THE WEALTH OF THE LAND

La ricchizza di la terra / La ricchezza della terra

By Chips Mackinolty
14 May - 18 June, 2016
Cicuoria - Chicory
Cacocciuliddi - Baby artichokes
Ciuru di cuczua - Pumpkin flower
Furmintuni - Corn
Ficu rinnia - Prickly pear
Ficu - Fig
Fragulina e ceuse - Red berries
Granatu - Pomegranate
Giri - Beet
Milinciana di tunisina - Eggplant
Nespulu - Loquat
Pumaruricchiu - Cherry tomatoes
Prunu - Plum
Persica - Peach
Pipareddi - Red chilies
Pipittuni - Citron
Piricoccu - Apricot
Pere - Pears
Pumu - Apple
Sparaci - Asparagus
Pumadoru - Tomato
Pipareddi verdi - Green chilies
Taroccu - Blood orange
Agghia - Garlic
Cipuda scalognu - Spring onions
Cirasa - Cherries
Piseddi - Peas
'The exhibition, La ricchizza di la terra/La ricchezza della terra/The wealth of the land is based on a year in Palermo, and looks at the produce, and the people and language, of the old markets here. It is very much about things so important in Italian cooking: local produce, seasonally available.

In developing this body of work, I have become acutely aware of the ways in which language has both shaped and reflected changes in food availability over thousands of years. “New” foods have become available over those millennia: carried on the back of trade and conquest from other parts of Italy and Europe; from the middle and far east; and from Africa and south America. These foods have slowly become part of local cultures and language. It is part of the human story but one which today, in this age of globalisation, may threaten our existence.

Working with Palermitano dialect—as well as Italian—has made sense from the beginning. But translator Francesco Pusateri, through his many commentaries to me, has heightened the tragedy of loss that sees the existence of local food varieties withering alongside the cultural loss of local language: they are inexorably linked.

And we are the poorer for it. All of us.'

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