October 10, 2013

For, Salento, we are interested to somehow begin the work of establishing and instituting a place dedicated to the development of a new sensorium for the common/s and practices of commoning. We associate the common/s as first and foremost conjoined to the basic elements that sustain and nourish life on the planet (from seeds, soil, groundwater, forests, mountains, seas to language, knowledge, labor, culture). And thus common/s and commoning practices are very closely associated to the reproductive processes of humans and other forms of life, other life forms.

A world that is being increasingly monetized destroys the diversity of value systems which have prevailed in different cultures, in the same way biodiversity when applied to land use or seed saving, the same way it reduces every type of decision concerning the sustainability of things to one of profit or loss. Moreover, in the context of increasing monetization of every thing, our basic sensitivity and sensibility to perceive, feel, and understand the reproduction of the world around us becomes dulled. When the life of an ancient forest or the destruction of entire bodies of water are comprehended and given a cost in dollars, we understand at least partly how this desensitization process is structured and took shape.

Whatever process of learning we would like to initiate has first and foremost to do with our sensorium and the capacity through various practices to enhance and cultivate the relation to the interdependency of different life forms and the necessity to develop an understanding of the common/s that is not strictly centered on human life.

What we hope for this December is to begin this process of establishing some space or spaces which could be dedicated to basic questions about the re-production of life,
...how can we share and inhabit a territory with other life forms, how can we live with one another, and explore what kind of social relations we may want when money is no longer the main arbiter of those relations.

During the course of the coming years we will be extending this investigation into other cities and contexts. We would like to see Salento as a base for developing a more sustained inquiry with friends over a period of years and hopefully decades.

In Lecce/Salento, we are specifically interested in trying to create a center which could be seen as a kind of alternative approach to learning, one which does not separate knowledge from action and considerations of how life can be lived. We are particularly interested in the rich local traditions and knowledge of cultivation, of stewardship, of food preparation, land and water use. This is a moment when many of these traditions are under threat.

Our approach would like to be based on a holistic outlook which attempts to see things from many different perspectives, but without losing a sense of the gravity of the moment. For this we feel it is important to establish a basis around notions of the common’s and to be informed by the unfolding ecological, political, and cultural crises we are living through.
Beginning of a call for the common’s course, Commoning Times:

It means seeing a new horizon arising in relation to alimentation our habitation and our revocation. they are all connected to this new old horizon.

It means hearing the voices that are not heard and the noise that is hindering our ears.

It means smelling wild flowers and herbs and fresh air.

It means tasting the food we cook together and thinking: "why should I ever eat alone?"

It means feeling our emotions and the emotions of others around us and acknowledging that for a while our feelings have been numbed by something, what was it?

It means thinking and weaving our idea -s(which were never ours to begin with) anew with other living and non-living entities.

It means contemplating and waiting maybe something will show itself to us when we are drinking tea together or when we are taking a walk in the city or country side and looking at that old high rising green tree from another age another time maybe the tree will say something?

It means sensing the far in the proxim-ity the unknown in the known the nonsense in the sense the unspoken in the spoken.

It means wanting everything that enhances our ability for seeing hearing smelling tasting feeling thinking contemplating sensing wanting acting and loving. And we intend to bring some friends! We hope to meet you soon

What we could also do in December is to try and determine potential sites where this center could base itself longer term and to make contact with future collaborators and people we could work with.