

# biennalegherdëina

## *IV Biennale Gherdëina* curated by Luca Beatrice

Ortisei, 18 July – 1 October 2014  
Opening on Thursday, 17 July at 6 pm

*The event, in the town's pedestrian district, maintains close cultural ties with the Val Gardena, but with an international outlook*

*The exhibition includes sculptures by Chris Gilmour, Sonia Leimer, Willy Verginer, Velasco Vitali and Bruno Walpoth, all made of wood and all in a close relationship with the viewer*

An expression of the cultural and creative tradition of the Val Gardena, establishing a close relationship between the land and its visitors, but with an increasingly ambitious international outlook: the **4th Biennale Gherdëina in Ortisei**, promoted by Associazione turistica di Ortisei in partnership with the City of Ortisei, grows and renews itself with a project entitled **Legno/Wood/Holz/Lën**, curated by **Luca Beatrice** (18 July through 1 October 2014, opening on Thursday 17 July at 6 pm) focusing on **contemporary sculpture**. The **five artists** invited to participate will exhibit their works in the pedestrian zone in central Ortisei, all sculptures made out of the most traditional material in the area - wood: **Chris Gilmour, Sonia Leimer, Willy Verginer, Velasco Vitali and Bruno Walpoth**.

The far-reaching works included in the exhibition will be created by the artists in the months to come, specifically for the Biennale, **in collaboration with local artisans and enterprises**, giving the town an economic boost. The **choice of wood** as the material for the sculptures, the only limitation imposed on the artists, is intended to establish a strong bond with the Val Gardena's most traditional roots, while at the same time giving wood the dignity of an element linked with contemporary art rather than just crafts.

**Chris Gilmour**, a British sculptor who lives in Udine, specialises in cardboard sculptures; he will now try his hand at a new material, imagining and designing a sort of rediscovery of crates containing archaeological findings which have been stolen away or survived some sort of natural disaster; while **Sonia Leimer**, who is originally from Merano, though she lives in Vienna, will create a conceptual revisitation of a theme dear to the traditions of the Val Gardena, the work bench. Others have been working with wood for a long time, such as world-famous local artists **Bruno Walpoth** and **Willy Verginer**: Walpoth will install a big wooden bust cut in half and hollowed out, while Verginer will leave his landscapes and portraits behind him and build a wooden house, or rather a hut or shelter, standing on tree roots. And lastly, **Velasco Vitali**, a Milanese painter and sculptor known for his packs of dogs, often in unusual settings, will create a gigantic hot-air balloon made out of wood and iron.

For the first time since the Biennale has been held, the artists were asked to create public sculptures that would interact with the historic town centre of Ortisei, dialoguing with residents and tourists rather than imposing themselves as if they had been dropped into town from outer space,” explains Luca Beatrice. “There were no restrictions as to subject or theme, but the material used had to be wood, even though the artists were not all experienced in working with this material. Wood therefore brings its own added value with it, because of its incredible relationship with the past; it tells stories, it doesn’t turn away the viewer, it incites with its warmth and texture. More and more artists all over the world are using wood as the material for their sculptures and in their installations. We might even call wood “trendy”, if the term were not such an ambiguous one!”

Thanks to Galleria Doris Ghetta for the assistance

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