



LA PUPAZZA DI ROVIANO



THE PUPAZZA



The PUPAZZA is a puppet with feminine features and emblem of the traditional Roviano culture and the territory of the Aniene Valley. It is a very common tradition in central Italy, linked to the agro-pastoral world and to the ritual use of fire. It has gigantic dimensions and exuberant forms. During certain ceremonial moments the PUPAZZA is worn by a dancer and made to dance; finally, it is burned.



THE PUPAZZA DURING THE FESTIVALS



In Roviano the PUPAZZA is usually made to dance during the holidays between August and October (in particular for the patronal feast of San Giovanni Decollato, on 29th August, or for the feast of the Madonna del Rosario, at the beginning of October). After his passage - it is used to say – *s'arappiccanu i canistriiji*: after the harvest season the farmer left his basket aside to resume later on the return of the good season.



THE CONSTRUCTION



To construct it, a conical framework is formed, consisting of four sturdy sticks of cores bound with iron wire and five circles of progressive dimensions placed longitudinally at the same distance. To it are linked vertically and horizontally numerous lists of reeds so as to form a tight and resistant grid. With the same technique the head and arms are made. Inside there are two horizontal axes that the dancer places on his shoulders. Finishing is obtained with the wire (nose and breast). The PUPAZZA is then covered with paper impregnated with glue, finally it is painted in bright colors. A hole is then made on the belly to allow the dancer to orientate himself during the dance.



MAIN CHARACTERS



It is an oversized figure, a ceremonial giant. It represents a woman, with traditional clothes that exhibits prosperous breasts. It has a bell shape, with arms on the sides or placed in the shape of 'S' (with one holding an object on the head). His performance usually takes place at nightfall, in the square. It is worn by a dancer and made to dance. At the end of the dance is burned.



RITUALITY



The PUPAZZA appears in the square at nightfall or during the night. It is always accompanied by music; today it is the Band that supports the dance. It is worn by a man dancer who makes her perform several movements, among which some sexually winking. She jokes with the audience, provokes him and involves him in his dance, which has faster moments and others more relaxed. At the end of his performance, the dancer emerges from the body of the puppet to which he is given fire until his complete destruction. Sometimes a puppet with masculine characters is flanked by the PUPAZZA.



THE PUPAZZA AND THE MUSEUM



The PUPAZZA has over time become a symbol of traditional Rovian culture. A specimen is kept at the MUSEUM OF THE PEASANT CIVILIZATION "VALLE DELL'ANIENE", stolen from the stake in 1992. In 2017 at the Museum were organized Laboratories of Construction for the protection and enhancement of techniques and knowledge that are the basis of this phenomenon, at risk of dispersion. Demos-anthropologists and scholars of popular traditions participated in the meetings. The contents of the conference were merged into the volume *Il ballo della Pupazza. Phantoms and giant rituals in the festivals of central Italy* (Ofesto Ed., Rome), with contributions by A. Broccolini, P. E. Simeoni, E. Migliorini, E. Bonanni, A. Tacchia.



CRED

ITS
COSTRUTTORI

Tonino Battisti, Antonio Coticoni, Danilo Folgori, Gianni Folgori, Giuseppe Folgori, Gianfranco Grisanti, Mario Innocenzi, Nino Moltoni, Antonio Nagni

IMMAGINI
Emiliano Migliorini
Artemio Tacchia



MUSEO DELLA CIVILTÀ
CONTADINA VALLE DELL'ANIENE
COMUNE DI ROVIANO
museoroviano.it
rovianomuseo@tiscali.it

