

Handy hands



LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURE

Research into gestures in three acts, created and organised by Claudia Polizzi and Stefano Riba, in conjunction with Associazione Donne Nissà, and funded by Provincia autonoma di Bolzano, Italian Culture Section.

Handy hands involved six Bolzano locals and six migrants and a cultural mediator in four days of socialisation and work in which learning and using the Italian language were the starting point for the creation of a short film taking the name of the project itself.

TRAJECTORY

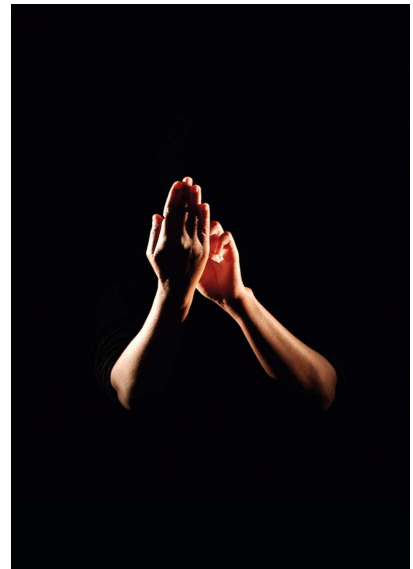
The meetings took place in a family atmosphere, at Claudia and Stefano's home, in order to facilitate exchange.

From the starting point of the work of various contemporary authors who have used everyday gestures and gesturality in their

work, this linguistic and interpersonal trajectory was an occasion for dialogue on the concrete use of gesture-related communication but also cultural, personal and social habits.

MEANING

Handy hands is a play on a polyphony of meanings. It means practical, skilled hands in the art of doing. But it can also mean 'hands within arm's reach', nearby in the event that help may be needed. Interest in this project emerged from the consideration that hands were the earliest communication and work tools. The project concentrated on analysing gesture as a transnational and transcultural non-verbal communication element. And just as hands represent our identity they also symbolise our earliest signatures, from prehistoric times, when our Palaeolithic ancestors left their hand prints in caves. But they have also always been a tool for contact and communication with the world's people and things.



VIDEO

When people are lacking a shared language they speak with gestures. We talk of 'making a gesture' and 'giving a hand' to mean small acts which can be of great importance to others. Gestures, understood as small everyday actions, bind us to the places we live in and fill up our lives, making them unique.

In this video hands tell stories and speak of everyday actions and relationships, voluntary movements and involuntary tics, leisure or work activities. Oblique light eliminates almost all skin colour, underlining the universal nature of gesture and putting migrants and locals on the same plane. Reading the individual gestures is left to the free interpretation of the onlooker.

<http://www.claudapolizzi.com/gesti>

INFO

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