



Final Research Report

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MASKS – UNVEILING THE ARTS AND WORKS BEHIND THE MASK

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ABSTRACT	This document provides the conclusions of the research carried out all the partners after visiting the craftsmen and recording the mask creation techniques.
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INDEX

1.	1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	2. SPAIN	6
	2.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS.....	6
	2.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	8
3.	ITALY	11
	3.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS	11
	3.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	13
4.	ROMANIA	19
	4.1. UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST	19
	DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS	19
	PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	21
	4.2. IAFAR.....	23
	DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS	23
	PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	25
	4.3. MUSA	30
	DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS	30
	PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	32
5.	PORTUGAL	34
	5.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS.....	34
	5.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS	36

1. 1. INTRODUCTION

This report aims to describe the results of the research and documentation activities on mask-making techniques carried out during the period of WP2.

All the partners involved in the WP2 activities first followed the research guidelines, prepared ad hoc during the first months, and deepened with research and documentation activities the case studies to be investigated from the list assumed in the masks database initially prepared. Each partner implemented its own documentation methodology, which is the result of years of experience and different expertise.

Indeed, despite the quantitative uniformity of the techniques documented in accordance with the above mentioned guidelines, as well as the use of the same inventory form as a guide in the interviews, what clearly emerges after the end of the WP2 activities is a variety of methodologies, approaches and results characterising the consortium partners and countries involved in the project. This is the real wealth of the MASKS project, which accounts for the cultural creativity of the different contexts considered and the different ways in which anthropologists and heritage professionals look at masking practices.

As you will read in this report, for example, the partners consisting of university research groups focused on the cultural and social processes surrounding masks, their functions in contemporaneity, as well as the communities and individuals involved in masking practices. On the other hand, the partners, who are associations of craftsmen and businesses, placed more emphasis on the figure of the mask maker and less on the meaning of the mask and its context of use. This difference in approach is obviously also found in the results of research and in the products of the documentation of techniques. Therefore, quantitative data regarding the number and typology of documented techniques depend on the specific partner and the number of them engaged in documentation activities in each country. As agreed within the consortium, the documentation work will continue beyond WP2 to implement the number of documented techniques.

Finally, thanks to the collaboration of a geographer from the University of Valladolid, we are also working on a georeferenced mapping of the mask-making techniques documented in the 4 European countries involved in the MASKS project.

A checklist of documented mask making techniques by 31 October 2024 was prepared, available at this link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dXYK9AWSHKrydolanwQ-3roCS5Yy_hMp/edit?usp=share_link&oid=114218216537082043798&rtpof=true&sd=true

Corresponding to each mask and inventory sheet complete with data are: almost one descriptive video on the mask production or packaging technique; one or more releases for use of the data; a series of photos representing the mask, the producer or craftspeople, the festive and ritual context of use, and sometimes the history of the mask.

2.

2. SPAIN

2.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

In Spain the documentation activities on mask making techniques was carried out by two partners: University of Valladolid and Cearcal, as will be described overall below.

Content creation has been approached with two types of mask makers. On the one hand, local creators and developers, people with emotional ties to the community and the festival in which the mask is worn, but who have professions other than that of craftsmanship; and, on the other hand, with professional artisans. The latter may be linked to the masks they build or not. We have a profile of artisans who are paid for their work as maskers, tailors, luthiers, etc., who, in addition, due to their emotional ties reproduce "their" mask on the same way as they do any other jobs.

We have found it very important to work with the creators of masks or of the elements used in the festival with masks (musical instruments, cowbells, costumes...); but also with the artisans who make artistic recreations based on the culture of the mask, such as muralism or street art. Large-scale urban art aims to show the individual and particular art of each artist and, in addition, generate a positive and artistic visual impact on the environment, challenging the communities.

We break down the work done with these lines that reflect the social interest generated by the masks, indicating the mask:

- Local creators: Carlos Andrés Santos; Antonio Suárez Fuertes & Manuel Martínez García (con Mónica Sevilla Pérez & Julio Sevilla Pérez); José Javier Sánchez Hernández; José Ramón Pérez Pérez; Paulino Blanco Garrido & Adrián Blanco Rivera & Iván Fernández Ferrero.
- Professional craftsmen: Jorge Sancho Santamaría, Jesús Hernández Sánchez, Alfonso Díez Ausín & Willian Cara Zanda and José Manuel Bustos with an special affection for the festival; and María Miano Peralta, Miguel Ángel Tapia, Miguel Elisardo Bueno and Jana Úbeda with no special relationship with the festival whatsoever.

- Craftsmen/professional artists (recreations of the mask): Carlos Adeva García (Street art on the Los Carochos de Riofrío de Aliste); José Javier Sánchez Hernández; Ángel Vicente Pérez; and Román Muñoz.

In addition to documenting the craftsmanship, communications with the people involved have been used to learn about spaces used by them as representative: identity museums based on emblematic masks for the groups that keep them. Photographs from three museums are included: Casa de los Carochos (Riofrío de Aliste), GUIMA Centro de Interpretación de los Guirrios y Madamas (Llamas de la Ribera) and Museo del Zangarrón (Sanzoles del Vino). We hope to have the opportunity to visit the Visparra Museum (Vigo de Sanabria) and incorporate it as an improvement of this WP2. The Antruejo haystack (Villanueva de Valrojo) is not exactly a museum, although it houses numerous masks, costumes, cowbell batches. We have found it very useful to incorporate it because the haystack grants a real meaning to the discourse of the artisan Carlos Andrés Santos, making it an example of living heritage.

We have documented some masked festivals. El Zangarrón de Sanzoles (25 and 26 December 2023) and El Zangarrón de Montamarta (1 and 6 January) are documented before 1 February, the date on which the project starts. We provide material because we think these representations are very important and we did not mind working on them as we knew that the project had already been granted. El Colacho de Castrillo de Murcia (29 May and 2 June) and El Atenazador from San Vicente de la Cabeza (11 August). The case of Montamarta is especially important for this work because we have documented the masked man's dressing that is made each time directly on the body of the young man who embodies the Zangarrón and the costume falls apart when the party is over.

Also, we have documented mask performances that are a social and cultural phenomenon that, with all their flaws, strengthen the bonds between various groups of masked people and spread, not always in the right way, the culture of the mask. We have been to the IV Encontro de Rituais Ancestrais in the Portuguese town of Bemposta where groups from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Bulgaria met (February 24); at the XIII Mask Festival in Zamora with groups from Spain and Portugal (October 5); also in other meetings with Zamoran groups such as the parade at FROMAGO Cheese Experience (Zamora, September 14) or the representation of rites on the Day of Tourism of Castilla y León (Zamora, September

21). We highlight the first Meeting and Exaltation of Masquerades in the Province of Zamora (San Vicente de la Cabeza, October 19) for being a meeting promoted and organized by the communities themselves through the Federation of Mask Associations of Zamora MascaraZA and not from the public administration. In any case, these meetings have served to listen to the groups that maintain the festivals with masks and strengthen the relationships that involve them in our project. For the Spanish partners this is fundamental: there is no culture of the mask without the groups that take care of them and maintain them with a lot of work and enthusiasm.

2.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

Below are the names of the artisans, the name of the mask or accessory they create, the main material and the location to which they are related to linked. We also added artistic recreations based on the mask.

- José Javier Sánchez Hernández: Leather El Zangarrón. Sanzoles.
The mask is made of strong, dyed cowhide leather. It is attached to a leather frame (head cover) and wire. Once the moustache, goatee and eyebrows have been sewn on, the cockades (simulating the male sexual organs) are sewn on. On the top of the head, there is a rose made of coloured satin fabric from which ribbons hang.
- José Manuel Bustos: three-hole flute or bagpipes in wood. Several festivals.
The creation of the three-hole flutes is done by turning the wood to give it its external shape. This wood is then drilled on the inside, and holes are made which will give the correct musical note. The mouthpiece is made of cow bone. The flute is finished with bone elements.
- Miguel Ángel Tapia: Extendable wooden pliers. They are used in several festivals, although it reproduces those of the Atenazador de San Vicente de la Cabeza.
They are long and jointed pliers made of wood with two cow horns at the ends. Several people are 'atenazadores' with their costumes, masks and articulated pliers. They interact with other characters.
- Miguel Elisardo Bueno: Preparation for Talanqueira. Vigo de Sanabria
The mask is a wooden trunk, which includes the horns of a cow that are then lined with textile elements. The body is a long iron bar that hangs from the neck of the

person wearing the “talanqueira”. The person and the “talanqueira” are covered with a traditional dress adorned with different coloured fabrics.

The “talanqueira” is easily constructed by drilling holes in the wood for the horns and the iron bar that structures the body of the cow.

- Carlos Adeva García: Hand painted mural art with acrylic paint on Los Carochos. Riofrío de Aliste.

This is a large mural painting made with primer material, acrylic fixative and acrylic paint in various colours, depicting six of the twelve characters of the masquerade Los Carochos.

It is a masquerade of those representing the *obisparras*. These are made up of a series of para-theatrical scenes. Each character has a mission, each scene has a performative function and the *obisparra*, taken as a whole, conveys a discourse in which religious and profane, social and cultural values of small rural communities are represented.

The masquerade is very complex because of the large number of characters involved. Two of the eleven characters change roles during the performance, so it is necessary to have them doubled.

- José Javier Sánchez Hernández: cold forging. Several masks.
Recreation of various masquerades from Zamora and Trás-os-Montes in carbon steel and recycled iron pieces. The technique consists of striking the iron, cutting it and welding it. These three actions are used to shape pieces that are joined together. It is struck with a blunt tool on the anvil (to bend, widen, make a round shape, etc.); or with a double T-beam and a solid cylinder that presses. The heat from the electrode of the welding machine makes it possible with the more malleable metal to shape it with different types of blows.

All content will be offered perfectly edited and classified before the end of 2024. In any case, we are open to offering improvements to this WP2 if possible, throughout the life of the project. There is a work in progress in various states ranging from virtually edited videos to interviews that have not yet been transcribed. These are:

- **Local creators** (Members of associations that watch over the festival):
 1. Carlos Andrés Santos: cowbell mask in papier-mâché and leather; Diablo mask in cork. Three different techniques. Villanueva de Valrojo.
 2. Antonio Suárez Fuertes & Manuel Martínez García: wooden mask. Llamas de la Ribera.
 3. Antonio Suárez Fuertes & Manuel Martínez García (Mónica Sevilla Pérez & Julio Sevilla Pérez): paper Guirrios. Llamas de la Ribera.
 4. José Javier Sánchez Hernández: Leather El Zangarrón. Sanzoles.
 5. José Ramón Pérez Pérez. El Zangarrón (festival masks and devil masks) in cork. Montamarta.
 6. Paulino Blanco Garrido & Adrián Blanco Rivera & Iván Fernández Ferrero: *Atenizador* in cork. San Vicente de la Cabeza.

- **Professional Craftsmen**
 1. Jorge Sancho Santamaría: El Colacho plastic for 3D printer. Castrillo de Murcia.
 2. Jesús Hernández Sánchez: Machurrero carved wood Pedro Bernardo.
 3. Alfonso Díez Ausín & Willian Cara Zanda: Colacho costume in cloth Castrillo de Murcia.
 4. María Miano Peralta: Cowbell stacks in copper or iron sheet. Several festivals
 5. Jana Úbeda: cadena de mimbre para Los Diablos. Sarracín.

- **Craftsmen/professional artists (Recreations of the mask):**
 1. Ángel Vicente Pérez: Glazed ceramic. El Zangarrón. Montamarta.
 2. Román Muñoz: Papier-mâché. El Tafarrón. Pozuelo de Tábara.

3. ITALY

The University of Basilicata was the only one among the Italian partners involved in the MASKS project to carry out research and documentation activities on mask techniques, in some cases thanks to the organisational support of partner CNA Basilicata.

Having an excellent knowledge of the territory of Basilicata and its cultural, tangible and intangible, heritage and having carried out several anthropological researches over the past decades on masking practices and Carnivals, that characterise the villages of the inner areas of the region, the research and documentation work did not entail any particular difficulties, although the time available was rather short.

However, since the University of Basilicata was the partner in charge of WP2, it was necessary to devote less time to documenting the techniques in order to be able to adequately coordinate the work of the various partners involved in the planned activities. This task required time, energy, flexibility, patience and great problem-solving skills in order to achieve the expected results within the agreed timeframe.

Nonetheless, the university team of anthropologists was able to document the minimum number of techniques required by this step of the project, as will be described in detail below with regard to methodology, results and research and documentation products.

Finally, further documentation on mask making techniques is currently being produced and delivered by the end of 2024, so that it can feed into the materials that will be used for training in the next steps of the MASKS project.

3.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The team of anthropologists at the university first followed the research guidelines, prepared during the previous months, right from the stage of identifying the case studies to be investigated from the list hypothesised in the mask database produced during the first months of WP2, as well as during all steps of organising the interviews and producing the materials. Moreover, being able to count on a network of relations and contacts already structured over years of work in Basilicata, as well as on a well-established research and

documentation methodology, it immediately contacted the organisational referents of the Lucanian Carnivals and the representatives of the heritage communities, in order to jointly construct the process of documenting the construction and packaging techniques of an first group of masks. During several meetings, both in-person and online, all decisions were taken in a shared manner and with respect to the needs expressed by the local communities. In addition, the modalities (dates, places, times, people to be involved, etc.) for the interviews and, above all, the contents to be conveyed through the documentation to be produced were agreed upon. A number of exploratory visits by the Unibas team to the villages involved followed, aimed at confirming or not the possibility of documenting those masks that had been identified, as well as to organise the moments of the interviews with the audio-visual footage.

An important fact to emphasise concerns the specificity of mask makers in Basilicata because there are no artisans, who produce masks and work in special workshops, instead those who make the Lucanian masks are members of the heritage communities, people who participate in and give life to ceremonial rituals. Such rituals relate in all the cases we have documented to the festivities associated with the Carnival period. These events are highly attended not only by the local village communities, but also by visitors from neighbouring countries and tourists. These Carnivals, which are considered 'historic', are also part of a newly established 'Network of Lucanian Carnivals'.

On the other hand, the use of masking practices at other times of the year and on other holidays was not documented. Therefore the documentation of the techniques was carried out at a time other than holidays, upon specific request. Given the time available to document the techniques in Basilicata and edit the materials produced, it was decided to start with an initial group of only 5 masks. The interviewees were contacted, with whom there were some preliminary meetings aimed to understanding the objectives of the interview and identifying suitable times and locations.

The semi-structured interviews followed a canvas of questions that referred to the fields of the inventory sheet, so that all the information on the use of the mask and the festive context could also be found. All the audio-video and photographic documentation, of the highest

quality, was realised thanks to the collaboration of the video troupe of the RVM company of Matera. The specialised contribution of technicians made it possible to produce a series of very well-detailed videos centred on the masks, their packaging and the meanings they take on within the ceremonial context.

In addition, the team of anthropologists from Unibas also proceeded to an in-depth study and critical analysis of the various ritual and festive contexts during which the documented masks are used and worn, in addition to various focuses on other aspects of anthropological interest (e.g. tradition and contemporaneity, the role of women in masking, innovation of techniques, patrimonialisation processes, etc.). Finally, it was considered important to give voice to the communities of the Carnival through the collection of self-produced documentation from the communities themselves, which was added to the consultation and collection of videos and photos in both public and private archives.

3.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

Given the aforementioned specificity of the contexts, the techniques that have been documented have mainly concerned masks that are constructed and packaged ad hoc on the occasion of local Carnivals and more rarely to be sold. These masks are often assembled and made shortly before the festive rituals, using artefacts and materials already in the possession of the participants who must wear them. In other cases, it is a bricolage operation of fabrics, garments, hats, scarves, boots and other objects and sound instruments, which are part of the family heritage and are passed down from generation to generation with great care, because they are considered 'objects of affection'.

The mask-making techniques, while referring more or less philologically to tradition, are flexible and respond to the taste and creativity of each mask maker. This characteristic makes it possible, for example, to make changes to the decorations at will. Especially the younger generation tends to innovate the masks, sometimes replacing traditional materials with others that are easier to use and find, or to meet contemporary demands.

The techniques that have been documented concern the following five persons. For each of them, the mask, the technique and the context of ritual and festive use are described.

1 - Giuseppe Grossi

Name of the mask: Cucibocca (Montescaglioso).

Giuseppe is a young inhabitant of the village of Montescaglioso and has been masquerading as Cucibocca since the age of fifteen. Giuseppe aims to transmit and make this figure known to the new generation of the village.

The Cucibocca mask is made of clothing, artefacts and objects belonging to him, which he wears on the night of 5 January in order to parade through the village streets with the other similar masks. The materials used are: textile materials (wheel cloak), orange peel, a basket, a lantern, a long cobbler's needle and a hat made with hemp disk from the mill (the *fiscolo*), a yellowish hemp beard, a broken chain.

It is difficult to identify the origin of the mask of 'Cucibocca' who, annually, on the evening of Epiphany Eve, wanders the streets of Montescaglioso, threatening children to sew their mouths shut while awaiting the arrival of the Befana. The meanings and symbolism of this ritual are the subject of various interpretations.

During the research, the critical issue emerged relating to the future availability of the hat worn by the Cucibocca figure: the *fiscolo*, an artefact of vegetable fibers in which the crushed olives were placed to carry out the pressing and thus obtain the oil. Today, oil extraction occurs differently and therefore the production and use of *fiscoli* is also one of the practices that is falling into disuse. As regards the objects that the mask carries during journey, a recent innovation has also been introduced to overcome the fire dangers caused in the past by the use of oil lamps. The latter has been replaced with an LED light. Furthermore, if in the past the Cucibocca mask was personified exclusively by the male gender, in recent years women participate in the event masquerading as Cucibocca hides his face so that no one, especially children, can know his real features. He frightens with the mystery of his concealed face and through his 'instruments of torture'. It sews the mouths of adults so that they speak and eat less, and it frightens children to be 'more good'; for humans, it is an admonition to walk the 'straight path'. The sewing of the mouth also marks the end of the Christmas libations.

2 - Donato Perrone

Name of the mask: the spontaneous Rumita (Satriano di Lucania).

Donato Perrone is one of the main promoters of the Satriano di Lucania Carnival. Called “u’ professor”, because he taught technical education to many of the people of Satriano (who today actively participate in the creation of the Rumit), Donato concretely supported the birth of a new "heritage community", which includes Rocco Perrone, Massimo Cavallo, Michelangelo Potenza, Antonio Pascale (who lent himself to the dressing), thanks to whom it was possible we documented the preparation phases of the Rumit.

The materials used for making the mask are: natural materials, ivy, string, stick, butcher's broom branch. The technique is the creative bricolage of those materials, through practices of collection, composition and tying of ivy shoots and butcher's broom sprigs.

The mask consists of long ivy shoots tied together at one end and placed on the wearer's head, covering and concealing the body up to the ankles. To best blend in with the ivy leaves, it is advisable to wear dark plain clothes, such as black, green or brown. The mask also makes use of the so-called ‘rustle’ (i.e. a polished stick with a diameter of about two centimetres and as tall as the person holding it, to the top of which a branch of butcher's broom is tied).

Satriano Carnival is the result of rediscovered and renewed traditions and practices that have become community heritage. Its masks, such as the Rumit, the Urs and the Quaremma, are the result of a process of reinterpretation and adaptation to the heterogeneous historical and social circumstances that have characterised the life of the village. In particular the phenomenon of post-war emigration influenced the perception of certain masks, such as the Rumita, associated with the image of the Satrianese man who decides to remain in his homeland in poverty. The introduction of past cultural models into the contemporary world has allowed the production of new styles, new practices, loading the Satriano Carnival with symbolic values, transforming it into a catalysing event (as The Walking Forest), that is the spokesman for a universal ecological message. People belonging to different generations participate in the Satriano Carnival, an event that becomes an opportunity for young people to learn, by older people, the techniques and knowledge connected not only to the creation of the Rumit, but also of other masks. Informal learning that takes place during moments of conviviality and dialogue.

3 - Mauro Tremamondo

Name of the mask: The Campanaccio (San Mauro Forte).

Mauro Tremamondo comes from San Mauro Forte and he is the son of one of the "leaders", as he defines his father, of the "Campanaccio" event, in which Mauro has participated since he was a child. The cloak belonged to his grandfather, who passed this garment to his father and then it came to him, as well as the cowbell.

The 'scampanatore' is the one who rings the bell in honour of Saint Anthony Abbot, which falls on 17 January. The garments worn reflect the clothing used by peasants and shepherds: the wheeled cloak, clothes made from jute sacks or, again, jackets covered with synthetic sheep fur, which identify the figure of the shepherd, but there are also those who choose to dress in the Saint's clothing. As for the bell, its weight can vary from 2 kg to 10 kg. The figure of the 'scampanatore' is part of a Carnival context, the centrepiece of which is represented by the event known as 'Il Campanaccio': a demonstration of 'free ringers', echoing the motto of the event's manifesto, consisting of a procession of cowbells of various sizes. The sonority generated by the procession of cowbells is reminiscent of the sound produced by the bells of transhumance herds. The large presence of local young people (emigrants to the North) testifies the intergenerational bond and the sense of belonging to their country. They participate personally by wearing their own bell.

The mask making technique concerns the assembly and dressing of the "bell ringer" figure. The used materials are mainly: textile materials (cloak), flannel shirt with vest, fedora (felt hat), scarf, leather shoes, bell. Each person decorates the hat as they wish.

After wearing the clothing, that recalls the figure of the shepherd (knee-high woollen shoes, knickerbockers, waistcoat with pocket, shirt with piping, a full cape if applicable and hats), the helper completes his clothing hooking the bell to a strap around the neck.

The Carnival of San Mauro Forte is characterised by a strong devotion to the saint, each 'scampanatore' mask wears the holy card depicting St. Anthony Abbot pinned to his chest.

4 - Paola Langone

Name of the mask: The Bull (Tricarico).

Paola Langone is a young woman from the village of Tricarico in Basilicata. She is not a professional tailor but learned as a self-taught and then specialised, among other things, in making local traditional Carnival masks. She also participates during the parade of masks.

Tailoring, sewing and weaving are the craft techniques of this mask. The used materials are the following: hat with wide brim, lining, nylon ribbons (light and resistant), black satin and double satin ribbons, scarf, lace, decorations to embellish the headdress which are strictly black. There are also the black boots. During the past years people remember they used recycled materials, such as tablecloths cut into strips, while today people use fabrics and materials that can be purchased at haberdashers and online.

The Tricarico Carnival is characterised by the re-proposition, in a contemporary key, of certain traditional symbols of the Lucanian carnival, such as the zoomorphic masks. This is followed by a new phase of Carnival creativity in terms of participation, transformation and innovation: this marks a difference from the past when there was more improvisation and spontaneous, exclusively male participation.

On 17 January, starting at dawn, an initial group of participants meets in the historical centre of the town and, after waking up the people of Tricarico by ringing cowbells, heads towards the Church of Sant'Antonio Abate, in the nearby countryside of Tricarico. The procession, which evokes the transhumance of the herds moving from the mountains to the sea, is characterised by numerous 'cows' compared to the numerical inferiority of the 'bulls' (two bulls for twenty cows). As the procession passes, wine, cold meats and cheese are offered to the participants. Both cows and bulls wave cowbells of varying sizes to accentuate the choreotic actions that take place during the parade. Those who decide to dress as 'bulls' wear black clothing. The neck, knees, elbows and waist are wrapped in red scarves. At the waist is placed the holy card depicting Saint Anthony Abbot, as a symbol of devotion. The characterising element of this mask is above all the rigid headgear from which hangs a dark veil, used to cover the face and neck, to which numerous long black ribbons and a maximum of five red satin ribbons are attached, with various decorations added. The bulls move with dance steps, simulating mating and, at the same time, death.

5 - Paola Langone

Name of the mask: The Cow (Tricarico).

Paola Langone has been involved in tailoring and has dedicated herself to making local Carnival masks (both the bull and the cow) for about ten years. She participates in the procession by dressing as a "cow" and ringing her cowbell.

Paola can create both bull and cow masks.

The technique she used to make the cow mask includes: tailoring, sewing, and weaving. The textile materials are composed by: hat with wide brim, lining, nylon ribbons (light and resistant), satin and double satin, scarf, lace, decorations to embellish the headdress (beads, fabric flowers) and boots. As for the bull, during the past also the cow mask was made with recycled materials, such as tablecloths cut into strips, while today people use fabrics and materials that can be purchased at haberdashers and online.

The Carnival of Tricarico is characterised by a parade through the streets of the town on 17 January, the day dedicated to Saint Anthony Abbot, protector of animals. As other Lucanian Carnivals, the feast of Tricarico is also characterised by a strong devotion to the saint, indeed the people wearing the cow mask wear a holy card depicting St. Anthony Abbot pinned to their waist.

During the parade there are riding scenes, in which the personification of the bull courts the cow by jumping on her: this is a propitiatory ritual indicating fertility and procreation.

The mask of the 'cow' fits into the Tricarico Carnival context and the use of coloured ribbons originates from the decorations, in particular polychromatic ribbons that were placed on the heads of cows during transhumance. The most conspicuous element of the mask is the polychromatic rigid headdress from which hangs a white lace veil, used to cover the face and neck, and to which are attached numerous long coloured ribbons that go down to the ankles, as if to simulate a long cloak, and various decorations. The preparation of the mask allows to personally choose the decorations with great creativity.

4. ROMANIA

The three partners of Romania (University of Bucharest, IAFAR and MUSA) have contributed to the research and documentation activities on masking techniques, on the one hand by valorising the research already carried out in previous years on the topic, and on the other, by initiating documentation activities in various rural areas of the country.

As for the other three countries involved in MASKS, the Romanian partners also initiated further research on masking practices, whose techniques could not be documented during WP2 and whose work will be completed in the coming months.

To respect the specific choice of Romanian partners in order to make the most of the individual contribution made by each of them, the documentation methodologies, the results achieved and the products of the documentation delivered on handicraft techniques are indicated below subdivided by partner.

4.1. UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST

DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The research team from the University of Bucharest has actively engaged in the study of masks within this project, drawing upon over 20 years of experience in the field, thereby contributing valuable insights and expertise to the ongoing exploration of mask-related traditions, practices, and the techniques involved in mask-making.

The selection of craftsmen was achieved through a series of in-depth discussions, aiming to ensure active involvement from all Romanian research partners engaged in the project. At the start of this work package, a consolidated list of selected craftsmen was prepared to facilitate comprehensive documentation and study.

The criteria for selection included the following essential aspects:

- Documenting key festive contexts in which the mask plays a central role, from carnivalesque traditions, such as New Year's celebrations or the customs at Lent before Easter, to rituals in which the mask holds significant symbolic and ritual value, as the Chipăruş funeral dance.

- Geographic distribution of investigations to ensure a broad representation of ethnographic regions, thereby capturing distinctive traits and specific characteristics of each area.
- Diversity of mask-making techniques, including both traditional methods and modern innovations that respond to evolving socio-economic and cultural contexts.
- Research focused on identifying and studying traditional knowledge bearers, emphasizing artisans skilled in longstanding archaic techniques, as well as those whose innovative practices demonstrate an evolving interpretation and respect for these artefacts and methods of creation in contemporary contexts.
- Typology of artisans: ranging from master craftsmen-performers, who create their own masks for ritualistic performances, to those recognized as UNESCO Living Human Treasures, and artisans whose work, while replicating traditional techniques and models, repositions the mask as a modern cultural artifact without compromising its archaic essence.

Field documentation aimed to produce high-quality educational and documentary content, both informational and visual. Detailed video recordings were made, capturing each stage of the mask-making process. In numerous cases, craftsmen were requested to create a mask specifically for the project, as capturing the process in a spontaneous context was not feasible. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand each artisan's unique context, covering aspects such as:

- Biographical information and the formation of the artisan, including the origin of their skills and knowledge and the modes of transmission;
- Context of practice, promotional and valorization methods of their craft;

- The artisans' engagement with the local community aims to deepen understanding of the mask's significance within local customs and traditions. This involvement enhances research by offering insights into the ongoing evolution of these customs, contributing to a comprehensive, updated perspective that reflects both historical continuity and contemporary adaptations.

For traditions occurring within the timeframe of the work package and therefore eligible for direct documentation, the method of participant observation was employed. This approach enabled researchers to engage actively in local practices, allowing a more comprehensive understanding of the customs and their significance within the community. For other traditions, relevant archival materials were used to supplement the documentation.

During the course of the work package, members of the research team from the University of Bucharest also participated in fairs and other relevant events where artisans showcase and sell their masks.

Quantitative results: 10 hours of video recordings, 14 hours of audio recordings, and 200 photographs were collected during the research process.

This comprehensive approach enabled not only an investigation of technique and craftsmanship but also provided a broad contextualization of masks and their cultural and symbolic significance across various ethnographic regions in Romania. In summary, the results of this research initiative have contributed to a holistic understanding of masks within their cultural contexts, emphasizing the importance of both preserving traditional practices and adapting to contemporary realities. The findings highlight the ongoing relevance of masks as vital cultural artifacts that encapsulate community identity, artistic expression, and the rich tapestry of human experience.

PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

Constantin Anghel, Brănești, Ilfov County, is both a mask-maker and performer in the Cuci (Kuku) Carnival, where he crafts two main types of masks integral to the tradition: *cuci* and *cucoiace*. The distinction between these masks lies in their shape, not in their construction technique.

- The Cuc mask features a cylindrical cardboard facepiece covered in fabric and painted. It includes a red nose, a fur beard (from field rabbit) and a tall metal structure adorned with crepe paper flowers and mirrors. Sometimes, the upper part is made from corn husk or feathers.
- The "Cucoaică/Babă" mask covers only the face and is made using a similar technique. It is decorated with fur, corn husk, feathers, beans, beads, and sequins. Associated ritual props include women's clothing, a "pămătuț" (a stick with a leather tip), and bells.

Șerban Terțiu (designated as a Living Human Treasure since 2018), from Chiricani, Vrancea County, produces two types of masks depicting ancestors figures (elder women and men). These masks are used in New Year's Eve festivities as well as in the staged reenactment of the funeral dance Chipărușul. Although the New Year's Carnival remains an active tradition in the village, Chipărușul has not been performed in approximately fifty years. Since the 1980s, both celebrations have been presented in a theatrical format by the local folklore ensemble.

- A polychrome mask made entirely of sheep's wool, with the eyes and mouth cut directly from leather, and the nose sewn on. The teeth are made from beans.
- A mask crafted from polychrome wood and fur. The face mask is carved from wood, while the fur covering the wearer's head is attached with nails and stitches.

Paul Buță, from Șivița, Galați County, recreates masks primarily from fabric, adorning them with various decorations that are stitched together. His characters, central to the masked parades of the New Year's Carnival, include an array of figures: devils, ugly man, elder women and men, merchants, and personifications of human vices such as greed, deceit, and hatred. For documentation purposes, three representative masks were selected: a hlizit (Grinning Man; a common humorous mask), a devil (crafted using a traditional technique

specific to Șivița, Galați), and an old man mask specific to the New Year's Eve carnival held in Luncavița, Tulcea County.

- The Grinning Man mask features a fabric base reinforced with foam for firmness, in a light color. To accurately depict the character, the nose is pointed upwards, and the corners of the mouth are wide and smiling. This character embodies laughter and its object, with the tassel at the hat's tip suggesting playfulness and absurdity.
- The devil mask is built on a corn husk weaving structure, adorned with a hat and a beard made of goat fur. Teeth are represented by feathers and beans, while horns are crafted from calabash. The devil is always smiling, conveying a malicious expressiveness.
- The Old man mask's face is made from a specific type of calabash, with the upper part shaped into the nose. The decorations, made from textile materials, are similar to those of other masks, and the head covering is a scarf.

4.2. IAFAR

DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Of the three mask-making contexts we have been able to investigate for the purposes of the WP2, two have been long-engaging field sites, investigated by MASKS researchers Ileana Benga and Bogdan Neagota in the frames of Orma Ethnological Association repeatedly, over the years, and represent traditional customs involving entire villages in the production of the ritual context necessary for enacting the respective masks: the cortege of Saint George / Sângeorz in Muncel, Cluj County, and the masquerade accompanying the ceremonial of the Adorned Ox at Whitsunday, in Mănăstirea, Cluj. The third one is the workshop of established artisans Pavel and Tudorița Lupașc in village Nereju, Vrancea county, and was part of a joint research in the region, undertaken by Ileana Benga together with Gabriel-Cătălin Stoian, who had investigated mask-making procedures and their

artisans in the village in a project which had his employer, The National Village Museum, as partner (published 2014).

The Nereju Lupașc family workshop has been researched in the privileged situation of researchers being actually lodged on location, being able to witness the activity of the household as well as of the workshop. Each artisan had their own working space, having specialised on different operations pertaining to wood carving in general and to mask-making in particular. Ileana Benga has relied significantly upon Gabriel Stoian's acquaintance with the artisans, which allowed not only the lodging, but also, better interviewing. Each of the researchers filmed, took pictures, and recorded the sound of interviews on mask-making personal history of the couple, and on the craft, from concrete procedures to their experience on passing on the craft, to younger generations of their own, and of the entire region (through the cultural centres).

In the case of Sângeorz in Muncel and of the masquerade in Mănăstirea, the lengthy personal experience with the respective field sites and subjects was the asset of us, researchers Ileana Benga and Bogdan Neagota, having been there to record in person, or through collaborators, the respective customs uninterruptedly, for the past 20 years. During the time lapse, not only has our experience with the feast grown, our wit to understand its complexities, but also our age changed, from being more or less of the same age category with some in the groups of youth, to belonging to the generation of their parents. We have confided to scientific papers these personal interactions with the respective field, considering the differences resulted from the change in our own perspectives. As such, we have been able to record changes in the custom, through direct observation, resulted in hundred of hours of video-recording and many thousands of pictures taken. The archive has already historical value for its richness, has relative unity, since the main people researching remained the two, IB and BN, and allows research to unite the dots of transmission, at both synchronic and diachronic level, with the other archival sources which have documented both feasts and ceremonial contexts, on much wider regions than the area where they survive to this day.

Hence the drive to drill as deep as possible, upon documented sources, to find ever more information about the historical-religious mechanisms in both the transmission and the functioning of these youth customs, within their respective societal groups, where they must

have filled roles of puberty rites as part of the rights of passage, roles of customary dramaturgy within fertility rites, connected to the needs of local economies of yore, and many more other, difficult to retrieve from the contexts of today.

In the absence of the genuine social-economic conditions within specific societies, with their occupations and restrictions-coercions, it remains a difficult anthropological task to witness and explain what may become of these customs, once the original ritual context has vanished or transformed radically. In these respects, MASKS project is a most valuable experience of exchange among researchers, who may thus become acquainted with solutions identified in other European areas who have once faced, or face right now, similar field constraints and evolutions. Extended field material, collected with both audio-video extensive methodology in situ, and with regressive interviews, to reach older strata in the memory of elderly people in the villages, becomes a key factor in evaluating consciously local perspectives of transmitting techniques of mask-making and of survival of crafts, with or without the functional, ritual or social, context which has transmitted them all the way to the present.

PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

1 - MUNCEL Green Man MASK

Name of Mask. GHEORGHE CEL VERDE, SÂNGEORZ

The mask ceremonial of Saint George's Day in Muncel, Cluj County, is one of the few surviving customs which associate the mask of a Green Man with the feast of Saint George, and one of a somewhat larger cluster of surviving local customs, which has the Green Man included in a larger complex of rituality, linked to animal husbandry, fertility rites, rites of passage in the group of lads organizing the masking and the carolling of the village, from earliest in spring, 23rd of April (which is still early in the year, in what the emergence of the leafage in the forest is concerned, much needed to enact these specific customs), Easter, all the way to Pentecost, in the summer. The mask, therefore, belongs to a larger group of masks to enclothe by one or more individuals with undisclosed identity, comprising, per each participant, a helmet and/or armour tailored from tree-bark, and a foliage garment covering the entire body. At times foliage and helmet are separated, at times they embody feminine

/ masculine parallel identities, or animal / vegetal identities, while all belonging to one morphological category of masked figures called *Păpălugăre* / *Păpăruți* / *Borbolatițe* / *Băbăluți* / *Sângeorji*, of enduring ritual and ceremonial usage by Transylvanian communities, as researched by Traian Gherman in the interwar period, pioneering these studies on peasant ceremoniality, and by the Orma group since 2003. The Muncel variant has been researched yearly for the past 20 years by researchers belonging to Orma group. On the eve of the day of St. George, the group of lads gathers at night on a hill over the village, enacting the local variant of *charivari*, called *strigatul peste sat*. The next day, they gather in a glade in the forest, same spot for the twenty years of our surveillance, where they assemble one mask of *Sângeorz* – *Gheorghe cel Verde*. The ones who carve the bark helmet and who attach, like scales, the bunches of foliage with wire to the body of the lad who thus becomes *Gheorghe cel Verde*, do not necessarily belong to the group of the young/ do not necessarily take part in the cortege of the masked figure (unmasked, but clearly assembled in a form of dramaturgy around the mask), being generally married man, experienced in the art and skill of creating the mask and organizing the carolling. Tree bark is procured from poplar trees, detached from the trunk, wired to fit completely the head of he who becomes the *Sângeorz* character, tailored with holes for eyes, nose and mouth, to fit him, adorned with foliage and crested at the upper edge. The craft is shown on the MASKS_film. Foliage is collected by the youngest lads. Hierarchy requires that stages are observed as boys grow up (combined with the *charivari*, this is a feature connecting the custom to puberty rites): first, small boys are not even allowed in the glade, being confined to the place where the carolling starts, by one end of the village, where girls are also allowed to stay; this is relevant also for the undisclosed identity of the masked person; then, they are only allowed to collect and attach in bunches the beech-tree foliage, and hand them to older lads, who assemble the "scales" of foliage-bunches to the body, over the clothes, with wire. They would only be allowed to embody the masked figure as ultimate stage in this hierarchy. The mask is procured a pole as well and is taken out of the forest glade on two other wooden poles, lying on the back, supported and carried by the entire group participating to the masking in the forest. He resumes vertical walk only on the meadow where the carolling starts. They stroll the entire village, villagers signalling to the cortege their intention to *water the Sângeorz*, that is, throw water on the foliage, in order to be given a twig, carrier of fertility

and general wellbeing to the household. In exchange, they give money, plum brandy, and in other regions, importantly, eggs. The accompanying cortege is unmasked, yet they represent the guardians of the mask, to protect its integrity from anyone who wished to steal a twig, loaded as it is with goodness, yet, which needs to be *paid*, in order to be acceptable a behaviour in the ceremonial ensemble of acts, actors and dramaturgy. They guard, on the one hand, and they receive the pay, on the other hand, being thus custodians of the custom. The cortege disassembles near the end of the village, where there is a cattle small pond. In the first field-research we carried in Muncel, Bogdan Neagota and Ileana Benga, 23rd April 2004, the mask was dismantled rather far from the village itself, in a rivulet, which kept untouched the secrecy around the identity of the person embodying the mask. For most of the twenty years that followed, they dismantled the mask by the cattle pond. Then they all count the money collected, throw away in the pond the helmet, which is crashed first, and the leafage having clad the mask, as well as the pole. The day ends these days – and the past two decades – with a football game, where everyone involved in the custom is welcome, together with their families. In other regions, days of mask cortege ended in communal dances and communal meal, prepared with the eggs of the mask collection.

Along the decades, the Orma group has followed repeatedly the Green Men ceremonials of the spring and early summer, in the limited number of Transylvanian villages where the custom survives; or reconstructed narratively the custom, where it had already become a memory of times past.

2- NEREJU MASK-MAKER LUPAȘC PAVEL & FAMILY

Names of wooden masks: OBRĂZAR; MASCĂ ZOOMORFĂ DE DRAC; BABĂ; MOȘ; URSAR; URSĂRIȚĂ - Name of leather mask: CHIPĂRUȘ

The second family of artisans in NEREJU, Vrancea County, comprises four generations of artisans, from which we have been able to document three, on occasion of our 12-14 August 2024 field-research: elder Pavel Caba, from whom both his daughter, Tudorița (b. 1975) and his son-in-law Pavel Lupașc (b. 1964) have learnt the craft of working with wood; and young 8 year-old great-granddaughter Lavinia Nico Bulz, who participated on location to the intermediary operation of painting the elements of the face of wooden masks. Pavel Caba is known for his unique, in the area, art of carving musical instruments (flutes of all kinds,

and bagpipes), yet of course, he was skilled in wood-carving every object necessary in the peasant household. The entire family has a long history of craftsmanship promoted by national ethnographic museums, through their network, the main partner being The National Village Museum "Dimitrie Gusti".

Pavel Lupașc began with an interest in tailoring, when he was about 10-12 years of age, which has combined with the graduation of a tannery school, in distant town of Lugoj; that craft has provided him with income all the way up to the Romanian 1989 revolution, when the heavy "alaindelon" winter coats he was sewing (on a hundred year old Singer sewing machine, see MASKS_film) came out of fashion. He therefore adapted to the needs of the emergent market, and started working masks, of types extracted from the rich ritual history of the area (documented beginning with 1927) and dedicated to commerce – a fact which brought specific changes to these masks: they are now produced for protection or adornment of modern houses. Yet, names, materials and features have been kept and adapted minimally by the artisan, who also observes how local tastes of the group of young lads, responsible for the *canarale* tradition with masks at the New Year's, had gone afar from tradition-transmitted types of the masked, and embraced "those modern masks which come so tight on the face of the actor, that you could swear they belong to the masked character" (silicon, industrial type), "for once masked, they give true life to the character they embody: they become them, even", commented astutely Pavel Lupașc (fragments of interviews on August 13th, 2024).

The mask artisan Pavel Lupașc is working alongside his wife Tudorița for decades. She knows how to carve wood into crosses, spoons, birds with spread wings, cheese moulds, and of course, masks, while he is into masks, distaffs, and musical instruments. As they were preparing for the impending fair organized by the local Astra Museum in Sibiu for the Feast of the Dormition of Mary, they were working on pre-carved (by themselves), nose-assembled, wooden figures, with different facial expressions, and bearing the ancient names, inherited from both the New Year's carnival-like traditional mask-related dramaturgy, and from the peculiar tradition of masking in a narrative of the dramaturgy of a group of elders, all male, during the wake of the dead: *chipărușul*, or little piper, already forbidden a tradition by local authorities in 1938, of uncertain survival in original context along the following 80 years (see H. H. Stahl, "Amintiri și gânduri din vechea școală a monografiilor

sociologice” [Memories and thoughts on the old school of sociological monographs], Minerva Ed., București 1981, p. 374, apud Gabriel-Cătălin Stoian, Măștile – de la practică la meșteșug [Masks – from practice to craft] in vol. “Nereju – patrimoniu viu” [Nereju – Living Heritage], ed. By Ioana-Ruxandra Fruntelată, TERRA Ed., Focșani 2014, p. 28-34). We have witnessed the following operations in the craft of mask-making, since the entire bulk of wooden carved masks (wooden nose glued) were already made, by the time of the interviews (The field-research and the emergent interviews were conducted jointly by Ileana Benga and Gabriel-Cătălin Stoian), carved by the family with an older, established in the area, technique (see <https://www.trinitas.tv/mestesugarii-lemnului-din-nereju-pavel-caba-si-familia-lupasc/> consulted on 27/10/2024), to be painted and later adorned with sheep-skin, cattle horns, and then hung on the wall – which is, these days, the ultimate destination of their craftsmanship: painting of wooden mask with facial details, by Tudorița Lupașc; painting of white teeth, by her granddaughter Lavinia Bulz; attachment of leather-slices for beard and hair; attachment of horns; attachment of thread for hanging on the wall.

Because of his skill and history with tannery, the craftsman Pavel Lupașc is getting sheep skin from non-local sources (localities Sascut and Homocea, Bacău County), because these are long-haired “*oi țurcane*” sheep, different from the short-haired local “*țigaie, merinoase*” sheep. Wooden masks are still used – by the groups of lads carolling at the New Year – in the *canarale*; leather masks, of the helmet kind – which appear in the MASKS_film and pictures, already made by the time of the interview – use the prototype of the *chipăruș* funerary tradition, nowadays only a festival, scene-bound, phenomenon. The research of this peculiar tradition of masked ritual screenplay enacted during the wake of the dead is yet to be researched, historically.

Pavel Lupașc is remembering his first time “wearing an identity”/ “being clad” in a changed person: about 7-8 years old, he is wearing the traditional local boy garment on occasion of the New Year (on footage of interview). The scene is taking place under communism. The first mask he made himself was one of “*ursăriță*”, a mask embodying local Gypsy travellers with one of their established occupations: carolling villages with a tamed real-life bear, in chains, which has become in many areas a mask of either “the bear” or “the bear tamer”, as it is in this case. The craftsman is clearly stating, in the interview, that “the core of masking is that under that cover, the bearer could do absolutely anything, for no one knew who they

were!"; even if they were a child, no one would know his true, real-life, identity: so they could utter any kind of words.

Nowadays, just like the first family of artisans in Nereju, Șerban and Ileana Terțiu, the Lupașc workshop collaborates with schools and cultural centres in the area, to pass on the craft to the youngest generations of local children.

4.3. MUSA

DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

In early October, after multiple phone calls during summer with craftsman Uwe Constantin Boghian, we had the opportunity to meet him in his home in Cincu Village, located in the Transylvania region. The primary goal of our meeting was to explore and document his art and craft of mask-making. The Lole Mask, or "Urzeln" in German, is an essential component of the annual spring ritual "Run of the Lole" (or "The Fleeing of Lole"), a historic custom observed in regions of Transylvania like Agnita and Cincu. This practice, with roots in the 17th-century Saxon guilds, represents a vibrant part of Transylvanian Saxon heritage.

The ritual originally involved and still involves masked figures known as Lole or Urzeln, who accompany a procession to symbolically protect a guild's precious items, such as chests holding funds and secrets. In addition, the Lole's role as guardians transformed into a cultural event to chase away winter and negative spirits through their costumes, masks, and loud sounds, making it a lively spring celebration. The Urzeln costume is carefully crafted with black textiles, furry mask edges, and hemp "devil tails," and the mask itself features expressive, painted faces.

The participants wear cowbells and use special braided whips to produce loud noises, which are essential to the ritual's goal of expelling evil. The procession usually includes stops where locals greet participants with treats, acknowledging the Lole's role in bringing fertility and good fortune. The revival of this ritual in recent years has not only served to preserve cultural heritage but also fostered a communal bond among diverse ethnic groups in the region, as well as being a unique pretext for Saxons originating in Cincu, who had emigrated in the last decades, to come back in the village and reunite with their families. This ritual, with roots in medieval Transylvania, involves participants dressed in these masks, running through the streets while cracking whips and ringing cowbells. These sounds, along with the

imposing visuals of the masked figures, aim to symbolically ward off misfortune and bring in a prosperous new year for the community.

On the first day, we focused on the mask stories within the context of the performing of the "Run of the Lole" ritual. This tradition originally paused in 1990, was revived in 2017, sparking renewed interest in preserving and passing down the custom. Boghian, having participated in the ritual as a child, is deeply committed to sustaining this heritage. He shared both his connection to the ritual and his passion for advancing its legacy. On the second day, we documented the mask-making process on film, following a structured set of research questions we had previously agreed upon. The filming took place in his studio, a space located in the backyard of his house. Not only a mask-maker, Boghian is also a skilled leather craftsman, and his studio was filled with various pieces of leather and handmade belts.

Interview methodology: We followed a semi-structured interview framework, using the catalog for inventorying masks (provided by the project methodology) as guidance for the discussion. Both mask context and mask-making techniques were recounted in detail by our interlocutor. The interview recording was consented in writing, through the release of the data protection agreement.

Filming Techniques and Setup: The camera work was a blend of handheld shots for close-ups and a small tripod setup to capture broader scenes of his workspace, as well as portrait shots. Natural lighting from his studio, supplemented by his work light, created an authentic atmosphere, illuminating both the space and his craft. Throughout two and a half hours, we captured the entire mask-making process, from construction to painting.

Post-Production:

In post-production, we carefully selected the frames that best conveyed essential details, emphasizing the chronological moments that would provide valuable information for those interested in all the steps of building up the mask. This approach highlighted the precision of Boghian's movements and the intricate details involved in mask-making. For frames where no voice was present, we edited sound sequences from other frames, to convey significant details that were spoken of elsewhere. There are two final montages delivered. One is of 43min length and one of 10min length.

Significance of the Interview: This documentation holds significant value, particularly because the ritual of "The Run of the Lole" was only recently revived and has become again an identity symbol for the Saxons in Romania. The filmed interview and mask-making process serve as valuable resources for future research on the ritual, contributing to a larger international project aimed at showcasing and preserving cultural heritage. For Boghian, this documentation also offers an opportunity to share his craft with a wider audience, furthering the reach of his artistry and the legacy of the ritual.

The documentation further supports local efforts of valorization of Urzeln ritual revitalization, such as the local cultural association "Kraft Made", which has recently established in Cincu a Museum work-in-progress on Lole ritual and heritage.

Lastly, the documentation is one of the scarce visual researches done on the Saxon minority in Romania from a National Museum, therefore it becomes unique not just for the Museum Archive, but for the community itself to be represented outside of its region (In November 2024, MUSE will organize a screening of the resulted video of the documentation for the Bucharest audience, under its regular "Conferences at the Boulevard" series).

PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

The Lole masks used in Transylvania's "Run of the Lole" (or "The Fleeing of Lole") ritual are crafted with a blend of traditional materials and careful artistry, reflecting a legacy of craftsmanship spanning centuries. These masks typically feature a fur border made from rabbit, fox, or marten, and showcase vibrant, exaggerated, and sometimes humorous painted faces. At the back of each mask, a long braided hemp tail is attached, symbolizing a link to the past and continuity of tradition.

Creating these masks is a meticulous process. Artisans like Uwe Constantin Boghian start by cutting a wire mesh base and securing it onto an iron oval frame. Once in place, he applies a base layer of white paste or brown paint. After drying it with a hairdryer, he sketches the mask's face using a black pen, drawing inspiration from villagers' faces, characters he has seen in films, or historical mask designs from his collection.

Once the main features are outlined, Boghian begins painting, carefully adding color and detail to bring the character to life. After the paint dries, he shapes the mask to accentuate its unique, exaggerated features. In the past, these masks were often made from wood or

other rigid materials, which were uncomfortable to wear. Modern techniques prioritize comfort while retaining the traditional look and feel. Finally, the fur trim and braided hemp tail are added, giving each mask its distinctive appearance—both fierce and whimsical.

The purpose of the mask is dual: it serves as a disguise to embody the spirit of the Lole and acts as a protective symbol during the parade. By cracking whips and ringing cowbells, participants in the "Run of the Lole" chase away evil spirits, honoring local bravery and bringing in blessings for the new year.

Uwe Constantin Boghian (b. April 19, 1974).

He is a dedicated artisan from Cincu Village, Transylvania, specializing in traditional mask-making for the "Run of the Lole" ritual. Deeply rooted in his region's cultural practices, Boghian has a passion for preserving and revitalizing Transylvanian Saxon heritage. Growing up with this tradition, he developed a love for the craftsmanship and cultural symbolism of mask-making. In addition to his mask work, he is an expert leatherworker, and his studio is filled with creations ranging from intricate masks to hand-crafted belts. Boghian's work is instrumental in keeping these local traditions alive, passing them down to new generations, and sharing this unique heritage with a wider audience.

5. PORTUGAL

5.1. DOCUMENTATION METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The research team from Academia Ibérica da Máscara e Brigantia Ecopark, with extensive experience in the study of masks and masked traditions, has been actively engaged in exploring the mask traditions of Trás-os-Montes (Portugal) within this project. Their contributions have been essential in examining the practices, techniques, and symbolism associated with traditional mask-making in the region.

The selection of artisans was carried out through in-depth discussions to ensure the active involvement of local partners. At the start of this work, a consolidated list of selected artisans was prepared to facilitate comprehensive documentation and study. The project included nine Portuguese artisans, each representing the diverse techniques and traditions of masks in Trás-os-Montes.

These artisans were selected based on rigorous criteria that emphasized key festive contexts in which the mask plays a central role, geographical representation, diversity of mask-making techniques, including both traditional methods and modern innovations that respond to evolving socio-economic and cultural contexts, traditional knowledge bearers, emphasizing artisans skilled in longstanding archaic techniques, as well as those whose innovative practices demonstrate an evolving interpretation and respect for these artefacts and methods of creation in contemporary contexts, and the symbolic significance of masks in their respective traditions. Field documentation produced high-quality educational and documentary content, with detailed recordings of the crafting process and semi-structured interviews, addressing each artisan's unique context. Throughout the research process, 12 hours of video and audio, and photographs were recorded, providing a holistic view of masks and their cultural and symbolic significance.

We followed a semi-structured interview framework, using the catalog for inventorying masks (provided by the project methodology) as guidance for the discussion. Both mask context and mask-making techniques were recounted in detail by our interlocutor. The interview recording was consented.

The research has contributed to preserving traditional practices while adapting them to contemporary contexts, underscoring the importance of masks as cultural artifacts that encapsulate community identity, artistic expression, and the rich tapestry of human

experience in Trás-os-Montes (Portugal). The filmed interview and mask-making process serve as valuable resources for future research on the ritual, contributing to a larger international project aimed at showcasing and preserving cultural heritage, but also a record for the future memories of the participating artisans.

All this work has been framed within the universe of Portuguese masked festivals, particularly those that take place between October 31 and Ash Wednesday, for which the work of artisans is essential, as masks and music are indispensable for these celebrations. To better contextualize the entire project and the Portuguese contribution to it, visits to museum spaces were crucial, such as the Iberian Museum of Masks and Costumes in Bragança, the Interpretive Center of Death and Devils in Vinhais, the Casa do Careto in Podence, and the Interpretive Center of Iberian Masks in Lazarim. Additionally, the involvement of the Academy of Iberian Masks as an organizer/collaborator in congresses, conferences, gatherings of masked participants, and exhibitions has been fundamental—such as Óscar Barros's exhibition of masks at the Iberian Museum of Masks and Costumes in Bragança; Ritual Masks of Portugal—a collection by Roberto Afonso in Góis (Coimbra), and soon in Mogadouro and Vinhais; the Exhibition of Iberian Masks at the "Market of Cultures... by Candlelight in Lagos"; photography exhibitions by Mercedes Saavedra, and the IX Edition 2024 Vibo Mask Festival in Viana do Bolo and Vilariño de Conso, among others.

This work will continue in the near future, with participation and documentation through video and photography of the masked festivals starting on November 2, with the Festa da Cabra e do Canhoto in Cidões (Vinhais), followed by the winter solstice festivities in December, when the mask will play a more prominent role, with the Festas de Santo Estêvão in locations in Bragança, Vinhais, and Torre de Dona Chama, the, The Velho e a Galdrapa, in S. Pedro da Silva, Carochinho de Constantim, Velha de Vila Chã (Miranda do Douro), Chocalheiro de Bemposta, Velho de Valverde, Velhos de Bruçõ, Velho de Vale de Porco, Mascarão and Mascarinha, Vilarinho dos Galegos, and the Kings' festivities in some villages near Bragança - and then the Entrudo of Lazarim, Vila Boa (Vinhais), Santulhão (Vimioso), Sambade (Alfândega da Fé), the Chocalheiro Entrudo of Podence (Macedo de Cavaleiros), the Lagarteiro Entrudo of Figueira Castelo Rodrigo, the Crastejo Entrudo of Castro Laboreiro, the Cardadores of Ílhavo, and the Caretos of Lagia (Mira), culminating in the Day

of the Dead, the Devil and Censorship in Bragança, the Day of the Dead in Edrosa (Vinhais), and the Day of the Devils in Vinhais, all three on Ash Wednesday. allowing us to cover almost all the masked festivals in Portuguese territory.

All this research and documentation work is essential for understanding the diversity of masks used in these rituals, as well as the materials and techniques used in their construction, along with the type of music that accompanies the rituals, which is essentially performed with bagpipes.

5.2. PRODUCTS: MASKS TECHNIQUES AND MASK MAKERS

Before introducing each artisan, it's essential to highlight the unique cultural and artistic significance of the mask-making techniques and products crafted by these talented artisans. Each mask serves not only as an artistic expression but as a vital component of regional traditions and ritual celebrations, especially during winter solstice festivities and Carnival across Trás-os-Montes (Portugal).

The artisans use various natural materials, such as wood, metal, leather, and wool, to craft masks that capture the essence of local customs and reflect ancient, often pagan, rituals. These creations are celebrated for their authenticity, dedication to traditional detail, and imaginative adaptations, seamlessly blending the past with the present through artisans. Each of them brings a distinctive approach, shaped by local customs, personal creativity, and their chosen materials, ensuring that this traditional art form remains vibrant and relevant for future generations:

1. Adão Almeida (Lazarim, Lamego): Born in 1962, Almeida is a master carver of wooden masks for the Lazarim Carnival. He primarily uses alder wood, crafting traditional figures that showcase his creativity and imagination. His masks retain their natural color without paint, preserving the authenticity of local tradition.
2. Amável Alves Antão (Bragança): A self-taught artisan, Antão discovered his skill for wood carving in 2003, and since then, he has created expressive masks associated

- with winter solstice rites. Using different types of wood, he crafts both traditional figures and imaginative designs, including replicas of the “Chocalheiro of Bemposta.”
3. Célio Pires (Constantim, Miranda do Douro): In addition to serving in the National Republican Guard, Pires has been making traditional instruments such as bagpipes and flutes since the age of 16. He primarily uses boxwood and blackwood, crafting standardized yet detailed artisanal instruments
 4. Isidro Rodrigues (Aveleda, Bragança): A teacher and “improvised artist,” Rodrigues creates traditional masks, known as “caretas,” for the Boys' Festival in Aveleda. He uses galvanized metal and brass, adding horns and wool to produce masks central to local rituals.
 5. Miguel Moreira e Silva (Alenquer, residing in Bragança): With a background in Artistic Animation, Silva is both a sculptor and painter whose masks blend Transmontana culture with international aesthetics, including Maori and Hannya influences. His work reinterprets the region’s ancient pagan rituals through a modern artistic lens.
 6. Octávio Marrão (Baçal, Bragança): An architect and artisan, Marrão creates masks for the Kings' Festival using recycled materials like brass, copper, and wood from old furniture. His masks, made for local “caretos,” emphasize sustainability by repurposing objects and preserving the local authenticity.
 7. Óscar Barros (Bragança, residing in Penafiel): A retired arts teacher, Barros makes masks for the winter festivals of Trás-os-Montes, notably the figures of Death and the Devil. His masks are crafted from galvanized metal and leather, primarily decorated in red and black, respecting the traditions of Northeast Trás-os-Montes.
 8. Sandrina Fernandes (Ousilhão, Vinhais): An artisan and teacher, Fernandes creates wooden masks and weaves wool blankets on traditional looms, which are used in costumes for local festivals. Since 2019, she has been dedicated to reviving the

production of vibrant wool blankets, an important element in the festivities of Ousilhão.

9. Sofia Pombares (Podence, Macedo de Cavaleiros): Active in the Caretos tradition of Podence, Pombares makes tin and leather masks and costumes. In her workshop, she offers mask-making workshops and produces traditional costumes from woven wool blankets, promoting local culture and tourism.