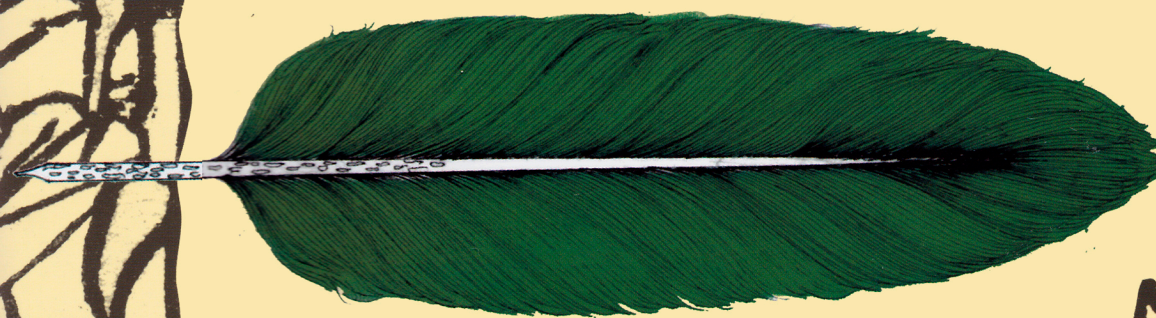
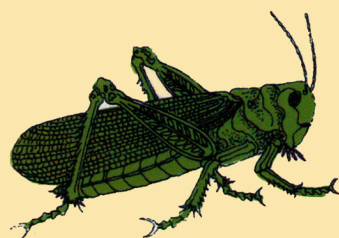


DALL'ALTRA PARTE DELLA NATURA
ETICHETTE IN LANGA DI GIANNI GALLO

LABELS
ETIKETTEN
ETIQUETTES



A CURA DI
SILVIA SALA E LORENZO MAMINO



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production (which is to say that it enhances the sustainability of those processes), and it brings a sense of contentment back to work.” And so we return to our subject. We begin with what is both a personal affirmation and a declaration of principles by Gianni Gallo, taken from a text that Gallo himself wrote for the Azienda Agrimontana in the early 1980s. (Agrimontana is a Borgo San Dalmazzo-based producer of marmalade and preserves, dried and candied fruits, and many other local specialty items from the Piedmont.) The book *An Engraver in the Kingdom of Marmalade* opens with this phrase: “Even well beyond the middle of our life’s road, a designer may find himself having to pit his skill against the matter of the fruit preserve. That is what happened to me.”

What, then, are we dealing with here? A designer who identifies himself as a country-dweller, a peasant if you will, and a peasant—to the extent that he lived a rural existence though he was also assuredly an intellectual—who declares himself a designer and whose work involves one of the earliest artistic professions in the visual arts: graphic design and engraving. And then we have another strong statement by Gallo, unambiguous, unsettling, very nearly a rejection of an entire career dedicated to an intimate relationship with the land on which he lived. It is almost as if Cesare Pavese had written that he cared nothing for the Langhe and its environs but was concerned solely with the style of his writing. The statement came in a May 10, 2009 article by Carlo Petrini in the “La Repubblica” newspaper. There, Gallo was quoted as saying, “I’m uninterested in nature. What interests me are shapes and lines. I don’t see an object. I see its weight and thickness; I see its rhythms. I don’t spend much time asking myself what I’m ultimately creating. I begin by putting marks on the paper that represent impressions.”

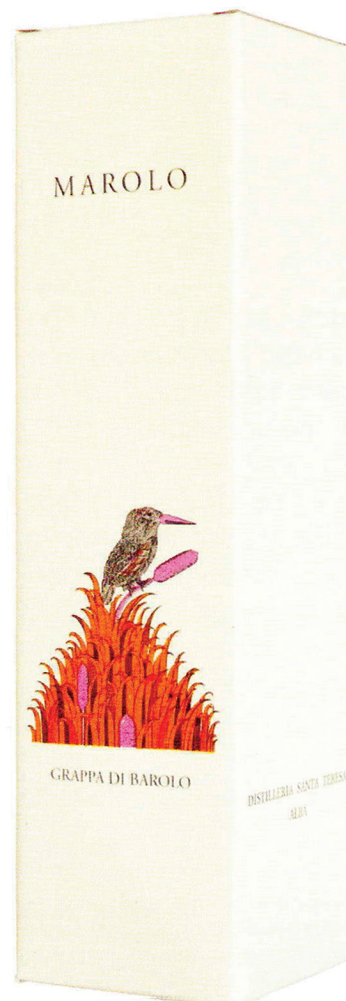
Odd, indeed. A lifetime of work, carried out within a programmatic vision of the natural world, becomes an excuse for putting marks on paper. It strikes one as difficult to believe, an extreme version of the paradoxes that Gallo enjoyed so much, and at the same time it seems uncharitable with respect to nature, Gallo’s muse. A few lines before, in the same interview, in fact, he had said, “I have the bad habit of concealing myself as well.”

What hid Gallo for the half-century during which he was committed to representing, through decorative arts and graphic design, the enjoyment of food and drink, the companionship of the table, the pleasures of friendship? Perhaps he hid himself behind hundreds of small works intended as communications on behalf of commercial enterprises or perhaps he hid himself from himself, appearing only in the brutal, painful, and yet fascinating act of engraving. Whatever the case, Gallo was a “hidden designer” whose work developed in the play of lines and rhythms, of full and empty space; he studied the aspects of a well-known and familiar nature, constructing them anew with each work as if perceiving them for the first time.

Gianni Gallo was, without question, an exquisite designer and a gifted engraver. He was bound to an ancient concept of the mark upon the page—a definitive and indelible mark, in fact, in which a single error could compromise an entire project. He lived and worked light years

di chi concretamente produce l quanto riguarda, nel nostro cas sce la catena industriale (ovver reintroduce felicità nel lavoro”.

Ci ritorneremo. Adesso, per co e allo stesso tempo una dichia Gianni Gallo contenuta in un te libretto Agrimontana nei primi recita *Un incisore nel regno dell il mezzo del cammin di nostra doversi misurare con le confetti Bene, cosa abbiamo qui? Abbi un contadino e un contadino, per quanto sicuramente un int designer che progetta e produ artistici del visual design: il di affermazione forte, difficilmente zante, al limite dell’abiura di un rapporto stretto con la propria t scritto che non gli importava r mondo di ricordi ma solo dello : “La Repubblica” del 10 maggio : Gianni Gallo dichiara: “ Non mi i le linee. Non vedo l’oggetto, ve chiedermi cosa viene fuori, metto Curioso vero? Una vita di lavoro*



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