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briccole

Antico Trentino
ABITARE L'EMOZIONE DEL LEGNO

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A lifelong story

Venice and the lagoon it overlooks, dotted with islands and tiny settlements, are some of the most fascinating places in our country. Their dreamlike beauty and intrinsic historical value have inspired the works of writers, painters, every kind of artist over the centuries, making Venice much more than a city, they have projected it beyond time and space, transforming it into a myth. The ancient history of these places has its

beginning in prehistory when man first settled in this territory rich in living resources, first among these fishing. Man therefore developed a symbiotic relationship with the water, characteristic element of this area on which to lay their vessels and homes. Pile-dwellings were the basic element of this relationship with the lagoon territory, which permitted all the subsequent development of life and civilisation. Today, more than 1000 years later, the beds of the lagoon look like an immense "forest" formed

of long oak and larch posts, which sink into the muddy lagoon bed until they reach a more solid layer, called "caranto". Consequently a particular underwater environment, the importance of which is perfectly exemplified by the famous worn out "briccole", groups of three posts which in the lagoon indicate the navigable areas and provide important information to seamen. Our company deals with salvaging and enhancing the value of the worn out briccole, the wood which they are made of, attacked by a mollusc

who feeds on it and soaked through by the brackish water, acquire amazing properties over the years, which place them among the objects considered desirable by the most important designers in the world. However, their value goes well beyond their physical composition, we recover a piece of history from the Venetian lagoon and by means of a meticulous process of craftsmanship, we create pieces of furniture which conserve all the beauty and magic of this extraordinary land.





Le Briccole

The city of Venice is part of a vast lagoon system, made up of islands and canals. The regulation of navigation in this difficult stretch of sea has always been an important aspect of this territory. As it is vital for a big, mainland city to have an adequate road system and a high standard of security, likewise, for a city such as Venice, a system of navigable canals is of primary importance. The pillars on which the organization of naval traffic in the lagoon rests are the briccole

(in international maritime nomenclature called “duc d'albe” or “Dalben” or “dolphin”), a set of three stakes driven into the ground and emerging from the water for part of their length, which are used to delimit the waterways. These numbered poles provide seamen with a wealth of information about the depth of the seabed, the changing of the tides, etc.. The lagoon is literally dotted with these briccole, but their exact number is not known, although reliable estimates speak of an amount between 60000 and 90000

units. As with the pillars of the buildings in Venice, the poles that make up the briccole are predominantly made from European oak, have an average length of from 10 to 15 metres and a diameter between 35 and 50 centimeters. Once unusable they must be replaced, to avoid that, cracking, they may become a danger for navigation. For years the briccole have been made from wood from France and Germany, countries with FSC and PEFC certified forests, whose wood mass is constantly expanding.



The shipworm

The briccole have a much greater enemy than time: the shipworm (Teredos Naualis), also known as the marine worm, a mollusc which lives in brackish water and feeds on wood. Since ancient times they have been the terror of all seamen, as they are capable of quickly destroying a port structure and boat hulls. However, it is precisely the attacks of these shipworms that make the worn out briccole a raw material appreciated by the best designers in the world, perfect for the creation of exclusive wooden flooring.





*Renzo p.i. Catelli,
the Certifier.*

A guaranteed origin.



The substitution of the worn out bricole is regulated by the Magistrate of the Water, a peripheral institution of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport,

which since 1907 deals with the management and protection of the lagoon of Venice. Through a tender, the work of removal of the spent poles and the laying of new ones is assigned to specialized companies. On authorization of the magistrate, our partner Lebric may withdraw the poles removed, which we submit to a meticulous process. To ensure the authenticity of the product purchased, we have Renzo p.i. Catelli, who personally certifies the origin of our bricole.







Reveal the hidden beauty: the working in progress

Only a proportion of between 10 and 20% of the surface of a spent pole shows the attack of the shipworm and it is their presence which makes this formidable raw material unique. Our method of processing allows complete re-use of the worn out briccole , realizing elements for parquet flooring, panelling, furniture etc.. Our contribution is, therefore,

environmental as well as artistic: our commitment to protecting the environment through the re-use of a material for disposal, is accompanied by the desire to create objects with unique design, embellished with beautiful patterns carved into the wood by the molluscs which feed on it. However, it is not only the action of the shipworm which makes this

material extraordinary; its immersion in brackish water removes the sugary parts and the hemicellulose of the wood, leaving only lignin and salt, which give life to a subject of extraordinary dimensional stability. It is a unique product in the world and all our work is dedicated to enhancing its beauty and quality.



For this reason we carefully follow every stage of production. First we prepare the briccole for the subsequent phases with attentive removal of extraneous elements and by careful washing. We then proceed to the cutting of the poles so as to obtain axes of various lengths and thicknesses, suitable for the realization of different products. Having made the cut we can start the drying procedure, moment of prime importance in the entire production process:

the method we use allows us to highlight the qualities that immersion in brackish water gives the wood, ensuring the re-use of the entire worn out briccola and not only part of it. After drying, our wood can be worked to take on the desired shape: this extraordinary material poses no limits to creativity, instead exalts it, thanks to its stability and its refinement of engraved signs due to the slow hollowing of the shipworm.



“this extraordinary material poses no limits to creativity, instead exalts it, thanks to its stability and its refinement of engraved signs due to the slow hollowing of the shipworm”



Proven authenticity: the Certification.

Our work would not be possible without a raw material of proven authenticity. The reliability and professionalism of our partners Lebric, which have allowed them to obtain authorisation from the Magistrate of the Water for the withdrawal of the worn out briccole, permit us to guarantee the originality of our products which tell the history of Venice and

its lagoon. The authenticity of the material we purchase is certified by Renzo p.i. Catelli, who issues a certificate of warranty with all the information regarding the batch of origin. At the customer's request, our products can be embossed with a branding iron on which the batch and the date of withdrawal of the briccole used in the production appear.

The guarantee issued by the certifier Renzo p.i. Catelli, contains all the information relating to the raw material used, from the origin of the batch to the decision of the magistrate of the waters of Venice.



On request, the fire brand, with indication of the batch and the date of withdrawal of the briccole used.



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lebric[®]
Briccola Veneziana



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