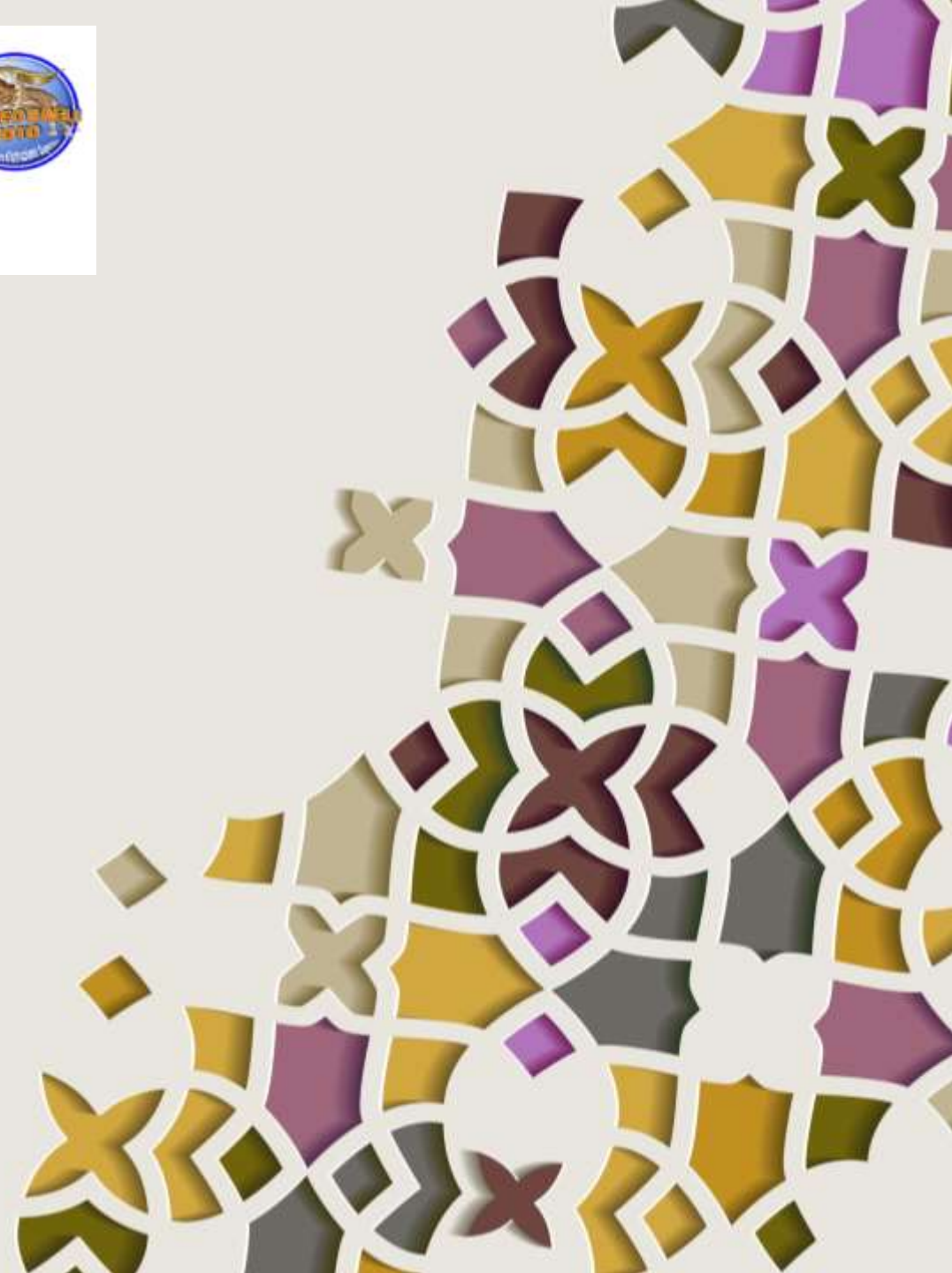


CRAFTMANSHIP IN OUR COUNTRIES

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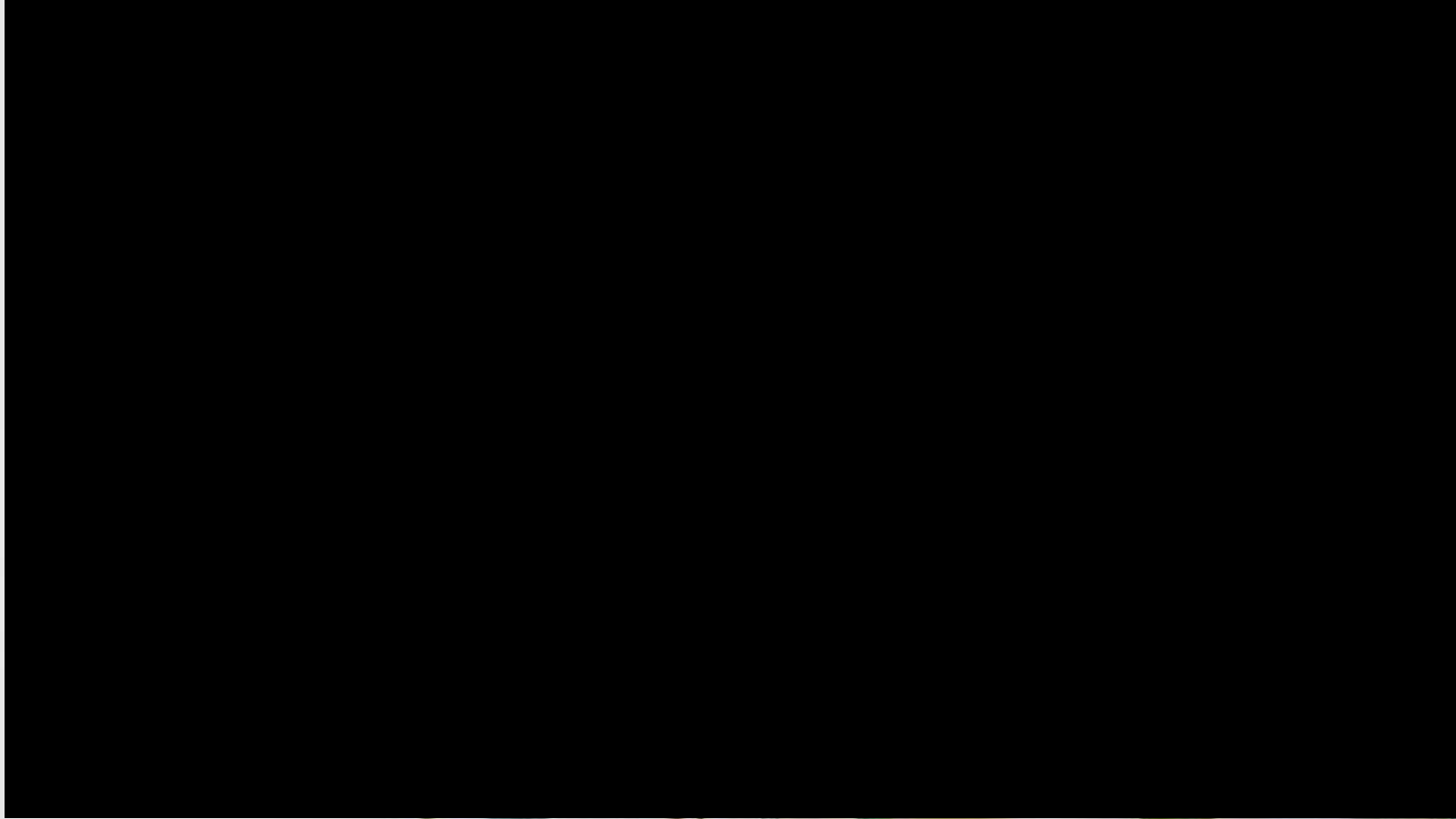


SICILIAN PUPPETS



The “Opera dei Pupi” is a particular type of puppet theatre that established in southern Italy and especially in Sicily between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. There are two different traditions, or "styles", of the Opera dei Pupi in Sicily: that of Palermo, established in the capital and widespread in the western part of the island, and that of Catania, established itself in the Etna city and widespread, in the eastern part of the island and also in Calabria. The two traditions differ in size and weight of the puppets, for some aspects of mechanics and the maneuvering system, but above all for a different theatrical and show conception, which has meant that in the Catania area, a wider chivalrous repertoire than that of Palermo is evident. The puppets of the Palermo tradition are lower and lighter than the ones from Catania, and the knees of those from Palermo can be bent as opposed to those from Catania. As to the theatrical conception while in Catania it is more sentimental and realistic, in Palermo it is more simply in the aesthetics.

HOW TO MAKE A SICILIAN PUPPET:



BASKETS MAKING

Basket weaving (also basketry or basket making) is the process of weaving or sewing pliable materials into three-dimensional artifacts, such as basket.

Basketry is made from a variety of fibrous or pliable materials—anything that will bend and form a shape.

They are made of 100% natural materials such as Rattan and willow stems or olive branches, according to the availability offered by Mother Nature.

Traditional Sicilian baskets are used for countless purposes. It is a unique 100% handmade artwork, therefore the item's design and dimensions may differ slightly. The size usually used is 16 × 16 × 30 cm including the handle, this kind of baskets are often seen tied to a rope, being lowered from balconies throughout Sicily. Called “u panaru” in Sicilian, they are used to carry everything from fruits such as lemons, grapes, and olives to foodstuffs like cheese and bread. You might even see a small dog in them!



HOW TO MAKE A
TRADITIONAL
SICILIAN
BASKET:



CERAMICS

Ceramic (from the ancient Greek *kéramos*, which means “clay”, “potter's earth”) has been known in Sicily since prehistoric times. Sicily is an important testimony of the best known handcrafted creations of ceramic artifacts. The Arabs brought the glazing technique to Sicily, a method that made it possible to waterproof the containers making them resistant to atmospheric agents.

One aspect is, first of all, the quality of the clay; the best one is extracted and selected, then refined to remove stones and impurities and forged by hand or on a lathe. In this case, the quantity placed on the instrument rotates and is molded by the hands to obtain circular shapes or vases. Immediately afterwards, the product is dried slowly. At this point, it is baked for the first time: the "raw" earth becomes baked. In this way, it is possible to proceed with the use of enamels for decoration. Once this operation is completed, the creation is cooked, once again, at a thousand degrees, giving life to majolica



HOW TO MAKE SICILIAN CERAMICS:



PAPYRUS

Papyrus is a material made from the pith of the papyrus plant, that was used in ancient times as a writing surface. The papyrus plant was once abundant across the Nile Delta. Papyrus is first known to have been used in Egypt, and throughout the Mediterranean region and in the Kingdom of Kush too. The papyrus plant was used by the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Arabs , and it was employed in the construction of other artifacts, such as reed boats, mats, rope, sandals, and baskets. It was food for the poor and was used for medicinal purposes. Unless the papyrus was of perfect quality, the writing surface was irregular, and the range of media that could be used was also limited. Nowadays, in our land, in the province of Syracuse -Sicily- we have a museum dedicated to the papyrus. The biggest colony of papyrus plants grows near Syracuse. At the heart of the island of Ortigia, there's a magical place of myth and history: Fountain of Arethusa, where papyrus flourishes. The museum in Syracuse it's one of the most important in the world. It's a living museum in continual evolution, where visitors can see papyrus paper being produced and learn about the traditions. The Museum has an extraordinary collection of papyrus produced in Siracusa from the 18th century and the biggest collection of ancient papyrus in southern Italy. At the heart of the museum's there are two main elements; the investigation of scientific advances, and the handing down of knowledge to future generations through educational activities. The name of museum comes from Corrado Basile, who has dedicated his life to papyrus and who runs the museum together with Anna Di Natale.





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