

“I DIRITTI SOLCANO L’OCEANO”

The project

Ten years after the tragic shooting in Miami that forced him on a wheelchair, Andrea Stella, the founder of the nonprofit association “lo Spirito di Stella”, has taken up a new project.

In 10 years the many activities carried out by the association were very successful, both in terms of public interest and media coverage. **7 years ago** there was the launch of the world's first architectural barrier-free catamaran with the foundation of “lo Spirito di Stella”; **6 years ago** the vessel sailed back to the United States with a mixed crew (disabled and non-disabled people); since 2003 there have been 8 editions of the “Spirito Libero” sailing tour for a total of **400 free sailing days** and **4,000 participants** (9 stops, 70 sailing days and 700 participants only in 2010); we have organized **4 editions** of the “Design and Build for Everyone” competition of ideas for designers and students, with over **1000 participants**. In addition to this, the association has been carrying out sensitization activities on disabilities in primary, secondary and high schools, holding design workshops in the main Italian universities and taking part to many conventions and events.

In the autumn of 2010, in order to prove that the “Spirit” is livelier and more vital than ever, the barrier-free catamaran challenged the ocean for a project called “**I DIRITTI SOLCANO L’OCEANO**”, an ocean crossing from La Spezia to Miami with a stop in Martinique, Caribbean Islands, having the aim of promoting and spreading the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Manifesto for Accessible Tourism, whose principles are printed on the sails. This exceptional adventure is dedicated to sustainability through various studies in the field of environment and medical science.

The project is supported by the Italian Ministry of Defense, the Italian Navy, Enit (Italian National Tourist Office), the Italian Ministry of Tourism, the National Research Council (CNR), the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and Enea (Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development).

Objectives

“I diritti solcano l’oceano” has many objectives:

1 - SPREADING THE UN CHARTER OF RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The catamaran’s sails are marked with an extract from the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** to testify the association’s adherence to the principles stated. This Convention is of key relevance, as it sees integration in the society as a fundamental right and not merely as an available option: this means that a judge will finally have a tool for punishing any infringements, inequities or abuses. Once in Miami, the Convention will be handed to the Miami Jackson Memorial, one of the world’s major medical centers for the treatment of medullar traumas and stem cell research.

2 – PROMOTING THE MANIFESTO OF ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

“I diritti solcano l’oceano” has the goal of spreading the “Manifesto for the Promotion of Accessible Tourism”. The sails are marked with the first article: “A person with a disability is a citizen and a customer who has the right to enjoy a touristic offer in a complete and independent way, with appropriate services and a fair quality/price ratio”. Back in Italy, the project’s results will be presented at “Gitando All”, the main Italian fair for accessible tourism and sports, which will be held in Vicenza Fair.

3 – SENSITIZING THE PUBLIC OPINION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ARCHITECTURAL BARRIER REMOVAL

“On a catamaran everyone’s got the same speed, differences vanish. Everybody can enjoy their sea experience without having to worry about how to move, how to deal with problems”. This statement by Mauro Pelaschier summarises the message of “lo Spirito di Stella”. The trip is **a chance for showing the world a pragmatic example of how it is possible to eliminate barriers**, both architectural and mental.

4 – PROMOTING RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

“Lo Spirito di Stella”, sticking to an environmentally sustainable policy and to a respectful exploitation of the planet, is a pollution-free sailing vessel equipped with sophisticated solar panels and special integrated batteries. During the crossing, the catamaran will be tested in terms of energy efficiency.

“Lo Spirito di Stella”, and Andrea Stella himself as a spokesman together with Giovanni Soldini and Ellen MacArthur, also co-operates with “**Environmental Ocean Team**”, an organization that carries out oceanographic research from sailing boats with the aim of delivering a broader knowledge about environment protection and sustainable development. The trip will allow to gather important data for Eot’s oceanographic research.

5 - PROMOTING RESEARCH ON STRESS TOLERANCE

“Lo Spirito di Stella” will be the subject of a **medical-scientific study** in co-operation with TeSAN S.p.A. The human body responds to stressors, in particular those of a disabled person, will be surveyed onboard by means of state-of-the-art medical equipment that allows a daily monitoring of the crew’s vital functions (ECGs, BP, Pulse Ox, etc.).

6 - PROVIDING AN EXAMPLE AND INCENTIVE FOR PEOPLE

“Lo Spirito di Stella” wants to **share this exceptional trip with its many fans and friends, both disabled and non-disabled**. The project is followed closely by hundreds of people via Website, Facebook, a blog, a newsletter and a ship’s log. In this way everyone will understand that nothing is impossible and that anyone of us, in the right conditions, can experience an “off-limits” adventure.

Testimonials

The project is represented by great sailor **Pietro d’Ali**, who will join the crossing from Gibraltar to the Caribbean Islands, world-beaters **Giovanni Soldini** and **Mauro Pelaschier** and Enit President **Matteo Marzotto**.

lo Spirito di Stella

Updated schedule

Press conference: 30th November 2010

Departure from La Spezia: 7th December 2010

Arrival in Gibraltar: 18th December 2010

Gibraltar - Las Palmas/Canary Islands: 29 December 2010 – 3rd January 2011

Las Palmas/Canary Islands – Martinique/Caribbean Islands: 5 – 19th January 2011 (13 days and 14 hours of sailing)

Miami: ...

Next stops

The catamaran is due to arrive in **Miami** in April. Here, Andrea Stella is going to hand the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the Miami Jackson Memorial, one of the world's major medical centers for the treatment of medullar traumas and stem cell research.

Back in Italy, the project's results will be presented at **Gitando All**, the first Italian fair for accessible tourism and sports promoted by the Veneto Region.

Supporters

The project's main partners are: Veneto Region, Gitando All and Volkswagen Das Auto.

The trip is also supported by: Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Pianeta Mobilità, Tesan, Gi Research, Vaccari, Vibeton.

lo Spirito di Stella

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