



THE COSTIGLIOLE CHRONICLE

DECEMBER 2024

THE PRACTICE OF TOTAL GIVING

In nature, there is a perpetual rhythm of giving, receiving, and resting. After the harvest, the soil regenerates, and when it cannot give, it is our turn to nourish it. This creates a reciprocal interaction of exchange and support: The Practice of Total Giving.



Scan to donate

8xmille



Unione
Buddhista
Italiana

Visit us: www.zentemple.it

GIVING IS RECEIVING

Master Beppe Mokuza reminds us that life itself is a continuous gift. Life gives sun, rain, and wind to everyone, making no distinction between good and bad people. This act of generosity sustains life, and we must learn to do the same. Giving also means receiving. As we offer something, we are already receiving something in return.

At the Gyogenji Temple, the practice of Total Giving is reflected in the loving care for nature: we protect the soil from pollution and exploitation, dedicating our time and attention. In return, the earth rewards us with generous and healthy harvests, as a sign of its gratitude.

Through samu—community work—we share this philosophy with those who visit us, working together in the vegetable garden, orchard, or with the bees. In doing so, we learn to be generous and in harmony with nature, nourishing not only the earth but also ourselves.

THE BUILDING PROJECT

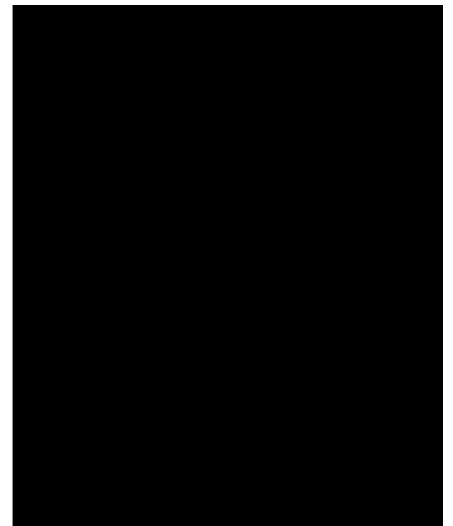
PLASTERING

In early November, the external plastering phase of the dojo and the first two apartments of the future Gyogenji Temple were completed.

We chose to use hydraulic lime mortar plaster to ensure protection against temperature fluctuations and excellent resistance to water and

humidity, preventing condensation. In the sunset light, the plaster reflects golden hues!

While professionals completed the plastering work, we continued with the interior finishes. The plumber has already installed the first pipes, and now the electrician is preparing to set up the electrical system.





BALCONIES

With the addition of Luserna stone, thresholds and balconies have taken shape, giving the buildings a more defined appearance and a sense of completeness.

PORTICO

Meanwhile, the construction company has been working on the portico. This space will house the dining hall and will also serve as a venue for meetings, conferences, a library, and many other activities that the center will soon offer to a wide audience.

We have adopted eco-friendly construction solutions to reduce our environmental impact, preserve natural resources, and improve the community's quality of life. For the portico, we are using 45 cm Porothersm BIO PLAN bricks, which ensure excellent thermal insulation thanks to their thin joints.

These choices demonstrate our commitment to addressing the climate crisis and reducing energy waste. In the coming weeks, the insulated wooden roof will be installed.





2025 PROJECTION

As we complete the first phase of the real estate project, we are now focusing on the second phase, which will include the construction of the kitchen, guest rooms, and accommodations for monks.

This new phase will begin with excavation and the installation of piles needed for the building's foundation. The basement will include spacious storage rooms for food preservation, kitchen supplies, and products prepared by the monks. Additionally, it will feature changing rooms, restrooms, and showers for visitors.

3D RENDERINGS

This rendering, created by Dutch architect Dieter Blok, illustrates the project divided into three main phases:

Phase 1: Completion of the dojo, apartments, and portico, expected to be finalized in the coming months.

Phase 2: Construction of the foundation and basement for the main building, up to the first slab.

Phase 3: Visualization of the project in its final form upon completion.

A detailed preview offering insight into the journey and evolution of our work.



LIVING INTERDEPENDENCE: OUR HUMANITARIAN PROJECT

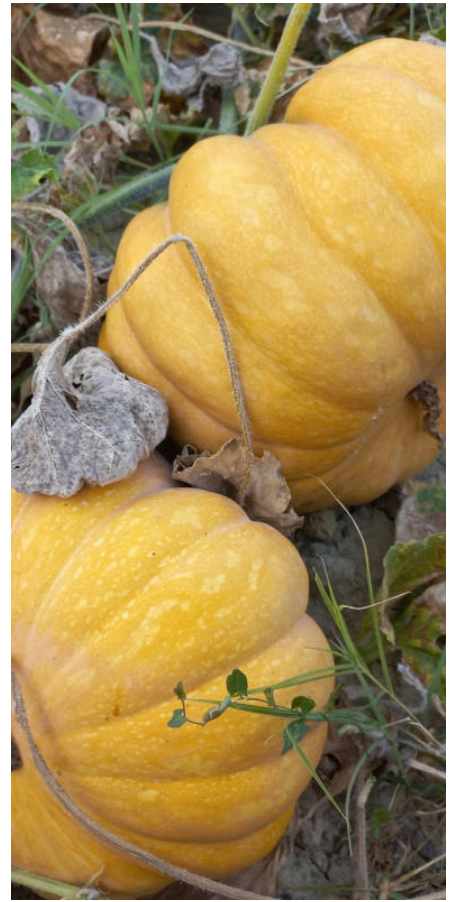
A GENEROUS HARVEST

Let us revisit some nostalgic moments from this summer, especially the fruit and vegetable harvest, which always brings joy and satisfaction! This year, the garden was very generous, and the long hours of work were rewarded!





Thanks to nutrient-rich soil, a warm season, and regular rain, small plants grew into splendid pumpkins and delicious melons.



For the first time, we also harvested black olives!



Another experiment underway... growing shiitake mushrooms! We can proudly say that our first attempt was a success!



Daikon is also sprouting! This Asian radish variety is known for aiding digestion with its natural enzymes, detoxifying the body, and strengthening the immune system.



With the arrival of autumn, onion planting has begun.



HOW ARE OUR BEES DOING?

AUGUST

Frame inspection to find the queen bee! The end of summer is a critical time for the hive. Organic treatments must be applied to combat parasites and help the bee colonies prepare for winter.



OCTOBER

Honey extraction! After a year of care, we recover a small amount of honey, leaving most of it as winter reserves for the bees. Using a special serrated knife, the wax caps are opened, allowing the centrifuge to extract the honey stored in the frame.



NOVEMBER

The collected honey is microfiltered and placed in tanks where it rests for three weeks, developing a uniform consistency and a unique flavor.

COLLABORATION WITH LIPU
(ITALIAN LEAGUE FOR BIRD PROTECTION)

Even small actions can significantly help nature and protect our feathered friends.

Last month, we installed new wooden nesting boxes from LIPU, providing safe shelters for many species during winter and spring. Additionally, we set up feeders to help them find food during tough times.



COLLABORATION WITH MONALFUNGO

This year, we began a collaboration with Monalfungo, a company based in Asti. We use their mushroom compost to enrich the soil and prepare it for new crops.

WHAT IS IT?

It's a mixture of horse manure, chicken litter, and peat, composted and pasteurized to create a substrate for growing champignon mushrooms. After its cultivation cycle, it becomes an excellent organic mulch, suitable for various crops, from vegetables to cereals.

After weeks of rain, the soil finally dried, and Monalfungo delivered six truckloads of soil, distributed in two loads per terrace in the garden.

This soil was also spread around the orchard trees to nourish them during the winter season.



IMPACT REPORT BY ETISOS FOUNDATION

The Etisos Foundation is an international organization specializing in evaluating social and environmental impact, with a strong focus on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Agenda. These goals encompass the social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability.

The Italian Buddhist Union (UBI) engages Etisos Foundation to conduct these assessments, ensuring transparency and evaluating the effectiveness of projects financed through the 8xmille program. This makes UBI the only religious organization in Italy to release a Sustainability and Impact Report.

With a certified score of an average of 83/100 from the Etisos Foundation on all Sustainable Development Goals, our project is in full alignment with these global objectives. We even received a 100% score on Responsible Consumption and Production and The Fight against Climate Change!

THE POWER OF GENEROSITY: BUILDING THE TEMPLE TOGETHER

The Gyogeeji Temple is taking shape thanks to the generosity of many people across Europe. We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who, over the past years, has kindly donated to support this project.

Each donation is a precious brick for the Temple we are building together! We are pleased to share with you some testimonies to express our deep appreciation.



I have been practicing Zen for about 15 years, but it has never been easy for me to understand the value of giving. I used to think that giving meant taking something away from myself or my family. Now I understand that giving helps me overcome my attachments, opens me to others, and, in this way, helps me know

myself. Giving helps me to go beyond my beliefs, to develop compassion and gives me a broader perspective on the world. The temple will be a place that promotes well-being and allows our community to offer visitors space and time to take care of themselves through the activities provided.

BEATRICE TOBRUK,
ITALY, DIRECTOR OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD FACILITY

I donate as much as possible to the temple, because I think it's a fantastic project. Beppe has been looking for that place for 20 years, with a clear vision and desire. And I think the place he has found is beautiful and I really want to live and work and meditate there in

the future. Everything I earn with my work and don't need myself goes to this project, and it desperately needs that. What is really my engine is to live together with the great sangha, of which I am a part, in such a beautiful place.

WILLEM VAN SEUMEREN,
NETHERLANDS, ARCHITECT





I donate through a monthly contribution. For me it is important that the Sangha is there, it makes the world a better place. I want to commit myself to that goal. Furthermore, donating monthly is easy, because it is done via automatic transfer. Every month when I see the debit, I have a good feeling!

INGRID OOSTERVEEN,
NETHERLANDS, NGO MANAGER

A family member is active in the project in Costigliole. Every year I like to donate to this project as a birthday present. Although I can't quite identify with Zen philosophy, I find the Living of the Land and the cultivation of their own fruit and vegetables very inspiring

DIEGO GARCIA MEJUTO,
ENGLAND, UNIVERSITY LECTURE

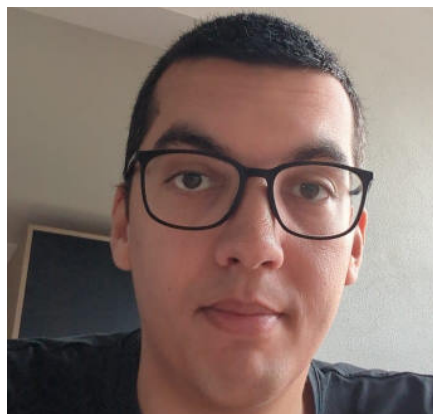


I have done zazen with Beppe Mokuza on zoom and I know its impressive effects. I donated to the project in Costigliole because I consider your work valuable and important.

KIRSI PELTOLA,
FINLAND, NURSE

A family member is active in the project in Costigliole. Every year I like to donate to this project as a birthday present. Although I can't quite identify with Zen philosophy, I find the Living of the Land and the cultivation of their own fruit and vegetables very inspiring

TYCHO NIJON,
NETHERLANDS, SOFTWARE ENGINEER



HOW TO SUPPORT GYOGENJI TEMPLE

DONATIONS

The Gyogenji Temple exists thanks to the generous donations of practitioners and supporters. Every contribution, big or small, helps us to:

- Complete the construction work.
- Expand and care for green areas.
- Develop reforestation and regenerative agriculture projects.
- Offer educational programs for children and teenagers.

ADOPT AND PROTECT

By adopting a tree, plant, or animal from the Temple, you actively participate in our mission to protect the environment: €50 per year or €250 for a lifetime adoption.

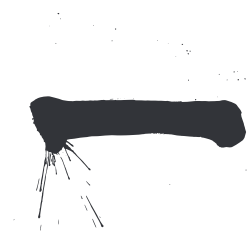
You will receive regular updates on how your support contributes to biodiversity and the regeneration of nature.

VOLUNTEER

Manual work (samu) is an essential practice in the Zen tradition. As a volunteer, you can contribute to:

- Maintaining the Temple grounds.
- Caring for green areas.
- Participating in reforestation projects and event management.

Volunteer opportunities are available for short-term (weekends/one week) or long-term periods (one month or more), offering a unique experience of personal growth within the monastic community.



HOW TO DONATE

Donations are gratefully received through bank transfers:

Zen Bodai Dojo Association

IBAN: IT21Y0853022505000000045799
BIC: ICRAITRREQ0

You can also donate through credit card by scanning the QR code:



ANBI-STATUS IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Bodai Doji Zen Association manages the Temple and is recognized in the Netherlands as a Public Benefit Institution (ANBI). With the ANBI status, donations to the GYOGENJI Zen Temple become tax deductible and no gift tax is levied.

RSIN Number: 823997765

BEQUESTS

A bequest to Gyogenji Temple is a gesture that leaves a lasting legacy. Including the Temple in your will means supporting spirituality, sustainability, and community for future generations.

For more information, contact us at dojo@bodai.it

THE ITALIAN BUDDHIST UNION



Unione
Buddhista
Italiana

A BRIEF HISTORY

1984: Foundation of the Italian Buddhist Union.

1987: Affiliation with the European Buddhist Union.

1991: Recognition as a religious entity.

2012: Approval of the Agreement between the Italian Buddhist Union and the Italian State.

2014: Taxpayers can allocate the 8xmille to the Italian Buddhist Union in their tax return.

Since June 2021, the Zen Bodai Dojo Association, along with our centers in Alba and Costigliole d'Asti, has been recognized as an affiliate of the Italian Buddhist Union. This organization unites and protects Buddhist centers across Italy, serving as their single representative to the state and institutions. Today, the Italian Buddhist Union includes 68 recognized centers.

The Italian Buddhist Union supports projects promoting environmental respect, human and social sustainability, the right to work, and social inclusion for all citizens, both Italian and foreign, as well as the development of a green and sustainable economy.

We are deeply grateful to the Italian Buddhist Union for supporting the construction and realization of Gyogenji and backing our project, "Living Interdependence."



Al Bodai Dōjō di Costigliole d'Asti sta nascendo una comunità di gran-
di Elena Seishin Vissani - vice presidente UBI

Di recente ho visitato la comunità del Bodai Dōjō a Costigliole d'Asti, un piccolo comune piemontese immerso nel verde delle vigne tra il Monferrato e la Langhe, sito Patrimonio dell'Unesco, dove la bellezza del territorio, valorizzata dal lavoro di contadini e viticoltori, ne fa un paesaggio unico e pieno di fascino. L'occasione è stata un incontro con i monaci della Comunità del Bodai Dōjō, promosso da Silvia Francesconi ed Eleonora Trani, rispettivamente responsabile e coordinatrice dell'Agenda Ecologica dell'UBI, a cui hanno preso parte, oltre a me, due caposigla di dell'Agricoltura, Lucia Cavazzoni e la moglie



orti terrazzati, già ampiamente coltivati, a diverse quote di alberi da frutto, vi è un'intera area esposta a coltivazioni mellifere per l'allevamento delle api.

Quella che segue è un'intervista a più voci di alcuni dei monaci e delle monache discipoli del rev. Giuseppe Mokusa Signorini, guida spirituale e ispiratore della Comunità.

"Tenendo tra le dita un solo stelo e una foglia, costruisce un magnifico tempio; dentro un minuscolo granello mette in moto la Ruota del Grande Insegnamento": così Dōgen Zenji nel suo Tenzo Kyōkun, parla dell'attività trasformistica del Dharma. Edificare un Tempio è quindi edificare lo spirito?

Aviamo Elgen Merlier, assistente personale del maestro Mokusa e responsabile del progetto del Festival dell'Oriente che fa tappa in tutta Italia:

Il progetto del tempio Gyōgenji è un passo fondamentale nella realizzazione della nostra visione di comunità e sarà luogo di pratica e di incontro capace di accogliere istanze educative, culturali e ricreative. La struttura, in costruzione da gennaio di quest'anno, viene realizzata secondo i principi della bioarchitettura, utilizzando materiali sosteni-

bili e rispettando le caratteristiche architettoniche regionali. Questo approccio riflette il nostro impegno verso la sostenibilità ambientale e il desiderio di creare un luogo non solo in sintonia con il paesaggio circostante, ma anche con i principi della pratica Zen, sarà affiancato da altre strutture complementari che ospiteranno gli alloggi per i monaci della comunità, il refettorio e sale multifunzionali. Ogni elemento architettonico è pensato per integrarsi con l'ambiente naturale. La meditazione zen, Zazen, è il fulcro della pratica del Sangha del Bodai Dōjō, da cui si è sviluppata nel tempo la nostra Comunità che ha scelto di vivere e sperimentare nel quotidiano, in modo naturale, il Dharma. La nostra visione di comunità si fonda su principi di inclusività e accoglienza: per questo il nostro obiettivo è creare un ambiente in cui ogni individuo possa trovare il proprio posto e contribuire al benessere collettivo, favorendo relazioni basate su rispetto e compassione. Fondamentale in questo senso è l'integrazione nel tessuto socio-locale e, fin da subito, abbiamo collaborato attivamente con istituzioni e associazioni del territorio per promuovere la consapevolezza ambientale e la sostenibilità.

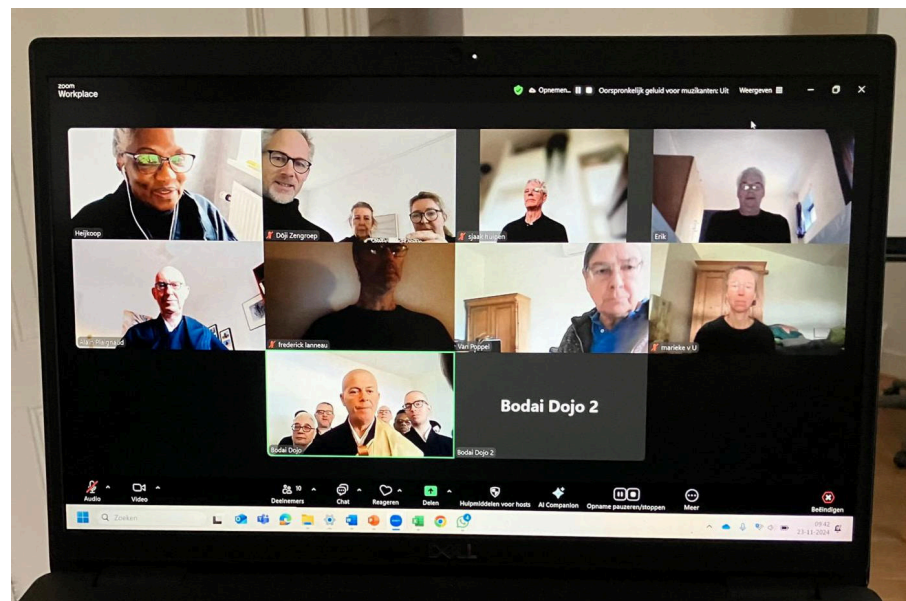
Dare origine a uno spirito di profonda autenticità e di sincera coerenza è dare origine ad uno spirito di profondo rispetto: è ciò che volete esprimere nella cura per l'ambiente?

Every quarter, UBI publishes the Buddhism Magazine. In issue no. 3 of September 2024, an article about our project was featured!

VOICES OF THE SANGHA : THE DUTCH DISCIPLES OF ZEN MASTER BEPPE MOKUZA

Beppe Mokuza teaches sumi-e and Zen throughout Europe: in France, Germany, Switzerland, and England. However, a special connection has formed with the Netherlands. Since 2011, he has visited the Netherlands at least once a year. He has organized around 40 workshops, demonstrations, and exhibitions, meeting hundreds of Dutch students, and the numbers continue to grow.

These meetings led to the creation of the Dōji group in Haarlem in 2018, where zazen meditation is practiced four times a week.



Since 2020, the group has also organized a Zoom session every Saturday morning to maintain connection and receive teachings from the master.

The Dutch community also plays a key role in organizing the annual sumi-e and Zen workshop led by Beppe Mokuza, which in 2025 will take place in Allardsoog from February 4 to 9.

Doji Zen Group, Haarlem

www.sotozen.nl

Thanks to regular practice in The Netherlands, a growing number of people have developed the desire to deepen their dedication to the Zen Path, aspiring to receive ordination as a bodhisattva or monk/nun. As part of this journey, each practitioner sews their own "meditation garment," the rakusu or kesa. The Doji Zengroup regularly organizes sewing workshops led by monk Mauro Eido, a disciple of Beppe Mokuza.



16 WE ARE PLEASED TO INTRODUCE THE DUTCH SANGHA



INGRID DOKAN
JOY OF THE WAY



MARJOLEIN SEI GYO
CLEAR PRACTICE



MARTIN
SEWING THE RAKUSU TO BECOME
A BODHISATTVA



WILLEM RYU SHIN
HEART OF THE DRAGON



LIDDY
SEWING THE KESA TO BECOME A NUN



RUDOLF
SEWING THE KESA TO BECOME
A MONK



The civil name is followed by the Zen name, received at the time of ordination, symbolizing the spiritual path undertaken.



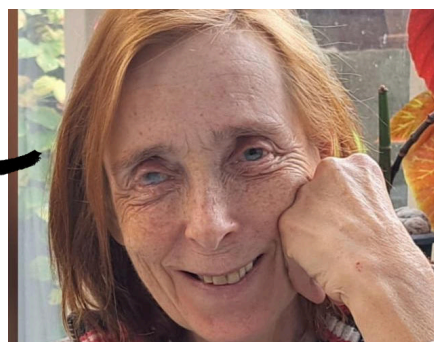
SUMI-E AND ZEN
WORKSHOP 2025



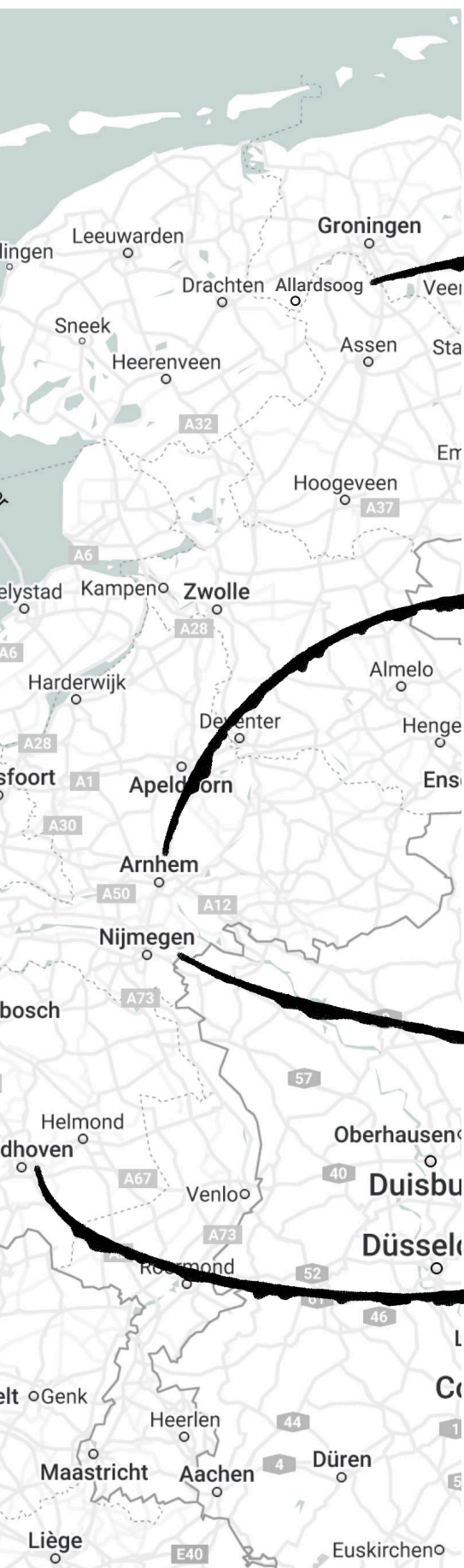
ERIK
SEWING THE RAKUSU TO BECOME
A BODHISATTVA



WIM MU GI
WITHOUT DOUBTS



MARJANNE ETSU DO
JOYFUL PATH



OUR CREATIONS

What the earth gives us, the monks and nuns of the Temple, transform it into homemade products to offer the original taste of times past.

TOMATO SAUCE: THE STORY OF AN ADVENTURE

From Seed to Fruit:
Cultivating with Respect for the Land.

In the summer, we select seeds from the best fruits, some of which come from Zen temples across Europe, and preserve them for the following year. In the winter, we prepare the soil by enriching it with organic nutrients. Around February, the seeds are planted, and once the seedlings are strong enough, they are transplanted and supported with bamboo stakes.



The Organic Choice:
Genuineness and Authenticity

We cultivate organically, without pesticides or chemicals, letting nature take its course. The tomatoes, ripened under the sun, are hand-picked by our community to ensure a healthy and natural product.

From Fruit to Processing

Each tomato is carefully selected, washed, and hand-cut to ensure the highest quality. The sauce, smooth and velvety, is made by separating the seeds and skins, then cooked, sterilized, and bottled hot with just a pinch of salt and no additives.



MELON JAM

This year, thanks to an especially generous harvest of orange and yellow melons, we decided to experiment and produce our own jam. The result? A thick, sweet, and naturally sugared cream, perfect for spreading on bread or enhancing delicious desserts. A tasty and genuine way to bring the flavor of summer to our tables.

The jam has been packaged in charming jars that will beautifully adorn our pantries.



We are happy to share our recipe with you!

HONEY



SUMI-E CALENDAR 2025

Every year, we present the sumi-e calendar, designed and created with paintings by Master Beppe Mokuza. This year's cover is dedicated to the crane, called *tsuru* in Japanese. A symbol of loyalty, honor, and strength, the crane is also known as the "bird of peace" or the "bird of happiness." According to legend, its large wings protect the weak and guide people to higher levels of spirituality.

Twelve unique masterpieces to bring a touch of originality and serenity to your days.



If our calendar isn't yet hanging in your home, contact us at info@sumi-e.it to order your copy!

自然之道



“EVERYTHING YOU GIVE,
YOU GIVE TO YOURSELF

RUMI (1207-1273)