

Role model portrait

Nelida Mendoza “Be open minded and build your communities”

Who I am



My name is Nelida Mendoza and I am 64 years old. I am from Paraguay. I have been living in Italy since 1986. When I was a child my family moved to Buenos Aires in Argentina because of the political situation in Paraguay. I studied in Buenos Aires at the Academy of Fine Arts (sculpture). I bring with me this sense of migratory identity. I am a sculpturer and I teach sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Brera, Milan. I participate to the cultural life in Italy and South America.

What is important in my life

At this stage of my life, my artistic research is important but with this pandemic it is difficult to work. Now resilience and working together are real issues for my research. Now we have no human contacts and this makes things more difficult and complicated.

The difficulties I faced in Italy

I am very happy about my experience in Italy. I spent 12 years in Carrara and I managed to do it. My friends helped me during my wandering in Italy, whenever I changed city and job. There are many facets of migration. Italy is one the most welcoming countries, you always find friends and hospitality. But now it is a little different because the time to accept the other is shorter! The difficulties I face are bigger now than where I arrived in Italy in 1986. Now there are many problems with diversity and acceptance. This is due to pandemic and massive migration in recent years. Migrants arrive in Italy and face a strong emotional impact. Italy is good for migrants to study how to enter in Europe and spend some time to adapt to this new situation. Italian language is fundamental to enter our society. We must be resilient



and calm down. In Carrara I meet many people from all around the world. We learnt to stay together and to support each other.

My social network

When I arrived in Italy there were no social media, no mobile phones, no internet. Today the web is important. But we have to go back to meeting other people and support each other and to limit the importance of social media to rediscover the other human beings. We must have a community supporting us, because it is important to create new structures supporting you. These communities change during the years but we have to keep building communities.

Which competences are important for the future

Resilience, ability to build communities, speaking languages but above all the capacity to study your group and be resilient. With this pandemic the exigence to create communities is fundamental, everything is based on communities.

If I am sixteen today....

I lived under a dictatorship. If I am sixteen today, I would study and try to be happy and enjoy my youth. I would suggest young people to be open and use foreign languages to be able to understand others. Today it is important to migrate and be open and be ready to meet other people to enrich oneself.

Now important is creativity today?

It is fundamental in all areas of human development.

Future plans?

I am almost retiring so I would like to have more contacts with Latin America where I am from. I would like to do more research in my creative areas and to establish a school in Paraguay of arts and crafts like in Carrara where I lived.



What is success for me

To be successful means that all my works create emotions to the people watching them. That makes me happy.

My models

When I was a student in Argentina I was inspired by the Italian sculpturer and artist Giacometti, now I am inspired by Louise Bourgeois who helps me understand my world as she did with her art.