was just getting to know the editing software and time was of the essence. Nonetheless, I am satisfied: I learned so much".

Speaking to many, to everyone

"The outcome? Well, the videos even impressed

the RAI who then commissioned the Ledro team with courses for the show *La Banda dei Fuori Classe* of Rai Gulp. In addition, ten episodes of the podcast were aired on Radio Dolomiti, a radio from the Trentino region. Alessandro also counts this interview as an achievement: he was

surprised to see 7 Minutes cited in our volume Branded Podcast, and was even more surprised that its forward was written by his mentor, Giulio Gaudiano. At the end of the day, it all adds up.

Links and Bibliographical Notes

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