



Giocherenda

An artistic collective of young refugees who invent, build and animate games devised to spread values such as sharing through storytelling

We are a group of young refugees from Africa who have found Palermo to be the place to grow and dream. Palermo is where we have given life to our artistic collective named "Giocherenda". Giocherenda is a term from the African language Fula which includes the meanings: "solidarity", "interconnection", "strength deriving from union", "joy coming from doing something together".

The fact that Giocherenda resembles the Italian word "gioco" (game) has triggered our idea of creating games capable of generating stories, recovering memories, and experimenting with the taste of sharing.



The protagonists

The members of Giocherenda met in school and in reception centres. Many of them escaped persecution, conflicts and dictatorships, surviving terrible journeys in search for peace, freedom and adventure.

Their countries of origin are: Guinea, Gambia, Mali, Burkina Faso and Morocco. Among them there are refugees, stateless Romani and second generations.

Once in Palermo, they decided to be assume a positive attitude not only with regard to their life, but also towards the country that welcomed them, so they intend to offer a contribution to their new country by putting their talents to good use.

These enterprising young migrants, disproving the widespread opinion that describes them as social burdens or dangerous subjects, aim to spread joy, imagination and solidarity.

Migrations and fairy tales

Many tales begin with a boy who decides to leave his poor home to seek his fortune elsewhere or with a girl who is forced to flee because threatened by hostile forces. Marvel tales allude to reality more than you might think.

Not unlike fairy tale heroes, many young people from the South of the World have set off on their journey and crossed the desert and the sea.

They have faced a great deal of misfortune and dangers, but have also met benevolent allies ... waiting for their happy ending.



«It is a **project of cooperation** for human development, and possibly also of economic development, by means of which **African refugees help European citizens** to discover "giocherenda": solidarity in interdependence, thus subverting common stereotypes on migrants.»

Clelia Bartoli, *coordinator of Giocherenda*

Our vision

Many young refugees wish to continue their studies but cannot do so because they are crushed by the need to make a living for themselves and often their families back in Africa. And so they run the risk of becoming seriously exploited laborers, accepting work conditions which might cause further violations of human rights.

We need a long-term vision to imagine forms of employment and enterprise that make the potential of each individual flourish and bring value to the host country.

Giocherenda is therefore also an entrepreneurial project producing cooperative artisan games and organizing workshops on creativity, storytelling and intercultural education, as well as a special resilience training program.

The members of the collective plan to expand the areas of activity in order to offer job opportunities also to talented young Italians.

Therefore, their aim is that of promoting an ethical and circular economic model, but also a model of inclusive and liberating citizenship for many marginalized groups on the territory, making them become active through the principle of Giocherenda.

This experience has to be credited for its wish to overcome a stereotypical idea of immigration. In fact, these young migrants who have crossed the Mediterranean are far from presenting themselves as witnesses of an atrocious reality of victims without hope and ability to act; it is the opposite: their activities are propelled by solidarity, they are creators of fantastic worlds, of compelling stories, of binding myths.



«Nobody loses inside
Giocherenda.

Our games are cooperative
and non-competitive,
players understand that
they can have
fun and win all together»

Saifoudiny Diallo,
President of Giocherenda

Our games

Storytelling dice



6 wooden dice have 36 faces. Each one of them has a different image: animals, places, characters, actions, objects, etc. The images are used to create collective tales.

The first player rolls one of the dice: a crocodile appears and the tale begins: «Once upon a time there was a crocodile happily swimming in a river...». The second player throws another dice and resumes the story: «The crocodile saw a paper airplane swirling above him and felt like learning how to fly...».

So, from mouth to mouth, the tale develops into a choral shared narration.



Memory catchers

A pack of cards, each of which represents one important word, translated into several languages and accompanied by images made with the surrealist collage technique. It is a multifaceted tool that can be used in different ways. For example, you draw a card and tell an episode of your life connected to the word on the card (challenge, fear, conflict, etc.) Or when a player draws the card, the others ask him/her questions about his/her experience of that word. It is a game that helps people learn more about each other and creates a climate of intimacy and mutual knowledge.

The wheel of wishes

It is a board game whose purpose is to make one's wish come true.

Through the rhapsodic combination of the elements, each participant will receive a bizarre identity, a paradoxical context and a series of objects, allies, obstacles and improbable virtues. Starting from these elements, the players will make up the stories of how they will make their dreams come true.

This playful activity stimulates the imagination and problem solving skills, but it also leads to more serious reflections: each person's opportunities to make one's own wish come true, as well as asserting those rights that should belong to every human being, are made rather unequal by the place and situation one lives in.



Le fantamacchie

Psychologist H. Rorschach used symmetrical ink spots to investigate the human psyche, we propose a collection of cards with colour spots to play with imagination and keep practicing. In *Phantasmagoria*, Marina Warner writes that when our brain stumbles upon something meaningless it tries to abolish it, generating fantasies.

In these colour spots you can see a multiplicity of figures and meanings, all of them equally legitimate. They are the symbol of the beauty of diversity and métissage.

Workshop, training and and entertainment



Giocherenda offers an experience that is a laboratory of creativity and storytelling, a form of education to interculturality, empathy and active and inclusive citizenship. These workshops can be modulated for children, teenagers and adults, in playful and educational contexts.

The activities usually begin with a coloured thread that passing from hand to hand unites all the participants, making the invisible plot that connects every human being visible; this web made by the thread shows that our fates are intertwined.

Then, the activities continue with our cooperative games which allow to experience together the "giocherenda": the "taste of sharing".



Heroic Imagination Project – Educating in resilience



The Heroic Imagination Project training, devised by social psychologist Philip Zimbardo, strengthens the resistance to environmental pressures. According to this approach, the term "hero" loses any rhetorical halo, and rather refers to the ordinary person who is able to disobey conformist pressures or unjust authorities who intend to crush us, compromise us and steal our humanity.

The young refugees have demonstrated an incredible resilience and a remarkable ability to understand the dynamics of social psychology. So, who better than them as HIP ambassadors?

Giocherenda offers HIP training courses in schools, institutions, associations and companies, both to enhance the dynamics and relationships within the working groups, and to acknowledge the talents and potentials of the people with whom each company operates.

The mentors



Marina Warner is a British writer, expert in myths, symbols and fairy tales; President of the Royal Society of Literature and Professor at Birkbeck College, University of London. In 2015 she received the Holberg Prize and decided to dedicate it to refugees. This is how **Stories in transit** was born: a project including a cycle of workshops animated by a group of artists, intellectuals and storytellers from various parts of the world. The assumption is that the storytelling activity produces an immaterial shelter where anyone can take a break even in hard and precarious moments. The members of Giocherenda have been able to take part in these workshops and are now accompanied in their development by Marina Warner and the Stories in transit group. The project has been made possible thanks to the generous contribution of The Metabolic Studio.



The British artist **Conrad Shawcross**, sculptor of impressive and philosophical works, through the "Response" foundation, donated funds for Giocherenda. This donation made it possible to purchase the materials and work tools that allowed the project to start. In addition, the artist has made available his creativity and his expertise to create more cooperative games.



The famous social psychologist **Philip Zimbardo**, professor emeritus at Stanford University, creator of the Lucifer effect and the broken windows effect, met the boys of Giocherenda in Palermo. He then decided to sponsor their training as trainers of the **Heroic Imagination Project**, a path of education to resilience, devised by Zimbardo himself and his team.

These young migrants are indeed an extraordinary example of resilience and, adequately trained, they are excellent teachers and, at the same time, models of "heroic imagination".








ISTITUTO DI FORMAZIONE POLITICA
"PEDRO ARRUPE"
centro studi sociali

The Pedro Arrupe Political Training Institute of Palermo (coordinated by **Nicoletta Purpura, Anna Staropoli and Massimo Massaro**) has offered a space to create a **creativity workshop**, where the members of Giocherenda can train, make their creations and carry out activities and events.

Although Giocherenda was only born in June 2017, there are already many initiatives in which it has taken part so far.

Among them: Meetings about youth and migration at the **European Parliament** in Brussel; **InGioco** project about migrant enterprenership, **Fondazione con il Sud**; a performance-tour for **Erasmus+ Agency**, International conference *Paths towards Citizenship through European Cultural Heritage*; **Law Faculty of Palermo University**, conference with Philip **Zimbardo** on Heroic Imagination Project, **Nativi Geniali**, demonstration on talents in Sicily; Trainers of tutors of unaccompanied minors with CIR (Consiglio Italiano Rifugiati); Collaboration in organizing Awards for **Unicef**; debate on the best practices of circular economy during the Fair of conscious consumption "**Fà la cosa giusta**"; resilience training **Heroic Imagination Project** for the staff of **Dell'Oglio**, brand specialised in haute couture; **Stories in transit III** at the **Ruskin School of Art, Oxford** and at the Birckbeck College, **University of London**; International conference "Gli sconfini dell'Educazione" organized in **Naples** by "**Maestri di Strada**"; workshops for schools at the **Ecomuseo del mare memoria viva**, Palermo; "**Magione We**", Palermo; **Festival delle Letterature migranti**, 3rd edition, Palermo; **READ: art and creativity to promote reading** organized by the **Centro per lo sviluppo creativo Danilo Dolci**, Palermo; **Ballarò Baskers Festival**, Palermo 2017; Conference on **Minori stranieri non accompagnati**, organized Centro **Astalli**, Palermo; **Festival delle comunità ospitanti, Salemi**; **Cesie** project "Gem: **educazione alla cittadinanza interculturale**"; Conference on **Giorgio La Pira**, "Spes contra Spem", organized by **Centro studi Arrupe**; **Campo Sconzajuoco**, anti-mafia education workshops through games; **Castellammare Culture Fest 2017**; Conference **Language Across the Mediterranean**, ItaStra – **Università di Palermo**; **Una Marina di Libri** Palermo 2017.



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