

Il Pennato

Spannocchia Internship Program

Volume 7, Issue 3

The Salumi Story

By Ben Slayton, Interim Internship Director

Spannocchia is so many things to so many people. That's a concept that has been applied to many places, I know, but Spannocchia really earns it. Anybody who has been there knows this is true, so I will spare you all the examples of what Spannocchia might represent to those who have been lucky enough to experience its beauty...its quirkiness...its deliciousness.



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I cannot choose just one favorite of all the wonderful experiences I had at Spannocchia during my 14 months. But for the purpose of this Pennato story, I am going to write about Salumi. I spent a lot of time working with meat while at Spannocchia and since I have left, I have found myself thinking a lot about meat...and therefore thinking a lot about the friends and memories relating to my Spannocchia experience. What follows are my three favorite salumi offerings and what they mean to me:

Prosciutto = Spannocchia's Torre

Prosciutto. Spannocchia's signature salumi offering made with passion and tradition commensurate with the grace and history of the animal from whence it comes. The Tower is Spannocchia's centerpiece. It proudly reaches up over Spannocchia, like a hind leg of the Cinta braced for hand carving at a local market.

Salsicce = Spannocchia's Intern Program

Sausage. The ingredients aren't the most prized parts of the pig. Just as some of the elements of the IP are not quite perfect. But somehow, in the end, both seem to turn out a product...an experience...that is rich and flavorful. And a little fattening.

Smoked Cervo Sausage = Spannocchia's creative spirit.

Smoke. What is that? Certainly not part of the Tuscan salumi tradition. Yet, there it was...the order from Riccio to prepare roughly 30 Kilograms of cervo sausage for smoking. Not once, but twice! Despite the stubborn momentum of Spannocchia, there is an undying spirit to reevaluate, rethink, and reinvent. Living at Spannocchia is an art and the space always exists for inspiration.

In Tuscany they say that when it comes to butchering a pig, nothing should go to waste: every piece is valuable.

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Ephemeral Beauty Haiku

By Susannah Clark



Haiku for Cow's Pigs:

*people always ask
the way to cow's pigs, but then,
cow's pigs are the way*

Haiku for Team Animali:

*climbing morning hill
Adamo calls, "eh, toh, toh - "
Lapo trails behind*

Haiku for Angelo:

*wise words of olives
spoken only to himself -
Angelo snips on*

Haiku for Giulio:

*guardo il recinto
e retornando, dico:
"si, funzione"*





Two haiku for Riccio, and all “sons of Giotto”:

*Painted white again,
the transformation kitchen
is never finished*

*I paint the red line,
freehand, mindful that beauty
is ephemeral*



Haiku for Lapo’s dreadlock:

*moist matted wonder
formed of primal elements:
blood, slop, mud, fur, drool*



Haiku for Giovanni (with thanks):

*dark evening run
to Stigliano reveals –
we have great neighbors*

Haiku for the spiritual chicken:

*solitary hen –
clucking corner exile in
moon sanctuary*



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Highlights

By Cara Hendry



When I think back to my time at Spannocchia, it's hard for me to imagine an experience that could possibly top everything that went on in those 3 months. Here are my highlights in no particular order:

Lapo: Lapo is a dirty dog that reminds me of some grumpy old man who, once you get past the aloof exterior, is really quite sweet. Although he doesn't do much beyond napping in the shade of the villa, Spannocchia, to me, would feel incomplete without "Superfriend".

"Ciao, bella": Even after a day of work, covered in every kind of filth imaginable, hair wild and greasy, wearing a baggy t-shirt, ripped jeans, and mud encrusted boots, this was Roberto's line. It always brought a smile to my face... until I saw a mirror and that clearly, he was lying.

Vendemmia: It was tedious and sticky, but looking back, harvesting grapes was awesome. It's nice to work in good company, with Angelo providing the music (acapella, of course) and Lapo napping under the vines.

Fires in Pulcinelli: Since we didn't have TV, we spent most nights glued to the fireplace. Also great for drying your jeans.

The Language barrier: Although at times it was super frustrating, it often provided pretty good entertainment. Some of my favorites were explaining to Giulio the meaning of "that's what she said" and "once you go black you never go back". Angelo's interchangeable use of jews, shoes, choose, and juice was also classic.



Lambs!!: The best part was putting them on your shoulders like a "real" shepherd.

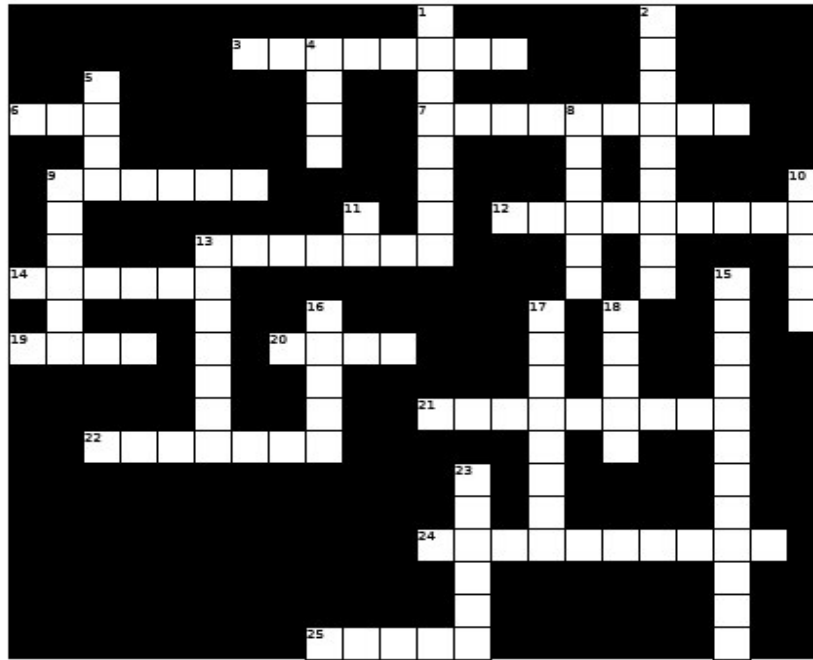
Hay-bales: More specifically throwing them from the bale loft into the back of the Guzzon. I have no idea why, but this was easily my favorite thing to do on the farm.



Spannocchia Crossword Puzzle

Annamarie

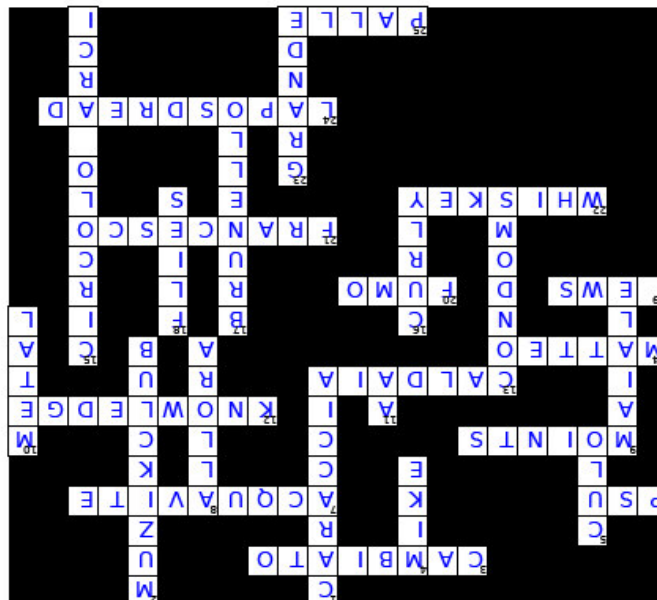
How well do you know Spannocchia and its Fall 2008 interns?
Find out here!



- Across**
- 3 Il mundo é _____
 - 6 Tyler's school of amore
 - 7 A surprisingly strong liquid
 - 9 Driving guzzon with cig
 - 12 Elspeth lays these kinds of eggs
 - 13 Julia's hot makeout spot
 - 14 Spannocchia's temporary Casanova
 - 19 Juice, choose, shoes, and _____
 - 20 Il _____ uccide
 - 21 Roberto's and Angelo's sons
 - 22 Susannah's drink of choice
 - 24 Halloween shrine
 - 25 Expand with boredom

- Down**
- 1 Bad Cara!
 - 2 Rosia's hotspot that never opens
 - 4 Olive amante
 - 5 If you win the lottery, you have a huge _____
 - 8 Italian "so then, well, all right, etc."
 - 9 porca _____
 - 10 Oops! Knock on _____
 - 11 Interns will be attending these meetings
 - 13 Piñata contents
 - 15 Alternative local gelateria
 - 16 Riccio's capelli ricci
 - 17 Spannocchia's wine equivalent
 - 18 The bane of the interns' existence
 - 23 How Angelo describes Elspeth

Answers:



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True Love: A Dream within a Dream

Tuscany, 2008

By Elspeth Pelliccia



Chapter 1

“I must have her!” cried Lord Nello, thrashing angrily at a lone chestnut on the forest floor. His short snout and cross-eyed stare made it nearly impossible for the Large White to successfully demolish the prickly nutshell and his anger was sparked anew. His pale blue eyes gazed longingly at the curvaceous Cinta in the next pen over, but her only response was a quick—oh! could it have been flirtatious?—glance in his direction. His brief hope was

dashed as Andy, Earl of Pig Hill and the local stud among the Mill Ladies, strutted past and promptly distracted every female in the vicinity. Perfect markings and rippling back fat made the enormous pig a prize for the lucky sows that were chosen for his private corral.

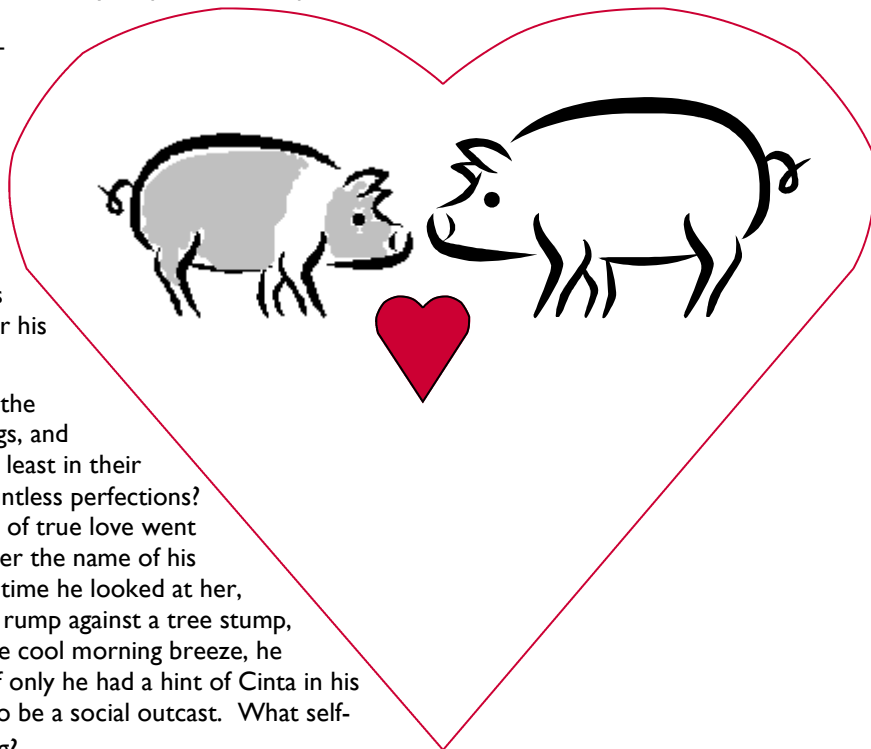
What was Lord Nello thinking? All the Cintas on the Spannocchia farm scorned his pale skin, stumpy legs, and submissive demeanor. How could he compare, at least in their eyes, to the blinding glare of Andy’s seemingly countless perfections?

And yet his attempts to stifle the sweet dreams of true love went unheeded by his heart, which seemed to whisper the name of his sweet Gertrude with every aching beat. Every time he looked at her, every time he caught her sensuously rubbing her rump against a tree stump, and every time he caught a whiff of her odor in the cool morning breeze, he knew his destiny was entwined with hers. Alas! If only he had a hint of Cinta in his veins! But fate, it would seem, had doomed him to be a social outcast. What self-respecting female would ally herself with such a pig?

Chapter 2

...Several weeks later...

A triumphant chuckle crept past Nello’s lips as he surveyed the scene before him. Gertrude, his dear, sweet Gertrude, was gazing into his eyes with such longing and devotion that he was overwhelmed with desire. A desire he was sure he had never felt before for any other pig. They sat atop the old stone tower underneath a full moon and a myriad of twinkling stars. And to think! After weeks of timid, grunting conversations and light caresses between feedings, he had only to procure a few bottles of grappa to convince his foxy female to follow him up to the tower. He had conquered Gertrude’s hesitation and successfully pulled her out of Andy’s grip. Ha! Andy! He need not worry about that sluggish oaf now. Not when he could simply laugh at his foe’s failure and relish his victory. He put those thoughts aside and focused his attention on whispering dolce nientes in his Cinta’s sexy ears.



a poem and two haikus about radicchio

By Sonya Kharas

I

in the small vegetable garden we grew two types of radicchio: radicchio di Treviso, which is named after a small village in the Veneto, and radicchio di Lusina, which is named after a small village in the Veneto on the river Po.

II

these are not loose, leafy greens, they prefer a stricter path. each leaf clinging close to the next, leafy arms wrapped around leafy shoulders, as if huddled together for warmth, as if discussing the passing route for the upcoming play, as if protecting their secrets from the gardener's view.

III

before lunch each day I'd walk the path alongside their bed, cupping each radicchio head and squeezing to test for the hardest, the firmest.

IV

sometimes I would play the following game: I, the main player, would stand at one end of the radicchio bed, the end nearest to the rosemary. from there I would scan the rows of loosely and tightly wrapped leafy bundles, and try to predict which ones would be most ready for harvest. many times I thought I could tell, but almost always, the radicchio won.

V

that which I thought I knew, suddenly coming undone.

haiku I (for Annamaria)

what is this one called?
radicchio. In English?
still radicchio.



haiku 2 (for Carmen)

this one is good raw.
and this red one is good raw
or also grill-ed.



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The Farmer's Market

By Gabe Clary

Before I was an intern at Spannocchia in the fall of 2008, I was living in Davis California. I visited the Davis Farmer's Market about once a week to buy produce and occasionally meat. I remember walking through the beautiful displays of fruits and vegetables, thinking that I was doing my part. I appreciated the farmers market for what it symbolized; getting away from GMOs, mass-produced food, supporting local business and agriculture.



While I respected what the farmers selling their products were doing, I didn't fully appreciate or understand it. In some ways I saw the farmers market as a sort of organic extension of the grocery store. I would cruise the "aisles" humming to myself, picking out the most beautiful bunch of radishes or imagining how I would cook Chinese long beans. Sadly, this is where my thinking ended.

In treating the experience of going to the Farmers Market much like shopping at any other store I missed a large and very important part of the picture. I wasn't putting together that, to the people behind the stalls, this was not just an exchange of goods for money; this was a way of living. More than just selling a product, the farmer sells something he or she has cared for from birth, nurtured, fed and even loved.

Farmers, I thought, grow food. Period. They grow it. I buy it and eat it. Simple. But why is it so easy to forget how important that is?

As Joy Moore said in an open letter to Barck Obama about the need for real agriculture policy in the U.S. "Basically what we all need to survive is clean air and water, whole nutritious food, love, laughter, music and dancing. That's it."

If food is one of the necessities of human life, how is it possible that I hadn't given *who* was growing my food, and *how*, a second thought?

Spannocchia was my first real exposure to working on a farm. Being so close to all the food we ate and the act of harvest changed the way I thought about food. For the first time I was making the connection that many hands (including my own), from past and present were responsible for everything I was eating, everyday. I could feel the sense of community that was involved in the production of all the food that was produced at Spannocchia. And I could see clearly the place where it was all grown.

Thinking about this community made me want to be a part of it. It felt, and still feels like the most important and fulfilling type of work one can do. If good food is vital to the quality of human life, farming is a powerful way to affect social change.

I quit my job in California halfway through the internship program, and decided to make a change. I am continuing my practical education in producing food here in Italy WWOOF program.

Now when I visit Farmers Markets, either as a consumer or vendor, I know what questions I'll be asking other farmers. Instead of asking how much a bunch of lettuce costs, how it was grown? Where it was grown and by whom? What kind of fertilizer was used? Where did the seeds come from? What else do you grow? Do you accept WWOOFers...?



A Submission

From Elizabeth Ginsburg

L'infinito

Giacomo Leopardi

Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle
E questa siepe che da tanta parte
De' ll'ultimo orrizonte il guardo esclude.
Ma sedendo e mirando interminati
Spazi di là da quella, e sovrumani
Silenzi, e profondissima quiete,
Io nel pensier mi fingo, ove per poco
Il cor non si spaura. E come il vento
Odo stormir tra queste piante, io quello
Infinito silenzio a questa voce
Vo comparando; e mi sovvien l'eterno,
E le morte stagioni, e la presente
E viva, e' l' suon di lei. Così tra questa
Immensità s'annega il pensier mio:
E' l' naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare.



Spannocchia Internship
Program

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Internship Mission Statement:

The Internship Program is dedicated to enriching the lives of young people by providing them with a unique educational experience on a community oriented farm in Tuscany, Italy. Tenuta di Spannocchia's 1100-acre pastoral estate serves as an active model for responsible stewardship through collective effort.

Fall 2008 Interns

Back (left to right):

Sonya Kharas—Team Orto

Gabe Clary—Accoglienza

Tyler Shean—Tuttofare

Elsbeth Pelliccia—Accoglienza

Heather Collins— Volunteer

Cara Hendry—Pastorella

Front (left to right):

Annamarie Askren—Vignaiola

Susannah Clark—Team Animali

Elizabeth Ginsburg—Team Orto

Adam Akullian—Team Animali

