ARTE E CULTURA | URBINO CENTRO | LA GENTE | MANGIA BENE

URBINO *Now*

The Magazine of Italy's Le Marche Region
2022-2023

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Urbino Now is a travel magazine for English-speaking visitors to Le Marche. Each summer, students write and photograph stories for *Urbino Now* as a part of a month-long study abroad program organized by ieiMedia.

For more information about the program and the magazine, visit ieimedia.com. You can buy copies of this issue and previous editions of *Urbino Now* on MagCloud. Visit magcloud.com and search for "Urbino Now."

Because of space constraints, only a few photos accompany each story in this magazine. Visit 2022.urbinoproject.com to see all the photos.

URBINO Now

ieiMedia
TELLING THE WORLD'S STORIES

Editor's Note

TO OUR READERS ...

COVER IMAGE

Sophie DiFrancesco

BEST INFOGRAPHIC

Madeline Edwards, page 51

BEST FEATURE ARTICLE DESIGN

(TIED FOR FIRST)

Caroline Shelly, page 10

BEST FEATURE ARTICLE DESIGN

(TIED FOR FIRST)

Anelise Johnson, page 34

NINE STUDENTS SAT AROUND A TABLE IN JUNE AND began envisioning the look and feel for a new *Urbino Now* magazine. This year's magazine design course is a new addition to the Urbino Program. Magazine design students came up with a style guide based on inspiration from the city of Urbino, then designed infographics, feature spreads, and other magazine elements as part of a cohesive publication about the people, culture, life, food, and arts of Urbino, Italy.

In your hands are the efforts of the nine magazine design students, and the nine multimedia story-telling students they partnered with for stories and photographs.

At the end of the summer every year, the Urbino Program honors the best work with the "Raffie Awards," named for the town's most famous son, the Renaissance painter Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, or Raphael. Choosing a winner for each category was challenging, as each student worked exceedingly hard on their photography, feature article design, and infographic. It is with great pleasure that I present to you the winners of the 2022 Raffie Awards (featured, left). Congratulations to each of you.

This edition of *Urbino Now* is a lively, in-depth guide to Urbino. The stories here reveal the heart and soul of the town and its people, re-creating on the page the experience of life in the city.

Enjoy the stories,

Elisabeth M. Kvernen

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COVER

A rhythmic sound rings through the streets of Schieti of Urbino with drums, whistles, and a tambourine played by Cate Etina, performer of Circa Teatro. Photo by Sophie DiFrancesco.

LA GENTE

MANGIA BENE

DESIGNERS

Nicole Basile

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"I can now state with certainty that I have discovered who I am as a young woman, all thanks to the people, place, and heart of Urbino. The phrase 'how you leave others feeling after an experience with you is your trademark' truly resonates with me."

Cooper Crowell

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"I came to Urbino to immerse myself in a different culture while furthering my design skills, and what I have gained has been so much more than that. Being able to experience this city as both a student and resident has been once in a lifetime."

Madeline Edwards

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"A sense of calm swept through my body walking the streets of Urbino for the first time. I was home. I am not just another tourist, but instead a part of the community, immersing myself into new culture, relationships, and learning opportunities."

Anelise Johnson

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"Urbino was everything I could have hoped for and more when I imagined the Italian study abroad 'experience.' I will be forever grateful to have improved my media skills in such a charming and dynamic city."

Lauren Nordseth

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"The beautiful stone architecture, cobblestone walkways, and friendly faces instantly made me feel at home. This program allowed me to be a student in Italy for a month while learning the language and collaborating with students from all backgrounds."

Caroline Shelly

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"Now that I have been here and experienced the people, the culture, and lively spirit of this area it will never be forgotten. My time spent in Urbino will always be at the forefront of my mind when I think of Italy. I am so fortunate for this experience."

Rebecca Smith

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"From exploring local shops and restaurants, traveling to Florence and Sirolo, immersing myself in Italian culture while working with media professionals, and meeting the most amazing individuals, I would not trade this experience for the world."

Anna Thornton

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"I am so glad that I pushed myself out of my comfort zone and came on this trip because I have not only learned a lot about design, but I've gotten to experience a new culture in ways I have never been able to before."

Audrey Valentine

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"Being in Urbino, I've learned so much about not only the content of the course but about culture, independence, and myself. I could have never imagined the people I would meet and the relationships I would make. I am very grateful for this experience."

Words to Live By

"Live, love, Adobe Creative Suite."
- Elisabeth Kvernen

WRITERS

Jordan Anderson

FILM & TELEVISION, RIDER UNIVERSITY

"I have made lifelong friends and connections, and was given opportunities one can only find abroad. This town is filled with wonderful people and breathtaking scenery. I cannot wait to share my experience with my family and friends."

Grace Clukey

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"Urbino is the first place I have visited outside of the United States, and it now feels like home to me. I have found comfort in this city, in the breathtaking views, and in the people that I have met here."

Sophie DiFrancesco

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"Coming to Urbino has been amazing, being able to take photos of such a gorgeous city with people even more beautiful was so thrilling. This program has taught me that I love meeting new people and telling their stories."

Sarah Dills

JOURNALISM & MEDIA COMM, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

"People say you grow the most when you are uncomfortable and I have definitely found that to be true throughout my time studying abroad in Italy. Spending time in a new country has pushed me out of my comfort zone, but I have grown in so many ways."

Lyuben Kraev

JOURNALISM & MEDIA COMM, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

"Urbino is a lovely slice of Italy. The exploration and mentorship here gave me a valuable taste of the work and life of a foreign reporter. I will always cherish the memories I made in this captivating town!"a

Ali McCaleb

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"This experience really challenged me academically but also brought me so much tranquility. I am confident that the knowledge and skills I acquired from this program will greatly help me with my future efforts."

Alexandra Meyers

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity has not only helped me grow my skills with regard to media, but it has also helped me discover who I am and showed me what I want to contribute to this world. Until next time, Urbino!"

Reena Patel

JOURNALISM & MEDIA COMM, COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

"I never could have anticipated that this city—from its beauty and culture to its extraordinary people—would feel like a second home to me. A part of my heart will remain in Urbino forever, but I sense that it has always been there."

Sabine Soltys

MEDIA ARTS & DESIGN, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

"I am in love with Urbino, with its gelato, *aperitivo*, chicken and fries, the views by the Raffaello statue, the *crescia*—shoutout La Baciocca—underground, and especially its people who make me smile every day."

Words to Live By

"When in doubt, gelato. (Yes, it's a verb.)"
- Michael Gold

ARTE E CULTURA

PHOTO BY EMILY KOZEL

The interior of the Duomo di Urbino was recently repaired and restored following an earthquake in 2016.

FERNANDO

Urbino's Geometric Sculptor

The designs of Fernando Rusciadelli crack a 'Da Vinci Code' of Renaissance math

STORY & PHOTOS BY JORDAN ANDERSON

FERNANDO RUSCIADELLI SCRAPES WOOD shavings into the air as he works on another beautiful structure that is his hobby since retirement – polyhedra connecting with the Italian Renaissance of Leonardo da Vinci.

Renaissance art was not just about human figures in paint and marble. Underneath that "art" was often a new science – of mathematics. Pietro della Francesco, known for his portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino, was also a mathematician. The Duke's son was tutored by mathematician Luca Pacioli, a Franciscan friar who also taught Leonardo da Vinci mathematics. There is much history in this small town, and Rusciadelli finds himself in a unique place to reconstruct these mathematical pieces of art.

Rusciadelli's main influence comes from Pacioli, who wrote many books conceptualizing intricate mathematical designs. Pacioli's most famous book, *De Divina Proportione*, carried 59 illustrations of polyhedra by da Vinci, the first time drawings clearly showed the front and back of such shapes. (Pacioli was also accused of borrowing from della Francesco's math.)

Today, Rusciadelli does not call himself an "artist," or his work "art," as he constructs elegant wood reproductions of the polyhedra that da Vinci drew for Pacioli's book.

"Sculptures are part of the history in Italy," he says, speaking Italian through a translator. "But it's not inspiration I look for. It's the scientific and mathematical centuries-old discoveries that exist within the sculptures."

Artwork can come in many forms, but the significance of both math and science during the 15th century is more important to him than the creations themselves.

SQUARING THE CIRCLE

The divine proportion of Pacioli's book title is the "golden ratio" that represents 1 plus an irrational number divided by 2. Specifically, $(1 + \sqrt{5})/2$. This proportion is famously expressed in da Vinci's sketch of man drawn in a circle, standing upright, his body spread out.

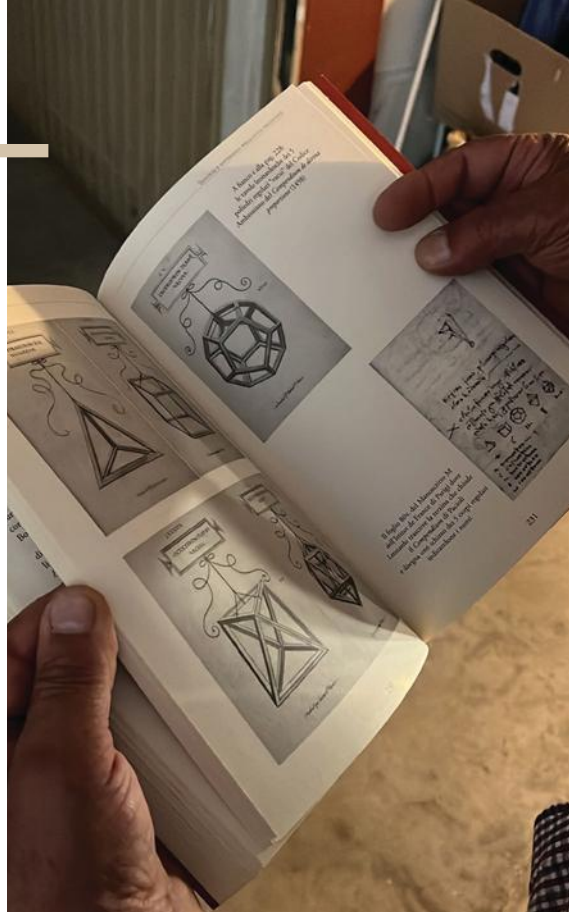
"...it's not the inspiration I look for, it's the scientific and mathematical centuries-old discoveries that exist within the sculptures."

The designs in the Pacioli book are specifically focused on polyhedra, three-dimensional shapes with an orderly pattern of regular polygons joining each vertex. Da Vinci made four versions of Pacioli's polyhedra: Planar (only faces are shown), Vacuous (only edges are shown), and two Stellar (pyramids drawn on each figure). Rusciadelli turns these illustrations into tactile objects of unvarnished wood.

Born and raised in Urbino, Rusciadelli retired from being a factory manager. After a bad experience with his health, he now busies himself working on his polyhedron sculptures. This has been his hobby for about 10 years. He lives outside the walls of Urbino with his wife, son, daughter-in-law, and two grandsons. As a family man, he dedicates his life to making the best of his environment and its history.

RUSCIADELLI

Rusciadelli with a stellar sculpture that he added felt and light to. One of his favorites.



The geometric sketches of Leonardo da Vinci.

He does not sell any of his work, but donates it to the town of Urbino.

THE SILICON VALLEY OF THE RENAISSANCE

The Oratorio di San Giovanni Battista is a chapel tucked away amid ancient alleyways on a slope in Urbino. Tourists find their way there to admire, behind a modern façade, its early 15th century murals depicting the life of John the Baptist.

Francesco Raghi is a brother of the San Giovanni Battista Confraternity at this chapel who welcomes visitors by explaining the historical context and artistic aspects of the Oratorio.

Science and math were slow to develop in the Middle Ages under the Roman Catholic church. But the Renaissance brought a flowering of math and science, as well as art, Raghi says.

"The people needed to know something about math in order to build things," he says through a translator. "The mathematicians of the time showed them how painters can become intellectuals, too." He is looking at Rusciadelli's wooden creations in a cave-like room attached to the Oratorio.

"Through these sculptures," Raghi says, "it creates both a scientific and artistic point of view."

In the 1500s, an Urbino native named Federico Commandino translated ancient mathematical texts from Greek and Arabic into Latin and Italian. He was a humanist, incorporating empirical facts to connect knowledge to humanity. His aim was to spread knowledge to everyone, those who could read, and those who couldn't.

Commandino printed his own books, which had not been done by writers since Gutenburg invented the moveable-type printing press a century earlier. His printing press was just outside of the Oratorio. His texts were studied by many in Europe for almost two centuries.

Raghi compares Commandino's work to that of Steve Jobs and Bill Gates, and the tiny street that ends with the Oratorio, Via Barocci, the "Silicon Valley" of the Renaissance. Commandino, like Jobs and Gates, used math and science together to create new ideas. The computer, he says, is a form of art that we use in everyday life, even if we don't understand the technology behind it.

Raghi and Rusciadelli worked together to set up an exhibit of his polyhedra that opened May 16. Rusciadelli's latest work has been shown here about three times a year for the last six years.

The current exhibit features many sculptures ranging from the Planar to Stellar.

"I have learned many things throughout my time building these sculptures," he says.

"Patience and self control are the most important, because it means you must never stop working your brain," Rusciadelli says. "That is something I have come to appreciate as I grow older." ✠

The exhibit, "Via Barocci Urbino," will be on display until July 15, 2022.

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino student Mariateresa Chiovotti.

Rusciadelli in his workshop by his sculptures.

Creating Art with

MATHEMATICS

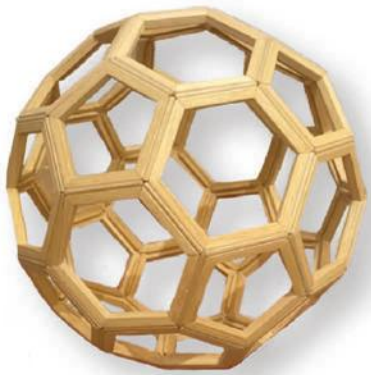
shapes through the centuries

Published in 1509, *De Divina Proportione* by Renaissance mathematician and monk Luca Pacioli included illustrations by his friend and pupil Leonardo da Vinci. The original illustrations combined da Vinci's genius for art and math in his drawings of fifty-nine polyhedra. Da Vinci's renderings of these three-dimensional geometric structures were the first in the history of art to show a clear distinction between front and back. Fernando Rusciadelli follows these illustrations today to create wooden designs that can be seen throughout the city of Urbino.

PACIOLI AND URBINO

Luca Pacioli devoted himself to teaching mathematics in many cities of the Italian Renaissance like Urbino. Pacioli lived in Urbino at the start of his career and tutored the son of Duke Federico da Montefeltro. Additionally, he dedicated one of his books, *Summa de Arithmetica Geometria Proportioni* to Duke Guidobaldo da Montefeltro in 1494. Pacioli had a deep bond with the city of Urbino, and contributed to its Renaissance greatness.

ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION BY DA VINCI



FERNANDO RUSCIADELLI'S RECREATION

PRESERVING HISTORY

Geometrics have been loved in the Ducal area for centuries and can be seen all around Urbino. In fact, the Ducal star, made of blown glass and brass, adorned the noble homes of Urbino in the 14th-15th century. Its shape, first described *De Divina Proportione*, is considered mathematically perfect. Thanks to Fernando Rusciadelli, the polyhedra of Luca Pacioli and Leonardo da Vinci find new life in modern-day Urbino.

Images retrived from ***Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana***

Revealing The Mask

Fa'Maschere keeps *Commedia dell'Arte* alive with a new take on traditional mask-making.

STORY & PHOTOS BY SOPHIE DIFRANCESCO

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP... THE SOUND OF WATER hitting a tin pail as a pair of rough, stained hands wrings out a light brown piece of hide. A whiff of earthy, woodsy smell fills the air. A smile peeks up over the hands as they shape the wet leather.

Eyebrows, a sharp nose, and a mouth form on the hide, creating a face just like the ones hanging on every wall in the shop. The craftsman lifts the leather over his own face, revealing an expressive mask with the eyes of Federico Gargaliano, its maker, looking through.

Gargaliano and his artistic partner Alessandra Ceccarelli make theatrical, artistic cuoio (leather) masks for private collectors and theater performers. Working out of their shop Fa'Maschere in Urbino, they have used their studies, personal performances, and mask-making knowledge to change the way that traditional masks are made and presented to audiences, specializing in the masks of *Commedia dell'Arte*.

Begun in mid-sixteenth-century Italy, Commedia dell'Arte is a loose, improvised style of theatrical performance that used distinct stock characters and emphasized acting in an ensemble and masks covering the faces of the ensemble. The stock characters created strict mask requirements for the mask makers, but with time, the framework loosened and allowed for the work Fa'Maschere creates to evolve as well.

"The evolution of theatre today was important for Commedia dell'Arte," said Michele Pagliaroni, artistic director of *CTU Cesare Questa* (Theatre Center of Urbino). "Today the art form is seen not only in traditional Commedia forms but also theatrical art and entertainment."

> "I love the predictability of the unpredictable." - Federico Gargaliano

Gargagliano and Ceccarelli began their work with *i Commedianti di Urbino* (comedians of Urbino) where they started learning acrobatics, stilt walking, and other "Cirque du Soleil type movements," said Gargagliano. After learning the basics, they began to design their products, which led to their current career path as professional Commedia dell'Arte leather mask makers.

Gargagliano said he appreciates how Commedia is always susceptible to change but at its core, remains the same. "I love the predictability of the unpredictable."

In 2003, Gargagliano and Ceccarelli met Giorgio De Marchi, an expert *mascherano* (mask maker) from Vicenza at the University of Urbino, and started learning all the basics of mask making. The pair became very serious about mask-making and started to know leather and how to work the material to shape it into their original creations. In 2007, Gargagliano and Ceccarelli parted from De Marchi and opened Fa'Maschere together. They named the shop after their names, combining "F" for Frederico

Federico Gargagliano spends his time constructing the masks in a process of hammering nails into the leather and matrice to hold the masks shape.

and "A" for Alessandra, creating "fa," the Italian word for "make." The name almost literally translates to "making masks."

Fa'Maschere masks are made from the typical wooden *matrice* (mask model), which are the wooden faces they store on the back wall shelf. From the wooden model base, the pair makes artistic decisions in changing the shape and color to make the masks completely their own. After creating the mask to the shape of the matrice, the pair then creates detailed eyebrows, sharp cheekbones, or even long pointy noses. Unless it is specially ordered, the team likes to focus on creating fantasy-themed masks, allowing them to make their creative features and unique artistic expression.

Gargagliano's favorite mask to create is based on the stock character the *Arlecchino* (Harlequin) due to the artistic liberties he can take creating facial features because of the role the character plays. He creates sharp detail cuts on the light leather with his bright yellow knife to form the original shape, and the extra leather that falls off the side of the matrice doesn't go to waste.

Stained hands carefully cut and shape the scraps of leather into a cone shape, nailing the edges to the forehead of the mask. Gargagliano loves to use the extra leather to make horns on his arlecchino masks, adding that extra detail to create an even more expressive, new mask.

"They have so many special materials and gadgets that make every mask absolutely unique and beautiful," said Giovanna Giusto, a friend and fellow artist

A few of the leather masks created by FaMaschere next to the matrice used to design them.

All scrap pieces of leather are used to make extentions of the masks or in the shop in other ways. No leather ever goes to waste.

on Via Valerio, who sometimes acts as a model for plaster masks. “They are handcrafted objects every time, even if the same mold is used.”

Gargagliano and Ceccarelli are appreciated by theatre-makers and artists in Urbino due to the novelty of their work. CTU director Pagliaroni appreciates their way of using the leather to create “different pictures of the same mask.”

“There is no typical day in the shop,” said Ceccarelli. Somedays are dedicated solely to preparing the leather. Some are used to shape and mold the leather. Some days they teach classes to people of all ages, including children as young as five years old. No matter how much fun they have creating their masks and sharing their knowledge, the most exciting days for them are when they get to perform, as they did on a recent Saturday evening in June.

Bright colors of red, blue, and green float through the air, twirling in circles as Ceccarelli and her performance partner dance on stilts 10 feet in the air while rhythmically playing tambourine. Gargagliano and his performance partner keep to the rhythm while playing drums on stilts and walking through the streets of Schieti, performing for every resident of the town. Masks created by Fa’Maschere on every one of the performer’s faces, emphasize the tradition, but bring forth their artistic liberties with the painted colors of green and red over the dark brown hide.

The Italian tradition of Commedia dell’Arte stays alive with every beat of the drum and shake of the tambourine. Each step of the performers on stilts creates joy and fear in the crowd knowing they’ll be okay but bringing that feeling of unpredictability in everyone. Every performance is different.

Ceccarelli carefully places her tambourine over her head and mask and rests the instrument on her neck. She leans down, getting to the same level as an older man in the crowd, takes his sunglasses off his face, and puts them onto her mask—an improvised trick completely fitting the old tradition but making every performance new, just as the sixteenth century Commedia dell’Arte form intended.

“The sensation to be free, to be creative, and make something for the older generation, while also making it ours,” said Gargagliano. “This is why we do what we do, and we love every second of it.” ✠

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino student Martina De Fillipo.

Love, Money, & Wit

A look into the most famous stock characters of Commedia dell'Arte, their personalities, and stories.

The Lovers

Isabella

Isabella appears most frequently on stage. She is famous for her beauty, exaggeration, and admiration. She is a flirty and strong woman who is deeply desired by men. She is also self-obsessed and selfish.

Flavio is a regular part of the Commedia dell'Arte tradition. He is a good looking and flirtatious man. He uses his attractiveness and charm to his advantage, not considering the well-being of others.

Flavio

The lovers are prideful, selfish, and lavish. They take on a human character requiring no masks.

The Masters

Pantalone is meant to depict the old merchant. He is greedy and cares most about money. His ego often creates conflict such as his attraction to young women and his high regard for himself.

Pantalone is in the highest class of wealth within the Commedia dell'Arte characters.

Pantalone

The Servants

Arlecchino is the servant of Pantalone. His role is usually considered funny, and he is not taken seriously. He acts on his master's needs and is continually pursuing his love interest, Colombina, with wit and resourcefulness.

Colombina is usually depicted as a spiteful woman who is unfaithful. She is also an intelligent woman who is capable of much more than being just a servant. She is skilled in solving problems to any given situation and is very resourceful.

Arlecchino

Colombina

URBINO CENTRO

PHOTO BY REENA PATEL

The city of Urbino as seen from Parco della Resistenza on a sunny day

The statues of Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta look out into the fading day as crowds assemble beneath for the Duke's birthday.

PHOTO BY LYUBEN KRAEV

La Relazione Ideale

Celebrating the patron duke's 6th centennial, Urbino honors its history with reverence. But does the "ideal relationship" between Federico da Montefeltro and his *Città Ideale* stand the test of time?

STORY BY LYUBEN KRAEV

CRICKETS SERENADE A SUMMER EVENING IN the city. Crowds shuffle up Via Vittorio Veneto to the Palazzo Ducale. Locals and tourists alike buzz with muffled excitement as they gather beside the Duomo, expecting a special guest.

This is a birthday celebration. Everyone is dressed up for a revered old friend of the city. Before long, the chattering stops and heads turn toward the street, where a mighty procession from a different age, complete with an orchestra, introduces the guest.

Splendid in a Renaissance gown, Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, strolls into his palace to celebrate his 600th birthday.

June 7th, 2022, marks the beginning of a full year of celebration in Duke Federico's honor that the city has made much effort preparing for. It is now six centuries since the birth of Urbino's most successful duke, the one who placed the city on the bleeding edge of the Renaissance. His revolutionary ways live on in many facets of Urbino today, while for others one has to look more closely.

The celebration on the evening of the birthday is fit for a noble. In front of a piano stage in the courtyard

Tempesta poses with fellow organizers at the Associazione Rievocazioni Storiche Urbino Ducale, the organization that handles all historical reenactment in Urbino.

PHOTO BY LYUBEN KRAEV

of the Palazzo Ducale, the crowds sit in orderly rows. To one side, as if transported from another time, sit the duke, his wife, and their entourage. Together they enjoy the magnificent music of Maestro Bruno Canino, a Neapolitan virtuoso who has travelled here for this special occasion.

Needless to say, it is not the original royal family enjoying Canino's performance tonight, but devoted actors. The night before, the city ceremonially welcomed the return of the duke's physical remains, after a 22-year stay in Pisa where a team of paleopathologists studied them to confirm details about Montefeltro's habits and features. As to the duke in the audience, how does he maintain such stalwart composure as Montefeltro while facing what is shaping up to be one long year of impersonation?

"My duty compels me," Roberto Tempesta says, gesturing energetically. "So, the persona takes over." By day, Tempesta works in a glassblowing workshop and in the *Protezione Civile* (Italy's civil protection service) on his motorbike. On his "off time" he embodies the living spirit of Federico da Montefeltro. It is difficult to believe that this animated man who struggles not to fidget and gesticulate during an interview has made a career of portraying the duke, known for his patience and restraint. Tempesta eagerly opens the door to a dimly lit apartment where he stores his costume, the place musty with the pastoral smells of an old wooden lodge, and digs into some photo archives.

"My father started the acting job in 1982," he says, pointing at black and white photos, "and in 2000 I took over." Tempesta's father, Sergio, founded the *Associazione Rievocazioni Storiche*, the organization that now oversees all historical reenactment work in Urbino. Thanks to this coordinated effort, the duke still walks the streets of Urbino for festive occasions. Tempesta regularly attends important ceremonial gatherings, a duty that doesn't weigh on him. On the contrary, it is a dream come true.

> "My duty compels me... So, the persona takes over."

"They used to call me Duca Jr. before all of this started!" he says. While Sergio Tempesta was the duke, he owned an electrical appliance store and shared a fascination with ham radio with his son. The younger Tempesta

adopted the handle "Duca Jr." for his radio station. Ever since, the man has embraced the title for all aspects of life, including his social media accounts.

For the uninitiated, such reverence for a figure in the past may seem overboard. Having an actor portray him nearly every week? Dedicating an entire year to birthday celebrations?

Lucia Bedini, avid city tour guide and amateur historian, chuckles at the questions.

"We need to understand what happened here was copied, imitated. People from around the world came here to personally check why Urbino was so famous for its modernity." She taps on the tabletop during an interview at a cafe.

Under the benevolent rule of humanist-educated Federico da Montefeltro, Urbino saw decades of peace, which was far from the norm in the late 1400s. The duke had a novel approach to government, promoting education for women as well as men, and supporting religious freedom and the arts. His wife, Battista Sforza, was equally instrumental in turning Urbino into an early Renaissance oasis.

"He gained the money with state-of-the-art mercenary tactics, while she spent it to bring wellness to all citizens," Bedini points out as she plays with her coral necklace. In the years of prosperity that Urbino enjoyed under Montefeltro its population exploded. The university taught a fusion of humanities and sciences, spawning advances in philosophical thought. The likes of Piero della Francesca, Francesco di Giorgio Martini, and Giovanni and Raffaello Santi produced renowned works of art, mathematics, and architecture.

Urbino feels eternally indebted to this "gentleman" of early modern Europe, Bedini says. The breakthroughs in thinking this city spawned sent ripples throughout Europe, which are felt to this day. So how much of the incredible leap from six centuries ago lingers here today, in the everyday student at Carlo Bo? Bedini's smile peters out.

"Today, we have separated humanitarian and scientific studies, as if they couldn't work together." Her

Roberto Tempesta looks through his archive of appearances since the year 2000, when he officially took over the acting job from his father.

PHOTO BY REENA PATEL

University administrator and city tour guide Lucia Bedini explains the novelty of Federico da Montefeltro's egalitarian rule.

PHOTO BY REENA PATEL

grimace tightens as she delivers the grim observation. “This is a great mistake of our period.” Bedini feels it is very dangerous to study only one aspect of this essential dichotomy and fears the modern world suffers from the absence of philosophy in its curriculum. The reason Urbino today no longer shines the way it once did, she thinks, is people’s inability to appreciate things beyond their grasp. The lack of empathy within this society bound by a pursuit of money, she believes, severs people’s aspirations from their ability to appreciate them.

Something about these modernist woes does not add up, though. Officially, Bedini is an administrator at the University of Urbino Carlo Bo, yet here she is delivering profound historical analyses, which often intrigue full-time historical researchers. Across the city, Tempesta, a glassworker and civil servant, prepares his alter ego for another night in the ducal court.

In a town where the essence of the great humanist Montefeltro becomes harder to define every passing year, innovators like these keep it alive. Both Bedini and Tempesta, in their own ways, demonstrate the ideal relationship Urbino aspires to with its beloved duke. ✠

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino student Iliara Caiazzo.

SYMBOLS OF *The Duke*

Duke Federico’s coat of arms contains two separate black eagles. Some say that the eagle is an ancient emblem of Urbino. Others hold that it is taken from the second coat of arms of the family, previously used by Federico’s late brother, Oddantonio.

As a crane is symbolic of watchfulness against potential threats, it has repeatedly been used to symbolize one of Federico’s most famous virtues–his consistent vigilance and awareness.

Images of squirrels are shown many times throughout the Ducal Palace as a symbol of the Duke’s prudence in war and politics. Squirrels reflect preparedness and the importance of investing in the future as they are known for storing food ahead of time.

An eagle was frequently used to physically represent the Duke. After he lost his right eye in a tournament when he was 28 years old, he had part of his nasal cavity removed, supposedly causing his face to look similar to that of an eagle.

Lucia Piazzalunga sits upon her windowsill, watching the locals. “I was working before, during, and after the lockdown and with the lessons online and doing my thesis I didn’t have any time to go out.”

Urbino College Students Suffered as COVID-19 Ravaged their Country

Italy was among the earliest and hardest hit countries in Europe

STORY & PHOTOS BY ALI MCCALEB

WHEN STUDENTS AT THE UNVERSITY of Urbino remember life during the peak of COVID-19, they recall inconveniences such as online classes and missed social events that also frustrated their American counterparts.

But as residents in one of the hardest hit nations in Europe, they have other, more distressing memories, such as this one by Alessia D'Aprile, 25, after her father contracted Covid from his brother and was taken to the hospital:

"When they gave him back, he was already in the closed coffin," she recalled. "So, we had the funeral, but we never saw him again."

"When they gave him back, he was already in the closed coffin," she recalled. "So, we had the funeral, but we never saw him again."

COVID-19 rapidly devastated Italy, crippling the country from smaller towns to great cities. In response the Italian government literally locked down the whole nation. This meant only being allowed to leave one's house to go to the supermarket. People could only walk their dog 600 feet from their homes.

But the pandemic still took a serious toll. According to research done by Johns Hopkins University, Italy recorded is 17.8 million cases with 168,000 deaths. The toll in Marche region, where this famous Renaissance city is located, is currently 480,000 cases with 3,922 deaths.

The rate of infection has now decreased significantly, and students are gradually getting back to normal Italian college life. But Covid left behind lasting memories, such as Alessia D'Aprile's.

Just days after a visit from her uncle, D'Aprile's mother fell very ill with her father following shortly after. While her mother was able to recover, her father, only having one working kidney, had to be moved to the hospital for intensive care, where he passed away.

"I went to the psychologist immediately because it's like he went somewhere," D'Aprile said. "And then I'm just here waiting."

Fellow student Sara Gabellini, 24, had an experience that was also scarring.

"In my city in Cattolica there were people dying at home." she says. "[One day] my friend called me crying saying her neighbor is screaming because he had two dead parents in his house."

Sara Gabellini, a current Foreign Language student, stands in Collegio Raffaello in her former English classroom.

During this time, Gabellini was staying with her boyfriend at his parent's house in southern Italy, far away from her hometown in central Italy. Gabellini started seeing a therapist because of the extreme anxiety of knowing her parents were stuck at home in Cattolica.

For Lucia Piazzalunga, 26, the pandemic means memories of blaring sirens and freshly dug graves in her hometown, Bergamo, one of the hardest hit in Italy.

"I live near a hospital in Bergamo and usually you listen to the birds, traffic, cars, but [during the pandemic] you only hear the ambulance all day," she recalled.

"In Bergamo there were [so many] deaths, you had corpses in churches because there weren't places to have funerals. There were military cars that took the corpses outside the cities to cemeteries away."

Other students like Matteo Ridolfi, 23, were not affected in quite the same way.

Ridolfi, now in his fifth year of foreign language studies, has lived in Urbino since 2019. Though passionate about his education, during lockdown he found himself losing his excitement to learn. "

I woke up like five minutes before a lesson and sat in bed all day wearing my pajamas," he said.

Virtual classes didn't cause his grades to drop, Ridolfi said, but the lack of social interaction due to nationwide isolation caused him to suffer emotionally. He said that students got so desperate for human interaction that sometimes people would gather in groups despite the law against those gatherings.

"One time the police stopped me at 3:00 p.m. and I had to pay a fine of 280 euros," he recalled.

Whether students stayed on campus during lockdown, or left home to be with family, all said they experienced loneliness.

Returning to normal habits after a life-changing event that endured for over two years has been a difficult process for many students. Some, like Chiara Centauro, 26 reported feeling uncomfortable to sit in large crowds at festivals or even to sit next to fellow students in class.

"I don't want to go to concerts or discos now because I am a little bit afraid," she said.

As a small city with a population of only 15,400 of which almost 14,000 are students, Urbino suffered fewer cases, but was not spared the impact of the strict regulations.

Student Sofia Urb, 24, stayed in isolation with her family at their home in Urbino, right outside the walls of the campus. She contracted Covid-19 twice but fortunately experienced only mild symptoms.

Urb found online lessons very useful to her because it gave her something to do during her long days in quarantine. She passed the time by baking, video chatting with friends, and tending to her garden.

But Urb acknowledged that lockdown was harder on her now 20-year-old brother.

"Your social life is more important when you're eighteen, because in Italy when you turn eighteen you can drive and you can drink legally," she said. "He passed his eighteenth birthday in quarantine, so it was really sad."

Urb felt lucky because she graduated in February 2022, so Covid wasn't as extreme, but a lot of her friends had to graduate virtually.

Now, thankfully, life is back to normal for this university city and its students. ✠

Silver Linings of the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic affected everyone around the world differently. Although it was a hard two years, there is light at the end of the tunnel. These University of Urbino students were all affected by COVID in many different ways, and through the process, learned a lot about themselves. Below are quotes of how COVID positively affected Matteo, Sofia, Sara, and Ilaria.

Matteo

finances

"The most positive impact from COVID was the economic and financial one. Due to COVD-19 I spent one year in my home town, so I saved the money for rent. Furthermore, the University of Urbino removed taxes so signing up was cheaper."

relationships

Sofia

"The biggest positive impact of COVID in my life was the improvment of my relationship with my brother because we spent a lot more time together. Also, I learned to appreciate the time I spend with myself."

Sara

mindset

"I changed my view of life. I now am more interested in enjoying my time and I prefer to love the world instead of thinking about money and my career. I am working for my future and I don't want to forget my present and the time that I have to be with the people I love."

hobbies

Ilaria

"I started to learn embroidery. I saw a lot of TikToks and videos on Youube of people doing it and I had nothing to do anyway, so I bought everything right when COVID was going to be super bad and learned how to embroider when I wasn't studying."

GOOD AS NEW:

Restoring Urbino's Historical Signs

STORY & PHOTOS BY ALEXANDRA MEYERS

THE SCAFFOLDING IN FRONT OF TOWN HALL has two of its steel supports propped up with extra wood to compensate for the cobblestone street's slope.The man standing on a four-by-six-foot platform two floors up seems oblivious to any danger.

He is concentrating on his work, using brushes, spatulas and syringes to restore the capital Roman letters engraved in a stone marker. It is from 1954, one of the newer historical signs in a city that takes pride in its last 500 years of history and architecture.

"*...AGLI INVITTI ED INVINCILI IDEALI DELLA LIBERTA*" it reads, in letters that Franco Bigini is carefully filling with black paint. This sign honors those who resisted the occupation of Urbino by Nazis and Fascists "for the undefeated and invincible ideals of liberty." Bigini, a self-taught art restorer, was commissioned by Urbino to restore signage installed since the 18th century. Over time, these signs have faded into the brick and lost the shine and attention they used to have. The project to restore 140 of such signs – and another 150 street names also engraved in stone – began in February and is to end in July. With this 25,000-euro project, Urbino maintains its reputation for being the only city center in the Marche region of Italy recognized, since 1998, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Bigini took on this project as more than just a job. Bigini is originally from Belgium, but moved to Urbino when he was a child. As a result, Bigini feels a personal connection to this particular project, stronger than to others he works on outside of Urbino.

> "It's an honor for me because Urbino is the town I grew up in."
> —Franco Bigini

"It's an honor for me because Urbino is the town I grew up in," he said.

First introduced to restoration work by his cousin, Bigini gained a passion at a young age.

"I grew up doing this work," starting at age 17. Now he's 61. "So, 44 years of restoring. It is a job that has become a passion." He smiles when he compares his work to that of Renaissance artist and Urbino native Raphael Sanzio, since Bigini chose not to go to school but to learn his craft by doing it.

AN EVEN TEMPERAMENT

Urbino's deputy mayor, Massimo Guidi, said he is very pleased with the work Bigini is doing for the city. "Bigini is a very hard worker with a calm disposition. Very professional."

Weather permitting, Bigini works early in the morning until late in the afternoon, with a lunch break in between. A typical work day starts at 7 in the morning, when he first starts to assemble his scaffolding. The 23-foot tall scaffolding breaks down into many pieces so that he is able to fit it into the bed of his truck along with his other supplies.

It is not difficult to find Bigini as he towers over Urbino on his scaffolding. Some signs take just one day, while others take three to four.

Bigini stands looking up at one of his projects, a sign on a wall that borders the Ducale Palace.

Franco Bigini was commissioned to restore over 200 stone signs in the historic center of Urbino, costing the city 25,000 Euro.

"It depends a lot on the state of conservation, but some inscriptions are very damaged and can take twice as long," Bigini said.

He has worked in other historic cities in the region such as Fossombrone and Senigallia. But Urbino has a special meaning for him, as it is his childhood home.

After 44 years, he wants to continue restoration work as long as his health allows. "I have six years to work before retirement, but if I am healthy by then I will certainly continue to work."

Keeping up his passion after cleaning and restoring signs in the June heat—is that easy?

"Yes," he says, still smiling. "I would do it another 100 times." ✠

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino students Lorenza Abbondanza, Linda Marangoni, and Lucia Piazzalunga.

Bigini is a well known man around town and is frequently stopped by friends passing by.

A completed historical marker above town hall restored by Franco Bigini.

IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

THE WALLS OF URBINO SPEAK IN A UNIQUE ROMAN TYPE STYLE

URBINO street names are incised throughout the city in a typeface from the Roman era, featuring capital letterforms chiseled into stone. These letters have many similar characteristics to the modern typeface Trajan, shown below.

Characteristics of *Roman Type*

ANGLED HEAD SERIF

You can see from the capital **T** the angled head serif feature of Roman type. Capital letterforms usually form at an angle instead of being strictly vertical.

BELOW THE BASELINE

The capital letter **J** descends below the baseline, a feature that originated in brush calligraphy. This feature remained as Roman capitals were later carved into stone.

FONT WEIGHT VARIATION

The letter **N** displays the variation in stroke weight within one letterform; each letter contains thick and thin, which is a defining characteristic of Roman type.

Palazzo Ducale

Roman type can be seen throughout the Ducal Palace as similar signs represent features of Trajan and Urbino's unique font styles, as shown on the right.

LA GENTE

PHOTO BY LYUBEN KRAEV

A couple plays guitar in the Piazza della Repubblica as birds scavenge crumbs.

MADE WITH LOVE

Cooperativa Sociale Francesca Creates a Community

STORY BY GRACE CLUKEY

Cooperativa's Director, Antonio Bernardini, shares about his passion for the organization while holding a ceramic model of the building.

PHOTO BY ANELISE JOHNSON

LAUGHTER TRAVELS DOWN THE GRAVEL PATH from the entryway, and summer evening sunlight streams through the windows of Cooperativa Sociale Francesca**.** Workers rush in and out of the kitchen, as the *aperitivo* is about to be served. Manu Magnoni, whose cousin Zaccheo* is among the hard-working servers, pauses for a moment before explaining why he and his wife, Sarah, have come to the event. Tears fill his eyes as he says, "It is the first place I go whenever I return to Urbino."

Cooperativa Francesca, located on the northern edge of Urbino, is an organization that employs young adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, but it is much more than a charity. Outsiders may be surprised to learn that the organization, housed in a quaint, classic Italian building, holds a multi-business workshop and a restaurant. At the Cooperativa, young adults with disabilities are given the chance to learn and exercise skills that promote creativity and individuality. Whether in the upstairs workshops crafting ceramics and wedding favors, or downstairs in the restaurant prepping meals or serving guests, these services benefit not only the workers but the entire community.

"They are all immensely skilled," says the organization's director, Antonio Bernardini, smiling. He recalls a debate among the staff about which workers were best suited for which jobs, claiming it was pointless to argue because they are all talented in their jobs. "It is the joy of seeing the workers doing what they love and doing it well," that, Bernardini says, makes the organization special. That, he says, is the message that Cooperativa Francesca hopes to communicate to the public: "Everything we do, we do with love."

Cooperativa Sociale Francesca was originally part of a larger education program, founded in 1992. In 2000, when Antonio Bernardini became the director, it became an independent organization. This shift to make the Cooperativa independent from the education center resulted in the organization becoming a legitimate company where the members of the larger education center could practice their working skills and interact with the community. Cooperativa Francesca received its name after the passing of a beloved member of the education center, Francesca.

There are usually 16 workers with disabilities at Cooperativa Francesca, but fewer have been active in the past couple of years due to COVID. Staff members along with volunteers assist the workers in learning new skills and improving their performance. The first service the organization provided was the creation of wedding and ceremony favors, called *bomboniere*, which include ceramics and other hand-made products. In 2021, the organization opened a restaurant on the first floor of the building where workers could learn the fundamentals of cooking and serving. "Ceramics used to be my favorite, but now I love to serve in the restaurant," says Zaccheo, who has been working for the organization since 2010.

Zaccheo takes a coffee order from a guest, while chef Tiziano Rossetti and sommelier Raffaele Papi stand with the other volunteers and thank guests for attending the event. (L to R)

PHOTO BY GRACE CLUKEY

> "Everything we do, we do with love."
>
> - Antonio Bernardini

Two workers prepare wedding gifts in the upstairs workshop.

PHOTO BY GRACE CLUKEY

On a typical day, Zaccheo and his fellow workers arrive at the Cooperativa at 8:30 a.m. by bus, getting straight to work on ceramics and ceremony favors in the upstairs workshops. While diligently painting, stitching, folding, and carving, the workers chat about wanting to go to the beach to escape the heat. “I like that we are all close,” says Barbara, while folding aprons with her coworker. After a brief break, it is time to begin work in the restaurant for lunch customers. “This is most workers' favorite part of the day because they get to interact with the community,” says staff member Silvia Amadori. The workers' day typically ends at 3 p.m. unless there is an event that evening that they need to work.

Amadori says employees with disabilities choose Cooperativa Francesca over similar organizations “because they feel a greater independence at this one, they feel like they are working like anyone else.” Though it is not the goal of the organization, employees will occasionally move on to work

Barbara adds final touches to the primo pasta before it is served to the guests.

PHOTO BY ANELISE JOHNSON

elsewhere, but it can be difficult. In one case, an employee tried working somewhere else but returned because, unlike his supervisors at Cooperativa Francesca, his new boss did not respect the amount of time it took him to complete tasks.

The organization regularly hosts events for the community in the evenings, like the one that Manu and Sarah Magnoni are attending that summer evening. The event, called *Il Buono del Bene* (The Greater Good), is a five-course dinner for about 50 funders and supporters. Volunteers Tiziano Rossetti, chef of Osteria L'Angolo Divino, and Raffaele Papi, a sommelier, guide the workers in plate presentation, pairing wines to each course, and serving the guests. Papi, also a cousin of Zaccheco, says he volunteered because of his appreciation for the organization that has given so much to his family.

Prior to each course, a worker comes out of the kitchen to announce the food and wine. "I am nervous and excited to be speaking in front of you all," says Barbara before delivering the name of the next course: "*Pinzimonio Ecco! Scusate, data l'emozione un po.*" ("Here is Pinzimonio—raw vegetables with dressing! Sorry, having a moment.") When the dinner ends, coffee is served and guests begin to walk around admiring the artworks and trinkets for sale. At this moment Zaccheo and Magnoni share a hug, delighted over the night.

At the end of the evening, the workers and volunteers stand together, thanking the guests for helping make the night a success. The workers' faces light up with joy as a round of applause fills the room. ✠

**For privacy reasons, Cooperativa Francesca asked that the last names of their workers not be used.*

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino student Lucia Piazzalunga.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

at Cooperativa Sociale Francesca

AUTONOMY

Employees exercise autonomy by taking the bus to and from Cooperativa Francesca.

Start of Day

Employees arrive at the Cooperativa's headquarters on Montefabbri street and start the process of creating bomboniere, art, ceramics, and more.

CREATIVITY

Daytime Activities

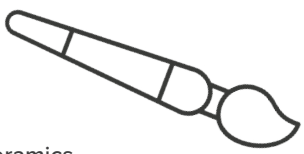
The employees' products and art represent the creative nature of Cooperativa Francesca. Each employee has their own creative specialty and takes great pride in the products and art they create. The employees are constantly using their creativity to provide products for various events.

Bomboniere

Employees create scented favors, known as bomboniere, that locals purchase for events such as weddings. Employees may make as many as 150 bomboniere for a wedding.

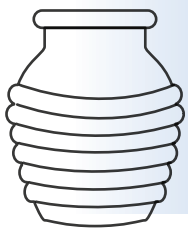
Art

Employees design and paint artwork that is sold in the public shop. These pieces often show outdoor scenes.



Ceramics

Employees create small ceramics for gift favors and larger ceramics, such as pots, for purchase. It is a two day process to make one ceramic piece.



COMMUNITY

Night Events

Cooperativa Francesca hosts a variety of evening events, including graduation, birthday, and dinner parties. During the summer, Cooperativa Francesca has regular happy hour events on Tuesdays and Thursdays. These events are an opportunity for the community to see and support the program.

Employees leave Cooperativa Francesca

Icons created by the Noun Project, Nook Fulloption, Ainul Muttaqin, Syawaluddin, Tezar Tantular, and Rainbow Designs

Italy Has Become

Ukrainian families fleeing war

Markian, Vadym, and Julian watch Ukrainian-dubbed Spongebob Squarepants on their tablet.

A Peaceful Haven

Two families find safety and welcome in the small town of Fermignano.

STORY & PHOTOS BY SARAH DILLS

THREE YOUNG BOYS SIT ON A COUCH, eyes locked on their tablet, where the cartoon playing causes them to giggle.

But just a few feet away, their mothers, who are sisters-in-law, are sharing a different emotion. Tears stream down their faces, their hands are shaking. They sob quietly as they recount the brutality and horrors of the Russian invasion that made them leave their husbands behind and flee their Ukrainian homes.

Their heartbreak is palpable.

"The Russians want to take the Ukrainians away from the world," Daria Marukhniak said between the sobs. "And we don't understand why. They are destroying us. They destroy churches and hospitals and schools and museums. Everything."

"The Russians come with tractors and scrape all the earth and the bodies together," Natalia Kurchak added tearfully.

On March 7, Daria and Natalia arrived in Italy after a two-day journey from their home in Lviv in western Ukraine to escape the bloody, violent attacks of the Russians. They left with Daria's daughter Yana, 14, and son Markian, 12, and Natalia's sons Vadym, 10, and Julian, 5.

Their story is not unusual. Since the invasion began February 24th, some 6.6 million Ukrainians, mostly women and children, have sought refuge in other countries. A week into the war, Italy declared its support for refugees and has since welcomed over 118,000 Ukrainians.

Italy was the natural choice for this group because Natalia's mother, Lucia Kurchak, has been here since 2001, working as a caregiver for the elderly.

On March 5, the two women and four children boarded a bus jammed with 50 people, and dogs, cats, and hamsters. Though their home city is only 43 miles from Poland, the line to exit was 30 miles long and took 15 hours to clear.

"I've never seen so many people," Natalia said. "So many buses and cars and people on foot. There were babies. Children who could barely walk. And it was cold, very cold."

The family stayed on the bus for another day as it traveled through Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia before crossing into Italy. Lucia picked them up in Cattolica, a small town on the Adriatic coast, and 33 miles later, they were in their new home.

Fermignano, with a population of 8,500, is in the Le Marche region of eastern Italy. Daria and Natalia's families live there in a four-room house, the cost of rent and utilities paid for by financial support organizations and the Italian government.

Now safe in Fermignano, the mothers prioritize providing their children with a sense of normalcy with books, art, toys, and games. They prepare traditional Ukrainian foods such as borscht (a stew-like dish with a beet base and vegetables, meat, and cream), salo (cold pork fat with garlic served on bread), and vareniki (potato dumplings eaten with oil, meat, and cream).

Julian (5), Markian (12), Yana (14), and Vadym (10) work together on a jigsaw puzzle.

A big adjustment for the mothers and children has been learning Italian. But the family says their Italian neighbors have been generous and welcoming.

"The people here have been very friendly and helpful," Yana said. "They bring us milk, chicken, bread, supplies. Very kind."

The children were invited to attend the local schools but didn't want to have to adjust to a new language, teachers, peers, and curriculum. Instead, they have been able to take online classes with their old teachers to keep up with their Ukrainian studies.

"I really like online school," Yana said. "We stay together. It was too much stress to try to go to school here. I said, 'I want to do school online,' not in a school."

"How can children learn and live to the sound of sirens? And always being afraid? When there is always a threat of a missle arrival?"

Now that school is over for the summer, the three younger children are going to a camp that is offered for free to Ukrainian refugees. There they will learn Italian and English, go swimming, hiking in forests, and play sports.

All four children like to ride bikes, kick around a soccer ball, do jigsaw puzzles, play board games, and take care of their landlord's pet turtle, Ibiza. Even with these activities, they are still missing out on a lot of their favorite things from home.

"I like to play chess," Markian said. "I got a trophy and a medal. I enjoy it very much." He played with a chess team back home but has yet to find a team in Fermignano.

Vadym has been practicing karate for four years. He had a tournament scheduled for the week after they had to leave Ukraine. Luckily, there is a karate studio in Fermignano, and Vadym has just received his green belt, one step below the prized black belt.

In the last two weeks, Julian, the youngest, has started riding his bike without training wheels and is very excited to be able to keep up with the bigger kids. He also likes to cuddle with his mom and watch Ukrainian-dubbed SpongeBob SquarePants with Vadym and Markian.

As the oldest child in the family, 14-year-old Yana has stepped into a more adult role and is staying home with the moms to help around the house and with cooking, which is one of her favorite activities. She also helps by keeping the boys happy and entertained.

Yana still finds time for her own hobbies. She said she enjoys painting, drawing, and reading. But even with all the efforts to pass the time and stay optimistic, it is extremely difficult for the family to be away from home, especially with how abruptly they had to leave and how much uncertainty still fills their minds.

"I like Italy," Yana said. "I like going to the beach with my grandmother. But I miss my dad."

The women wish they could tell the children when they can go home and see their fathers, homes, families, and pets, but there is no telling what their future holds.

"It is such a dangerous place," Natalia said, as Daria tried to slow her tears and catch her breath. "Catastrophic. Our friend's town in the East is completely occupied by Russians. People can't recover the bodies of their loved ones."

Natalia said she understands why her parents and grandparents would cry when talking about the second world war, when the Nazis invaded Ukraine. Her mother, Lucia, compared the Ukrainian War to World War II.

"She said, 'When the Nazis came to Ukraine, they gave the children chocolate bars,'" Natalia repeated. "'When the Russians come to Ukraine, they kill the children.'"

Many of the family's friends and relatives are still in Ukraine, including elderly people and young children.

All Ukrainian men ages 18-60 were sent to work for the armed forces, including the women's husbands.

During the first couple of months, they were in contact a lot with their husbands and others in Ukraine through social media apps like Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Viber. But recently, their phones have been quieter, though they often receive texts warning that there is a threat of an air raid.

Artwork by Vadym that says "No War. I Am For Peace."

Natalia gives Julian a quick kiss while they play a board game.

At first, there was hope they could all go back by the middle of May. But now, it looks like the war will last longer.

"The kids really miss their fathers," Natalia said. "They ask when we can go back home. And we have to say we don't know when we can go home. We can go home when there is peace, but it is not possible now."

The air raid warning texts are horrible to receive, but also a reminder that the six of them are in a safer place. Italy has welcomed and supported them in many ways, yet they still look forward to the day when Ukraine is a safe place to raise their children.

"We want to return, but we need peace," Daria said. "How can children learn and live to the sound of sirens? And always being afraid? When there is always a threat of a missile arrival? Unfortunately, we have no plans for the future. Only hope for peace." ✠

A Community That Supports

The many ways locals are easing Ukrainian refugees' transition into their new community of Urbino

Schooling

All education for incoming refugee children is held online due to the challenges of language differences. All refugee students are required to take Italian lessons as well.

Housing

Local officials and volunteers are opening their homes to incoming refugees, and the city is using buildings that originally served as "COVID hotels." All housing is funded by local donors.

Transport

All local transportation is free to Ukranian refugees, including the buses, tram, and the trains. There is a small fee for out-of-town travel.

Healthcare

The newcomers are entitled to the same health services as Italians, as long as they are registered with the Italian healthcare system. Free services include a family doctor, specialized medical visits, vaccinations, blood tests and more.

Language

All refugees are required to take Italian lessons if they are enrolled in school. Children are offered online classes, while teens are required to go in-person.

MANGIA BENE

PHOTO BY SABINE SOLTYS

Gigi Andreoli, owner of Camera a Sud, serves crescia to Cesarini Marcello and Serafini Luana as they look over the streets of Urbino.

Breaking Truffle Tradition

One woman's fight for success in the male-dominated truffle industry

STORY & PHOTOS BY REENA PATEL

A **DISTINCT EARTHY AROMA WAFTS** through the restaurant. Though city pigeons and roaring motorbikes roam outside, the scent seems to come from the depths of a wilderness untouched by humans — a fragrance akin to soil, wood, and foliage.

Monia Costantini unfurls a cloth bag, revealing the source of the scent: black truffles. She touches one of the dark, grooved lumps to her nose and inhales deeply. Satisfied, she picks up a metal slicer and carefully shaves the truffle, hunching her shoulders to get the right angle. Each glide across the blade is delicate and meticulous, like setting stones in jewelry.

The care and effort that Costantini puts into each dish she prepares reflects the care and effort she puts into her business, Tartufi Antiche Bontà, a truffle-centric shop and restaurant in the heart of Urbino. In an industry full of men, Costantini has fought hard to fulfill her vision for the establishment, which she considers her "third son."

Costantini may not work with jewelry, but the truffle is still very much like a gem. The underground fungus is a prized culinary delicacy that grows in few places around the world. It is a hallmark of the Marche region in Italy.

Usually, "hunters" must forage for truffles in the woods, using dogs to sniff out the buried treasure. However, 15 to 20 years ago, the Marche region offered payments to residents willing to experiment with farming truffles.

"It was an experiment because they weren't sure at the time if truffles can actually be cultivated," Costantini says through a translator. "My dad had some hectares of land, and he asked himself, 'Why don't we try?'"

That experiment grew into what is now eight hectares of a truffle farm that Costantini owns in nearby Acqualagna. Every truffle at Tartufi Antiche Bontà comes from that farm.

Though her farm is in Acqualagna, Costantini chose to open her business in Urbino 14 years ago because very few people in the city specialized in truffles at the time. This holds true even today, according to Egidio Cecchini, the director of shopkeepers, restaurants, and hotels in Urbino and its surroundings.

Cecchini strolls into the restaurant on a slow evening. Mellow jazz floats in the air. A soft gurgling joins the symphony as Costantini heats up a truffle cream sauce for *crostini con vellutata e scaglie di tartufo fresco* (crostini with cream and fresh truffle flakes).

"In Urbino, this is the only restaurant shop where truffle is the icon, the most important food identifying the character of the restaurant and of the shop," Cecchini says.

The lamps cast a dim amber glow on bottles of wine lined against the back wall. Shadows dance across Costantini's face as she grabs a bottle to share with Cecchini. Their relaxed smiles and lively conversation brighten the dimly lit restaurant.

Cecchini has worked with Costantini for nearly 15 years. Though business brought the two together, friendship also bonds them.

"She (Costantini) is courageous, and she has fantasy," Cecchini says in English. "She was able to think a place different from any other you can find in Urbino

Monia Costantini focuses intently on each truffle shaving as she prepares a ricotta salad appetizer. This careful precision exemplifies her work ethic as an entrepreneur.

Tartufi Antiche Bontà, a shop and restaurant in Urbino, offers a culinary experience centered around the truffle, a prized delicacy in the Marche region of Italy. Owner Monia Costantini supplies her business with truffles from her farm in Acqualagna.

and that has an own identity, and this is its force, its strength, her strength."

Costantini did not always receive such high praise. When she opened Tartufi Antiche Bontà in 2008, many naysayers predicted that she would have to close within a couple of years. They did not think a 30-year-old woman could survive in the industry.

"In the truffle world, most of the workers are men," Costantini says. "The hunters are men. You're a woman, and you work with hunter men, and they dismiss you and your work."

Though Costantini has her own truffle farm, she must work with hunters to collect enough truffles to sell when festivals roll around in the fall.

"It's not easy because you have to be a woman with a man's personality, with the determination most of all," Costantini says. "Because when you go to the truffle hunters, and you are a young woman of 30, and they are older, if they see you as naïve and inexperienced, then they try to overstep you."

> "It's not easy because you have to be a woman with a man's personality, with the determination most of all," Costantini says.

Costantini recalls some of the ways truffle hunters have tried to fool her, assuming she does not know any better. Some put broken truffles back together using toothpicks and tried to sell them to her as whole. Costantini explains that a broken truffle that costs 200 euros would cost 1,000 euros if it was whole, so buyers risk wasting a lot of money if they do not know how to analyze truffles.

In another instance, a hunter tried to sell Costantini a bag of truffles with a kilogram of soil in it. The weight of truffles determines their value, so if Costantini had not been discerning, she would have wasted her money on dirt.

"You have to make them (truffle hunters) understand that you know how to do this job, and you can do it as well as someone else could do it," Costantini says. "It's you who has to make them understand the person you are and the determination you put in the job you're doing."

Over the years, Costantini has done exactly that. She learned which truffle hunters she could trust and earned their respect.

One such hunter is Giorgio Remedia, 66, who has known Costantini since she worked as an assistant at a truffle shop in Acqualagna. Remedia recognized early on that Costantini is "brilliant" and "dynamic," so he partnered with her when she opened Tartufi Antiche Bontà.

"You have to be good at selling truffles before they deteriorate because it's a product that has great value, economically speaking," Remedia says through a translator. "Whoever sells truffles has to be professional, serious, credible, and prepared. Monia has all these characteristics."

Martinelli (right) grew up with Tartufi Antiche Bontà, which Costantini opened when Martinelli was 10. The 24-year-old now helps his mom with the business.

Costantini's capabilities are clear to one person who has seen it all: her eldest son. Simone Martinelli, 24, has gone from running around Tartufi Antiche Bontà as a child to now working there alongside his mother.

"This restaurant for her, this activity for her, is like a son," Martinelli says in English. "Because she cares much about this activity. Because she dedicated much time."

Although Costantini derives great satisfaction from her business, this dedication requires sacrifice. The time she spends on the business equates to less time with family and friends.

Costantini says she struggles with the fear of not being the mom she wants to be because she spends so much time at the shop rather than at home: "One time, this old man came to the shop and told me, 'Remember, Monia, that during life you have to make choices, and if you want to do something good, mom and entrepreneur don't go well together. Either you do well as a mom or as an entrepreneur.'"

Tears gloss her eyes. She blots them away with a paper towel, smudging her mascara.

"I call the business my third son," Costantini says. "In reality, it's the first one because I'm always in the shop."

From Martinelli's perspective, Costantini spent plenty of time with him while he was growing up. He got to see her every day, whether it was at home or at the shop. Martinelli says that the situation might have been stressful for Costantini, but it was never stressful for him.

Despite the sacrifices, Costantini recognizes the value of what she has built. In fact, it is the very challenges she has faced that make her proud.

"I get a lot from this job, but I've lost a lot. I didn't go out with my friends, but also on a family level, because I was here (at the shop) for all the holidays except Easter and Christmas," Costantini says.

She pauses, contemplative. Then, with a small smile: "But everything that you lost, you have received it from your business." ✠

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino students Ilaria Caiazzo, Mariateresa Chiovitti, Linda Marangoni, and Lucia Piazzalunga.

Crescia Sfogliata:

The Secret of La Baciocca

Crescia sfogliata comes in many different forms and has remained a delicacy in the town of Urbino for centuries.

PHOTO BY SABINE SOLTYS

The recipe for this *crescia sfogliata* goes back more than a hundred years.

STORY BY SABINE SOLTYS

LARA AMADORI REMEMBERS HER NINE-YEAR-OLD SELF sitting in a warm kitchen on a cold winter afternoon. She contentedly watched her Grandma Irene working hard to make several dishes, including her special *crescia sfogliata*. A thin, flaky Italian flatbread typically used to make sandwiches, crescia takes a lot of time and effort. But for Grandma Irene it was the perfect opportunity to share her love for cooking with her granddaughter.

Little Lara watched her grandma heat the crescia in the terra-cotta pan over glowing embers as the buttery perfume spread throughout the room and beyond. She listened in rapt attention as her grandma explained the recipe that has been passed down through their family, how to combine the superfine flour, water, pure pork lard, fresh pasteurized eggs, fresh whole milk, pepper, and the sweet natural sea salt taken from the Cervia salt pan in a small nearby town on the Adriatic coast.

image: Freepik.com

Fast forward to present day, June 2022, at a small shop a few minutes outside Urbino. The warm kitchen is gone, replaced by the stainless steel of an artisanal workshop as Amadori, now 48, has taken over from her grandmother and continues to work hands-on creating her own crescia under the brand name *La Baciocca*. Today, La Baciocca crescia is sought after for its fresh ingredients and exceptional quality by customers and proprietors of classic and quaint restaurants and quality grocery stores all over Urbino. What has not changed is the recipe from all those years ago.

The story of the La Baciocca crescia really began in 1890 at an inn in Urbino run by Amadori's great-grandparents. They served crescia sfogliata at the inn, and they taught their daughter Irene the special recipe. In 1903, Italian poet Giovanni Pascoli wrote a letter to a friend about Urbino, expressing a longing for the crescia made by a woman at an inn whom he nicknamed "La Baciocca." Amadori said she believes that Grandma Irene's recipe would have been similar to the recipe in use in 1890. That is why she and her husband, Giuseppe Baldelli, 57, choose La Baciocca as the name of their crescia brand when they started their business in 2014.

The cook of the Ristorante pizzeria ragno d'ore, Urbino kneads the dough to assemble the form of the crescia.

PHOTO BY SABINE SOLTYS

Amadori and Baldelli run La Baciocca with the help of four employees. Sillicia*, Simonetta, and Adriana help Amadori in the kitchen while Marco oversees deliveries. Baldelli runs the business side of the lab. Amadori deals with production. She talks about how she is never bored and likes to feel the dough with her hands. "You change the hand, you change the product," she said.

Amadori and Baldelli refer to their place as an artisanal lab because they do almost everything by hand and only use fresh ingredients. "Our crescia is the best," said Baldelli. When they are not working in the lab, they go to food festivals presented by different regions of Italy showcasing their best crescia. In April they attended Viniltaly in Verona, where only businesses known for having the best quality of food are invited. Since 2014 La Baciocca's business has remained consistent, with Amadori focusing more on fulfilling the needs of select clientele, selling to local grocery stores and restaurants in Urbino. However, with the war in Ukraine, prices have gone up on ingredients. Amadori and Baldelli say they have had to raise their own prices, which has stressed their business. But they continue to maintain the consistent quality of their famous crescia to satisfy their customer's needs.

> "You change the hand, you change the product."

Delivered by Marco, the La Baciocca crescia can be found in grocery stores such as the Coop and specialty stores like Raffaello Degusteria. The Raffaello Degusteria, run by Valentino Gostoli and Alberto Crinella, has been around for 15 years. When asked how often people buy La Baciocca compared with other brands, Gostoli replied, "It depends...but if they want better quality, they choose the La Baciocca one." Gostoli said he started selling La Baciocca about 5 years ago because of its popularity and unmatched quality.

Il Ghiottone, a pizza and sandwich restaurant located just off Urbino's main piazza serves La Baciocca crescia for its sandwiches. There are many options, including *Squacquerone e Rucola* (with cream cheese and arugula) and *Crescia col Prosciutto* (with dry-cured or cooked ham).

"That it is one of the best cresce they are selling in Urbino," said Urbino resident Adele Pretelli, 26, who comes to Ghiottone often for a prosciutto crescia sandwich. She said she loves it especially for how crunchy and tasty it is.

Pesaro resident Serena Bartolucci, 23, said she favors the crescia sandwich with sausage and spinach. With a laugh she admitted that she comes to Il Ghiottone two to three times a month and prefers the crescia sandwiches."It is a traditional Italian food," said Bartolucci, "so it is really good."

When asked if the La Baccioca business will continue in her family, Amadori thinks about her 13-year-old daughter, Mia. "With little regret, I hope not," she said, "as it is a tiring and demanding job." But even if the La Baciocca brand loses its family connection sometime in the future, the recipe is accessible to anyone willing to do the hard work. The essence of that crescia created all those years ago by Grandma Irene and her family, and the taste that captivated the poet Pascoli, will still be around for centuries to come. As Baldelli explained, reflecting on the effort and expense, "Quality costs a lot, but it is worth it." ✠

Owners Lara Amadori, and Giuseppe Baldelli proudly stand in the artisan lab of the La Baciocca crescia.

PHOTO BY MADELINE EDWARDS

** For privacy reasons, La Bacoccia asked that the last names of their employees not be included in this article.*

Translation of interviews and other language assistance by University of Urbino students Maria Teresa Chiovitti, Miriana Organtini, Martina De Filippo, Ilaria Caiazzo.

A TASTE of Tradition

Unpacking Crescia Sfogliata & Local Favorites

Crescia sfogliata is a delicacy that originated in Urbino. Its mixture of simple ingredients makes it versatile and allows it to be paired well with different foods. Crescia has remained a rich part of Urbino's history, with recipes being handed down from generation to generation. You can see crescia sold in Urbino's food shops by itself or in sandwich form. Often you will see it served during *aperitivo* hour with fresh meats and cheeses. Aperitivo refers to the pre-meal drink that Italians enjoy in the afternoon or early evening. It's often accompanied by snacks or appetizers. If you get the chance to try crescia, even a bite will have you hooked.

What's Inside?

- Fresh whole milk 
- Pepper 
- Fresh pasteurized eggs 
- Water 
- Pure pork lard 
- Superfine flour 
- Natural sea salt 

The pairing options for crescia are endless, but here are a few **local favorites!**

Classic Style

Stracchino, rucola, pomodoro, e prosciutto

(with dry-cured or cooked ham, arugula, tomato, and cream cheese)

With Meat

Crescia col prosciutto

(with dry-cured or cooked ham)

Vegetarian

Squacquerone e rucola

(with cream cheese and arugula)

Ingredient images from: Peter G. Werner, Freepik.com

Magazine students not only designed but also promoted the magazine through Instagram and TikTok.

Students browse through magazines for typographic inspiration.

Behind the Scenes of Urbino Now

For over a decade, *Urbino Now* has been a product of The Urbino Project, a multimedia study abroad program. This summer, our team of ten had the privilege of designing Issue 11 of *Urbino Now*.

We worked to infuse the city's character and charm into the magazine as much as possible. Urbino's architecture inspired our use of arches, and we drew our end mark character from signs around town. The light green in our color pallete was taken from the ceiling of the Duomo, and the browns from the charming cobblestone paths of the city.

After we gathered inspiration, we created roughs and a style guide. We also collaborated with the Urbino Project's multimedia journalism team for stories and photos. All these elements became what we are proud to present to you as *Urbino Now* 2022.

Scan the code below for a link to our behind-the-scenes Instagram account and a deeper look into our creative process.

Magazine design students sketched roughs on paper before moving to Adobe Creative Suite.

Lauren Nordseth, Madeline Edwards, and Nicole Basile meet up outside of class to brainstorm ideas for the contributors page.

Magazine student Nicole Basile and multimedia student Sarah Dills collaborate on their story about Ukrainian refugees.

Anelise Johnson collects photo inspiration from the arches in Urbino.

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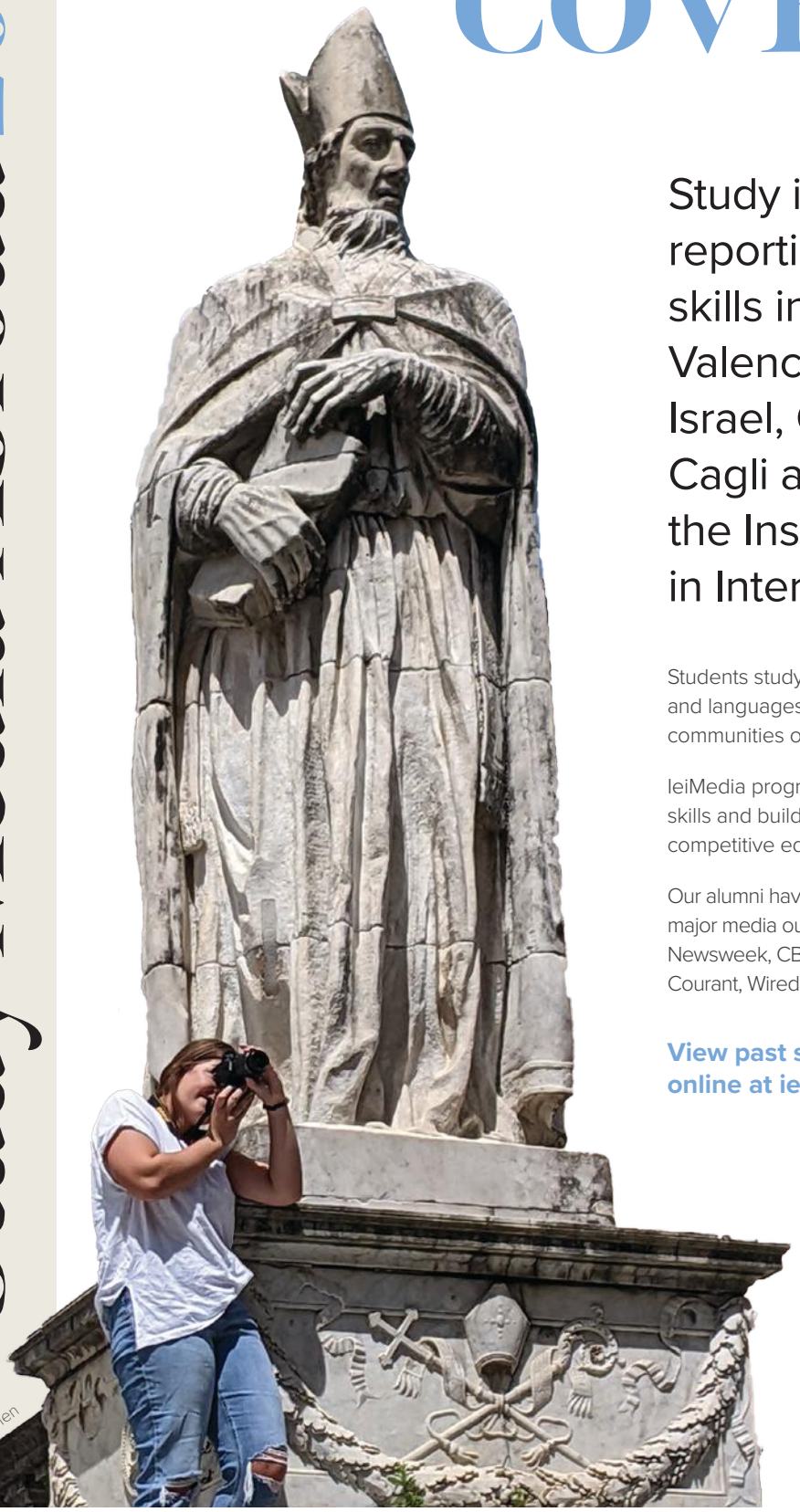

o by Elisabeth Kvernen

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