

Exposed

JRC fotocineclub's journal
Vol. 7, April 2021

Foto
Cine
Club

Lago Maggiore





Editorial

Dear photo friends,

time for an Easter surprise; Exposed 7 is ready, even though, unfortunately, it misses the chocolate taste!

We had chosen 'Lago Maggiore and its villages' as our storyline in order to reflect about the beauty of the area we are lucky to be living in; especially in these very difficult times. The response of our members was very positive and reached well beyond what we can share in just one issue.

"... I think these people are mistaken, not in questioning the artistic merits of objective views (which can still be beautiful, inspiring, or otherwise valuable and useful in other ways), but in failing to acknowledge that the medium of photography, beyond just being a means of recording appearances, can also be used to transcend objective aesthetics and to express subjective concepts—moods, thoughts, feelings—as well." Guy Tal

And indeed, I believe that the photographer's intent and care with the composition, sets 'real' images well apart from snapshots. You immediately feel the excitement of Tommaso (image page 2) standing at the lake side in the dark watching the sky with the shooting stars, hearing the waves and exploring the open night view. I am there with him right now, experiencing the nightly mood.

Thanks to all the fantastic contributions, Exposed 7 has again turned out to be a journal with great images and interesting points of view. So, please take the time to read the contributions and look carefully at all the images. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions to us or to the authors or if you feel a strong wish to tell your story in a future Exposed.

Rudolf



volando sul lago

Sandro Maffei



la mia piacevole ed
emozionante esperienza
di fotografia "volante"

*sopra: Rocca di
Angera
a destra: decollo pista
Venegono Inferiore*



Vi voglio raccontare la mia piacevole ed emozionante esperienza di fotografia "volante" che mi ha permesso di osservare luoghi, più o meno noti del lago Maggiore, da una prospettiva poco abituale per un fotografo di "terra" come me e come la maggior parte di Voi, che normalmente scattano foto stando sulle proprie gambe a mo' di treppiede. Procedo: siamo al 9 Aprile 2011, ci troviamo al campo di volo dell'Aeroclub di Varese presso Venegono Inferiore, con l'amico Paul che oltre che pilota civile è anche Chirurgo di Medici "Senza Frontiere", dopo le procedure di rito ed i controlli di routine al "volatile" I – FFAE – SKY-HAWK, che ci deve portare sul lago, finalmente alle 17,53 ci solleviamo dalla pista, per me che onestamente, di preferenza ho collezionato migliaia di Km. a stretto contatto della gravità terrestre e che certamente, se devo scegliere, preferisco non imitare gli uccelli almeno con la fotocamera in mano; superato il tumulto dei primi istanti fatto di timore e tanta curiosità, mi dedico con impegno a trarre il massimo per sfruttare l'occasione di riportare a casa la migliore e più completa documentazione della escursione aerea sul lago. Ho dovuto sfruttare ogni istante del tempo di volo

perché impossibile ritornare più volte sulla stessa linea, quindi malgrado aver preparato la fotocamera ed un altro apparecchio di scorta, ho usato solo la mia fedele Nikon D 700 con unico obiettivo zoom 24/120 dall'inizio alla fine. Purtroppo, data l'eccitazione del momento, l'esiguità dello spazio a disposizione (il mio ospite infatti, è un omone il doppio di me con leggero ingombro superiore al normale, tanto, da limitare ogni mio movimento) il sole, che quel giorno la faceva da padrone ed entrava prepotentemente nell'obiettivo, soprattutto giocando di volta in volta, attraverso i finestrini, obbligatoriamente chiusi, che naturalmente generavano riflessi incontrollabili; tutto ciò mi ha consigliato di impostare la fotocamera in maniera da potermi dedicare esclusivamente alla composizione. Alla fine, durante l'ora esatta ho scattato circa 300 foto e purtroppo mi sono reso conto della difficoltà di ottenere "scatti puliti" per l'inesperienza della prima volta e l'impossibilità di correggere i disturbi dell'illuminazione che cambiava ad ogni istante. Tuttavia, pur nelle difficoltà ritengo importante questa esperienza fotografica che Vi sottopongo attraverso le mie immagini.





a fronte: Ispra; sopra: Monvallina; sotto: Imbarcadero di Intra





sopra: Punta san Michele con Rocca di Caldè; sotto: Isola Madre





sopra: Isola Bella; sotto: Isola Pescatori e Isola Madre





Note e suggerimenti per foto dall'aereo

Normalmente le fotografie aeree vengono catalogate e divise in due categorie tecniche, oblique e verticali.

Oblique sono quelle ottenute da fotocamera, il cui asse (obiettivo) presenta una ridotta inclinazione rispetto alla linea dell'orizzonte per cui tutti gli oggetti appaiono più o meno nella stessa relazione spaziale come se fossero visti da terra (foto dal finestrino dell'aereo, le più comuni).

Verticali sono quelle ottenute puntando l'asse della fotocamera (obiettivo) verticalmente verso terra, foto utilizzate soprattutto per la costruzione di mappe, che esaminate da persone non qualificate mostrano un paesaggio piatto non immediatamente identificabile, non avendo le stesse una prospettiva naturale al nostro occhio, dette foto risultano poco interessanti dal punto di vista strettamente fotografico

amatoriale ma importanti per scopi civili e militari (studi scientifici, rilevamenti, e mappe della superficie terrestre).

Per ottenere buone immagini, ricordarsi di:

- tempi di scatto veloci, mai inferiori a 1/125 di secondo;
- altezza da terra, ideale 300-500 metri;
- possibilmente scegliere giornate con buone condizioni atmosferiche, se si può;
- filtro skylight o polarizzatore per foto colori filtro giallo chiaro per foto bianco e nero;
- importante usare il paraluce;
- non appoggiare i gomiti o la fotocamera sulla struttura dell'aereo per evitare le vibrazioni;
- per riprese con finestrino aperto, attenzione ai colpi di vento sulla fotocamera.



*a fronte: Isola Bella
sopra: Palude Brabbia
sotto: Isolina Virginia,
Lago di Varese*



autumn leaves

Andreas Brink

an intimate view at the lake's waterscapes

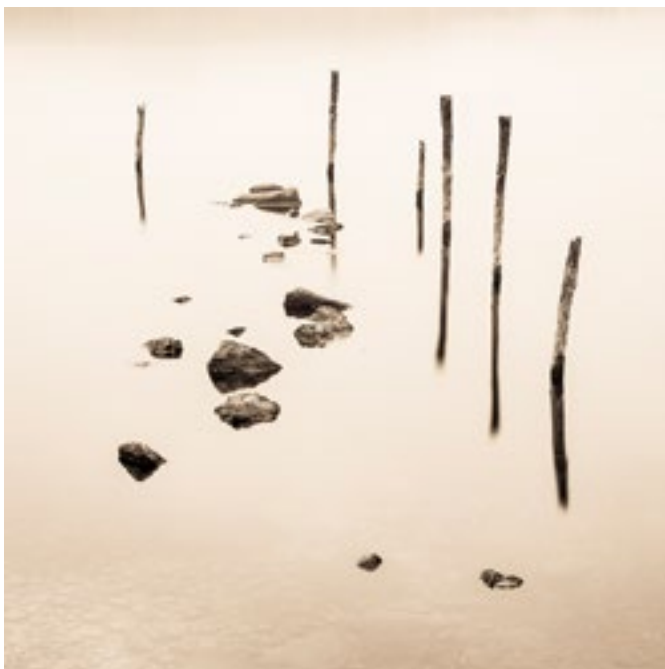


"When autumn leaves start to fall"... ends the famous jazz song, summer has gone and so its frantic life and people. The first cool air descends on the still warm water of the lake creating a game of light and mist. This sometimes mysterious atmosphere is intensified by the quietness and peacefulness autumn and winter bring. But it's this time of the year which allows to focus on the essential elements in the landscape. The colours tend to have a warm monochrome character, and shapes and lines are highlighted in front of the foggy background. The calm and mirror-like water surface seems to be almost frozen, generating smooth reflections, the mirror of time.

Leafless trees reach out to the autumn mist, appearing like graphic art drawings and revealing all their detail and beauty, the tree of life.

Stones, poles and branches gently touching the unbroken water surface remind of old Chinese drawings, the river of dreams. The silhouettes of small fishermen boats emerge from the morning mist, chained to land and gone to winter sleep, resting motionless on the water surface, the testimonials of a forgotten era.

Birds become part of this minimalistic environmental artwork, adding to the composition a sign of life, still life. The lake is melancholic in this season, people say.















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discovering known and hidden places

Valcuvia hills

Rudolf Hummel





previous spread: Vararo and Val Busegia

left page, top: view from Cima Crocetta to Vararo and Lake Maggiore beyond; bottom: Scarce Swallowtail

this page: Arcumeggia, artwork and murals



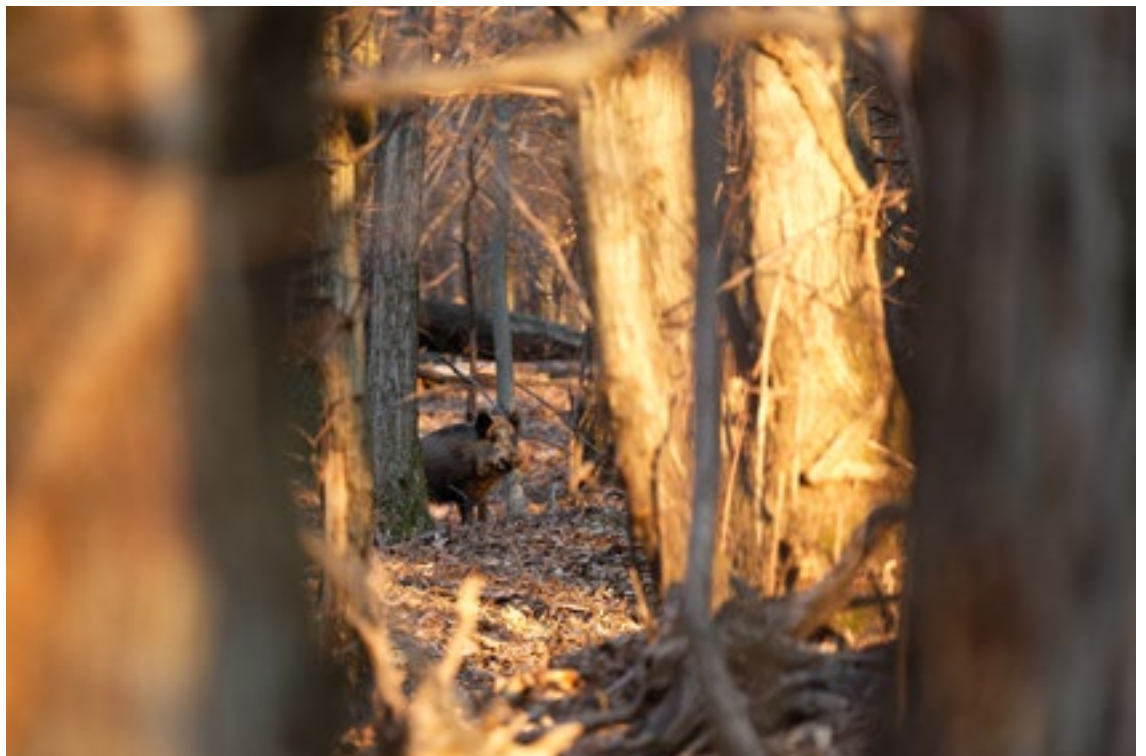


The hills, which stretch from Laveno to Luino, and which are confined by the Lake Maggiore to the west and the curving Valcuvia valley to the east are often overlooked. There are a number of mountain tops, like Pizzone di Laveno, Monte Nudo and others, offering impressive panoramic walks. Below them are villages like Vararo and Arcumeggia. Originally, constructed half way up the mountains to escape the mosquito-ridden wetlands of the valley and offering also a safe haven from passing troops. In times of crisis the number of inhabitants would rise dramatically, filling with residents from Laveno and other places. Arcumeggia, with its frescos mainly created in the 1950s is an exciting place to walk about and study the artists' works. Also the XII century church in San Antonio in its panoramic situation above Lake Maggiore is well worth a visit.

The limestone geology of the mountains hides a great cave system (only for experts), and the linea Cardorna offers plenty to explore. The museum in Cassano Valcuvia with its trenches gives an interesting insight into our recent history. The calcareous dry meadows of Val Busegia (next to Vararo) form a very unique habitat, with unusual type of vegetation, with many orchids and vast areas of grassland. Also beautiful butterflies can be discovered.

A very experienced walker might also explore the forests themselves. Walking alone, one can encounter plenty of mammals, like deer, Mouflon and wild boar. Not to talk about the plentiful of birds.

A visit is well worth it, but please behave responsibly to nature and take all necessary steps to keep safe.



*left page: Mouflon
this page
top: Red Squirrel;
bottom: Wild Boar*



Sesto Calende

Daniele Ehrlich







The towns and villages on Lago Maggiore and close-by water bodies are some of the well kept secrets of Northern Italy. The landscape is quite developed, but walks and bike paths are starting to cut across developments and provide access to nature sites and shorelines with great recreational value. In fact, outdoors activities including fishing, canoeing, bicycling, running, are now very common. The town of Sesto Calende has an added

value to recreation: its natural setting. Located on the northern shore of the initial track of the Ticino river, it experiences continuous changes in lights across the day and the year generating stunning dawns and sunset enjoyed by people of all ages on its pedestrian alongshore walk. As some photo-enthusiasts would say, you never go to Sesto Calende without a photo camera, as you will for sure miss a good photo opportunity.



"Let the children play
maybe not with smart phones"







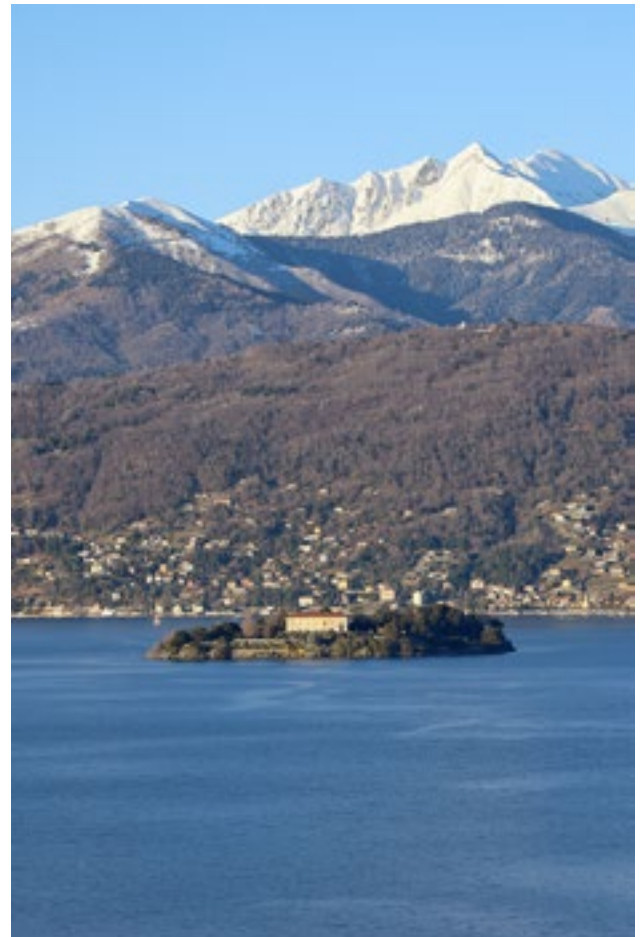


chronicles from the golden age

Maria Luisa Paracchini

I don't remember the first time I came to visit this land, I was probably twelve years old, when my parents built the villa in Meina. They called it "Villa Eden". They had fallen in love with the lake and its quiet rhythm, they used to say that traveling North and passing the white cliff in Arona was like going through the gates of heaven. My father was running an important notary office in Milan and had a hectic life, he did not have much time to spend at the villa, and often he would bring his work with him, but I have never seen him so happy as in the moments we spent playing badminton in the garden.

We arrived in 1890. At that moment the railway was ending in Arona, we were arriving there by train from Milan and then two carriages would bring us to Meina. We were traveling with our servants, Miss Anna, the youngest, was my fashion councilor. My mother was so rigid, she did not want me to wear feathers, she was saying I was too young. I loved feathers and was secretly asking Anna to buy some for me at the market, that she would then sew on my favourite hat. We were spending quite some time preparing the wardrobe for our holidays at Villa Eden. There was a sort of migration after the springtime rains, many families had bought or built villas in the evenly spaced little towns: Meina, Lesa, Belgirate, Stresa, Baveno and further North towards Switzerland. The season was very lively: industrialists, composers, politicians, writers, painters, aristocracy and the high bourgeoisie were meeting and discussing in the beautifully decorated salons among Murano chandeliers and Renaissance paintings. Some were coming all the way from England. I was so excited when we went to visit Giuseppe Mussi, a family friend who lived in Baveno and was at the time a Member of the Parliament. Going there was my biggest dream, somebody told me that, only ten years earlier, Queen Victoria spent a month in Baveno, with her ladies-in-waiting and her daughter. She stayed with the





Henfrey family, how much I would have longed to see her, a real Queen! I never understood why she preferred to stay in a private house rather than in the majestic Grand Hôtel et des Iles Borromées in Stresa, which had been inaugurated with great pomp in 1863, sixteen years before Victoria's visit.

I would have easily spent my days playing badminton, studying piano and visiting the neighbours with my mother, but my tutor was regularly arriving after the first week. My parents could not tolerate me wasting time playing with the ball with the daughters of Marquis Fossati de Regibus. Summers followed one another and Villa Eden did not change much, but the surroundings did. The railway was

prolongued and connected to the European network through the Simplon tunnel, and we could arrive in Meina by train all the way from Milan, or from Turin. It was 1906 and I still remember the first trip to Switzerland, I had never been abroad before, everything looked so different. I had married and I was mother of a small child, my beloved Giulia. At the time my husband was working in Turin running the industry of his father, and I was spending much time at the lake. I was regularly having tea with some of the other ladies, some of which I had known since we were children. New houses were built and they looked so different, they had decorations resembling flowers and leaves. Liberty style they called it. After a while I started to like it, I was







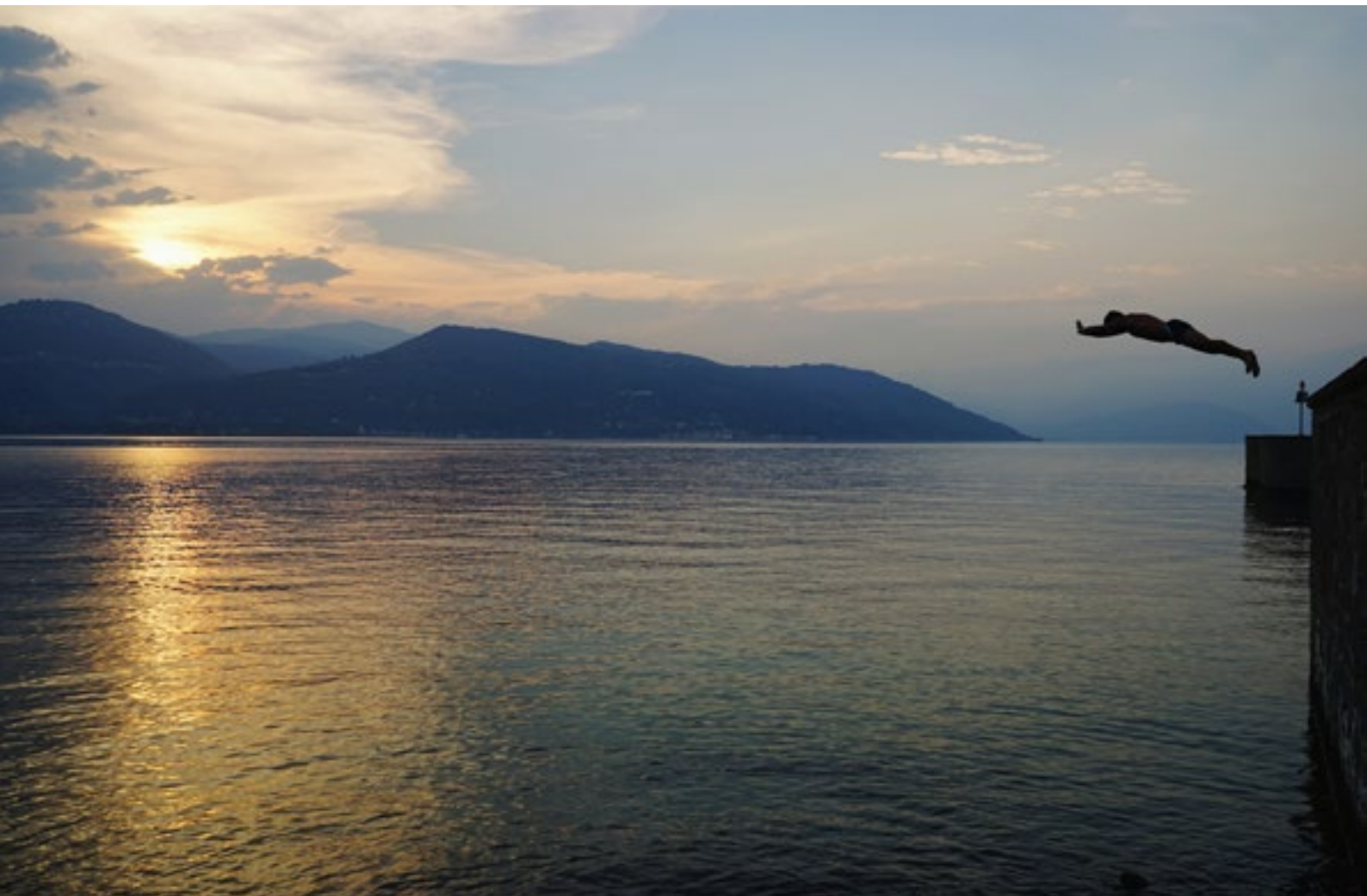
almost going to ask my husband to sell Villa Eden and buy one of the new manors. No, we did not do it. I could never sell it, I have spent thirty summers here, and it is always like the first time. We are just back from our first tour on the Orient- Express, we went to Paris. It is so easy to catch it, in Stresa where it has one of the stops. It was the most amazing adventure of my entire life but somehow I liked the idea of coming back to the peace of the lake. You never get used to the changing light, to see the opalescent water right after sunset when the sky is still bright, to the colours slowly fading into the night. I am still amazed to experience the explosion of flowers at springtime, to being able to grow in my garden firs and orange trees. To fall asleep while listening to the sound of the waves from the open window.

*NB: references to people, places and dates
are not coincidental*



the lake

Konstantinos Gkoumas

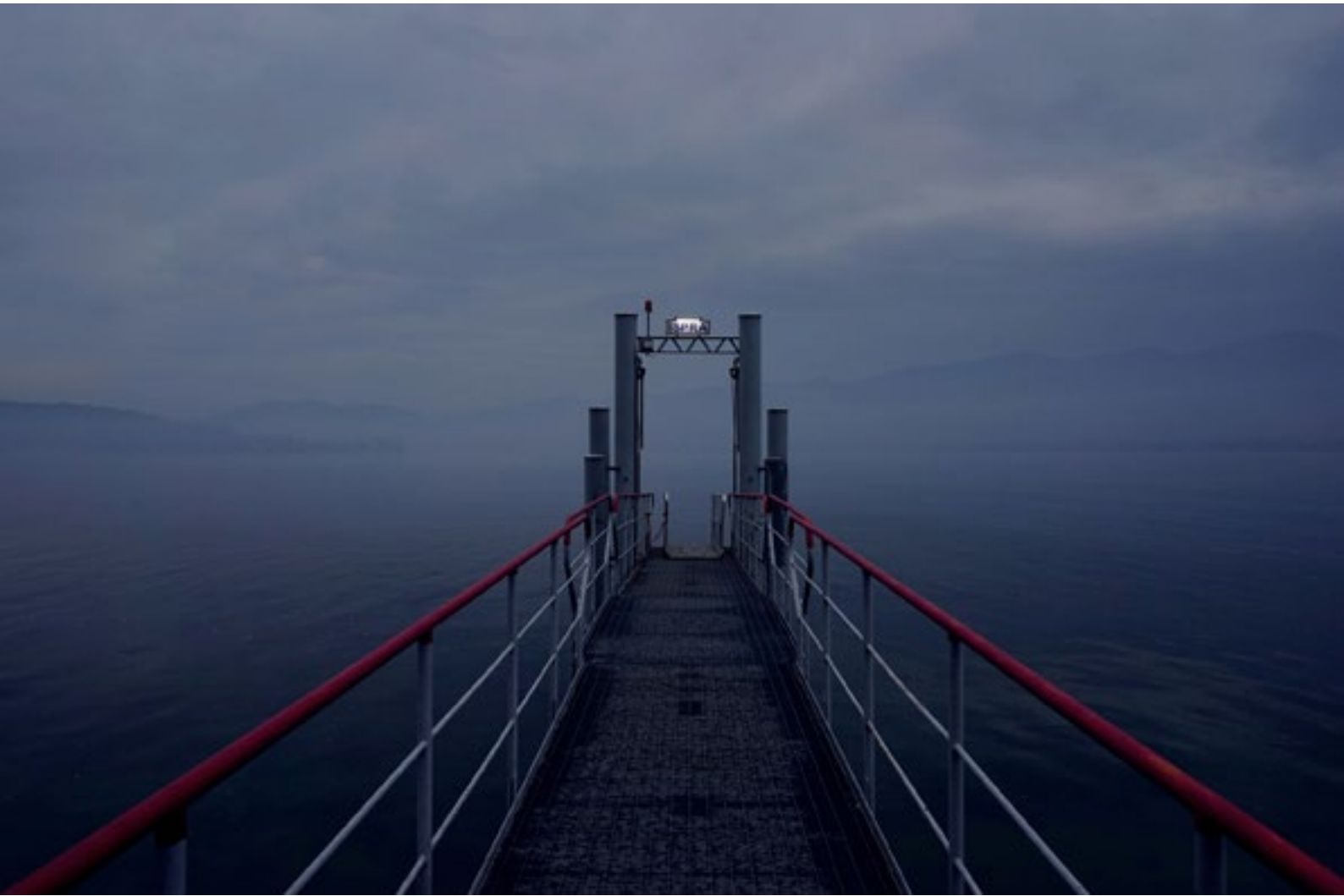






"In Winter, when the fields are white, I sing this song for your delight. In Spring, when the woods are getting green, I'll try and tell you what I mean. In Summer, when the days are long, perhaps you'll understand the song. In Autumn, when the leaves are brown, take pen and ink, and write it down." - Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*











and I must confess, despite the cable car,
I have never betrayed the mule track



Monteviasco

Enchanted village - Roberto Tilio

Monteviasco is a wonderful mountain village located at 930 meters, high on the slopes of Monte Pola, close to the Swiss border. According to a legend the village was created by four brigands who came here to escape from Milanese justice. But in reality, the first settlements date back to the Bronze Age while the first written records of a permanent community date back to the 12th century. In 1928, it had more than 300 inhabitants that gradually, due to emigration, have reduced. Finally, the village was abandoned also because there was no carriage road but just a mule track to reach it. The situation changed in 1989 when a small cable car was built; it was working until 2018 when the service was suspended. Today it has, more or less, a dozen residents and this number increases during summer when homeowners return to take advantage of the climate and tranquillity of this place.

I don't know why but abandoned villages have always fascinated me. These places can convey a sad feeling of a community that no longer exists but if you look closely, with

a careful and sensitive eye, you can discover in the engravings on the old doors, in the votive chapels and small fountains, the call of that time when the village was populated and alive.

In 1981, I went for the first time to discover this village I had heard so much about. The images therefore date back to 40 years ago, a distant time, but I don't think the village has undergone significant changes. Now, as then, you have to walk the 1452 steps of the mule track climbing 375 meters. A tiring but suggestive path, a sort of pilgrimage in a wonderful naturalistic context.

It was November, it had snowed the day before and there were some white spots around. The day was splendid and when I reached the end of the mule track, I discovered a magical, silent and fascinating place. In front of me I found some low houses covered with the typical roofing stones and with wooden balconies and, in the middle, narrow and shaded streets paved with stone.

The village was immersed in a "deafening silence"!







The nature on the edge of the town was wild, characterized by majestic chestnut trees, walnuts and centuries-old beeches. I didn't meet anyone on that occasion but I saw that there were signs of human presence, stacked wood, panniers and tools for daily use. The problem for these places is the maintenance of the houses, the streets and the whole rural context which, normally, does not find much support from the local authorities. Fortunately, local people, who have moved to other places, often return, specially in the summer, to keep the village alive and healthy. Since then, I have been back several times to visit it, unfortunately not recently, and every time I brought some friends with me for a nice walk in that magical place. Furthermore, there was (I don't know if it still exists) a nice "Trattoria" where you could eat some typical dishes of the area and it was particularly famous for its goat cheese. For me going to Monteviasco was an enormous pleasure, despite the effort of climbing the mule track. It represented a kind of "philosophical path" whose prize was reaching the village and, more prosaically, find a good place to eat!







the hidden Brebbia

Kevin Douglas





Brebbia does not appear so interesting when passing through by car, however, this small town has some secrets, hidden away from the main roads but well worth exploring!

Wandering through the woods towards Laghetasc, we stumble across an abandoned farmhouse used by the

Betti family for summer cattle grazing, sixty or so years ago. Nearby, their water well is still standing. The woods are a more recent addition; apart from the pastures there were once beautiful vineyards. The suggestive Laghetasc, sometimes completely dry, often frozen in winter, is occupied by

characterful bald cypress trees. These slow-growing, long-living deciduous trees are native to wetlands.

The pathways that criss-cross this area are part of the 'Vie Verdi dei Laghi-Sentiero del Verbano' and it is possible to walk down to a small part of Brebbia that enjoys a wonderful panorama of Lake Maggiore. Here, at Bozza di Brebbia, where the Bardello river enters Lake Maggiore you can also see a variety of wildlife. If you are lucky you might get a glimpse of the Kingfisher that nests along the river and visits the lake to fish. Nearby is the Sabbie d'Oro beach, another characteristic area of white sands, and bullrushes and trees growing in the shallow lake-side water.





left page, top: deserted farmhouse in the woods; bottom: old water well; this page: LagheTasc





*Panorama of Lake
Maggiore with
Isola Madre and Val
Grande mountains
from Bozza di Brebbia*

this page

left: Kingfisher

*right: black-headed
gulls taking flight*

right page

*after the storm a
rough Lake Maggiore
at Bozza di Brebbia*









*View from Brebbia
superiore towards
Besozzo*

*left and right: the
canalised Bardello
river and the Brebbia
Pipe factory*

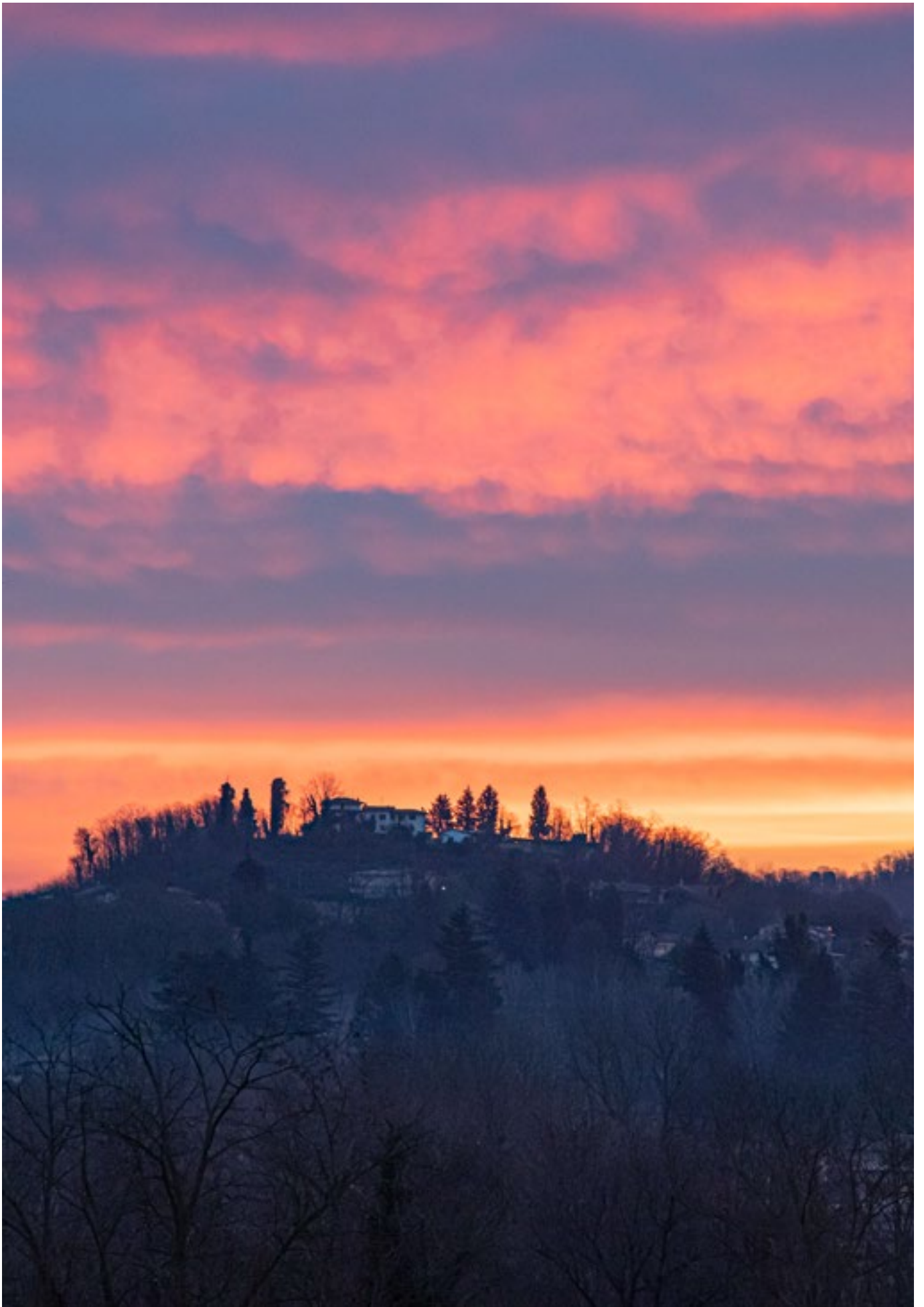
Moving east upstream the Bardello river, which connects Lake Varese to Lake Maggiore, we come to the famous Brebbia Pipe factory and museum. It is placed in a humid sandstone basin ideal for growing briar-wood used to making pipes. Prior to the factory's opening, the site housed a small hydroelectric power-plant.

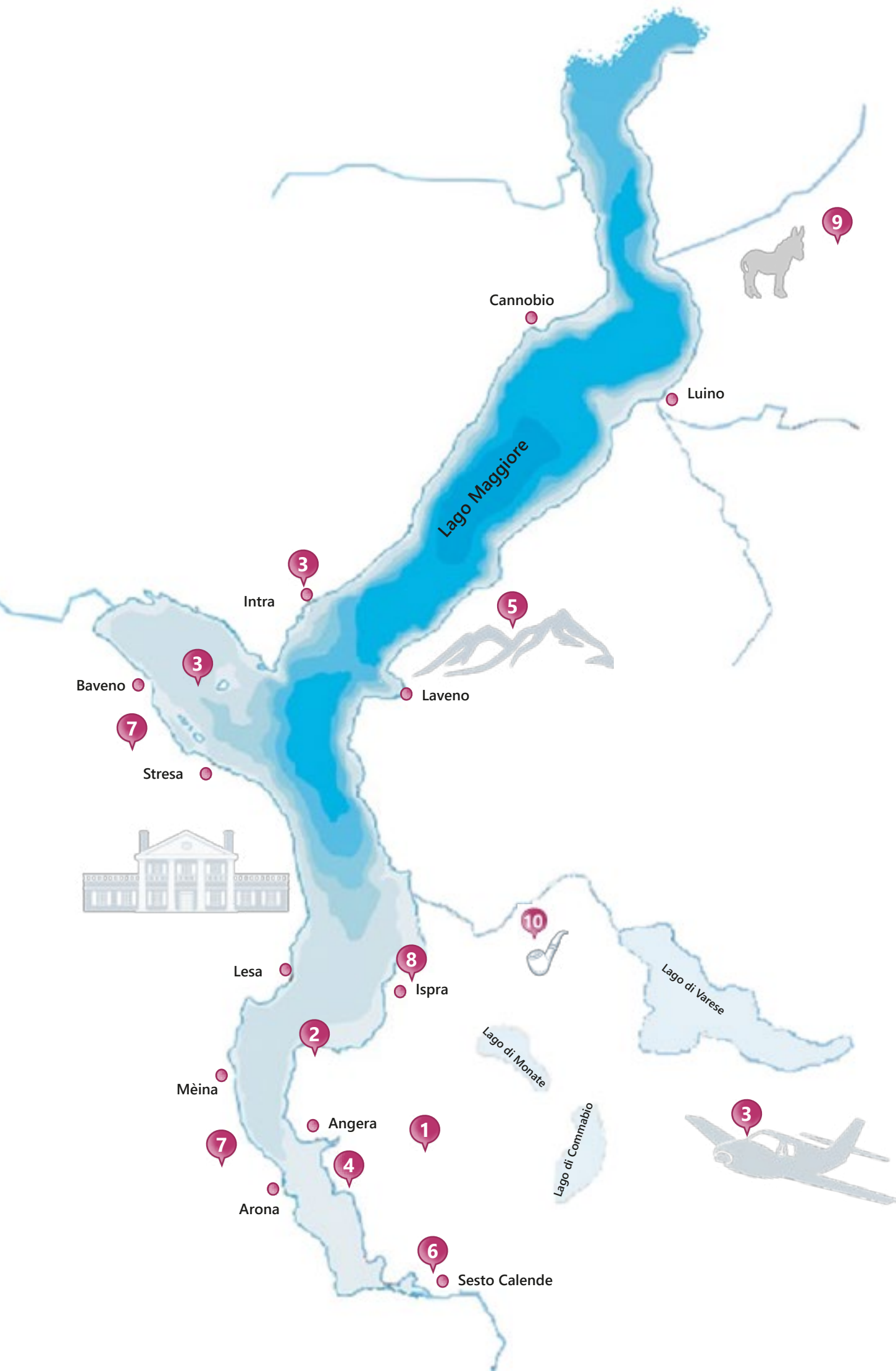


*top: abandoned house
left: modern medieval
house*

*right page: sunrise
over Brebbia superiore*

After further 2km, we arrive at Brebbia Superiore with its own distinct character. A castle, destroyed in 1263, once perched on the hill, overlooking the roadways below. The facades of many more-recently built dwellings were changed by a local builder to give them a medieval appearance. Every summer for almost a century now, the famous San Rocco festival takes place. Down at the city centre, the church from the 13th century with its famous frescos was actually built on top of a much older church from the 7th century. Indeed, Brebbia with its long history offers any curious photographer plenty of interesting opportunities.





FotoCineClub

FCC

The FotoCineClub (FCC) is a COPAS-supported club at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra, Italy. We invite all interested persons to join our activities and meetings, as well as our email distribution list and the WhatsApp group. Paying members can additionally participate in group decisions, use the club's equipment including our photo studio, receive photo journals and participate in courses (additional course fees apply). Membership fee for the year 2021 is 30 Euro.

committee: Gabi Breitenbach (president); Rudolf Hummel (vice-president); Sara Flisi (treasurer); Ralf Steinberger (secretary); Kevin Douglas, Eva Grammatikaki, Rosana Grecchi, Daniele Ehrlich, Tommaso Selleri (consiglieri).

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about this issue

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page 2: © Tommaso Selleri (view from Ranco) [2]

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autumn: Andreas Brink [4]

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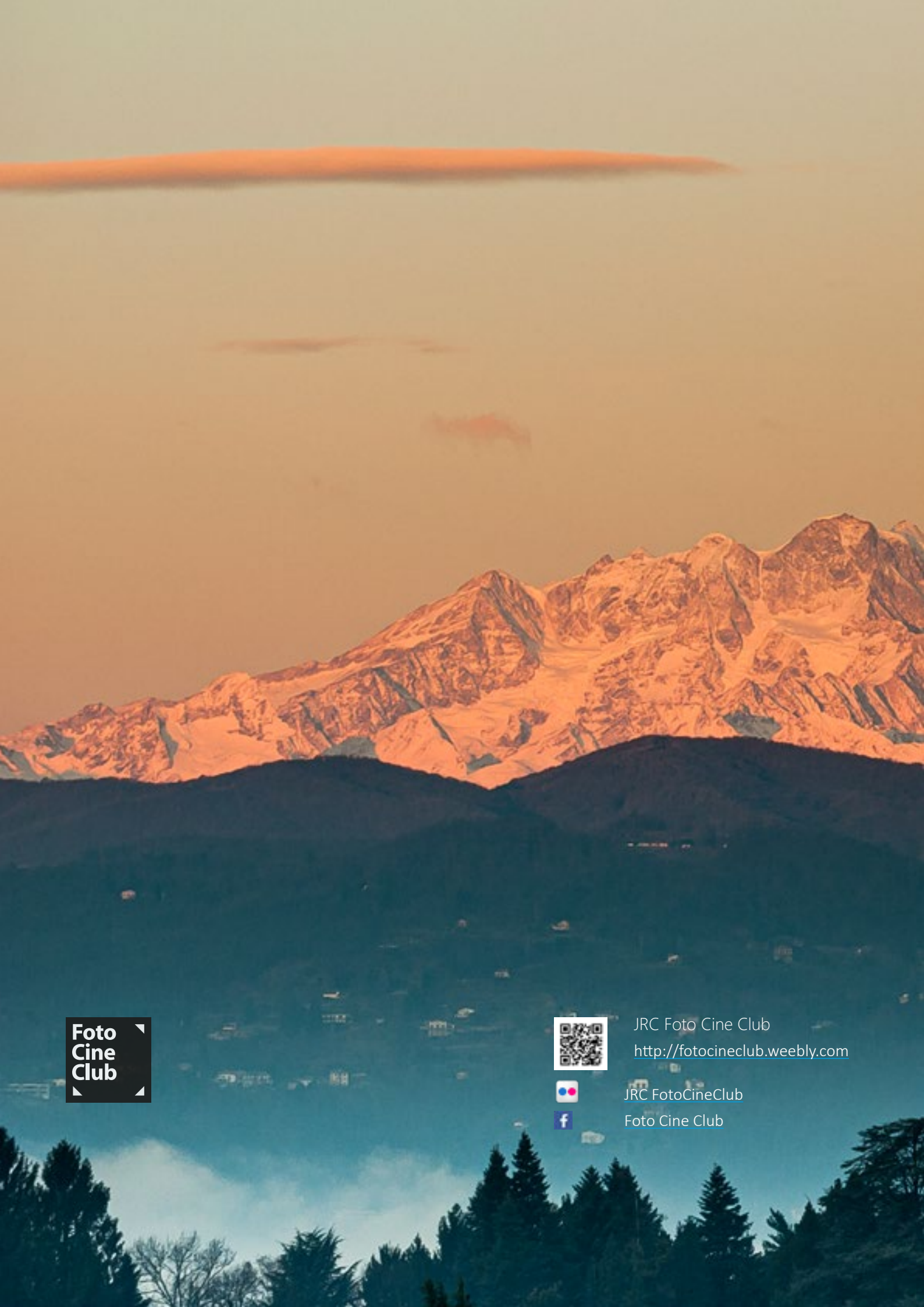
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