

**The Mirror  
and  
the Mask**



*Residential Initiation Training to the  
Intercultural Approach*

**Centre Europeen de Rencontre et de Ressourcement - Gargnano (BS)  
26-30 October 2014**

**The mirror and the mask**, icons of the experience of the encounter between Me and the Other, key actors of intercultural relations, will serve as a stimulus and guide in a personal metaphorical path, that everyone will have the opportunity to live in Gargnano (Lake Garda, Brescia) at the *Centre Europeen de Rencontre et de Ressourcement*.

It is a place and an environment suited to the style that we want to give to this proposal, because of the wide green spaces, protected and insulated, to the beautiful views and the fine air (concrete but also symbolic) that you breathe.

Indeed, due to the spread experience that Interculturando can offer (services and training courses are offered in different local contexts in Italy, from Milan to Bergamo, Novara Genoa, from Piacenza to Rimini from Rome to Naples), we have evaluated that a residential seminar was the best setting to coadunate people from different countries and experiences in Italy and Europe, and to explore the themes presented below.

The **Social Cooperative Interculturando**, was founded in 2001. Since the founding, its main **feature** was the marked heterogeneity: geographical, cultural and professional.

Regarding geographical **heterogeneity**, members of Interculturando come from different countries: Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, the Philippines, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, Romania, Senegal, Syria.

Among the **elements** that defines Interculturando, we can find:

- co-leadership of strangers
- great experience on the field;
- synergies with local authorities and private capital;
- understanding of the ongoing changes in immigration (changing phenomenon).

We consider our cooperative a **laboratory**, where to experiment the dynamics that our Society presents.

Our idea of immigration as a **resource**, move from the observation of great human richness present in the young immigrant populations, with particular reference to the **families**.

It is, in fact, highly motivated people that intend realize a project of improving their socio-economic situation, in **transition** between tradition and modernity.

**"Unire,  
senza confondere;  
distinguere,  
senza separare"**

**Sede Legale**

Via Grossich,33  
20131 - Milano  
Tel. 3336740751

info@interculturando.it  
www.interculturando.it  
C.F. e P.I.V.A. 13442580158

**Bergamo**

Via Puccini,30  
24027 Nembro (BG)  
Tel.3391754856  
bergamo@interculturando.it

**Genova**

Via Del Camoscio, 16/2  
Tel. 3397226756

Rarely the host society is aware of the fact that these are people projected on the future and which are intended to be part of a **stable** and definitive of our society.

For the mainstream, their presence, is justified almost exclusively from the economic benefit that comes to our economy and, generally, the **social value** of their human and cultural resources, is neglected.

For this reason, in Interculturando, immigrant citizens are also trainers, mediators, researchers, managers.

Interculturando promoted the *Network Interculturando* that combines experience and different identities active on the front of intercultural education and interventions, to promote social cohesion in multi-ethnic contexts.

**Interculturalism** is the expertise you needed by anyone called to move in everyday life (personal, professional) in a multicultural context.

This expertise is often to acquire, to discover, to educate, as the culture to which we belong plays the bad joke to structure us in a "*mono*", which is a dimension that becomes inadequate in a "*multi*". This finding is not painless, much less the acquisition is not so easy.

Hence the importance of an occasion of "**initiation**", intended as a "ritual" of entrance into a personal, much longer, journey of maturation and training, both as initial awareness of a much more complex topic.

To break into this complexity is not sufficient to simply reading. The most profitable way is to put yourself in certain situations of plurality, testing your '**cultural resistances**'. At the same time it is useful to prepare and acquire tools to deal this challenge with greater awareness. Our suggestion, aimed particularly at young people and adults, is to put yourself to the test in a real intercultural training.

**Training** is an interactive methodology facilitated by a conductor (*trainer*) who leads the group-without explaining, without telling, not by relating the front or through digital communications – but through a process that involves a sequence of activities and experiments, designed, in our case, to become aware of the diverse intercultural dynamics. The training allows you to **learn from the experience and sharing**: everyone is invited to critically examine their own action to get back to it in a new way. It's a **path** that provides continuous clarification of what you are doing, a full awareness of the 'here and now' and the socio affective components involved in the learning process.

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