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Air, men and falcons



An exhibition in conjunction with the publication of Serena Galvani's book *Aria, Uomini, Falchi* will open on Tuesday. Photos: Serena Galvani

Falconry and sailing are the main themes of a photographic exhibition that will be mounted by the Italian Cultural Institute on Tuesday.

The event will mark the presentation of a book called *Aria, Uomini, Falchi*, (air, men, falcons) by Italian photojournalist Serena Galvani, who is also passionate about sailing.

For the past 20 years, she has been at the forefront in safeguarding the rich Italian nautical heritage and founded her own association for salvaging historic wrecks. She is also a skipper of the prestigious 1935 yacht *Aria*, which she restored to its original glory. As the name of the book suggests, Ms Galvani's other passion is falconry, which features prominently in her work.

The exhibition focuses on an event she organised in 2015 to mark 80 years since the construction of her yacht. Back then, she fused her two passions together by taking seven falcons on board during a trip to the Gulf of Trieste. The penetrating looks of the birds of prey and their masters were captured in a series of black and white photos that make up her collection.

"My photography is the expression of the soul and documents passions and emotions. It communicates that eloquent freedom that lasts in the mind and dreams, and for this reason, it is not confined... and exists in the infinite movement just like life." This is the personal interpretation Ms Galvani gives of her photography.

The photo exhibition and book presentation are being organised in conjunction with the Italian Cultural Institute in the wake of the fact that, in December, Italy became the 18th country to recognise the art of falconry in Unesco's list of intangible cultural heritage.

In Malta, falconry has a long tradition going back to the rule of the Knights of St John. In 1530, Charles V, King of Spain and Sicily, donated the Maltese Islands to the Knights in return for a falcon every year.



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