



TRIBALEGLOBALE09

proposal for the construction of the **MAP,**  
**museum of primary arts**



## ***Introduction***

There are countless contemporary art museums, many archaeological museums, several ethnological museums, a few “primitive art” museums, mostly in ex colonial countries and the US, but (with the exception of the Quai Branly in Paris) TO DATE THERE IS NO MUSEUM OF PRIMARY ART.

### *Primary Art*

The term “primary art” is beginning to be used in reference to extra-European “tribal” art by those who believe that the cultures defined as primitive are in reality just as complex, articulated and rich in value as our own, and that the term primitive is therefore diminutive, if not offensive.

“Our science arrived at maturity the day that Western man began to see he would never understand himself as long as there was a single race or people on the surface of the earth that he treated as an object ” writes Claude Lévi-Strauss.

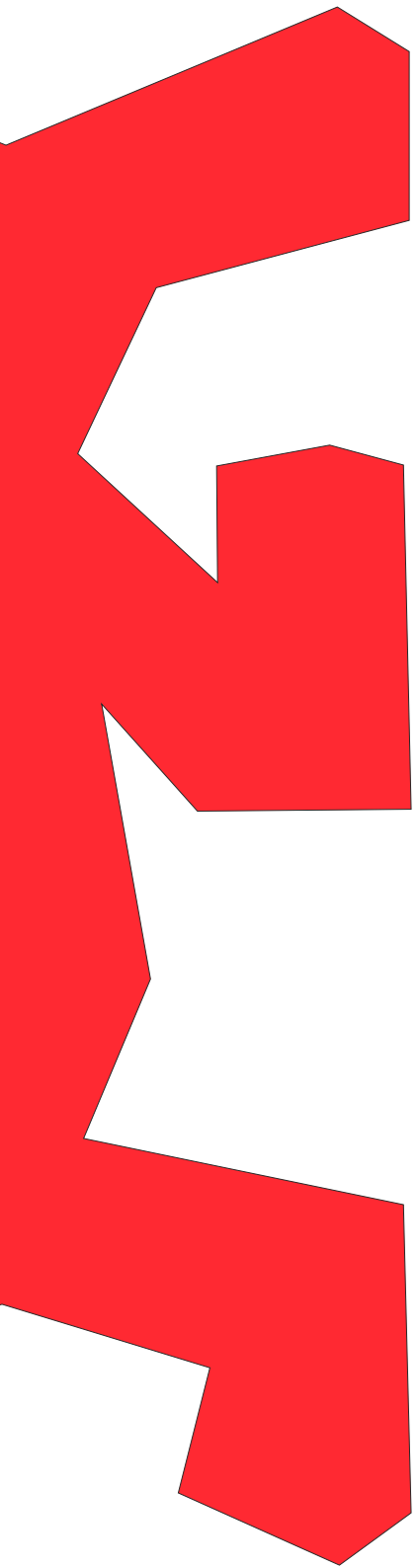
Furthermore, many think that Western museums too often seem to be places to hang “hunting trophies” won over the centuries from the conquered by the conquerors of the moment, and that the ever more global and polycentric contemporary world, in which different identities coexist everywhere, highlights the inadequacy of this vision of museums. This position is rooted in the theories of eminent 20th century scholars, from Bastian’s “Museum of Elementary Ideas” and Andre Malarux’s “Musée Imaginaire”, to the idea of the Diffused Museum that has been circulating now for decades.

### *Globalisation and belonging*

On a more general note, we may remember that the deprecable phenomenon of consumerist homologation is often combined with an equally deprecable localistic exasperation. Ethnic or religious diversity is superimposed on unresolved and shameful problems relating to economic “diversity” among both individuals and peoples, while “it is a universal which requires detail, a space which requires articulation, a cosmos which requires a plurality of ethics, a fraternity of diverse identities” (Carlo Galli, L’Umanità Multiculturale (Multicultural Humanity), il Mulino 2008).

It is a fact that “the world is everywhere” and that “globalisation is a reciprocal interchange” (idem), but we believe that the valorisation of differences and their comprehension tends to represent the singular uniqueness of human experience.

Words are alive, and often they can tell us a lot about the peoples who use them: for example, the Italian pronoun “*noialtri*” is a unique word composited by two words: *us* and *other* and it is a useful conceptual synthesis of what we set out in this text.



In fact, this first person plural pronoun declares that us – a declaration of identity and belonging – is strengthened and defined by the recognition of them, and that it is precisely this separation that qualifies our strengthened and legitimated identity.

It is this alterity which recognises identity, finding in it a dimension which is somehow archetypal.

The problem appears even more actual in the light of the objective crisis of the human condition of permanence, which is genuinely under discussion for the first time perhaps since the Neolithic age. The world as we know it is born precisely from the transformation of man from hunter-gatherer first to shepherd, then to farmer. This is when these newly permanent/sedentary men invented – as stated by Jacques Attali – fortresses, states, and taxes, while nomads invented (as nomads) everything else: fire, language, religion, horse-riding, agriculture, cattle-breeding, the working of metals, navigation, the wheel and democracy, markets, music, the arts... (Jacques Attali, *L'uomo Nomade (Nomadic Man)*, Spirali 2006).

Today, once again, large masses of people are on the move, with profoundly diverse conditions and motivations. Multitudes of poor people are searching for freedom (both in quality of life and survival itself), while active and influential minorities move purely for pleasure or cultural interest. It is clear that these migrations pose epochal problems, and perhaps Attali is correct to say “the great conflicts of tomorrow will not contrapose civilisations, but the last stable empire, the American empire, against three non-territorial nomadic empires in competition with America and in conflict with each other: three empires aspiring to govern the world for themselves: the markets, Islam and democracy” (idem).

But the most clarion characteristic of contemporary nomadism is represented by the “nomadic” dimension of technology, which allows for an epochal communications innovation in the potential it contains. The *worldwide*, the way in which it is structured and above all the way in which it can be managed, really is the most subversive element of the last millennia, and its implications can perhaps only be compared to the invention of the wheel. For example, internet obliges us to redefine the subject acting as protagonist: there is no longer the “us” which functioned first as a mass and then as the television public of the great show society, but a first person “I”. The election of Barak Obama shows among other things that this “I” is not necessarily limited to a virtual and solitary dimension, but can become a real and aware subject of change: it changes perspective, our social structure becomes tribal rather than pyramidal, “us” is seen in the collective imagination as a group of “I” formed by a common feeling which is such because I recognise it in myself. The cultural frontier represented by nomadism is therefore one of the foundations of our project.



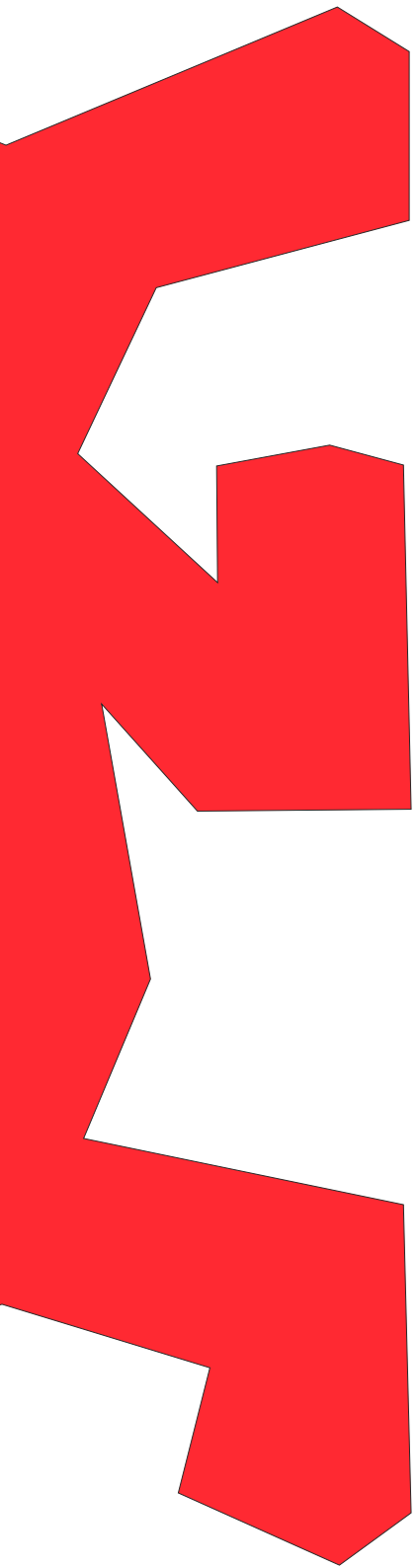
*The function of art*

This is particularly clear in art: if the dimension represented is not that of reality, but of conscience, as stated by Emmanuel Löwy at the beginning of the 20th century in reference to primitive drawing, artistic languages can be a unifying contribution to the construction of a world beginning to be envisaged as a network and not a pyramid, in which identity and belonging produce curiosity and respect for diversity rather than fear and antagonism.

There is in fact a profound harmony in the history of mankind: it is astonishing to consider the complete assonance noted from even a superficial observation of artefacts which have only their material (terracotta) and their period of manufacture (between 5000 and 2500 BC) in common: we refer to the Naqada terracottas from Egypt, and those from Yang Shao in China; a sweeping overview of the art works of peoples from 3500 years ago, moving from Easter Island to Corsica, from Tanzania to Liguria and Stonehenge shows a common feeling, and if we move further back in time and compare the metaphoric language of rock carvings with the works of Mirò or Keith Haring, universal, suggestive scenes that are both timeless and everyday are revealed. With regard to this aspect we could consider Gestalt's psychological theories of the perception of form; not so much the idea that the whole is more than the sum of its parts, but that this is revealed in the detail, and uncovers a transcendent dimension.

*The languages of art*

The worlds of science and art have long been investigating the issues related to these themes, starting with the general conviction that ancient cultures should be studied from the perspective of sign language rather than simple decoration. Until a couple of decades ago it was mainly archaeology, anthropology and philosophy which investigated this subject, but an attempt to "interface" Gilbert Durand's theses on figurative structuralism or those of Leroi-Gourhan with the work of geneticists such as Cavalli Sforza or linguists like Noam Chomski proposes much vaster horizons which now have every right to include neurosciences (Samir Zeki: *la visione dell'interno, arte e cervello* (Inner Vision: an exploration of art and the brain), Bolati Boringheri 2003), mathematics (Marcia Ascher, *Etnomatematica* (Ethnomatematics), Bolati Boringheri 2007), physics and computer science (Douglas Hofstadter, *Anelli nell'io* (I Am a Strange Loop), Mondadori 2008) and much more. Compartmental barriers put in place by Western culture fall and the specialist approach is once again considered together as a whole, and the question is once again "Why?" rather than "How?". The need to leave a sign – which we believe to be both the engine and the fuel of artistic action and which is second only to the need for food ever since the cavemen – once again can be measured against what Emmanuel Anati states as the origin of cultural experience: "knowledge for the sake of knowledge".



This is the common language re-turning essential, together with the need to face the mystery of life, in the nature of the sign freed of the crusting left by a culture which is at the very least faded by time. This is the sense in which we speak of primary, i.e. archetypal art.

*Who we are*

TRIBALEGLOBALE is a permanent laboratory of ideas and actions in a changing world, between belongings and globalisation.

We explore languages using the arts and their contamination in time and places, with the aim of capturing its archetypal dimension and representing it in the language of our time.

We are made up of students, intellectuals and artists, and we are funded by non-profit organisations (the Cooperativa degli Accessi and the Passarè Foundation). Founded in 2004 we obtained sponsorship of our various initiatives from many public and private institutions, including the European Parliament, the Italian Consulate in Corsica, the Region of Liguria, the Region of Sardinia, many town municipalities, and the International Institute of Ligurian Studies.

Artists and scholars such as Giorgio Amico, Pierre Amrouche, Emmanuel Anati, Paolo Angeli, Ivan Bargna, Mirella Bentivoglio, Carlo Benzi, Massimo Cacciari, Luigi Cavalli Sforza, Giuseppe Conte, Philippe Daverio, Enzo l'Acqua, Vittorio Sgarbi, Malik Sidibè, Lucille Reyboz, Guido Rodriguez, Claudio Ruggieri, Aldo Tagliaferri, and Franca Zoccoli have been involved in our cultural studies work.

We have organised events in important public and private museums such as the Casa Museo Jorn in Albissola Marina, which we reopened in 2004 after 20 years, and which has been the location of Tribaleglobale main events up until 2008, the Archaeological Museums of Savona, Finale and Ventimiglia, the Bicknell Library in Bordighera, the Oratoire de la Providence in Nice, the Galerie Berggruen in Paris, the Museum of Castelsardo, the Priamar Fortress in Savona, and the Liberty Palace in Imperia.

We have also taken part in archaeological expeditions in Israel under the guidance of Prof. Emmanuel Anati and organised the Pavilion of Marginality at the 52nd Venice Biennale.



## ***The realization of the Map***

### *The element of innovation*

Given our introduction above, we propose the centrality of Africa, soul of the world and “vocabulary” of archetypes: artistic languages so ancient as to be absolutely up to date, and – also thanks to the great artists of the 20th century – ever more suggestive and “recognisable” by us. Them, strengthening Us.

The **element of innovation** consists in the translation of the history of modern art using this same “vocabulary”, while noting how the great artists of the last century were the first to understand the need for an ancient language, generated by a kind of cultural DNA: a language that does not try to describe reality but “understand” it, that does not celebrate mankind but measures us against the mystery which generated us.

The fact that the Passarè Collection can remain within the territory of Savona in several different places (still to be decided together with the town municipalities) makes this vision more concrete and feasible, and allows us to present the MAP, Museum of Primary Art, strong in the telluric energy generated by the works present in the Collection.

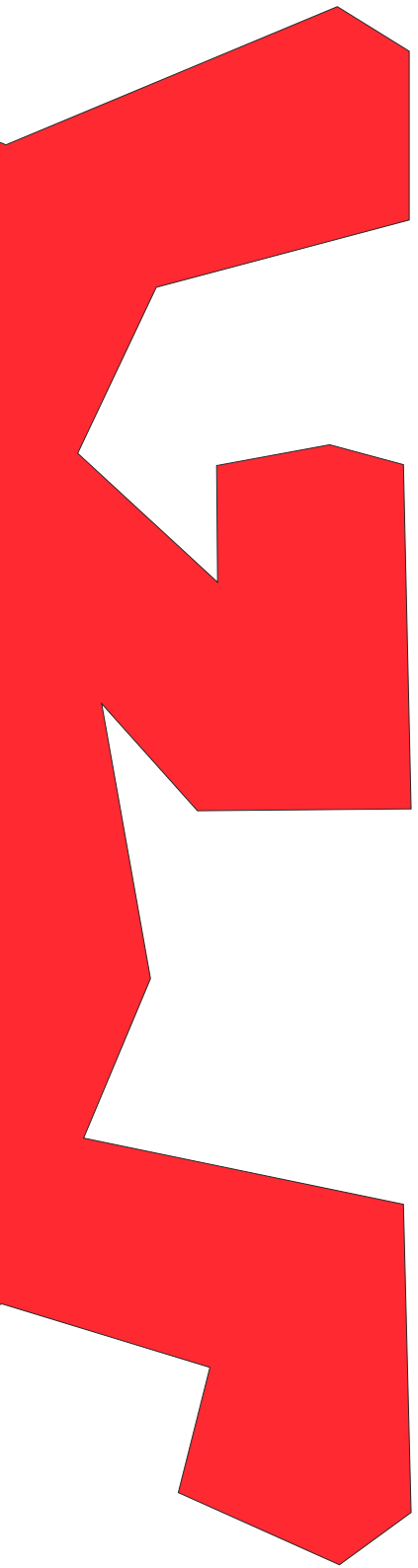
### *What is the Map*

***The Map is above all a declaration of curiosity, respect and passion for diversity***, interest in those “others” whom we evoke when we need to reinforce our identity and the pronoun Us is not sufficient.

Without a solution of continuity or any flat description of ethnographic or anthropological subject, works of great 20th century masters flow together with masks, ritual sculptures and objects of daily use from the four corners of the world, Pre-Colombian terracottas and reliquaries from Gabon, ritual Malaysian weapons and Corinthian and Cretan vases: the context, however, is the dimension of the contemporary world, the new languages of art and those who speak them, the young artists.

The thread that links this emotive magma is mainly the life and travels of an extraordinary collector, Alessandro Passarè. The adventure of his life is now continued in the Foundation, created by his son Massimo to renew his father’s spirit.

We start therefore with the works of those artists present in the Collection, which have created a vision of a future world already present: Baj, Burri, Carrà, Fontana, Picasso, Lam, Matta, Tancredi...and the dialogue which they hold with the more than three hundred traditional art works of extra-European peoples (mainly African) present in the Passarè Foundation: the intent is not to exhaustively describe, but to open windows in the imagination looking towards the true Museum of Primary Art which for us signifies the territory as a whole.



### *Where is the Map*

In fact, we believe that a Museum should be a place which testifies to the conscious trace left by generations seeking to form a memory in order to create a future: this is why we must consider the whole territory, “read” using the places where the testimony is defined in such a clear and evident manner.

The Map, Museum of Primary Art, **will therefore be a network of places interconnected** through this vision, and chosen according to their particular nature.

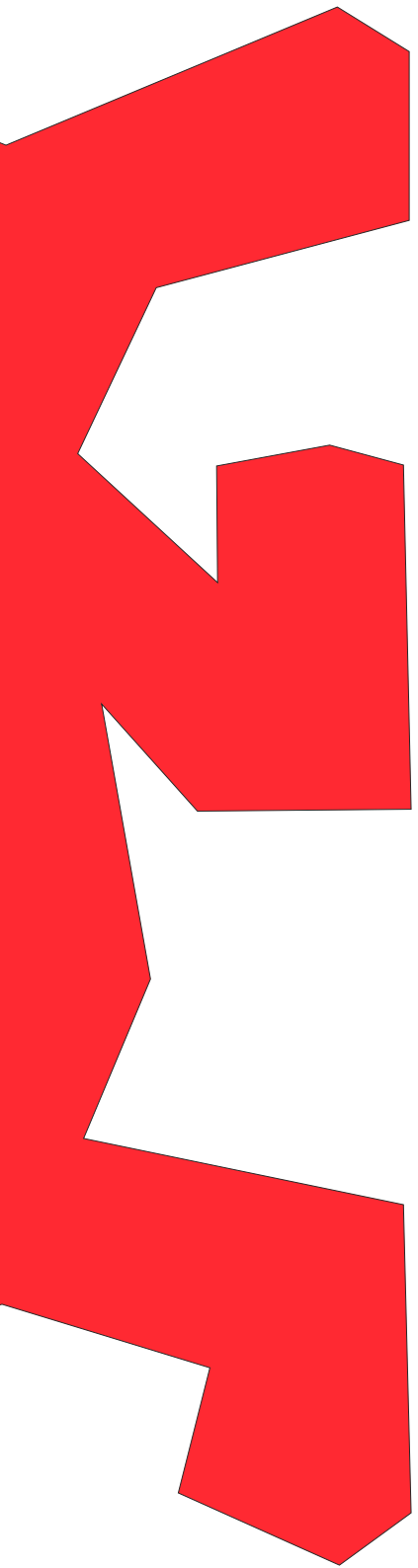
We think of the Map as a network of active outposts, factories of ideas and emotions each constructed around a nucleus of works of great historical interest and emotional suggestivity, genuine witnesses of a timeless beauty.

In this sense we like to recall that beauty is “subversive” in that it subverts hearts and frees energy: whoever is in love knows this condition. Camus said, “Beauty, no doubt, does not make revolutions. But a day will come when revolutions will have need of beauty” and the revolution of the heart is ultimately the real consequence of contact with art.

The idea of “dispersing” the works in different places, instead of concentrating them in one location, is also somehow subversive, because it obliges visitors to make a journey and acknowledge the context in which the work is placed, to organise their time with different rhythms: the underlying principle is to overcome the idea of art for all and think about art for each individual. Each single artwork is strengthened by this idea, and becomes the starting point for dialogues with other works in other places and times, a stimulus for the work of young artists, an instrument for rediscovering works sometimes buried under the boring crust of the traditional museum which exhibits, perhaps even celebrates, but rarely proposes.

The Map has its permanent location in *Saona* (that limb of Liguria starting at Alba Docilia and ending at Alba Inguana), firstly because it is at least curious that it was a man from Savona (Pope Julius II) who initiated art as a celebration of “the wrapping of man”, and that five hundred years later it was again in Savona that several men coming from far away places (Fontana, Lam, Jorn, etc.) created new impulses that have returned to investigate the Mystery.





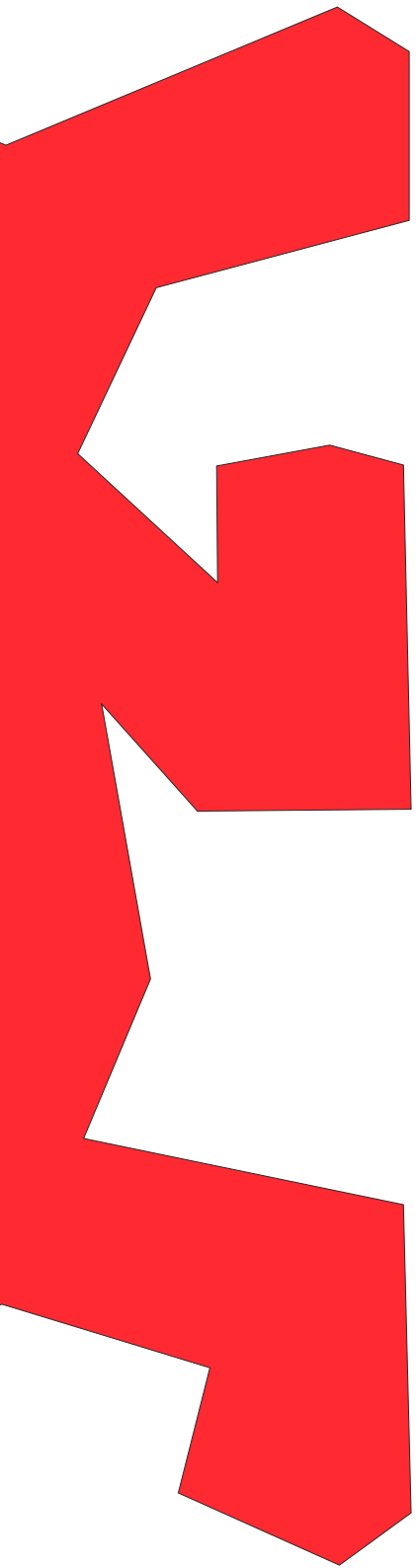
Art has been rooted here for many centuries, and even in recent times great artistic movements have been born here and have then crossed the world, from Second Futurism to the Imaginist Bauhaus Movement.

Each outpost will be founded on an aspect of the languages of art, and the works which will remain there will be chosen according to the site's "vocation": however, the single "vocations" will not have the function of limiting the outpost's range of projects or operating ground, but on the contrary will open them, and demonstrate the universal to be found in the details. "Homo sum. Umani nihil a me alienum puto", said Terence. To force this concept, a Pre-Colombian terracotta, or a rock carving, or a detail of one of Fontana's paintings can become the starting point for a work of video art or a musical performance...

Together with the Municipality of Savona we have agreed to use a space in the Civic Market as the location for the Passarè Library, recently enriched by the acquisition of the Stelio Rescio fund. The Savona outpost will therefore be named **The Market of Ideas** and will become the headquarters of the project's permanent work groups on different cultural themes, as well as being the "technological heart", the base of the WEBTV we have activated as part of the TRIBALEGLOBALE cultural format. This outpost will open in March.

**Albisola Superiore**, land of Etruscan vestiges and Pignattas, will be characterised by **Material**, and here we will certainly house the ancient terracottas, in the spaces of the ex-infants school in Via Schiappapietro given to us by the Municipality. This outpost will open by the end of March 2009.

**Arnasco**, the land of origin of Pinot Gallizio, so close to the place where the International Situationist Foundation was started, will host the ancient **Language of Stones** that will be demonstrated by a small but important collection of Mesopotamic seals and the archaeological artefacts from the Passarè Collection. Pinto Gallizio, just like Asger Jorn, was a great supporter of the agelessness of ancient archaeological languages, and was perhaps the first to make clear the energies liberated by decontextualizing art works which – once free of the "confines" they are condemned to by an historicist approach entirely based on the temporal dimension of the work – return to speaking a living language. The Arnasco MAP (which we plan to inaugurate by the end of March 2009) will be the first outpost to



be specifically designed for the *Nomadic Museum*.

Thanks to the collaboration of Pilcher Italia, we will position three exhibition and work spaces on land made available by the Municipality designed by the Planit division of the Company in order to support cultural and archaeological missions: these will be flexible units made from wood, glass and technology, completely independent in every way (electricity production, multimedia and satellite connections, etc.) and designed specifically for each destination. The same modules will be used for logistic bases for the project's international segments, which we plan to open by the end of 2009 in the **Negev Desert** in Israel, in **Sarajevo** and on the **Isle of Goree** in Senegal.

The symbolic evidence of the locations indicated backs up our underlying idea: the Negev is where the great monotheistic religions (and not only) were born, Sarajevo is probably the most dramatically conflictual frontier and the most potentially rich in opportunities of the last century and its cultures, and the Isle of Goree was the largest slave depot ever known.

These places are destined for the circulation of ideas, persons and events connected to our work.

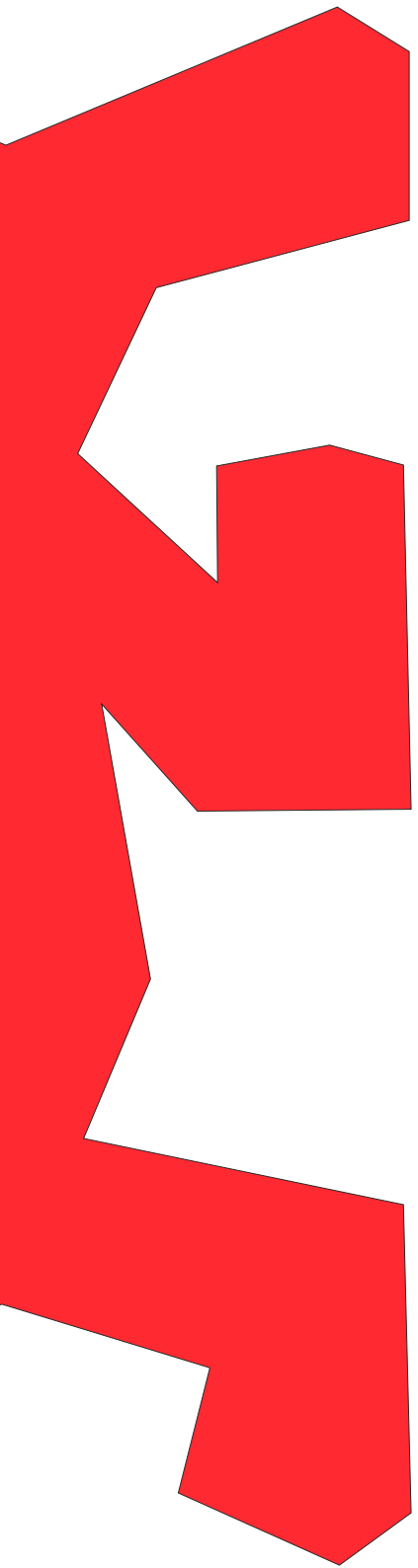
They are also linked to people and projects that share our path, starting with Professor Emmanuel Anati, who, due to his cultural vision, is in some ways our most important cultural reference point, just as the young people in the Tribaleglobale Permanent Laboratory are strategic and with whom we are renewing a collaboration pact in itself innovative in the reciprocity of its commitments: in fact, we believe – just as the cultures associated with the land remind us – that time is a “hereditary value” to be recovered and valorised and that new forms of collaboration can be founded on the exchange of time with opportunity and with the free use of technological instruments.

#### *Organisation of the Map*

If the outposts in the territory can be seen as the “containers” of our project, the contents will be structured in *Departments* organised by competence: each department will be independent and able to produce initiatives, publications, events and anything else may be considered useful, and together they will contribute to the organisation of the events involving the whole project.

This part has yet to be written, because we believe above all that in this case the method itself has merit.

Therefore we will just indicate some of the Departments we believe will be useful, granting them to people among the founders of our project. We are aware of the necessity of having as wide a view as



possible on the world, with particular attention to young resources, and we plan to find the heads of other departments via idea competitions to be launched online by the end of January: with the same criteria, each department (including those indicated) will be born on the basis of workshops which will begin from March onwards. The positive experience of the Workshop Immagino, held in June 2008, makes us confident in the potential that can be activated today thanks to the internet, on condition of taking on the difficult position of the open listener.

We plan to conclude this phase by October 2009, and during this period we will organise, on the basis of the work carried out, the MAP FOUNDING MEETING.

In this phase we plan to activate the following Departments:

Archaeology	Maria Chiara di Pace
Traditional Extra-European Arts	Giuliano Arnaldi
Visual Arts	Elisabetta Rota
Neurosciences	Dario Arnaldi
Photography	Roberto Sartor

Music  
Philosophy  
Poetry  
Videoart



## Events

As in previous years, we have chosen a representant and a few keywords.

Our *representant* is the android Roy, the “human, too human” protagonist of Blade Runner.  
The *keywords* are:

## *The material of dreams*

The material of dreams: a series of events which will link contemporary visual arts with the languages of modern, ancient and archaic art.

Two exhibitions, “Il Filo Rosso” (The Red Thread) and “Le nuove incisioni rupestri di Filippo Biagioli” (Filippo Biagioli’s new rock carvings) have already been held, and these continue on our website [www.tribaleglobale.info](http://www.tribaleglobale.info) : Filippo Biagioli is the element linking our 2009 activities, for the reasons indicated at the web site.

This series of events will be concluded with two big exhibitions respectively linked to Boccioni and Lam, and we will present these as soon as they are developed.

## *Future Neolithic*

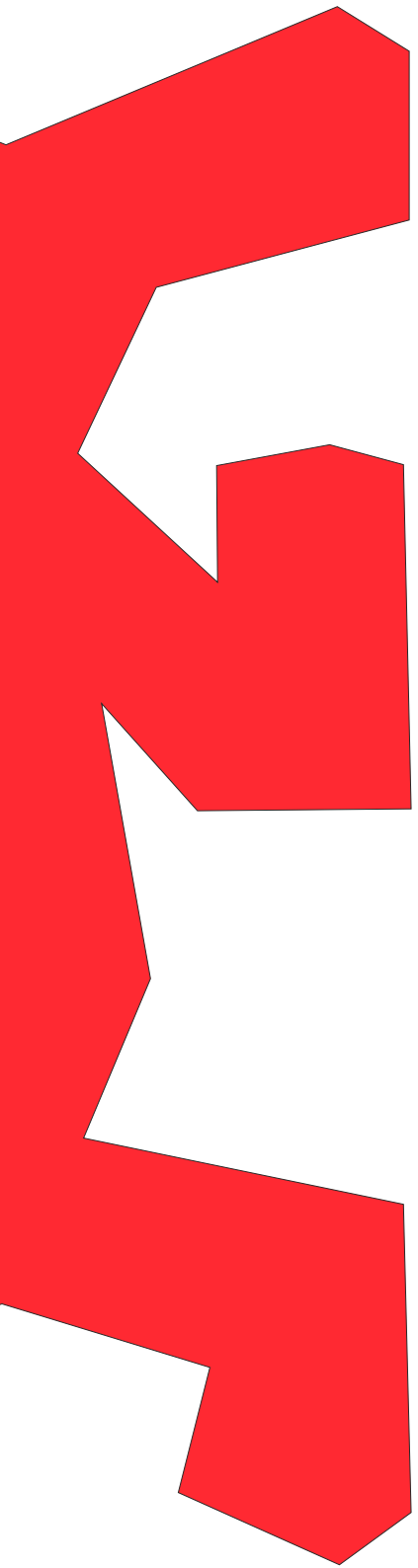
Future Neolithic: this project is designed to encourage us to consider mainly the languages of art in the period at the origin of the world as we know it: the recent Neolithic, precisely the period between 5000 and 2500 BC.

This is the period of the revolution of agriculture and the consequent birth of “stability”, or the stable relationship of a community with a specific territory: at the same time we observe the new “surface” which mankind at that time chose to leave a trace of his existence (with the function that the walls of caves played in the previous period): terracotta, noting that an important part of the Neolithic revolution is the first dynamic abstraction of material: the invention of ceramics.

In fact it is mainly on vases and vessels of this material (which is created or at least widely diffused in this period) that man chose to illustrate his vision of the world, for what it is and for what created it.

We propose:

A) to pick up the harmony between artistic languages born in places a long way from each other; Essentially this project is born from the astonishment at the harmony perceived on even a superficial observation of artefacts that have in common only their material (terracotta) and the period in which they were created (between 5000 ad 2500 BC). to the terracottas in Naqada, Egypt, and those from Yang Shao in China.

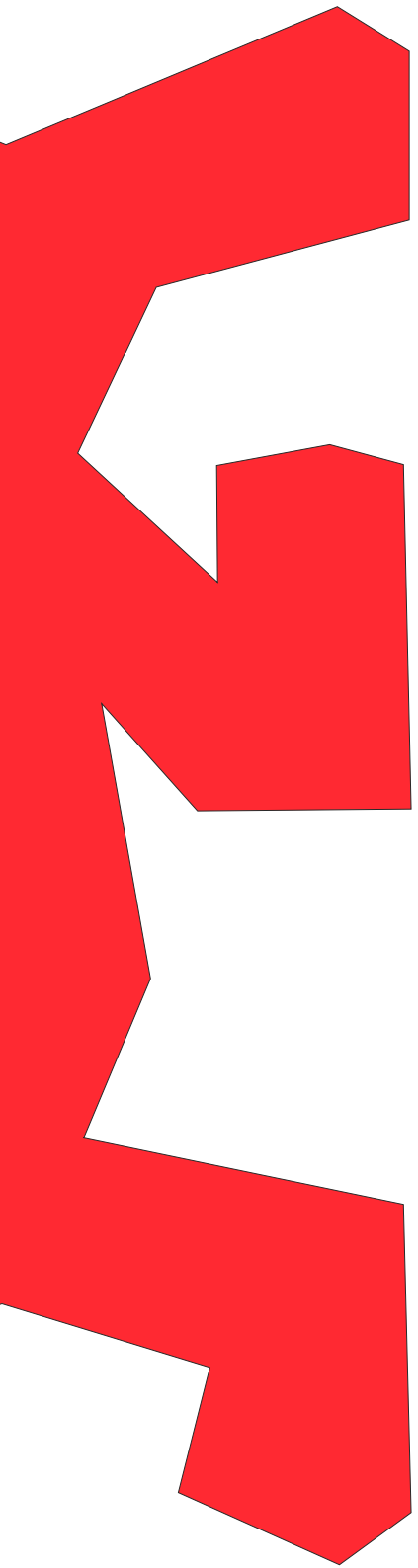


targum: tradurre, tradire...(targum: translate, betray...) It is now generally accepted in scientific circles that when referring to ancient cultures we should speak of sign language (and not simple decoration), and it is clear that both the line and the background painting and often also the form and function of the object on which the sign is made are similar if not identical. Our aim is not to “translate” this language: apart from anything else, we wouldn’t be capable of doing so. We are more interested in “betraying” it, breathing new life into it by exploring an ancient sense of the contemporary that come to use through thousands of years and are reposed in the most current languages of art.

*B)* to put them in relation with

- the ceramic works produced by the primary cultures (in particular African) from different periods but similar both in their design and their expressive function (Africa as the real archetypal vocabulary) ;
- works of modern art;

The signs left on terracotta artefacts (but also on wood, plant fibres and other materials) by African cultures up until a few decades ago speak the same language as Naqada and Yang Shao. Coincidence? Our theory is that a group of factors suggest the opposite. The “genetics of language”, the reflections on the “Io Memoria” (memory of self) by Carlo Severi, together with the more general recognition of the complexity of primary cultures, bring us to say – as described in the introduction to this text – that it is the need to leave a sign combined with the necessity of facing the mystery of life and death in order to govern daily life and forming a strategic vision to show the archetypal dimension of this language, and its vocation to resurface openly with the decline of civilisations associated with set temporal cycles: to be provocative, we could say that we live in a future Neolithic age, and that the revolution of agriculture 5000 years ago is today the revolution of internet. Furthermore many African cultures, at least until a few decades ago, had maintained a relationship between time and people that had remained substantially unchanged by the millennia, and this is why we consider the artistic languages of the continent to be a vocabulary of archetypes: a further connection is given by the fact that, as Western civilisation fades, artists have started to abandon the idea of “representing” reality and returned to face the mystery that generates it. This is why we are interested in placing the works of Naqada and Yang Shao side by side with, for example, the works of Boccioni, Capogrossi and Lam.



C) to verify contemporary “consequences” (design and symbolic analogies in video art, etc.); this exploration will take place via a process that is apparently “turned upside down” with respect to tradition.

we intend to:

- 1) declare our theses
  - using an exhibition of art works
  - via a collection of a range of intellectual contributions: glottological, semantic, linguistic, archaeological, and historical-artistic;
- 2) confront them with any interested subject, with particular attention to the world of young people, mainly via internet;
- 3) use confrontation as an occasion to create stable bases for further projects, and content for the Museum of Primary Art.

*Living stones*

Living stones: with this title we will indicate the continuation of work already started, participating in Prof. Anati’s expedition to the Negev desert in April 2008: the underlying theme is the exploration of the metaphoric language proposed as the beginning of civilisation (opinion which, if shared, would eliminate the term “prehistory” and place the date of birth of civilisation 50,000 rather than 5,000 years ago). We propose the goal of:

- providing logistical and documentary support for the archaeologists who will be working in this research area;
- constructing an image archive that will be available to artists and their creativity, in line with the “betrayal” indicated above.

*The soul’s skin*

The soul’s skin: we keep on the survey activities about natural fibre, used as surface to leave ritual traces: the programme of these events will be available within March.

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project made by TRIBALEGLOBALE

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