

The plot is Capri, with its infinite memories and suggestions, the game of parts that has been taking place there for centuries, the music, its unparalleled beauty of sea and land. Its mysteries, the sunniness and the evidence of fascinating chronicles and imaginaries.

Capri is an oxymoron and an iconic unicum, from the rock it is made of, the composite vegetation and

hy create yet another Capri magazine, many will ask. The answer can only be the island itself.

Capri is an oxymoron and an iconic unicum, from the rock it is made of, the composite vegetation and the fairy-tale morphology. It encompasses a thousand and one personalities, holds countless lymphs and outlines a map of signs and mysteries.

Capri is an unmatched repository of encounters, a crossroads of dialogue, welcome and attraction. Despite the daily tourist assault, Capri still vibrates with the original elements of its deepest soul. Everyone has passed and still passes through here, it is fate. It is a contradictory, mischievous and secret muse. Belle dame sans merci, she offers herself and denies herself without apparent reasons. A timeless forge of modernity nurtured by the heritage of classicism and an immense past, branching out through different and distant lands, belongings and cultures. Capri is impregnable and sensual like a sea divinity that can suddenly disappear into the abyss on the edge of an enigmatic smile.

Its nature is exceptional both above and below the sea, a deep sea of dark sapphire color with edges of emerald and tourmaline, hiding rare species of fish and mollusks, seagrass meadows and enchanted caves, according to the myth inhabited by the sirens of Ulysses.

We liked the idea of telling some episodes, emblematic places and salient figures of the Island, especially those less known or perhaps a little forgotten. Some of them are in various ways linked to the history of Chantecler, a high jewelry Maison that was born in Capri at the end of the Second World War. Events that seem to come out of the pages of a novel and that appear to be made on purpose for one of those TV series that hypnotize you inexorably, sticking you in front of the small screen. Chantecler is so called from the nickname given, we don't know by whom, to one of the legendary Caprese hosts in the central decades of the 20th century, the Neapolitan Pietro Capuano. He was very eccentric, affable and cheerful. A true charmer and the soul of all parties, a marketing genius but also a formidable intuitive creative. Even his arrival on the island, in 1927, escorting an Indian prince, is out of the ordinary, turns into legend, and recalls an old song by Renato Carosone titled eloquently Pasqualino maragià. Capuano alias Chantecler focused the attention of the world and every prominent figure who arrived in Capri, between the early 1950s and the 1980s, added a special light, a further reflection to the uniqueness of the brand he founded. This is testified by the numerous illustrious signatures and often affectionate thoughts that enrich the Caprese boutique's guestbook. Many of these significant cards for Chantecler are intertwined with the historical mosaic of the Island, with its History with a capital H.

The first issue of this magazine is ideally dedicated to Capuano and his alter ego and operating arm Salvatore Aprea. We thought of giving space to the environment, Capri is a fragile, unique and complex ecosystem that must be respected and protected. The next step was to expand to fashion, which has written important chapters here, to art and to the varied island cuisine. Finally, the new books on the Blue Island. This magazine is a narrative experiment generated by a sudden inspiration and the desire to share. We hope it can be pleasant and entertaining for those who already know Capri, as well as for visitors who come here for the first time, revealing less usual and overused interpretative keys, highlighting interesting and curious aspects. So welcome to Capritude, an aura and a way of being that can only exist and exercise its spell here, on the magical Island of the Sirens and the blue lizard.

CHANTECLER

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Allessandho
A continuous creative metamorphosis
Hearisti

lessandro Preziosi, a Neapolitan, is today one of the central figures in Italian cinema, television and theater. His acting career is multifaceted and fascinating, but above all free, just like his personality and his way of reading life.

The bond that unites Alessandro to Capri is visceral and passionate. The island is a part of his being, a place that has always belonged to him and is interwoven with memories and affections.

It is impossible to retrace all the successes achieved by Preziosi, a temperament in perpetual metamorphosis, constantly surpassing himself with overflowing creativity. Alessandro is larger than life. Next October will see the release of his film on Cesare Pavese as director. For Preziosi a big-screen debut, without taking into account the poetic docu-film La Legge del Terremoto, which he made in 2020. Also coming out is Ruggero Cappuccio's Shakespeare Re di Napoli, a film adaptation of a successful play by Cappuccio himself, performed on stage for more than twenty-five years.

Alessandro stars in it alongside Peppe Servillo, Elio De Capitani, Giovanni Esposito, the newcomer Pasquale Zappariello and Jacopo Rampini in the role of the Bard.

Preziosi is also busy rehearsing King Lear, a tragedy by William Shakespeare that he will bring to the stage of Naples Festival and Verona's Roman Theater this summer. His idea is completely innovative. He will be conversing on stage with a number of installations by one of Italy's and the world's leading contemporary artists, who designed them specifically for his version of the play. He does not want to disclose the name out of superstition. The contribution about « his » Capri arose spontaneously from a brief telephone conversation that was to be followed by a coffee in the Piazzetta, prevented and procrastinated by a monsoon rain last Easter Saturday.



I'd like to begin this chat as if it were a swim we took together in one of those wonderful coves of Capri, like Cala Ventrosa- and continuing on one of those rebellious protruding rocks of the undertow, which marked the first sunburns with the saltiness of Capri on the skin.... Hands underwater looking for flat stones while interspersing tales of winter past, current summer and future plans. This is the first photograph of a boy adopted by the island, who sought and found through the alleys of Capri, like the sudden changes of wind in the middle of the sea, his happy place among the extravagances of generations past, long walks of adult love and sleepless nights marked by important decisions. I learned, leaning out of my house in Marina Piccola, the whole concept of beauty that experience can give you, between a coppery mountain of unexpected colors dictated by the chiaroscuro of the seasons and a horizon carved out amidst pine trees and reeds that, over the years, seemed to grow larger and larger. Partly, perhaps, because nature ages and retracts, partly because the imagination flies high. But it is from the port of Capri that I would begin a tale with a "once upon a time."

The rush stops when you disembark on Capri. You feel as if you are stopping in front of a painting and at the same time the island is observing you. When the observed and the observer come together you understand that an exchange of love is taking place. Along the pier you meet friends from the island who recognize you and greet you as if they had seen you a few hours before, yet a calendar year has gone by. Islanders make you feel like you're in a Hemingway novel. They don't have sailor beards, they're always well shaved. You feel that they left in a hurry and ran to greet you that very morning. That's it, that's how I like to imagine the first meeting I have every time I get to the island. I have been pregnant with this island for 45 years now and I still discover glimpses and perspectives, alleys that I pretend not to remember. Like all places rigged by modernity, the island changes and is filled with lights and artificial garrisons. Yet, this creature made island inside of me always remains still: a rock reflected in that marvelous calm water of the Ferragosto sunrise. Now we leave our rock, I greet you by embracing you, like two infants underwater suspended in their life preservers. And as I did as a boy, I dive and stay underwater as much as I can, until I reach my boat. Looking at that seabed where to me everything seems to remain eternal.

Alessandro



Pietro

ALSO KNOWN AS CHANTECLER: THE FOUNDER

Capuano

hantecler. An evocative French name for a jewelry store that opened in Capri immediately after the Second World War. In reality, it is the affectionate and ironic nickname attributed to founder Pietro Capuano for his flamboyant and irreverent, energetic and carefree character. A temperament that brought him closer to the brash and willful rooster protagonist of Edmond de Rostand's novella. It is not clear who gave Capuano this sparkling, colorful and joyful nickname with which he became universally known. For some, it would be due to the "Maisonette Chantecler" in Sopramonte, where Capuano settled in 1935, so named for a beautiful ceramic rooster inspired by Rostand's "fabula" and received as a gift on the occasion of the residence's inauguration. It is also said that the authorship of the "nom de plume" should be attributed to the sophisticated Countess Edda Ciano, true queen of the island for about 15 years, rebellious eldest daughter of Benito Mussolini and wife of minister and regime heir Gian Galeazzo Ciano di Cortellazzo and Buccari.

With Edda, Capuano, after the war, maintained a long and discreet relationship that was never publicly declared. He, unconcerned by gossip and malicious criticism, was among the few courageous people who did not hesitate to take the side of such a divisive figure as Edda during the darkest years, offering her help, affection and understanding. In a postcard fortuitously sent from Pietro to Lipari in 1946 he reminds her bluntly: "In Capri, you have a friend." It is a faithful friendship, almost a dedication that soon turns into love. Desperate and anxious to recover her seized assets and filled with nostalgia for her beloved place, the countess asks Pietro to find her a modest pension to stay at in Capri. Only recently, a series of letters - about sixty of them, written by her and addressed to him, dated between 1946 and the early 1960s - revealed the true nature of this deep, fluctuating and complex relationship, which demonstrates Capuano/Chantecler's romantic and chivalrous side and his delicate discretion as a gentleman. Often in the company of a mythical Capri couple, friends Francesco, aka "Pupetto" Caravita Prince of Sirignano and Anna Grazioli, when in the presence of others Capuano addressed Edda respectfully as "countess" and walked two steps behind her.

Together, from the 1950s onwards, regularly attended the Tennis Club, Bar Tiberio, the scene of high society, and the island's nightclubs until the wee hours, especially the favorite « Tabù ».

According to tradition, it was the transformation of some jewels entrusted to Pietro by Edda Ciano for discreet sale that was the origin of the first Chantecler signed creations. After becoming a widow following her husband's execution for high treason, losing her father, all alone with three young children and practically without any income, after two years of confinement on Lipari Island following the fall of fascism, her life had plunged into an aura of Greek tragedy.

All her personal assets, including her beloved villa at Castiglione where she had dominated the sweet life of Capri for three decades, had been confiscated and, in a kind of tacit agreement with her husband, she had woven spicy liaisons that filled the secret police dispatches. One of these was a much-talked-about affair with Marquess Emilio Pucci. In Capri, after the general amnesty wanted by

Palmiro Togliatti, armed with legal documents Edda returned to claim the restitution of her properties. But, perhaps, the story of the jewels with adventurous twists and turns is just another romantic reflection of this story. A bon vivant, brilliant mind, quick-witted and visionary. Pietro Capuano was a man of taste with a cheerful and playful spirit, born into a well-known family of Neapolitan jewelers with Roman branches. He arrived in Capri in 1927 with one of his clients, none other than an Indian maharaja who wanted to visit the "Island of the Sirens." Pietro immediately understood that Capri's cosmopolitan and eccentric vocation, the Mediterranean and northern glamour combined, would be the perfect stage for a larger-than-life existence, to give shape to that dandy and joyful parable he had in mind for himself. "With his charm, he became a legend, tirelessly building upon it until the end of his days, and it still endures. He was the host of Capri, the gallant suitor, the gentleman of a thousand parties, with infinite metamorphoses, capricious whims and originality.

Polite and perpetually tanned, wearing striped or bright red pants and voile shirts with ruffles or wild prints open at the chest, coral chains and porte-bonheur, cache-cols and well-groomed hair, he had a reserved cabin on the Canzone del Mare, where, shielded by a screen of reeds, he loved to sunbathe naked in every season.

He was most certainly among the island figures who inspired the hilarious satire of the 1949 film, The Emperor of Capri, directed by Luigi Comencini, starring Totò with his sidekick Mario Castellani, Yvonne Sanson and Marisa Merlini.

In Capri, Don Pietro is still remembered in the Piazzetta with his inevitable glass of Scotch in hand, surrounded by italian and international friends such as Mona Bismarck and Harrison Williams, the Parente princes, the aristocratic playboy Pupetto Caravita di Sirignano and the splendid Irene Galitzine. Or in a boutique welcoming illustrious guests such as Audrey Hepburn, Sophia Loren, and Ingrid Bergman - then wife of Roberto Rossellini - socialites like Patricia Lopez-Willshaw, the Aga Khan, Grace Kelly and Linda Darnell, Gianni Agnelli, Maria Callas with Onassis and often Jackie Kennedy, who never failed to visit whenever she arrived on the island.

Jacqueline, a Capri habitué since the debut of the sixties when she was the First Lady of the United States and probably the most famous woman in the world, leaves him a message full of admiration: "Thank you for your artistic taste, my fabulous Chantecler. »

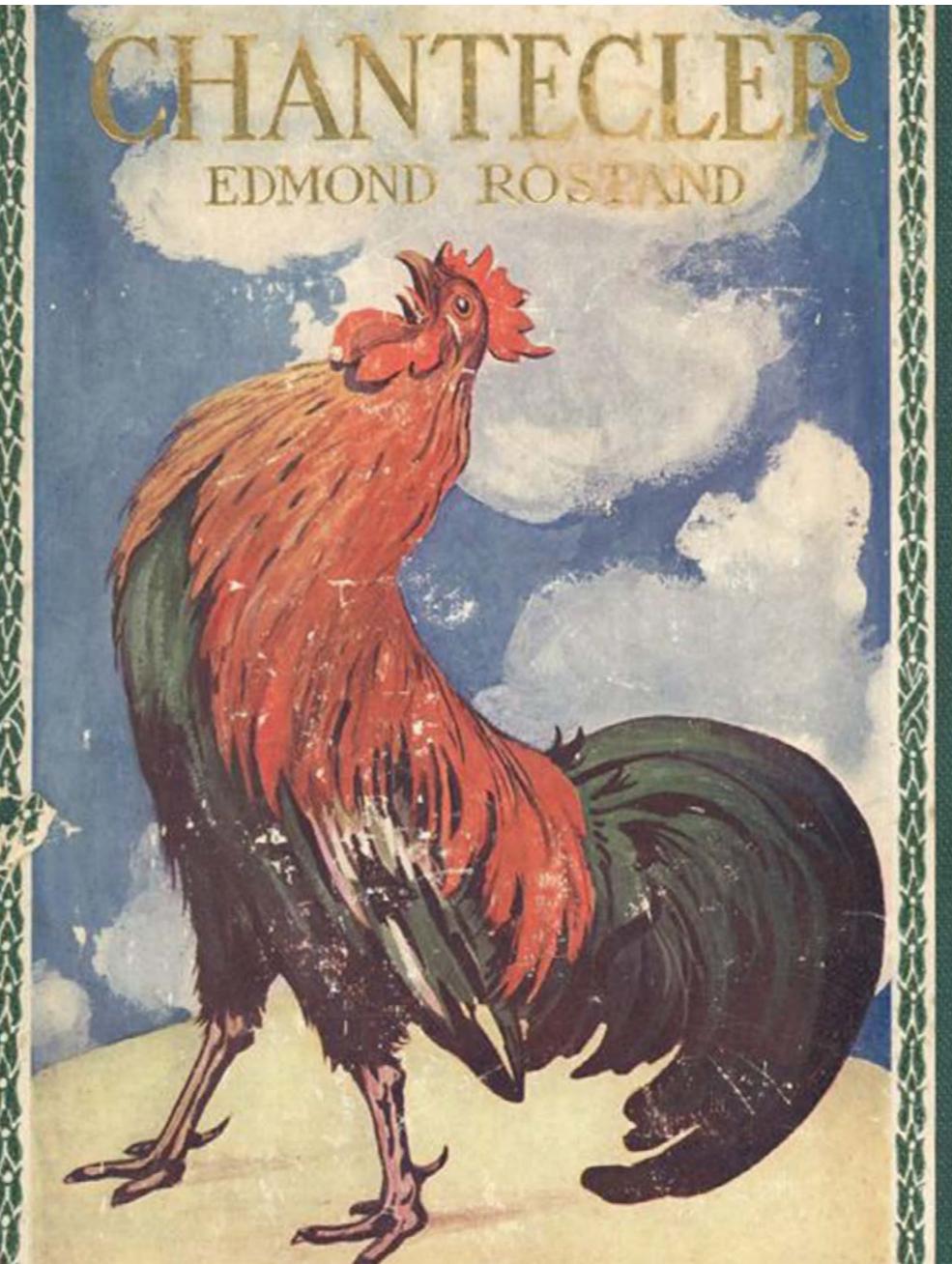
"His eyes always shone - Maria Elena Aprea recounts. Pietro Capuano was enthusiastic and terribly superstitious. As a good Neapolitan, he believed in luck and the unpredictable turns of fate. His day was marked by special and apotropaic rituals, he ate on a tall stack of plates in order to never bend over the table. He loved to perform in a continuous show where he acted with grace, self-ironic lightness and an inimitable dose of humor, winning the sympathy of everyone. Capri had become his playground. My father, Salvatore Aprea, a stubborn and full of initiative young man who had just completed his law studies, gave up his legal career to work alongside him.

In 1947, they founded in partnership the first core of the Chantecler brand, a laboratory that proposed a new idea of jewelry, with less constraints and more suggestive shapes, marked by vivid, unusual and Mediterranean color combinations. They firstly opened in the Piazzetta before settling

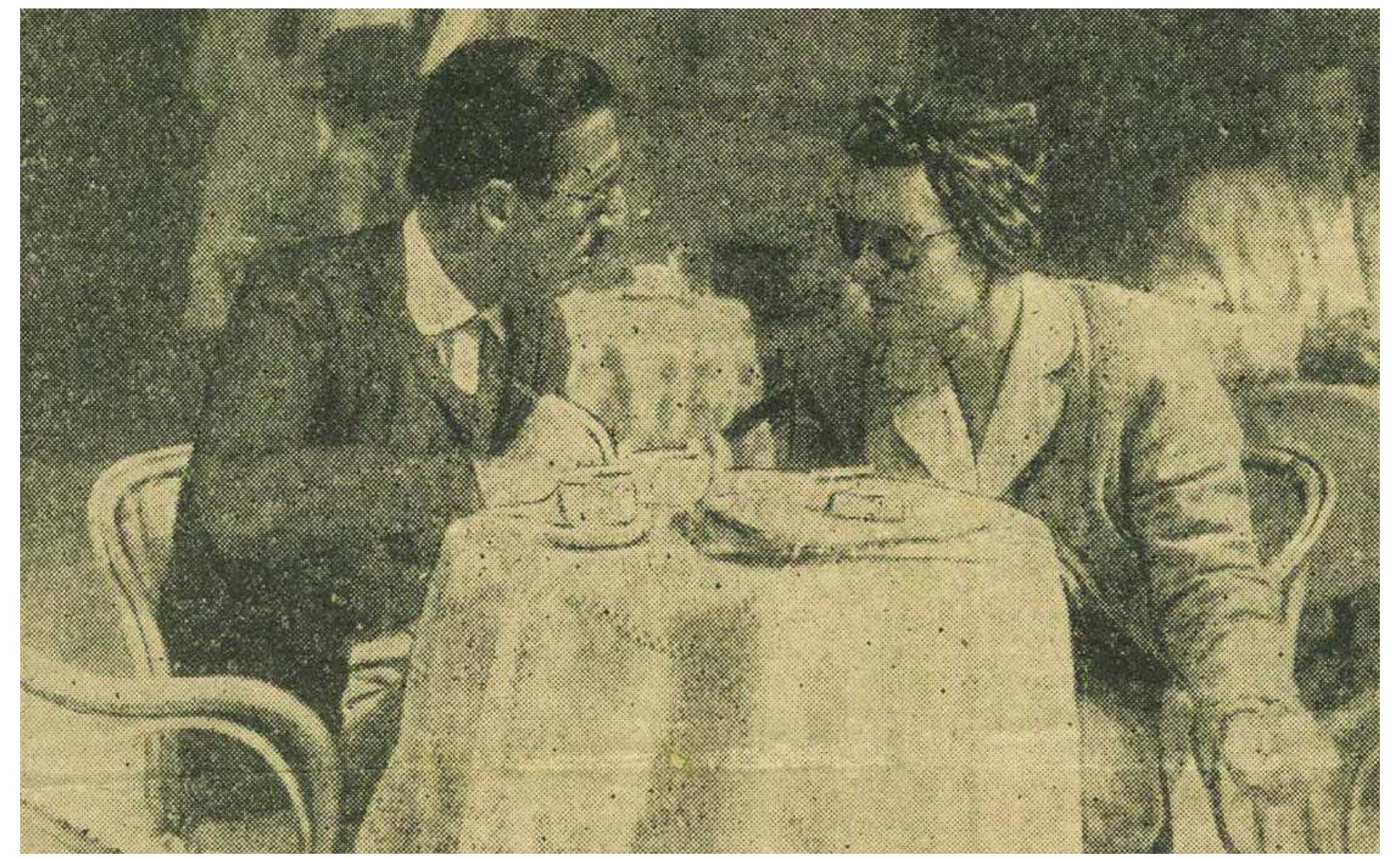
...it is the affectionate and ironic nickname attributed to founder Pietro Capuano for his flamboyant and irreverent, energetic and carefree character. A temperament that brought him closer to the brash and willful rooster protagonist of Edmond Rostand's novella.







CHANTECLER, NOVELLA BY EDMOND RC





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> in via Camerelle, where an eighteenth-century golden sedan chair appeared for the first time and became the object with which Capuano liked to joke and used as a theatrical showcase. They were totally complementary. Salvatore embodied the operational and productive arm, Mr. Pietro was the frontman, the histrionic star who drew attention and lured a high-level clientele. At a glance, the combination proved very successful. I don't know why Pietro Capuano never wanted to buy a house on the island he loved so much. He preferred to rent the villa in Tragara, which became famous for its private nights and refined and bohemian furnishings. When the Swiss doctors confirmed to an elder Capuano that he had to undergo heart surgery, an operation that would radically reduce or even cancel all those pleasures he was accustomed to, a good whiskey on the rocks, the many cigarettes, the masked balls and the never-ending game of seduction, the nights spent in clubs dancing, chatting and flirting until dawn, he resolutely refused to give in. He faced his destiny as an unshakable fatalist, with a challenging smile on his lips and the elegant nonchalance that was his own, enjoying it all the way, without regrets or second thoughts of any kind. He passed away prematurely in 1982. He was like family to us. Over the decades, friendship and trust towards my dad had never waned. In my memory, concludes Maria Elena, art director of the Chantecler brand, he was constantly with Edda Ciano, they often stayed with us. She was solemn and mysterious, with inscrutable and nervous eyes, a sculpted profile and a little dog in her arms."

> Pietro Capuano, who had even risked confinement during the fascist era, was far from inclined towards dictatorship and any form of totalitarianism. In 1944, after the liberation of Naples by the Allied forces, he had the intuition to create a bronze bell with the effigy of the Archangel Michael for the American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as a good luck charm celebrating the imminent conclusion of the war and the so called for restoration of peace.

The source of inspiration was the local legend of Saint Michael, which tells the tale of a young shepherd who manages to find his lost sheep thanks to the sound of the bell given to him by the saint. The original bell is still kept in New York City, at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Since then, the bell has become a universally recognized talisman of peace and joy, a charm of prosperity and good fortune. The first to adopt it were the American soldiers stationed in Italy, who returned home with a tiny metal reproduction. That small charm throughout the years became a real jewel in silver or gold, adorned by enamels and precious stones, with a thousand different chromatic, stylistic and material connotations.

Along with the rooster, the bell is the propitious deity and emblem of the Maison Chantecler, representing its indissoluble bond with Capri. Pietro Capuano, Chantecler, is at the origin of this fascinating story, made of never ending creative impulse, artisanal excellence and dolce vita. His partnership with Salvatore Aprea laid the foundation on which the Maison Chantecler built its uniqueness, which crosses time while maintaining the energy, search for beauty and charm of those enchanted early years.









# Mas Born in Capri

osalba Giugni is as beautiful and proud as a mythological amazon. In addition, she is always smiling, tirelessly proactive and positive. Her energy and enthusiasm seem to be endless; she fearlessly swims through icy waters even in the middle of winter. A lifelong vegetarian, an active diver, totally focused on environmental emergencies, she lights up when explaining her beliefs and the projects she has undertaken, over three decades of constant commitment and militancy in the field. She loves to dispel myths and clichés and often manages to unsettle you with Parthenopean humor, like when she tells you about her peaceful and natural relationship with sharks, among whom she has dived on several occasions in various parts of the globe. "Spielberg with that film has done real damage" she wryly quips.

The life of Rosalba, mother of three children and grandmother twice, is totally dedicated to the sea, its resources and its inhabitants since she founded the Marevivo association on May 5, 1985, in Capri with the help of hundreds of volunteers and thousands of members. Marevivo is divided into delegations throughout Italy and is divided into the diving, sailing, canoeing and kayaking, beaches and coasts divisions, allowing open action on all fronts.

The goal is to protect this watery universe, fundamental to human life, countless animal and plant species, from the wounds inflicted by pollution and the damage of illegal fishing, by promoting the study of biodiversity. Marevivo, which is based in Rome on a barge docked at the de Pinedo port on Lungotevere Arnaldo da Brescia, was born in Capri, a place Rosalba has been linked to since her early childhood and that inspired her endless love for the sea element. It makes up 98 percent of the land inhabited by

life. Eloquent data in itself, which cannot be avoided and which make it clear how paramount the defense of this asset is.

"I am Neapolitan and the daughter of shipowners," says Rosalba Giugni, "I was practically born on Capri, spending much of my childhood and youth there. I have a house in Marina Piccola and there are many places related to as many chapters of my existence and sentimental journey, from the Hermitage of Cetrella to the lighthouse of Punta Carena, high on the Limmo peninsula. The sea accounts for 71 percent of the planet's surface and we

owe it more than 50 percent of the oxygen we breathe; it absorbs one-third of carbon dioxide, the gas responsible for the dramatic climate change we are experiencing.

Capri has taught me so much, made me familiar with the underwater world and the ancestral rhythms of a Mediterranean island. Several years ago, it was here that I noticed the first foams and plastics surfacing and decided to start with the most basic thing, clean the beaches. Capri - emphasizes Rosalba - is an equally rich and interesting island both with regard to the emerging land and rock and in the depths of the Tyrrhenian Sea embracing it. Many rare species that populated the coast and the Capri seabed have disappeared or are on the verge of extinction, due to a thoughtless and aggressive human action. The urchins, the "sconcigli", and even ants are no longer found on the island. In 1988 we waged a tough fight against the destructive practice of fishing for sea dates. The Caretta-caretta sea turtles who once lived in this area have disappeared, leaving a proliferation of jellyfish, some of non-native species, of which they were the natural predators. Also endangered is the volcanic cachalot pit, 1,000 meters deep, located between the island and Punta



# The sea is the big sister of the marine womb. Erri De Luca

Campanella, where these cetaceans are attracted by giant squid. I don't want to scare anyone, but the violence and polluting processes that the sea has undergone have produced a very critical situation. The problem of nano-plastics is increasingly serious. A catastrophe that is responsible for irreversible mutations on the endocrine system, causing blindness and infertility in fish, which become hermaphrodites.

Recently, an phenomenal researcher, Professor Antonio Ragusa, Chief of the Fatebenefratelli Hospital in Rome, who is one of our "Knights of the Sea," with a group of volunteer and self-funded colleagues and the collaboration of Dr. Giorgini of the University of Ancona made a staggering discovery. He isolated the presence of micro-plastic particles in a human placenta. It already makes one wonder how difficult it was to create a plastic-free protocol, since plastic is everywhere. The first idea was suggested to Ragusa by a seemingly pristine Mediterranean patch such as the Piscinas dunes in Sulcis, Sardinia, one morning when waves washed plastic debris ashore. A scientific achievement that opens up at least disturbing scenarios, all yet to be sifted through. By now, an ecological settlement is necessary; the clock is ticking inexorably.

With Marevivo we have fought a thousand battles and achieved some results. But it is really a drop in the ocean. Still, I always tell myself that we have to start somewhere, each in his or her own small way, with meaningful acts, from small to bigger scale ones. So many tiles of a connective mosaic to take care of our common home, the earth. When I ask a child where he lives, where his home is, I stimulate him to answer with a symbolic statement: my home is planet earth. The nucleus of life was born in the waters of the sea through the intervention of the solar globe, the mother's womb being the sea, the sun the father. We should never forget this.

Among the initiatives we have undertaken is the fight to safeguard Posidonia meadows, authentic underwater forests formed by this marine plant, which is not seaweed but a real plant that has adjusted to live underwater. They are threatened by trawling, pollutants and anchorages. They provide food and shelter to countless organisms and allow many species to reproduce.

They play a vital role in coastal defense because they stem erosion and provide an irreplaceable underwater lung. Just think that one square meter of Posidonia, in a single hour produces about 1,200 cubic cm. of oxygen. I often feel that I am not doing enough, but I cannot afford to get discouraged and throw in the towel. I am convinced that we are coming to a turning point and that the mindset is changing. The new generations are much more ecologically aware than we were. We have launched educational and awareness programs for young people and in universities on the topic of sustainable development, targeting children first with the creation of the « Dolphin Island Guardians ».

While growing up, however, this seed is often lost among the numerous issues and happenings of everyday adult life.

The purpose of "Ride the Way" was aimed at making students in nautical institutions more aware, both individually and collectively.

There is a compelling need for the government to carry out the implementing decrees of the "Salvamare Law," ten months after its publication in the Official Gazette. A law that came into force on June 10, 2022, strongly desired by Marevivo because it allows fishermen to take plastic recovered from nets ashore instead of dumping it in the water and to install waste collection systems in line with the principles of the circular economy and as required by the European Union. Although it cannot solve all the problems of plastic pollution, this is a milestone that establishes a crucial first step in the ecological transition. Plastic is now in human blood and in the eyes of fish, who lose their sight. But above all we are the ones who can't see. It is a serious public health issue, even before it is a marine ecosystem restoration issue."

The sea, writes Erri De Luca in poetic words, is the big sister of the marine womb.

Marevirs

*PHOTOS* GIÒ MARTORANA









Crow of THE MYSTIQUE OF THE PANORAMA LETTELLA

he Hermitage of Santa Maria in Cetrella, clinging to the steep cliff overlooking Marina Piccola, dominates the island from a charming clearing on Mount Solaro.

The conventual complex was built on the ruins of a pre-existing Roman factory unearthed in the 18th century, allegedly the remains of a temple dedicated to Venus Citeria or Citalia (hence the name Cetrella), between the 15th and 16th centuries, probably by Franciscan friars.

Located along the steep path of Passetiello carved into the mountain which, along with the steep Phoenician Steps, constituted the only way from the marina to Anacapri, following the strict and altruistic rule of the Franciscan Order, it offered a stopover to weary travelers before facing the descent to the upper town on the other side.

As a result of the construction of the new road between the two towns, the two paths lost their original function of connection from 1870 and the Hermitage, immersed in the typical Mediterranean scrubland, became a spiritual place where to find oneself, gazing out over the horizon. From its terraces one can admire, between sky and sea, a landscape of incomparable beauty, serenity and inner peace in symbiosis with the surrounding rugged and wild nature of the place, that in spring turns into a riot of colors and scents.

A state of mind that led, until the beginning of the 20th century, friars and hermits to retreat on the mountain, leading a solitary and frugal life, made of prayers and meditation.

The image of the Madonna kept inside is sacred especially to sailors. In the past, when coral fishing brought the islanders to the coasts of "Barberia" in Africa, it was customary to climb on pilgrimage to the little church before any dangerous expedition. The last devout greeting from the sea was for the Madonna on the mountain. A moment of enlightenment that must have struck the great German poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who landed in Capri in December 1906 to stay until May of the following year. At that moment, he was experiencing one of the most uncertain and stormy periods of his life in a state of isolation. Inner peace came precisely with the discovery of the Hermitage of Santa Maria





in Cetrella, where he, moved and amazed, admired the painting of the Virgin: "I began to compose some verses for that poor Maria, abandoned up there," thus mystically releasing his poetic inspiration. Today, to reach Cetrella, one still climbs the path of Passetiello or the one from Anacapri, along which, lined with a dense chestnut forest, one meets the house purchased in 1918 by the Scottish writer Compton Mackenzie, author of the novels Vestal Fire and Extraordinary Women.

The residence was surrounded by a vast garden entrusted to the skilled hands of the island's most famous gardener, Mimì Ruggiero. "The climber was rewarded for the climb when he turned left on the top to enter a discreet valley (...) " - wrote the same writer in My Life and Times - « There, at the bottom was the four-room cottage with two pines next to it; behind, the terrain was steeply uphill towards the peak of the mountain, from which two hundred and more meters below was the limestone rock precipice wrapped in the Ventroso scrub (...) Mimi Ruggiero and I thought of a tulip valley (...) and having found the owner of the land, I bought a couple of hectares with the money earned from Sylvia Scarlett."

Soon, in what had become an exclusive cultural circle, important intellectuals and writers gathered, from Norman Douglas to David Herbert Lawrence, from the Swedish doctor Axel Munthe to the poet John Ellingham Brooks. After Mackenzie's departure from Capri, the property passed to Edwin Cerio, an event that seems to have marked the mysterious break in their friendship; later it became the "Centro Caprense « I. Cerio ».

Today, it is on loan to the volunteering association "Amici di Cetrella », responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of the valley. More easily, the Hermitage can be reached using the convenient cable car, from the summit of Monte Solaro through a shorter route.

The Eremo, immersed in the typical Mediterranean scrubland, became a spiritual place where to find oneself, gazing out over the horizon.

From its terraces one can admire, between sky and sea, a landscape of incomparable beauty.





# Mare Moda Lapri

TEN YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL EXTRAVAGANCE, BEAUTY, AND GLAMOUR IN DIALOGUE WITH THE WORLD

apri has been a continuous stage for invention and evolution in fashion since the second half of the 19th century, even in its more extreme, characterized and eccentric forms. Just think of figures like Marchesa Luisa Casati, Louise Brooks or Mananà Pignatelli, three dark ladies in D'Annunzio style, or sophisticated women like Mona Bismarck, Edda Ciano, Madina Arrivabene, Elena Serra di Cassano and Anna Grazioli, endowed with an unparalleled personal style.

The relationship between the island and fashion is complex and deeply rooted, and has written many fundamental chapters intertwined with a series of creative events and professional contributions, especially during the period from the 1930s to the 1970s. Among the highlights of this golden era MareModaCapri stands out, which took place from 1967 to 1977 over eleven editions. Some institutional entities as well as a handful of Neapolitan and local entrepreneurs contributed to its inception. At the time, the island was considered the capital of the so-called "boutique & sportswear" fashion, namely beachwear, and possessed a multifaceted artisanal humus concentrated on tailoring and accessories. One name for all, "La Parisienne," founded in 1906 in Piazzetta, where it is still active. But there were also the workshops of Baroness Clarette Gallotti, the Heitel Cosentino boutique of Celeste Canfora, Adelaide, Chantal, Oriane, La Lorica, Caprese Fashion and others. Talents such as Emilio Pucci, who opened his first boutique in 1947 at Canzone del Mare with his friend Gracie Fields, and the Neapolitan Livio De Simone, with his informal artist's mark expressed through powerful and pictorial patterns, had already emerged in Capri. Irene Galitzine, a stunning Russian princess, gave birth here to the "Palazzo

Pajama", which exploded as a global phenomenon and became the "uniform" of women of celebrated elegance, such as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Lee Radziwill, Babe Paley and Slim Keith, Truman Capote's fabulous « Swans."

A universe overflowing with inspiration, which originated on the island and combined international scope with genius loci.

A completely different approach from the current standardization of Via Camerelle and neighboring areas to any fashion district in the world. The Capri of the 1960s played the leading role and imposed its language. It was no longer just the uncontested star among sea resorts but imposed itself as a stage and paradigm of new forms of freedom that manifested themselves in the way of dressing, making-up and interacting, in the desire to expose or cover one's body.

Sophia Loren started the decade, but it was Brigitte Bardot who really made the difference. Barefoot and dazzling, she walks in Tragara and Camerelle, a brief and fateful appearance that caused a stir in 1963 while filming Jean-Luc Godard's Le Mépris at Villa Malaparte. The Nouvelle Vague director immortalizes her covered only by a book, on the roof terrace of the villa, and as a pop siren, diving naked into the waters below. Many of Capri's most iconic photographic images date back to that era of experimentation and change and portray women of legendary allure. Consuelo Crespi first and foremost, followed by Claudine Auger and Ira Fürstenberg, the emerald eyes of Graziella Lonardi Buontempo, later an established cultural agit-prop and muse of artists and writers. The sensual and modern beauty of Veruschka, Marisa Berenson and Elsa Martinelli in nude-look, bandanas and big dark sunglasses, and the inevitable flat sandals or gladiator

# MARE MODA CAPRI



sopra l'acqua dentro l'acqua sotto l'acqua

above water in water under water

ûber Wasser im Wasser unter Wasser

au dessus de l'eau dans l'eau Sophia Loren started the decade, but it was Brigitte Bardot who really made the difference. Barefoot and dazzling, she walks in Tragara and Camerelle, a brief and fateful appearance that caused a stir in 1963 while filming Jean-Luc Godard's Le Mépris at Villa Malaparte.

sandals. Minimal in black or total white, or baroque and gypset, wrapped in jewels and turbans, sparkling with gold and a thousand colors. MareModaCapri captures and amplifies the independent and contradictory spirit of those years, intertwining it with the glamorous vocation that is the heritage and inspiration of the island. In 1968, two Hollywood stars, George Hamilton and Tony Curtis arrived at MareModaCapri with their respective partners. They were immortalized by the glossy lens of Slim Aaron, as he did with a stylized and heraldic Marisa Berenson. Returning to MareModaCapri, the first elected president was Pasquale Acampora, involving a group of entrepreneurs from Naples, but the real driving force behind the event was Count Rudy Crespi, a sophisticated Italian-Brazilian gentleman who operated on the Rome-New York axis.

In the 1950s, based at Palazzo Colonna in Rome, Rudy anticipated the chronicles of the Dolce Vita, attracting with his parties and sybaritic luxuries the harsh criticisms of the leftist press, especially L'Unità, the newspaper of the Italian Communist Party. The nobleman, a friend of the eccentric Dado Ruspoli and intimate with all the VIPs, even went so far as to challenge a well-known journalist working for the newspaper to a duel. However, nothing came of it.

With collaborator Giorgio Pavone, Crespi played a crucial role both in organizational matters and in the experience he had gained leading to a vast network of international contacts. He was an exceptional PR person and a pioneer who foresaw the enormous potential of Made in Italy before anyone else.

Also valuable was the coordinating contribution of the show's secretary, Sergio Capece Minutolo, the organizational commitment of Gino Coppola and the futuristic marketing vision of Franco Savorelli, who was responsible for the idea of the fashion shows at the Certosa. Against the backdrop of the scenographic and solemn architecture of the ancient monastery, the shows, held in September, were signed by renowned directors such as Gavin Robinson, Enzo Trapani, Giorgio Veccia and Sandro Massimini, who created innovative, spectacular and often provocative choreography.

At the same time, beach accessories, jewelry, cosmetics and above all local craftsmanship were showcased in various institutional spaces and hotels both in Capri and Anacapri, from the Centro Caprense "Ignazio Cerio" to the Hotel La Palma and Phoenicia, spanning the entire island geography.

"In its editions, MareModaCapri has represented the evolution of taste and its revolution. From the 1960s protest to the little dress found by chance at the flea market by hippies, to the bon ton revival with the irony of old-fashioned styles amalgamated and deliberately non-conformist" writes Bonizza Giordani Aragno, fashion and costume historian. Among the participants in the event were illustrious names such as Antonelli, Balestra, Laura Biagiotti, Roberta di Camerino, Caumont, Oleg Cassini, Cerruti, Livio De Simone, Ferragamo, Ferrè, Givenchy, the brilliant Pino Lancetti, Krizia, Missoni, Sarli. Mila Shön, Ken Scott, Valentino - particularly attached to the island along with Giancarlo Giammetti - and Versace.



4 4









TRADITION ALWAYS RENEWED

urora means Capri. A name that today, for many enthusiasts scattered all over the world, is immediately associated with the magic of Capri. More than just a restaurant, it has become a place that, generation after generation, belongs to the emblematic map of an island so full of myth, beauty and infinite stories.

Aurora is a story that is largely written in the feminine. The protagonists are two extraordinary women, mother and daughter: Donna Lucia and Mia D'Alessio. Mia, after working alongside her mother, who has made a groundbreaking turn to what was once a family trattoria, took over when Lucia passed away. "I always miss my mother," she says. "She was an extraordinary school, not only professionally but also humanly. She devoted herself entirely to this work. She spent the whole day in here with a love and dedication that also shone through in the smallest gestures. I'm stubborn, I've opened a new path, taken an independent course, interpreting the achievements and examples of the past without severing the original flow."

Mia has been able to reinvent a tradition that is over a century old, dating back to the legendary beginnings of Capri and the glamorous era of the 1950s and 1970s. Raffaele, the older brother, cultivates secret gardens of rare delicacies and tirelessly runs along the most solitary surfaces of the island. His wife Caterina, with a touch of irony and mystery, accompanies him in this incessant exploration in communion with Capri. The contribution of chef Franco Aversa, Mia's husband and an experimental and imaginative talent, is central, he's a man with a nerve system that can withstand anything when Aurora overflows with customers and habitués in the summer. Franco creates memorable dishes based on the local legacy, working with the suggestions of the sea and the island's land. An entire family involved in a line of thought, in a project that is transformed into a cuisine with basic and refined taste, tracing an aesthetic and conceptual dimension, as well as gastronomic and oenological. Mia D'Alessio, the owner, always wears black. She hurries, disappears, reappears and interacts with guests. She observes and controls every tiny aspect of the service, food and wine.

Sometimes, as if by chance, she throws in a joke. She smiles with her eyes behind black-rimmed glasses and gives the staff a tight and harmonious rhythm, like an expert helmsman. She has built an exceptional wine cellar, a library of crus and rare wines that has few rivals.

"The universe of wine has always fascinated me," says Mia D'Alessio. "It is a passion that has grown over the years and has connected us with the highest wine-making realities not only in Italy but

throughout Europe and around the world. We like to compare them with our cuisine, seeking taste combinations that are never banal and unexpected. Aurora is a crossroads of lives, rituals and relationships, a tapestry of sensations and belongings based on a profound Caprese identity."

The password is "pizza all'acqua": an inimitable invention, a light dough with an infinitesimal thickness. In its apparent simplicity, it contains the secrets and nuances of a practice perfected over decades. It has more imitations than the Settimana enigmistica (a famous Italian puzzle magazine). Many have tried to capture its essence but without success. Faithful to a family recipe guarded with jealous love, repeated thousands of times yet always different and new, "Pizza all'acqua" is the key to a statement that transcends borders, becoming a cult for many central figures of our time.

From Antoine Arnault to couturier Valentino, a great Caprese habitué, from Giorgio Armani and Naomi Campbell to Mariah Carey, Ben Affleck, and Jennifer Lopez. Even Moravia, Neruda, and Jorge-Luis Borges, while staying in Capri, appreciated its lightness and flavor.

Among the many personal memories I have of Aurora, I can't forget a noon in June a few years ago. Steven Spielberg and Tom Cruise were sitting outside on Via Fuorlovado, in shorts and flip flops, in front of a plate of spaghetti. Shortly after, another friend, Al Gore, joined them.

Capri represents an absolute difference compared to many other places. Here, everyone, even the powerful and the stars, have to walk, there is no choice. Capri is a state of mind, even before that rocky, fabulous and dazzling cliff that everyone knows and dreams of. Aurora has made this inimitable approach her own, this nature that is an oxymoron and uniqueness. The people of Capri, being tenacious islanders who sometimes during the winter season remain isolated due to the violence of the sea, have seen and continue to see everything pass by. Over the course of more than two millennia, they have recorded and live every day imaginary pages and fragments, they have recomposed, reinterpreting them, the tiles of a mosaic of the most diverse and distant cultures and suggestions. One evening when Aurora was overflowing with people, Charlize Theron was sitting on the low sidewalk in front, among the crowded crowd. She was patiently waiting her turn with some friends, promptly provided with a glass of wine by Mia. Without flattery, courteously, like a hostess who doesn't loose heart even in front of the most prestigious celebrity.

"Aurora guards a peculiar character" says Mia D'Alessio. "It belongs to strong roots and nourishes them every day. Something that marks a big difference in this globalized and homogenized era. Capri is not just any place, we must always remember that. People come to us to seek the truth, the excellence of ingredients chosen one by one, a cuisine rooted in the territory and the sense of family. We don't want to look like anyone else, we follow a precise line that has grown on an ancestral and identity platform. We feel like depositaries of a philosophy of life and work that draws strength from the brackish land, the scents and flavors, full of Mediterranean energy and imbued with Capri's sunshine. The trait that unites these elements means friendship and cordiality, maximum quality and commitment. Hospitality with a secular imprint adapted to today's highest standards.

"Mystification is not our thing" concludes Mia. "Aurora can only be in Capri. Those who want us are not dazzled by fancy effects and the ephemeral, but come to find us here. We defend a special soul, an autochthonous root, wanted by many. We testify to its value and vital strength. The service is attentive to every need, we have transformed the island's natural vocation for hospitality into an international language made of details and particular reflections. Every customer is special, requiring a tailored approach and dynamic. Research and improvement are continuous, we never stop learning and evolving. But it's always us, continuers of a Capri heritage that speaks to us from within.

We are ourselves and nothing else. I think this is the factor that rewards us over time."



5 2



## SPAGHETTI ALLA LUCIA

#### RECIPE FROM MIA D'ALESSIO

#### RECIPE: for 4 people

320 gr of Gragnano spaghetti

2 anchovy fillets

50 gr pitted Gaeta black olives

30 gr Pantelleria capers

1 clove of garlic

1 Lime

Toasted and flavored stale bread

Maldon salt - to taste

Evo oil - to taste

#### PREPARATION:

In a pot of boiling water, toss the spaghetti and in a frying pan sauté a clove of garlic in evo oil.

Melt anchovy fillets in pan and add capers, black olives and grated lime peel and maldon salt to taste.

Slow the cooking by adding a ladleful of pasta water.

Drain the spaghetti al dente and toss in the pan.

Plate and finish with a drizzle of oil and toasted stale bread crumbs.



Mona

THE CRYSTAL IDOL WITH SAPPHIRE EYES

Don Bismarck

magnetic woman, an iconic socialite who reigned over New York and Paris, as well as the Capri of legend. A frigid and aristocratic beauty who came from the deep America of Kentucky. She was the first American to become "The Best Dressed Woman in the World" in 1933, nominated by a jury including stars such as Chanel, Molyneux, Vionnet, Lucien Lelong and Jeanne Lanvin, and she also entered the "International Best Dressed Hall of Fame List" in 1958.

A series of increasingly wealthy husbands and her innate allure made her an absolute for the best couturiers of that time, first Cristóbal Balenciaga and then Hubert de Givenchy. Balenciaga designed even her Austrian linen shorts worn while working in the garden at Villa II Fortino in Capri.

Legends and ferocious rumors surrounded her. She was accused of being an adventurer and a cynic, of giving up custody of her son, the only one she had, to her first husband in exchange for money, of having ugly hands, and even of spying.

But Mona, despite everything, managed to become a legend over the course of 50 years. Her friend Cecil Beaton called her the "crystal idol with sapphire eyes," Cole Porter and Ethel Merman sang about her in "Ridin' High" while Honingen-Huene, Horst, Otto Bettman, George Platt-Lynes, Steichen, and especially Cecil Beaton immortalized her face and inimitable elegance in their shots. Syrie Maugham decorated her houses, Leonor Fini portrayed her with one of her beloved dogs. Salvador Dali in 1943 created a controversial painting that represented her as a majestic and evanescent goddess of surrealism.

Mona, Countess von Bismarck-Schönhausen after her fourth marriage in 1956 to Albert, a penniless Prussian nobleman who descended from the Iron Chancellor and acted as her secretary, is one of the figures most closely linked to the history of Chantecler.

A personal friend of Pietro Capuano, the founder of the Maison, her name appears several times in the magical guestbook of the Capri jewelry store. Born as Edmona Margaret Travis Strader in 1897 in Louisville, at the age of 20, she married Henry Schlensiger, 18 years her senior and owner of Farland Farm in Lexington, where her father was an equestrian instructor and trainer. Milwaukee was too small for her and it was only the beginning of an irresistible ascent. The second marriage to

James Irving Bush, acclaimed as "the most handsome man in America" and who led her to live in New York, where he soon became a violent drunkard, quickly ended in divorce. The subsequent Parisian interlude brought her closer to Madeleine Vionnet, Schiaparelli and especially Mademoiselle Chanel, a woman who became a reference point and inspiration not only in fashion.

In 1926, Mona married Harrison Charles Williams, a widower 24 years older than her who was said to be the richest man in the United States. During the long cruise that preceded their wedding on Williams's yacht, the "Warrior," then the largest pleasure craft in the world, Mona discovered Capri and fell hopelessly in love with it. She arrived in Capri as a permanent resident in 1936 from Palm Beach, and returned after the war period when she was forced to return to the USA. Later, she divided her life between the Blue Island, Palazzo Borghese in Rome and Paris, first at the Hôtel Lambert and then in the famous Hôtel Particulier at 34 Avenue de New York, decorated with wood paneling, paintings, tapestries and 18th-century furnitures by Stéphane Boudin of Maison Jansen.

Everything surrounding Mona is the epitome of style, an absolute and draconian philosophy. From clothing to jewelry, from her personal and fairy-tale taste displayed in her residences and matching Rolls-Royces, all in midnight blue, to her greatest passion: gardens imagined as painterly palettes. In the park marked by themed rooms surrounding the Fortino, her villa overlooking Marina Grande built on the site of an Augustan and Tiberian dwelling, Mona, wearing a straw pamela hat and black sunglasses to protect herself from the sun, spent hours tending to her rare flowers. She never woke up before noon, being essentially a nocturnal and social creature.

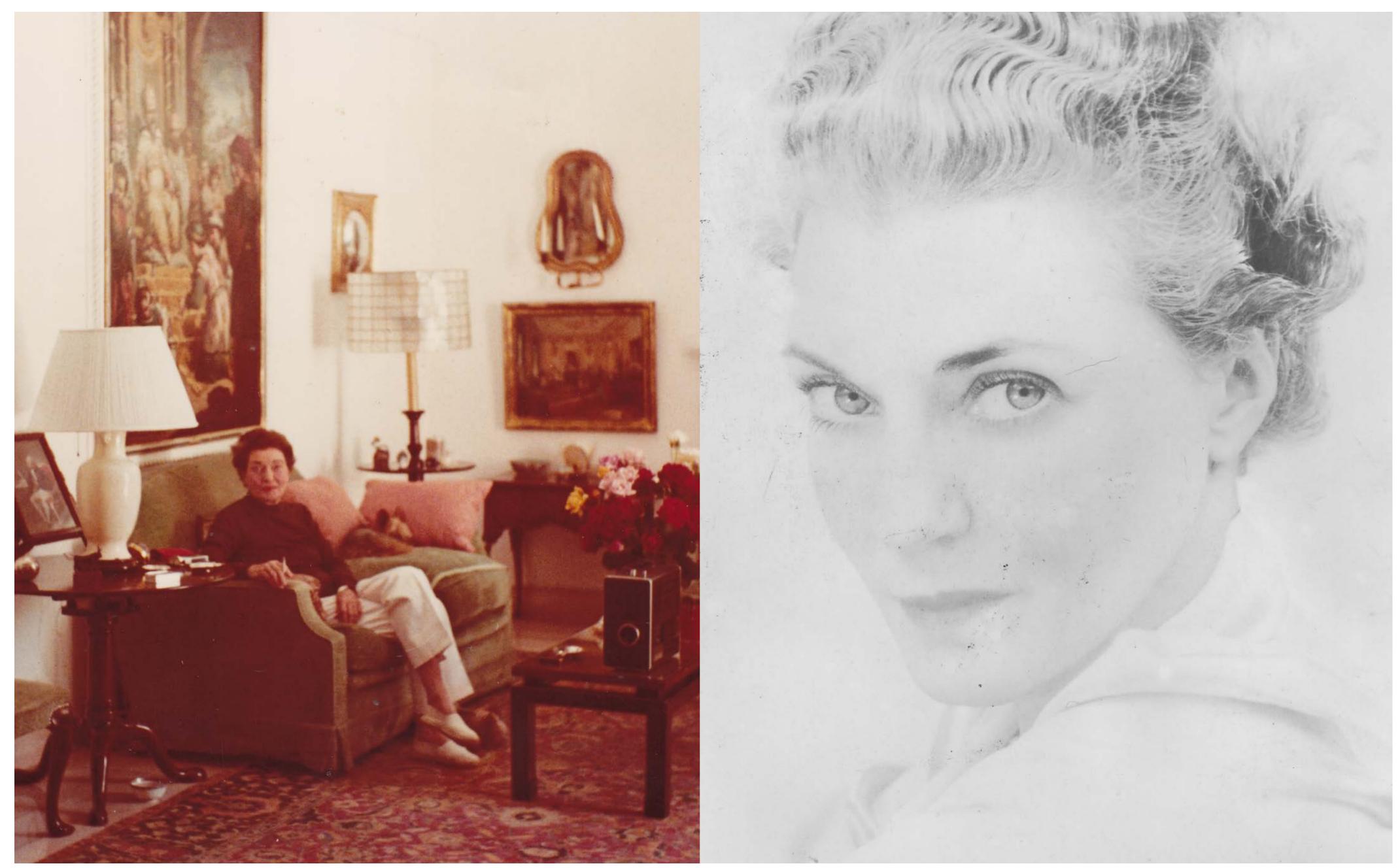
The people of Capri loved her and some elders still remember her as affectionate, distant and courteous. When Balenciaga closed his Parisian atelier in 1968, Diana Vreeland said that Mona locked herself in her room at the Fortino for three days. Who knows if it's true. Diana always was her close friend and contributed to the global launch of the typical Caprese sandals. The Countess never forgot a commemoration or the birthday of the people who worked with her or with whom she had a relationship on the island. Her fifth husband, the charming and controversial Neapolitan doctor Umberto De Martini, who was 14 years younger than her, for whom she acquired a comital title from Umberto II of Savoy, died in a car accident near Naples in 1979. "Martini on the rocks," some old friends of the noblewoman sneered, especially when the many frauds, money embezzlements and intrigues hatched behind her back by the enterprising Italian doctor were uncovered. The Countess, who remained loyal to Capri until the end, passed away in Paris in 1983 at the age of 86. She left numerous documents and photos to the Filson Historical Society of Louisville, several clothes and art objects to various museums. In 1967 she decided to donate the diamond necklace that sets the "Bismarck Sapphire" of exceptional purity, 98.6 carats, a wedding present from Harrison Williams, to the Natural History Museum of the Smythsonian Institution.

Her sumptuous Parisian residence has become the headquarters of the "Mona Bismarck American Center," where prestigious cultural events are held. In Truman Capote's "Answered Prayers », 1987, the character of Kate McCloud is based on the Countess. Chantecler was always in her heart, as evidenced by the writings addressed to Capuano and Salvatore Aprea. Mona Bismarck's life was like a novel, intertwined with the trajectory of Chantecler.

Her friend Cecil Beaton called her the "crystal idol with sapphire eyes", Cole Porter and Ethel Merman sang about her in "Ridin' High" while Honingen-Huene, Horst, Otto Bettman, George Platt-Lynes, Steichen, and especially Cecil Beaton immortalized her face and inimitable elegance in their shots.







mona von bismarck in the living room of her villa "il fortino" at palazzo a mare, capri

#### CAPRI BOOKS



# CAPRI, LIGHT AND SHADOW. GUIDE TO MYSTERIES AND SECRETS OF THE ISLAND

## BY RICCARDO ESPOSITO CONCHIGLIA CAPRI EDITION

Mystery: « What precludes a reasonable orientation, causing a reaction of uncertainty not necessarily anxious or painful, sometimes even fascinating». This is the interpretation, taken from the Illustrated Vocabulary of the Italian Language by G. Devoto-G. Oli, of a word that can also solicit unexpected reactions and risky expectations.

The intention of Riccardo Esposito's book Capri, Light and Shadow. Guide to mysteries and secrets of the island (La Conchiglia Editions) is not to list stories of ghosts, paranormal phenomena and various occultisms connected to Capri, but rather to deepen a series of topics, questions, and unresolved dilemmas along with potential and specific insular characteristics. Possible solutions and interpretations are proposed for many of these issues, while for others, only hypotheses and further questions are suggested. Mythical mysteries (Sirens, Pan, Leukotea) and historical ones (Augustus, Tiberius) have overlapped with those more related to the tourist era and local history (the hermaphrodite island of "sin," the rocks of Capri, the lords and ladies of darkness), in an attempt to analyze some basic motivations that have determined, in the past, the affirmation of Capri as a destination for international flows. In this attempt, there was a clear awareness of the constant and insidious danger of idealizing a fabulous past devoid of contradictions and degradation.

Therefore, the text enters without hesitation into the current social, tourist and economic processes of the island, risking perhaps excessive contextualization. It has been considered, however, that the nature of the topics discussed could not exempt itself from such a strong adherence to a current reality, which is the offspring of an extraordinary past.

Similarly, it was deemed necessary to initiate an investigation, albeit superficial, into what survives of local popular culture and oral traditions, now almost completely forgotten and cancelled. From all this, one of the questions or maybe a further and final mystery has arisen, stemming from the current and enduring ability of the island - despite abuses and overwhelming crowds of tourists invading it - to preserve a series of attractive and fascinating abilities that clearly refer to the strength of some primordial elements of the island's deep soul.



#### CAPRITUDINE

## BY RENATO ESPOSITO CONCHIGLIA CAPRI EDITION

Capritudine is an oxymoron: a joyful melancholy.

This magical feeling, which German poets call Caprisehnsucht, binds you to the island for life. Capritudine is the invisible thread that links the ten chapters of Renato Esposito's book, which describe many unpublished aspects of this iridescent island. A ten-year journey in which Capritudine has been a spiritual elixir to counter the trivialization of an island.

For many happy castaways, Capri has been the island of the soul where they rediscovered lost happiness. In this cathedral of rock and light, they started living again, free and dreamy, without fear of being judged by an oppressive morality. The book is embellished with 28 drawings by the artist Fabio Finocchioli, appeared in the Capri Review magazine, where you can perceive the true Caprese spirit and navigate the enchanted landscape of the island.

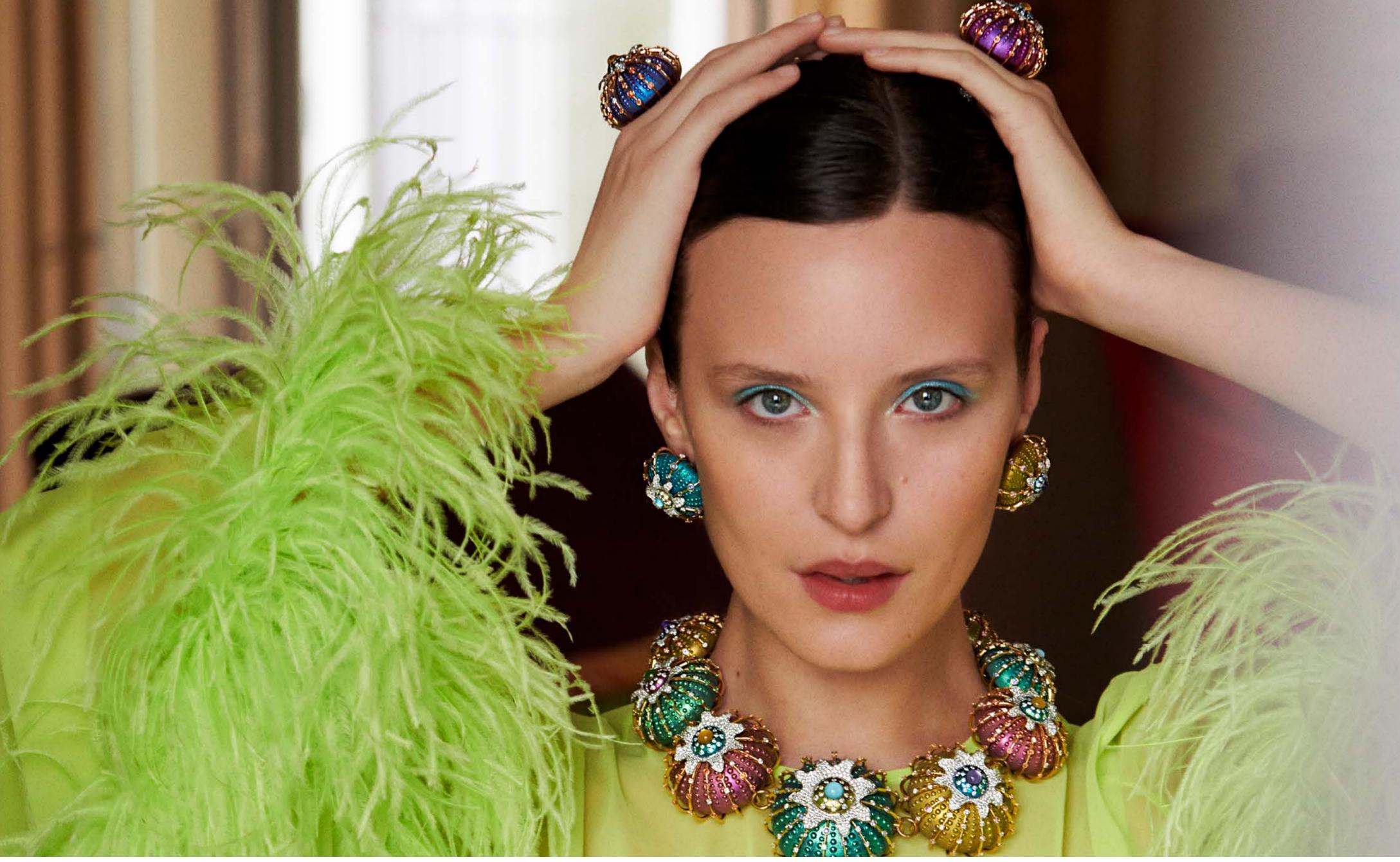
This book is a kaleidoscope of a colorful and secret Capri, an attempt to describe that elusive and dreamlike Genius Loci, to make readers actors on that world stage called Capri.

on that world stage called Capri.



Ohé! Chi sente? E chi mo canta appriesso a me? Ohé Pe' tramente S'affaccia 'a luna pe' vedé!







Maruzzella, Maruzzè T'hê miso dint'a ll'uocchie 'o mare E mm'hê miso 'mpiett'a me Nu dispiacere Stu core mme faje sbattere Cchiù forte 'e ll'onne Quanno 'o cielo è scuro Primma me dice sí E doce doce, mme faje murí Maruzzella, Maruzzé









Ohé! Chi mm'ajuta? Si tu nun viene a mm'ajutá? Ohé Mm'è venuta 'Na voglia ardente 'e te vasá





Stu core mme faje sbattere Cchiù forte 'e ll'onne Quanno 'o cielo è scuro Primma me dice sí E doce doce, mme faje murí Maruzzella, Maruzzé

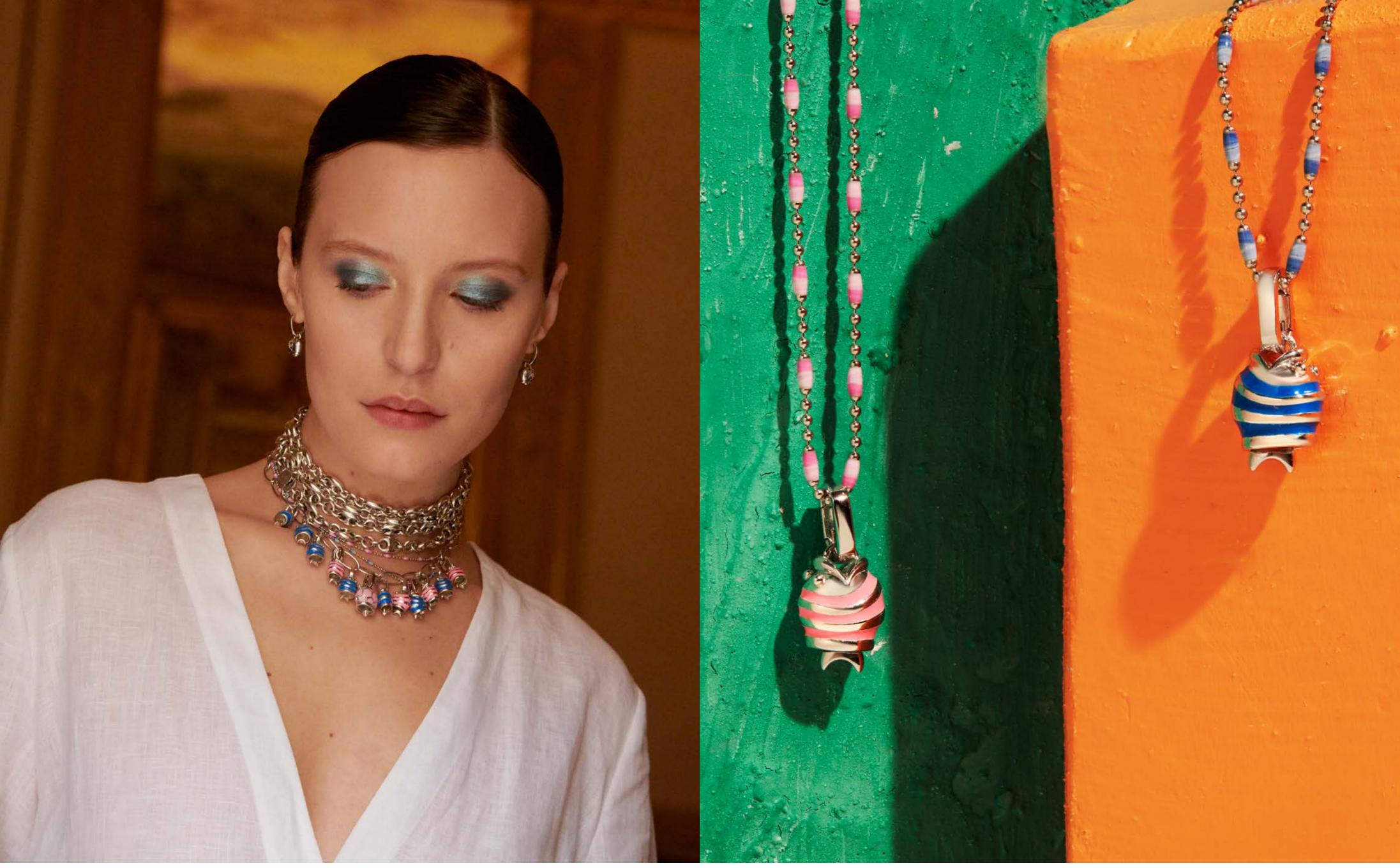










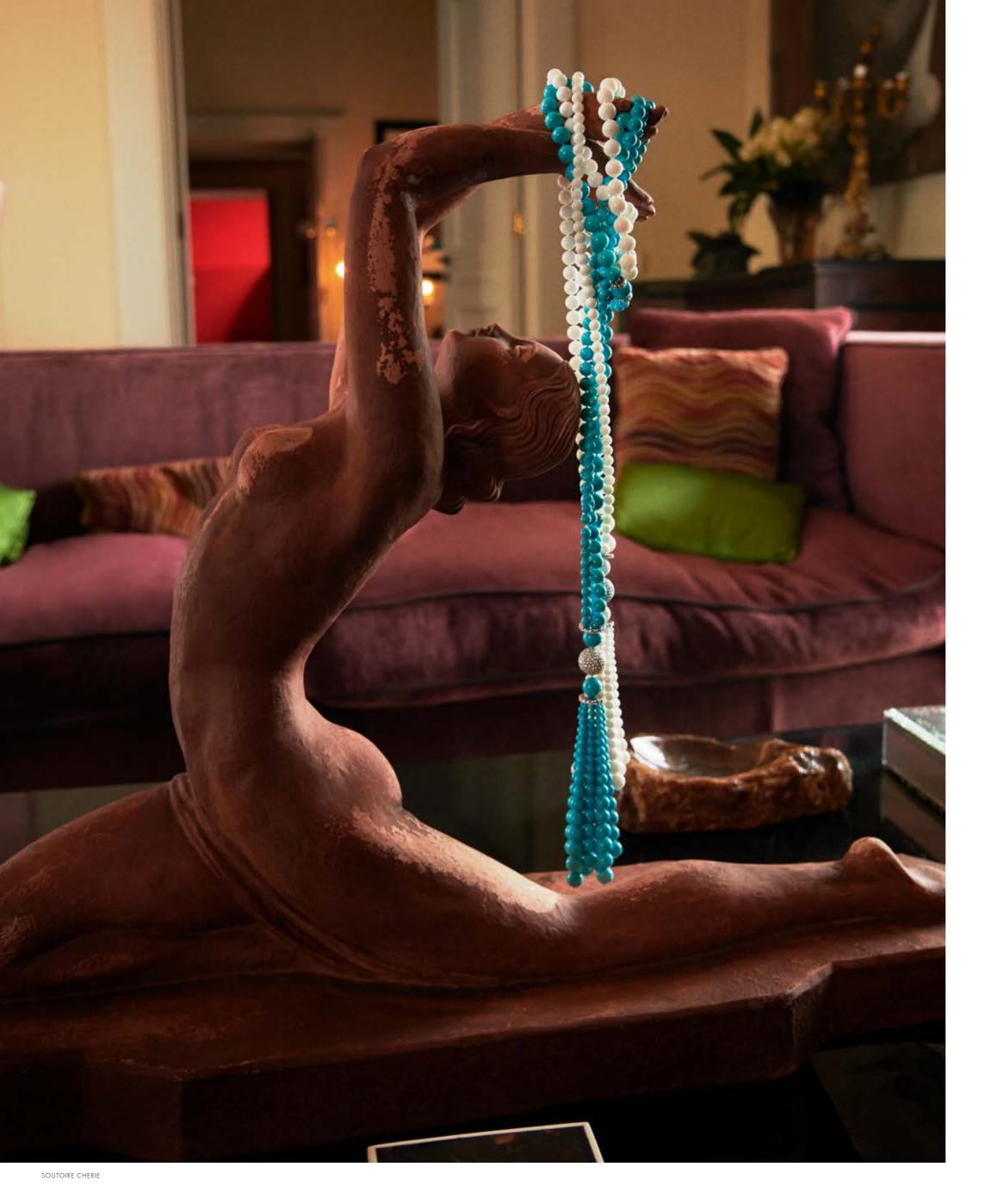






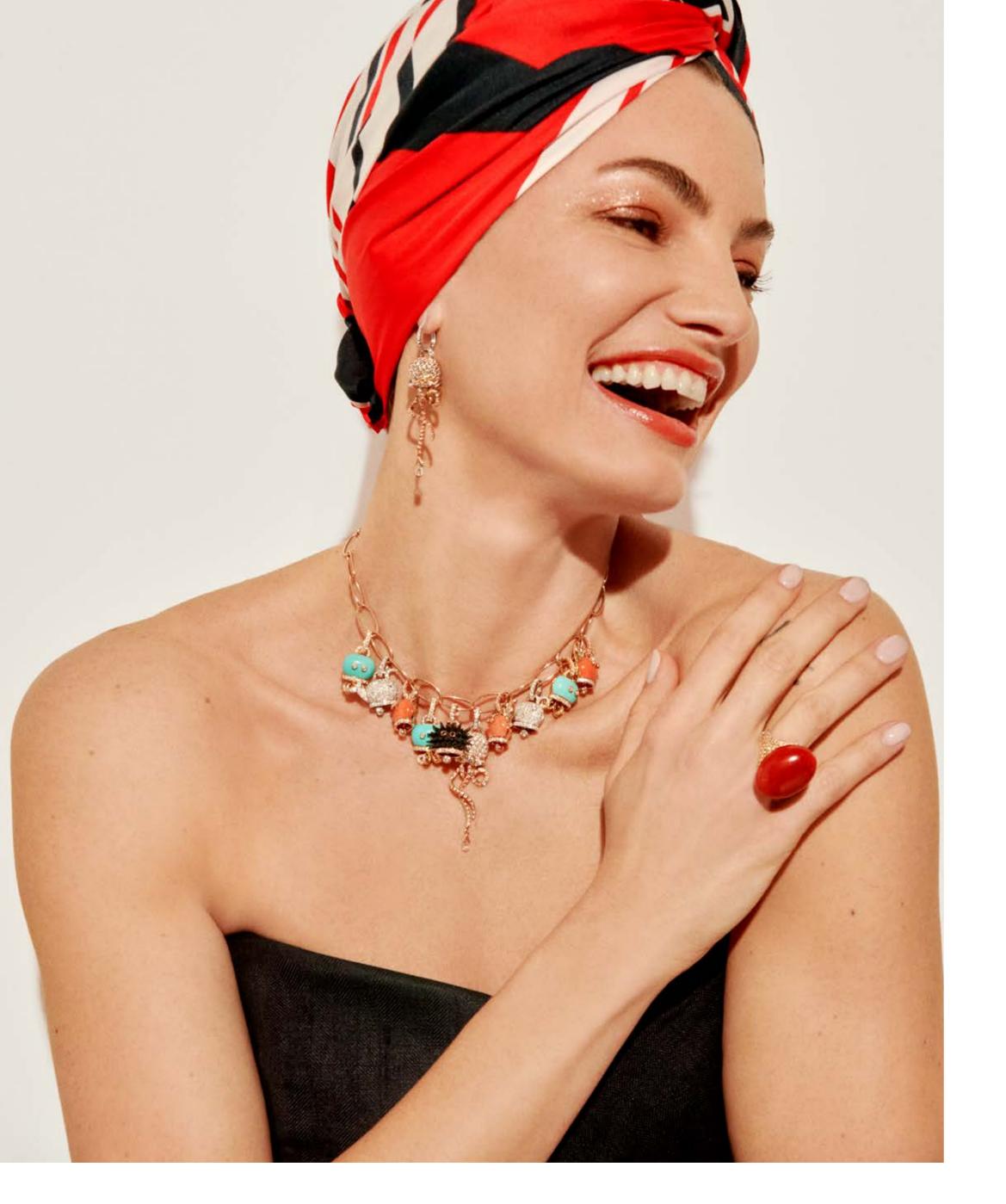






Stu core mme faje sbattere Cchiù forte 'e ll'onne Quanno 'o cielo è scuro Primma me dice sí E doce doce, mme faje murí Maruzzella, Maruzzé





## A SPECIAL THANKS TO

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