

## Tiziana Volta

### Activist Italy



**Tiziana Volta** attended the Catholic University of Milan, Faculty of Economics and Commerce. She is Photo Editor of the magazine "Gardenia", the most important Italian magazine about the culture of green, for which she has been working since its foundation in 1984. Over the years, she has become increasingly involved in environmental and social issues. Since 2009, she has been following Peace and Nonviolence projects with an international humanist group, World without Wars and Violence. She coordinated the first World March for Peace and Nonviolence (2009-2010) in the province of Brescia. She was the Italian coordinator of the second World March for Italy (2019-2020).



*Tell us a bit about yourself, and why and how you became involved with trees and nature.*

My love for nature comes from my origins. My grandparents lived in the countryside. Every summer my sister and I went to spend the summer holidays with them. I still remember with great pleasure the long bike rides with my father in the lush woods near the river Po (the longest in Italy). I have always been fascinated by trees as they dance with the wind. This great passion has been enriched even more by working in the editorial staff of "Gardenia", a monthly magazine specialized in the culture of green. I have had the great fortune of being part of it since its inception (1984). I was able to observe little by little the change in Italian society towards Nature, the growing respect for the environment where we live day after day.

*How did your partnership with Green Legacy Hiroshima start?*

I heard about the peace trees of Hiroshima and Nagasaki while following the first World March for Peace and Nonviolence in the province of Brescia. Inside the Santa Giulia Museum, there was a Hibaku Jumoku sapling of persimmon from Nagasaki and Firmiana platanifolia from Hiroshima. Fascinated by their history, strength, and the simple yet deep message of rebirth of life, I went to the world of peace to tell their story, their experience as silent witnesses of a terrible tragedy but also of hope that the nature gives us. In 2013, I was in Val di Susa, a group of children asked me if it was possible to grow and take care of one of these special trees. I learned how it was possible. I asked how it happened with the Brescia specimen (one person had brought some seeds from Hiroshima). I started doing some internet research and got to know Green Legacy Hiroshima. From there, our collaboration began.



*What does the partnership with GLH and the connection with Hiroshima mean for you personally and professionally?*

I have had a very special relationship with Japan since my childhood. A cousin of my father had married a person from this country. Atzuko was a reference figure for me, for her great simplicity, but also great sensitivity that led her to be an important writer, but, above all, through her we got to know Japanese authors who would have been unknown in Italy. I found that simplicity and sensitivity but of great cultural-scientific depth in the path I took with Green Legacy Hiroshima. The years of work in the editorial office of "Gardenia" have given me the opportunity to grasp all this even more. Unfortunately for some health problems, I have not yet managed to visit Hiroshima myself, but the relationship I feel for this city is deep. What happened on August 6 of 1945 should continue to make us think. Peace cannot be found through violence. Nature teaches us that life can be reborn. Its beauty gives us serenity day after day. With peace in our soul we can live our daily lives in peace even if there are problems we have to face.

*What does the presence of the saplings mean in Italy? What is your vision for these saplings there in the future? What kinds of activities or partnerships can you cultivate surrounding the hibaku jumoku?*



Each tree has its own history, millennia long. The Hibaku Jumoku have a history within history. Think of Ginkgo biloba and saplings that grew from the seeds of the survivor trees. The presence of these silent witnesses is especially important through the complex history. We live in a confusing society. The message of the Hibaku Jumoku is simple yet immediate. I think of Our Father Center in Palermo, where we gave a Hibaku Jumoku sapling to. Hiroshima's Ginkgo biloba is growing in a neighborhood where the mafia has always been present, which also has strongly influenced the life of its residents, especially the young. The new generations, we must engage them with peace messages brought by the trees from Hiroshima. This is the activity we started to run with associations, primary and secondary schools. Before COVID-19, we established a new partnership with nurseries. It might be challenging to educate very young children about peace and Hibaku Jumoku, but this is certainly very important. They will become great guardians for beauty of the creation, which the trees are a part of.



At Centro Padre Nostro, Palermo; March 2018

*Besides GLH's current activities, what is something else you think that can be done for the hibaku jumoku for a nuclear-free world and reverence of nature around the world?*

I believe knowledge is fundamental for peace, of which only culture can bring to you. We sow in sensitive and careful soils. We have great hope that, following the growth of Hibaku Jumoku with attention and love, their deep message will bring more human souls to peace. Nuclear power was born during a very turbulent time period of our history. If we understand that there are no enemies but only other beings with their history and culture, which deserves equal respect, then we would understand it is useless to have the nuclear weapons that we have now.