



RURAL RESIDENCY FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

ABOUT RUC ARTIST RESIDENCY

Nestled in the Italian Alps, the Camonica Valley has been telling stories for thousands of years, carved in rock, shaped by glaciers, echoed in ancient traditions. In fact, the Camonica Valley is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979, and is renowned for its breath-taking glacial lakes and mountains, for the Roman archaeological sites, and most especially its prehistoric engravings carved in the rocks.

RUC is a private rural estate offering artists a residency rooted in nature, archaeology, and living community. RUC estate (around 20 acres / 8 hectares) hosts a tiny rural community immersed in vineyards and woods, and is located on the hills above the small town of Cividate Camuno, an ancient prominent Roman outpost.

Our facilities are Villa Amati, an early XX century iconic villa, and 'Casa della Letteratura', an ancient rural mansion restored with creativity and charm by the Polish contemporary designer and architect Marek Misztal von Blechinger. In both our facilities, you will be accommodated in a private room and studio, while the kitchen, living room, and bathrooms will be to share with other artists in residency.

The residency project focuses on supporting artists' development through reconnecting with nature and with the valley's ancient traditions: Ruc is an ideal place if you are looking to concentrate on your work, while relaxing in a very quiet and natural environment. Residents can experience simplicity and freedom while living in deep contact with nature, a condition that leads them to reconnecting with their creative profound self.

TYPES OF RESIDENCY

In case you would be interested in living your stay not only as a retreat, but also as an occasion of discovering local history, art, craftsmanship, and traditions, we encourage artists to join one of our residences dedicated to the 'In Simplicitate Libertas' program. Every year, throughout the summer season, RUC Artist Residency offers one-week residency programs, developed in collaboration with the Misztal von Blechinger Foundation, with the RUC Aps non-profit association, and with several international artists. Thanks to RUC Artist Residency's non-profit partners, artists can enjoy studio visits, artist talks, cultural events, wine tastings, social gatherings between peers, unforgettable encounters and experiences, discover in-depth history, traditions, craftsmanship and art of our magic and remote valley. Besides the artistic program, during the one week residency, participating artists will experience the simple ancestral magic of rural life in a small community, and will enjoy focused studio and en-plein air working time. Artists will explore the rich historical, artistic, and naturalistic heritage of the valley, from the world known UNESCO sites of prehistoric rock engravings, to the several medieval towns, and majestic beautiful mountains around the residency.



If instead, you intend your time at RUC just to concentrate on your own projects, we offer you the opportunity of attending as an independent resident. We would still be available to help with information and basic assistance, for example: pick up from the train station, and a ride to the grocery store if you don't rent a car.

ART SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Artists are encouraged to bring with them in their luggage the supplies they would use during the residency. If it is not feasible there is also the possibility to have materials shipped to RUC in advance, or to order them directly from our local partner shop in the valley, 'Colorificio Lorenzoli', thanks to the nice collaboration of Camilla that speaks English (+39 346 817 1489). Please check their shop at [@colorificio_lorenzoli_srl](https://www.instagram.com/colorificio_lorenzoli_srl).

STUDIO WORKSPACE

Artists will have the possibility to work outdoors and create their own open air studio space wherever they prefer in the garden area.

Upon request, artists can also benefit of private indoor studio spaces at RUC: on the top floor of Villa Amati there are 3 studios (that measure 14 x 10 feet / 4 x 3 meters each). Our basic studio set up for each artist is 1 big table, 1 chair, 1 lamp. Easel upon request. Residents are invited to communicate us their needs regarding furniture and setting of the studio and we will try to meet them in the best possible way, according to our possibilities. Villa Amati also has an outdoor covered veranda where artists can work.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Just let us know your travel schedule and we will help you finding the best connection to reach the valley.

Car is the best option to get to the valley and to move around while at RUC, so we recommend it warmly as the best solution. There are several international car rental services that provide vehicles for affordable prices for the whole period of your stay. Car rental services are present for car pick up and return services at all airports and main train stations in Italy. We strongly recommend the website www.holidayautos.com to compare prices and find the best quality price relation for your car rental.

If you come by car, our meeting point is Piazza Fiamme Verdi in Civate Camuno. We will meet you there and then we will show you the best way to RUC.

If instead you choose to come to the valley by public transportation, we will pick you up from the nearest station at your arrival and will drive you back to it at your departure.

You have different options to come to RUC by public transportation:



- by bus, from Milan Sesto San Giovanni (northern end station on the red tube line M1) to 'Malegno' or 'Breno' stop: <https://arriva.it/app/uploads/sites/7/2021/12/linea-bs1.pdf>. This bus stops also in Milan Bergamo Orio al Serio airport.
- by train, with the Regional railway of Lombardy Trenord <https://www.trenord.it/en/> to Civate-Malegno, or Breno (depends on timetable, the connection is quite slow although very panoramic on Lake Iseo). You will get this train after changing in the city of Brescia. To get to Brescia railway station from anywhere in Italy please check the National railway Trenitalia <https://www.trenitalia.com/en.html>; for fast trains also check the private train company Italo <https://www.italotreno.com/en/booking-train-ticket> that often offers cheaper tickets.
- by private taxi, we recommend to contact in advance Domenico Bianchi at Taxi Boario <http://www.taxiboario.it/> to book a car with driver or a mini-van that will drive you from Milan airports or from Brescia station directly to RUC.

MOBILITY WHILE AT RUC

Warning—RUC is at the top of a STEEP road!!! The walkable way to RUC is a narrow small road called via Teatro Romano, from the historical part of the village Civate Camuno, located at the foot of the valley.

If you intend to rent a car or arrive with your own, please remember that the street that drives you to RUC is steep and narrow, so we recommend you to choose only city cars, like a Fiat 500, Panda, or similar.

The nearest ATM and groceries are in Civate Camuno, at a distance of 700 meters (0.4 miles), 10-15 minutes walking distance, with an altitude difference of 90 meters (295 ft).

Other ATM and supermarket are also in Bienno, a very nice village on the top of our hill, named by the Italian Cultural Ministry among the most beautiful villages in Italy (Borghi più belli d'Italia), and also reachable with a 15 minutes walk.

ACCESSIBILITY

If you have any accessibility needs please let us know in advance. RUC is in a mountain area, there are stairs and no elevators in the buildings.

RUC'S RULES IN EVERYDAY LIFE

It is forbidden to introduce spirits, hard liquors and any kind of drugs at RUC.

Residents are not allowed to let non-authorized persons enter the residency and any of RUC's indoor and outdoors spaces.

Non compliance of this rules will result in the immediate end of the residency.



INTERNET

Our philosophy is to reconnect with nature through experiencing the slow rhythm and the simple authentic activities of rural life. Disconnection is, in our philosophy, a crucial part of the experience.

However, we are aware that our residents may need to use internet for their daily working activity, so we have free wifi at Villa Amati, and we eventually assist those artists wishing to have their own independent connection, in buying Italian sim cards to have an individual internet hot-spot (phone companies in Italy offer lots of Gigas at less than 10 euros per month).

EATING

RUC is first and foremost a home, and as such, we have a shared kitchen that we make available, fully equipped with everything needed. We offer a “welcome basket” and we provide residents with packaged goods (pasta, olive oil, tomato sauce, certified cheeses, local bread). The artists cook on their own or take turns to encourage interaction and integration. In case you may have any special needs or preferences regarding food, we will help you locating the best shops or restaurants for you in the valley (vegetarian, vegan).

Group shopping: We organize a community shopping system, such as a weekly trip to the local grocery store or market, where artists can independently purchase whatever they wish.

Thanks to the collaboration with local chefs, we will provide welcome and farewell dinners during your stay, and we are always open to organize meals altogether as an important moment of sharing thoughts and ideas. Meals are a social event in Italy!

For organized groups above 6 people with an artist leader we are happy to put you in touch with local chefs that can cook your meals.

CLOTHING

Comfortable shoes only! Please note that there are no streets within RUC and you will have to walk on grass all the time.

You will be living in an old mansion in the mountains, and this is part of the experience. So please be aware that this kind of old houses in Italy cannot be heated up as a modern city apartment would be, therefore on chilly days you will have to wear a sweater or some warm cloths also while indoors. Due to the global current unpredictability of the weather, we may have fresh days in May and October, and very hot days in July or August.



Wear only very comfortable clothes. We are in an alpine valley so your daily basic clothing should be T-shirt, jeans, and sweater.

If you intend to go trekking please bring with you appropriate trekking shoes and a backpack for water and snacks.

Weather can be rainy in the area so we recommend to have a raincoat with you.

HEALTH

Make sure you have a proper health and travel insurance during your stay in Italy.

RUC is not responsible for any accident or health concern you may experience during your trip.

There are pharmacies reachable in walking distance from RUC.

The nearest hospital is located in the village of Esine and it is less than a 10 minutes drive.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

Main cultural and entertainment themes in the valley

Archaeology—Prehistoric Rock Engravings, Roman (Minerva Temple, open air Theater, Roman Museum), Medieval towns and buildings (Castle of Breno, churches);

Art—Medieval and Renaissance Sacred art in churches, contemporary art and other art residencies;

Craftsmanship—blacksmith, wood, ceramic;

Trekking and other mountain sports;

Gastronomy, oenology and wine making;

Examples of nearby must-see places

Lake Iseo <https://visitlakeiseo.info/en/>, with a walk on the marvelous panoramic Roman path via Valeriana, or up to the top of the fishers island Montisola, or simply discovering the picturesque villages on the coast and then eating in a refined restaurant like Zu <http://www.ristorantezu.it/> or Glisenti in Vello <http://www.trattoriaglisenti.it/en/>.

Another must-see for a full day trip is the Unesco National Park of Prehistoric Rock Engravings <https://www.vallecamonicaunesco.it/>, with its incredible legacy of the ancient population of the valley, its museum and its enchanted woods ancestral magic.

In walking distance from RUC

The Roman Archaeological sites and Museum of Cividate Camuno: the Theater <http://www.parcoarcheologicocividate.valcamonicaromana.beniculturali.it/>, the Minerva



Temple <https://www.bresciatourism.it/en/things-to-do/minerva-shrine-breno/>, the Museum <http://www.museoarcheologico.valcamonicaromana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/1/home>

The medieval stone village of Bienno, famous for ancient metal forging: <http://www.bienno.info/bin/index.php?id=1&lng=EN>, the local artist residency at the 'Casa degli Artisti', the medieval castle of Breno <https://www.turismovallecamonica.it/en/content/breno-castle>, and the sanctuary of Cristo Re <https://www.turismovallecamonica.it/en/content/monument-christ-king-and-maddalena-sanctuary-bienno> that overlooks the valley and hosts our partner vegan restaurant to rest after the steep walk.

Before your arrival you can discover more on the valley checking this link <http://www.vallecamonicacultura.it/il-patrimonio-culturale/>.

Main towns reachable from the valley for a day trip: Bergamo, Brescia, Milan, and Venice. These are only some of the many things to see!

WHO WE ARE

GIULIA MAZZOLANI, RUC ARTIST RESIDENCY FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR – Giulia blends a deep love for literature with a lifelong career in the international art world. She shapes her journey by connecting brilliant creators with historic cultural spaces. From world-class museums to the alpine peaks of Italy, she turns the appreciation of art into a daily lifestyle. Her story weaves through some of the most famous cultural capitals of the world: Giulia begins her fine arts journey after studying German literature. She immerses herself in the electric art scene of Berlin, explores Museum Island, and works closely with iconic creators like Georg Baselitz and Julian Schnabel at Munich's [Galerie Daniel Blau](#). She returns home to join the world-famous [Peggy Guggenheim Collection](#) in Venice, working under the visionary leadership of Philip Rylands. In 2015, Giulia expands her reach by becoming an international development consultant. She helps guide major historical landmarks, including Giuseppe Verdi's legendary [Teatro Regio in Parma](#). The RUC vision starts in 2014, and in 2018 she plants deep creative roots by founding [RUC Artist Residency](#), an international rural art retreat. Located on a peaceful private estate in the Italian Alps, it brings global artists together with nature and ancient history.

ZYTA MISZTAL VON BLECHINGER, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF THE MISZTAL VON BLECHINGER FOUNDATION – An independent journalist, essayist, curator, cultural animator, and author of monographs and critical texts, she is the creator of the 'Libersi' project and a recipient of numerous literary awards, including the prestigious Creative Scholarship in Literature from the Polish Minister of Culture and National Heritage. Her background in economics, combined with postgraduate studies in Contemporary Art Mediation, allows for a unique fusion of business acumen and artistic sensibility. Prior to her full dedication to the cultural sector, she led a highly successful career as a bank director, bringing over 20 years of experience in project management and leadership of



large teams. For the past decade, she has been a regular foreign correspondent for the art magazine “Format” and serves as an editor for its online portal, where she authors an original series of cultural reports on Lombardy region. Her writings are also featured in the prestigious literary journal “Hybryda”. As a curator, she collaborates with European cultural institutions, directing key initiatives in Italy under the official patronage of the Consulate General of Poland in Milan.

MAREK MISZTAL VON BLECHINGER, VICE-PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF THE MISZTAL VON BLECHINGER FOUNDATION – An entrepreneur, designer, producer and technical coordinator. He is the co-founder of the Misztal v. Blechinger Foundation, where he oversees logistics, exhibition systems, and the spatial design of international art events. As a versatile project engineer with over 25 years of experience, he successfully bridges the world of advanced technologies with the creative industry. He is the founder and owner of enterprises operating across diverse sectors- ranging from the IT firm to his bespoke design practice (Jacob Studio) which specializes in interior architecture, furniture design, public space arrangement, home staging, and visual merchandising. His combined technical and artistic education forms the bedrock of his unique specialization: the renovation of historical landmarks. His portfolio features prominent projects (including the Sułkowski Castle, the Schoen Palace), and his distinctive concepts have been featured in leading design media. On the international art scene in the Lombardy region, he is responsible for the technical direction and execution of the Foundation’s flagship projects. He has designed and implemented advanced spatial structures for large-scale exhibitions featuring site-specific installations. Concurrently, he is an accomplished documentary photographer capturing key cultural initiatives, with his photographic work regularly published in Polish art magazines.