September, 2009 Vol. XXVII, No. 1

poche parole

The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C.

Preserving and Promoting Italian Culture for All

www.italianculturalsociety.org

ICS EVENTS

Social meetings start at 3:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month, September thru May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4422 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD (map on last page)

***Sunday, Sept 20:** September social meeting. Chef Cesare Lanfranconi of Spezie restaurant will present a delicious culinary experience, with generous tastings of risotto, crab-stuffed tomato, and a fruit tart, accompanied by chardonnay and sangiovese wines. Not to be missed! $20 per person.*

***Movie of the Month:** at 1:00 "Golden Door" Details on page 2*

***Sunday, Oct. 18:** October social meeting. Program to be announced later*

FREE ITALIAN LESSONS FOR ALL LEVELS FROM 2:00 to 3:00

President's Message.

As we begin a new social year this September, let us take a moment to reflect on the fine stewardship over many years that has been the hallmark of the presidency of Luigi De Luca. We all know Luigi as the gracious host of our social programs, but I want to be sure that you all know how much Luigi has meant to our organization. Luigi wears many hats: professor at JHU, scientist, graduate student at CUA of Greek and Latin, teacher of Latin to elementary school students…not to mention devoted husband, father and grandfather, and yet Luigi has found time to offer energetic and able leadership that enabled our organization to prosper. Over the past year he stepped up to take on another year of the ICS presidency when an unexpected vacancy occurred, and in addition, took on the duties of director of the Italian Language Program when our Director Emeritus, Maria Wilmeth took ill. Recently he was a participant in the very successful National Summer Institute 2009 in Rome: "The Art of Teaching Italian Through Italian Art" endowed by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. All in all, this record of service is a remarkable achievement by a remarkable man, and we are all the better for his generous gifts of time and talent. I know I speak for our ICS board and for all the Society when I say: We salute you, Luigi, and offer you our most sincere thanks and best, and we know we can count on your continued joyful participation in the Italian Cultural Society.

I now have the unenviable task of stepping into the shoes of the presidency after such an illustrious performance! In this I have the great good fortune to have a very able board to guide me as we team up to carry the Society forward. Like Luigi, I too am a scientist (a physicist, not a biologist). I came to Washington about 10 years ago to work at NIST, retiring from a professorship at Ohio University. I began taking introductory classes in the ILP in the spring of 2003 and through this participation learned of the activities of the ICS. In the spring of 2005 I was translating a history of the town in Italy where my father was born, and I discussed the project with my teacher, Silvana De Luca. She introduced me to Luigi, who treated me as a fellow Pugliese, and who took an interest in the project. Luigi asked me whether I would like to serve on the ICS board. I accepted, and that summer I got to work with its members as well as with our co-sponsor, SMATCH, to mount a production of "Magic Rome" with a troupe from Rome. Since then I have been involved in a variety of activities with the ICS, including continuing to take classes with the ILP.

If I have a vision for the ICS it is this: I would like us to recognize that Italian culture does not only involve the illustrious contributions of the past in Italy, although it starts there, but that it is also of the here and now and on this soil. It is a culture that is being dispersed by people like us, our membership, imbued with the love of the vitality, humanity, richness and intensity that Italian culture represents. We are either by birth or choice an Italian diaspora, and it is the purpose of our Society to celebrate what this culture means to the world, and to invite others to enjoy it. This year we are working to provide our membership with a variety of interesting programs and activities as shall be evident in these pages as they come up. Our first meeting will involve a culinary demonstration described on subsequent pages. I look forward to enjoying your company at our next meeting on September 20 and throughout the coming year.

a presto,
Ron Cappelletti

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2009 ICS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS

Asia Goode, a 10th grader of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Received the Pietro Antonio Donna Scholarship in the amount of $600 specifically established to recognize a meritorious High School student. She says of herself "Io voglio essere una cantante classica di professione….lavoro diligentemente per essere fluente (in Italiano) per la mia carriera e per apprendere una cultura diversa". Her teachers describe her as follows: "She has been a very sincere and diligent student whose hard work is a constant source of inspiration for the other students". "She is in the top 1% of her graduating class". "Asia is one of my top performing students"

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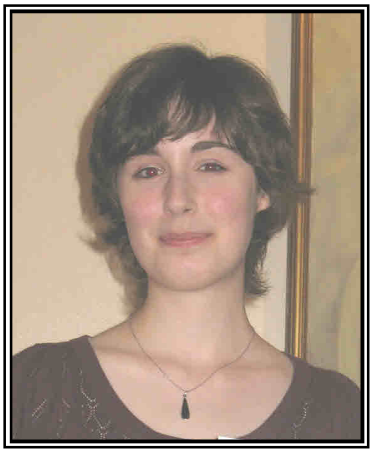


Lauren-Claire Kelley is the winner of the Candida DiCroce Italian Language Award. She will be a senior at George Mason University and is majoring in English with concentration in Linguistics, with a minor in foreign languages, with studies in French and Italian. She says of herself : " I found that I had an affinity for Italian that I never felt for French; I remembered words and phrases easily, and the sounds seemed to shape themselves far more naturally in my mouth than did the tortuous sounds of French. I responded to the language's playful, yet earnest quality. I could recall Italian vocabulary more easily, I think, because Italian is so musical, and being the daughter of a pianist I have always been sensitive to the cadences and inflections of music." Lauren is the vice-President of the Italian Club.

Joseph Ippolito is the winner of the Young Scientist Award. He double-majored in Physics and Astronomy with a B.S. from the University of Texas at Austin in the Fall of 2008. He is attending the University of Minnesota where he is enrolled in the Biomedical Engineering Graduate program. "I have been taught to think like a good scientist, and this gives me the opportunity to work on things that are unimaginably complex and beautiful without hesitation….I believe that this award can help me as I go forward trying to be the best scientist I can be." He is a coauthor of a publication entitled: "The first galaxies: Signatures of the Initial Starburst",

Lionel Yacecsko, a MA-PhD student in Greek and Latin at The Catholic University of America, is the winner of the Antonio and Elena De Luca Classics Award. Lionel attended the University of Dallas, where he studied Classical Philology (BA, 2005), and wrote a critical edition with verse translation and commentary of Propertius 4.11. His research interests include all aspects of textual transmission, especially manuscript studies and textual editing, as well as the literary tradition of tragedy in Western civilization. "I consider "speaking with precision" to be the following: to effect, to the greatest extent possible, the coincidence of the image of the word used with the demands of the context in which it is used. When this is done speech is living, fresh, forceful and effective….Latin trains the tongue to speak with precision, because it is the tongue of the civilization that gave birth to the modern nations of western civilization."

FILM OF THE MONTH: Golden Door In this elegiac immigrant's tale from director Emanuele Crialese, Sicilian widower Salvatore Mancuso (Vincenzo Amato) leaves behind everything he knows to pursue a better life in America at the dawn of the 20th century. ►►►

With his sons in tow, Salvatore survives the harrowing Atlantic crossing only to suffer more hardship and humiliation on Ellis Island. But along the way, he finds romance with a mysterious Englishwoman (Charlotte Gainsbourg).

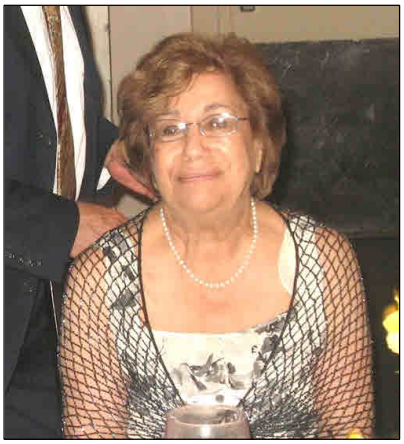
PICTURES FROM THE GALA

OUR NEW PRESIDENT RON CAPPELLETTI

COUNSELLOR MARCO MANCINI AND PAST PRESIDENT LUIGI DE LUCA

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS AND THE ICS BOARD

NEW VICE-PRESIDENT OLGA MANCUSO AND RON CAPPELLETTI



CESARINA HORING

CLAUDIA DONNA & LUIGI DE SANCTIS

MARIA WILMETH

L' ARTE DI INSEGNARE L' ITALIANO ATTRAVERSO L' ARTE ITALIANA

Sotto l'egida dell'Italian Cultural Society of Washington DC e grazie al contributo del National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) si e'concluso a Roma il seminario di quattro settimane che ha avuto luogo dal 22 giugno al 17 luglio 2009.

Il seminario 2009, denominato "L'arte di insegnare l'italiano attraverso l'arte italiana", -- ed in precedenza tenutosi giá due volte: nel 2004 a Washington, presso la Georgetown University, e nel 2007 a Roma – si é proposto come in passato l'obiettivo di perfezionare le tecniche pedagogiche di 25 insegnanti d'italiano presso le scuole secondarie americane, proponendo loro nuove strategie di insegnamento e, soprattutto, l'uso di opere d'arte italiana come mezzo per insegnare la lingua e la cultura italiane.

Per l'intera durata del seminario i partecipanti sono stati esortati a servirsi esclusivamente della lingua italiana, e lo stesso hanno fatto i 6 docenti (3 storici dell'arte e tre linguisti e pedagoghi specializzati nell'insegnamento dell'italiano come Lingua2) provenienti da universitá italiane e americane che sono stati invitati a tenere i corsi.

Il seminario ha previsto anche un'interessante escursione accademica della durata di 5 giorni a Firenze e in altre cittá della Toscana. Tra gli eventi che piú hanno destato interesse basti ricordare la visita privata di alcune tombe etrusche nelle vicinanze di Chiusi, e quella del Convento di San Marco a Firenze in cui visse Fra' Gerolamo Savonarola. Durante l'escursione, e grazie all'interessamento del Prof. Aldo Bove, é stato anche possible includere una visita alla cittá umbra di Cittá della Pieve e di altre localitá. In questo contesto é da sottolineare per l'appunto il fatto che molte lezioni di storia dell'arte sono state tenute *in situ*, presso I musei romani e fiorentini come i Musei Vaticani, Galleria Borghese, la Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, gli Uffizi e la Galleria dell'Accademia o presso le chiese ed i siti artistici ed archeologici visitati.

Le lezioni hanno avuto regolarmente luogo da lunedí a venerdí dalle 8 e 30 del mattino alle 17,00, e ad esse si sono accompagnate anche delle conferenze di specialisti e personaggi di spicco come l'Onorevole Valentina Aprea, Presidente alla Camera della Commissione Cultura, Scienza e Istruzione, l'Onorevole Elena Centemoro, membro della stessa Commissione, e la Dott.ssa Gisella Langé, Ispettore presso il Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Universitá e della Ricerca. Oltre a ció si sono verificati altri interessanti eventi, quali, ad esempio, gli incontri con i rispettivi Rettori delle Universitá per Stranieri di Siena e Perugia, e coi dirigenti delle case editrici Guerra Edizioni e Bonacci che hanno presentato ai partecipanti il loro vasto e specializzato materiale didattico.

Oltre a seguire con assoluta assiduitá tutte le lezioni e a partecipare alle visite *in situ*, ai partecipanti é stato richiesto di creare delle lezioni corredate di esercizi ed esami da usare nei loro rispettivi corsi, di discuterle e presentarle in classe ai loro colleghi, e da consegnare

THE ART OF TEACHING ITALIAN THROUGH ITALIAN ART

Under the aegis of the Italian Cultural Society, and thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), a four-week institute was held in Rome, from June 22nd to July 17th, 2009

The 2009 Institute, entitled "The Art of Teaching Italian through Italian Art," was similar to those previously held in Washington (Georgetown University) in 2004 and in Rome in 2007, and its main objective was that of further refining the teaching techniques of 25 committed teachers of Italian in U.S. secondary schools by exposing them to state-of-the-art pedagogical techniques and, primarily, by training them to use a variety of Italian works of art as vehicles for teaching Italian language and culture.

The official language used during the four-week institute was Italian, and all six eminently qualified scholars -- three art historians and three linguistics docents, specialists in the teaching of Italian as a second language, who came from various Italian and US institutions of higher learning and who were selected to lecture in the Institute – spoke exclusively in Italian.

The Institute also included a five-day academic excursion to Florence and other Tuscan cities that offered many highlights such as personalized visits to the Etruscan tombs located at Chiusi and to Gerolamo Savonarola's Saint Mark Convent in Florence. Thanks to Prof. Aldo Bove, we were also able to visit Cittá della Pieve, in Umbria, and other sites. Indeed many art lectures were held *in situ* at various Roman and Florentine museums, churches and historical sites such as the Vatican Museums, Galleria Borghese, Rome's National Gallery of Modern Art, the Uffizi Museum, and the Galleria dell'Accademia.

The Institute met Monday through Friday, 8:30AM to 5:00PM for classes and occasional special lectures by distinguished guest speakers such as the Hon. Valentina Aprea, President of the Italian House's Commission on Culture, Sciences and Education, the Hon. Elena Centemoro, who is a member of the same Commission, and Dr. Gisella Langé, Inspector of the Italian Ministry of Public Instruction, University and Research. Visits were also organized to the Universities for Foreigners of Siena and Perugia where the Institute's Directors and the participants were met by their respective Presidents, and at specialized publishing houses such as Guerra Edizioni and Bonacci.

Besides attending all lectures and site visits, all participants were required to produce a number of lesson plans, exercises and tests that could be used in their respective classrooms, and that they were required to hand in at the conclusion of the Institute, as well as a formal final oral class presentation, on the basis of which they could exercise the option of receiving six graduate credits from an accredited institution of higher learning.

in forma cartacea ai Direttori alla conclusione del seminario. In base alla qualitá dei materiali prodotti e al contributo e partecipazione dati nel corso delle lezioni, ai partecipanti é stata offerta la facoltá di avvalersi dell'opzione di poter ricevere 6 crediti a livello post-universitario da parte di un'universitá accreditata a tutti gli effetti.

Tra i suggerimenti e commenti generalmente positivi e costruttivi offerti in gran parte anonimamente nelle valutazioni fatte dai partecipanti alla fine del corso ne citiamo *verbatim* solo alcuni: "É stata un'esperienza incredibile… Vi prego di offrire lo stesso tipo di opportunitá anche ad altri."; "É stato il miglior corso di aggiornamento a cui abbia mai partecipato. L'organizzazione, i contenuti e tutti gli altri aspetti logistici sono stati eccellenti…"; "Questa é stata un'esperienza meravigliosa… I direttori sono stati assolutamente fantastici…"; "…preferirei non dire niente ai miei colleghi dell'esistenza di questo seminario… in modo da poter essere nuovamente io a ritornare!"; "Questo é stato un corso meraviglioso. (Mi) ha veramente aperto la mente e l'anima per una nuova direzione nell'insegnamento dell'italiano…"; "Tutto il mese é stato organizzato alla perfezione e in ogni suo minimo particolare, e ció ha reso la mia partecipazione piacevole e facile: nel complesso una meravigliosa opportunitá di far progredire l'insegnamento dell'italiano negli Stati Uniti…"; "…dire che ritorneró (al mio lavoro) come un'insegnate d'italiano piú impegnata e ispirata é un'affermazione semplicemente inadeguata… In realtá mi mancano le parole per esprimere come mi sento fortunata di aver potuto fare una simile esperienza… Grazie di avermi data l'opportunitá di essere qui anch'io".

La presentazione delle domande di finanziamento per le due precedenti edizioni del seminario, come anche la sua direzione, sono state gestite da due soci dell'Italian Cultural Society: il Prof. Roberto Severino, che per due volte é stato anche Presidente della Societá, e dalla Dott.ssa Maria Wilmeth, Direttrice del Programma di Lingua Italiana dell'ICS, con la collaborazione e co-direzione del Seminario del Direttore dell'Ufficio Scolastico dell'Ambasciata Italiana: la Dott.ssa Graziana Morini nel 2004 e il Prof. Luigi De Sanctis nel 2007.

Nel 2009 i tre condirettori sono stati il Prof. Severino, il Prof. De Luca , ex-Presidente dell'ICS, che ha gentilmente e prontamente accettato di prendere il posto della Dott.ssa Wilmeth, e il Prof. De Sanctis, mentre l'amministrazione del finanziamento é stata oculatamente espletata da Cesarina Horing, attuale Direttrice del Programma ICS di Lingua Italiana e dalla Signora Flavia Colombo. Sia la Dott.ssa Maria Wilmeth, che é attualmente in fase di superamento dei problemi medici cui é andata incontro, che la Signora Cesarina Horing, hanno entrambe effettuato una visita a Roma e dato il loro fattivo contributo alla buona riuscita del seminario. ***Roberto Severino***

In addition to much welcomed constructive comments, the mostly anonymous evaluations handed in at the conclusion of the course were in general, very positive and contained comments such as "It has been an incredible experience… Please offer the same level of opportunity to others."; "It has been the best series of workshops I have ever attended. The organization, content, logistics have been excellent…"; "This has been an amazing experience…the Directors were simply amazing…"; "I would prefer not to tell my colleagues… so that I can come again!"; "This was a marvelous institute. It truly opened my mind and soul towards a new direction in teaching…"; "The month was organized very well, down to the last detail, which helped make the experience enjoyable, easy to be part of, and an overall amazing opportunity to advance the teaching of Italian in the States."; "…to say that I will return a more committed and inspired teacher of Italian is an understatement… I truly have not the words when I think about how lucky we are to have had this experience… thank you for letting me be here."

The two previous editions of the grant applications were authored, and the Institute co-directed, by two members of the ICS: Prof. Roberto Severino, Director and twice ICS past President, and Dr. Maria Wilmeth, Co-Director and for many years Director of the ICS Italian Language Program, with the cooperation of a third co-Director, the Director of the Educational Office of the Italian Embassy, respectively Ms. Graziana Morini, in 2004, and Prof. Luigi De Sanctis in 2007.

The 2009 triad of Directors was composed of the following individuals: Prof. Severino, Prof. Luigi De Luca, ICS Past President who graciously accepted to step in for Dr. Maria Wilmeth, and by Prof. De Sanctis. The grant's administrative work was performed under the expert guidance of Ms. Cesarina Horing, Director of the ICS Italian Language Program, and Ms. Flavia Colombo. Both Maria Wilmeth, who is successfully recuperating from medical issues, and Cesarina Horing were able to visit the Institute in Rome and give their valuable input. ***Roberto Severino***

ICS Board of Directors and their Responsibilities

Ron Cappelletti, *President & Webmaster*
Olga Mancuso, *Vice President*
Cesarina Horing, *Membership, Treasurer & Italian Language Program*
Paolo Vidoli, *Secretary*
Arrigo Mongini, *Editor of Poche Parole*
Joe Onofrietti, *Film & Hospitality*
Nick Monaco, *Outside Events*
Aldo Grossi, *Music & Hospitality*
Luigi De Luca, *At large (Past President)*
Romeo Segnan, *At large*
Maria Wilmeth, *Historian*
Elio Grandi, *Emeritus*
Aldo Bove, *Liaison in Italy*

NEWS BRIEFS FROM ITALY

(Summarized from Corriere della Sera on line)

On June 16, a young Japanese couple, tourists, had lunch at Passetto, a medium/high priced restaurant in the heart of Rome, near Piazza Navona. They were not offered a menu, and instead were sent a waiter who spoke English, who politely said "Trust me. I'll take care of it". They each enjoyed the full meal, which included three oysters, some pasta with lobster sauce, baked fish, and a cup of gelato in three flavors plus ordinary white wine and mineral water. This was all fine until they looked at the bill, 696 Euros, including a "small" tip of 115 Euros imposed without their consent. First they thought it was a mistake but then they noticed that their credit card had been, in fact, charged the full amount. The restaurant ignored their complaint, insisting that those were the regular menu prices. The couple went to the local police station. The cops investigated, found that the prices were not what was on the menu, ordered an inspection of the restaurant and promptly closed it down for unsanitary conditions. Gianni Alemanno, Mayor of Rome, commented "As far as I am concerned, this restaurant should never reopen… Cases like this should result in the revocation of a license" Yasuyuki Yamada has since refused an offer from Italy's Minister of Tourism for a return trip to Italy at government expense, saying that it was a great trip, he loves Italy, and wants to return at his own expense. It would be a "pointless expense for the Italian taxpayers".

ICS Poche Parole Publication
Arrigo Mongini, Editor
Nick Monaco, Assistant Editor
Romeo Segnan, Paolo Vidoli, Italian Editors

Poche Parole is published each month from January through May and September through December.

The deadline for the submission of all articles and ads for a newsletter issue is the 25th of the month preceding publication of the issue. Please send submissions via the Internet to e-mail address: **icspoparole@verizon.net** or on a computer diskette/CD to:

Editor, Poche Parole
4848 Battery Lane, Suite 100
Bethesda, MD 20814

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NOTIZIE BREVI DALL' ITALIA

(Riassunte dal Corriere della Sera on line)

Il 16 giugno, una coppia di giovani giapponesi, turisti, ha fatto il pranzo a Passetto, un ristorante medio-alto nel cuore della città, dietro Piazza Navona. Nessuno ha loro dato un menu. È' stato invece mandato un cameriere che parlava in inglese che, con modi gentili, li ha convinti: "Fidatevi di me, faccio io". Hanno goduto il pasto, che ha incluso tre ostriche, della pasta con salsa di gambero, pesce al forno, una coppa di gelato a tre gusti, vino bianco, e acqua minerale. Andava tutto bene finche' non hanno esaminato il conto, 696 Euro, inclusa una "piccola" mancia non autorizzata dai clienti. All' inizio, pensavano che ci fosse un errore, ma poi hanno visto che nella ricevuta della loro carta di credito risaltava proprio la somma intera. Il ristorante ha ignorato la loro lagnanza, dicendo che I prezzi erano quelli regolari. La coppia e' andata alla vicina stazione di polizia. La polizia ha investigato, ha trovato che i prezzi non erano quelli scritti nel menu', ha ordinato un' ispezione sanitaria e ha subito chiuso il ristorante per gravi carenze sanitarie. Gianni Alemanno, Sindaco di Roma ha detto "Per quanto mi riguarda questo ristorante non deve più aprire e per casi di questo genere si deve arrivare alla revoca della licenza." Yasuyuki Yamada ha poi respinto un' offerta del Ministro del Turismo italiano di un viaggio di andata e ritorno a spese del governo, dichiarando che e' stato un viaggio splendido, che ama l' Italia, e che vuole tornare a spese sue. Sarebbe "una spesa inutile fatta con le tasse del popolo italiano".

WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that I introduce those Members who have joined us recently. As I welcome them I hope that they will take advantage of all that the Society has to offer and that they will contribute with their knowledge and expertise to the success of the Society's mission:

Nora Scaccia, Vincenzo e Ileana Ippolito,
Anne C. Dineen, Charles De Marco, Noel Konig,
Irith Dror, Jeff Murray and Vidgis Jacobsen,
Laurel Luchs, Mr. & Mrs. Coburn,
Bruce & Patricia Esposito,
Barbara Bays, Joseph Parlante, Brenda Albus
Janice Lower, Sharinna Sarmiento,
Michele Parisi Family, Richard Nehring.

Benvenuti !

Cesarina Horing, ***Membership Chair***

Album di Famiglia
Romanzo visuale
by Anna Maltese Lawton

Edizioni dell'Orso, 2008
ISBN 978-88-6274-07503

Book and dvd can be purchased:
online at: **www.ibs.it**
through the U.S. distributor
New Academia Publishing:
orders@newacademia.com
and in Italian bookstores.

Presentation of the book and screening of the stage adaptation with original music and lyrics

Embassy of Italy
3000 Whitehaven St, NW

September 23 2009, 6:30 pm

Organized by Italian Cultural Institute and sponsored by SMATCH

A panel of critics and literary scholars, chaired by Roberto Severino, Professor Emeritus of Italian at Georgetown University, will discuss the novel with the author.

The screening will be introduced by the video director, Max Chicco, of Meibi Productions, Turin, Italy.

After the presentation, refreshments will be served and the author will sign the books.

Album di Famiglia is a family saga which unfolds on the background of Italian history from 1870 to 1945.

The rich narrative tapestry includes a castle in the Monferrato area, three women, three generations, and a hundred minor characters. It brings to the fore individual lives and human predicaments, personal feelings and universal themes.

The place that inspired the novel is the Castello di Cortanze, which belonged to the author's family and served as the set for the staging of the video.

The presentation will be in English. The video is in Italian with English subtitles.

Anna Maltese Lawton teaches courses in visual culture and film studies at Georgetown University. Her most recent book, *Imaging Russia 2000: Film and Facts*, was awarded the prize CHOICE 2005 as Outstanding Academic Title.

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Antenna Italia

is now on the AMICO website. Get news from Italy and information on Italian and Italian-American events as well as music & commentary in streaming audio. Tune in any time at Pino Cicala's web site
www.italianamericancommunications.org

Ai Nostri Lettori: *Questo Saggio e' un lavoro di uno studente in un corso avanzato di Silvana De Luca dell' Italian Language Program.*

To Our Readers: *This essay is the work of a student in an Advanced Italian course of Silvana De Luca, of the Italian Language Program*

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI (1792-1868)

di Richard Mounts

I. Perché la sua musica è importante?

Con Gaetano Donizetti *(l'Elisir d'Amore)* e Vicenzo Bellini *(Norma),* Gioacchino Rossini ha introdotto l'opera detta "bel canto." Questi tre compositori hanno dominato l'opera lirica durante la prima metà del secolo diciannovesimo. Erano delle composizioni per far piacere, non per far pensare.
Per certi critici, il *Barbiere di Siviglia* è la migliore opera buffa di tutte. Rossini era conosciuto sopratutto per le sue melodie. Wagner ha detto che Rossini ha "chiuso la storia dell'opera lirica", perché, per Rossini, l'opera era solamente la melodia.

II. La sua giovinezza

È nato a Pesaro il 29 febbraio 1792. Pesaro è sul mare Adriatico, tra Rimini e Ancona, nella regione delle Marche. È nato tre mesi dopo la morte di Mozart. Oggi, Pesaro organizza Il "Rossini Opera Festival" nel mese di agosto. (C'è anche un festival di Puccini a Lucca in agosto, un festival di Donizetti a Bergamo in autuno, e un festival di Verdi a Parma in ottobre.)

Suo padre era musicista e suonava nelle orchestre locali. Sua madre era cantante. In quest' epoca i francesi occupavano Pesaro e la regione, e il signor Rossini li sosteneva ardentemente.►►►►►►►

A causa di questo**,** la famiglia ha dovuto trasferirsi spesso nella regione Emilia-Romagna, più frequentemente tra Ravenna, Ferrara, e Bologna. **Era precoce.** Ha cominciato a studiare la musica a Bologna all'età di quattordici anni. Gli sono piaciuti molto Mozart e Haydn. Ha composto la sua prima opera a quest' età – a quattordici anni!

III. La sua carriera

La sua prima opera è stata rappresentata nel 1810 quando aveva diciotto anni. Prima dell'età di trent'anni aveva già scritto trentadue opere, tra le quali
- *L'Italiana in Algeri*
- *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*
- *La Cenerentola*

Doveva lavorare così perché guardagnava i soldi solamente dopo aver scritto e consegnato un' opera. Dopo aver pagato il compositore, l'impresario teatrale aveva controllo dell'opera. In quest'epoca i compositori non avevano i diritti d'autore. Dovevano scrivere continuamente. Spesso i cantanti erano pagati molto di più di Rossini.

Tra il 1812 e il 1825 Rossini ha fornito le opere per i teatri a diverse città, incluso Bologna, Ferrara, Venezia, Milano, Roma, e Napoli. Nel 1823, è stato nominato direttore del "Teatro degli Italiani" a Parigi e lui e sua moglie , la cantante spagnola Isabella Colbran, si sono trasferiti a Parigi. Lì, sei anni più tardi nel 1829, dopo aver scritto ancora otto opere, ha presentato la sua ultima opera, il *Guglielmo Tell*. Aveva trentasette anni.

IV. Perche ha smesso di scrivere le opere?

Dopo il *GuglielmoTell* nel 1829 non ha scritto più niente da pubblicare. Ha vissuto ancora 39 anni e ha scritto le cose solamente per piacere. Dopo il 1829 era effettivamente in pensione. Perchè? Veramente, nessuno lo sa. Ma si ha alcune idee.
- Era ricco e non aveva bisogna di lavorare.
- Non aveva una buona salute, e, in più, era un ipocondriaco.
- In quest'epoca – epoca romantica – non gli piaceva le tendenze nell'opera e nella musica in generale. Secondo lui, i cantanti non erano più abbastanza seri e sopratutto, i compositori tedeschi avevano introdotto troppi elementi brutti.

È morto a Parigi il 13 novembre 1868.

Ma almeno abbiamo alcuni capolavori come,

Il Barbiere di Siviglia
La Cenerentola
La Gazza Ladra

E molti altri.

THE FORTRESS OF FENESTRELLE

by Arrigo Mongini

This past June Ingrid and I planned to be in Torino for a few days visiting relatives and we came across an article in Smithsonian Magazine describing a little known nearby historic site, the Fortress of Fenestrelle, in the high Chisone valley about 60 miles from town. We decided that this was definitely worth a visit. The fortress is essentially a two mile long stone wall, really several forts connected by embankments, ramparts, projections, and stairways , with cannon emplacements, barracks, warehouses, and other service buildings, covering 320 acres along a ridge on the left side of the valley. It was built by the House of Savoy to defend Torino and the surrounding plain against possible invasion attempts by the French.

Construction was begun in 1727 by Victor Amadeus II (Duke of Savoy and later, while maintaining the duchy, King of Sicily and, finally, King of Sardinia) and continued intermittently through much of the 18th century and half of the 19th. Some have called it Europe's answer to the Great Wall of China, though of course much less extensive. It runs from an altitude of 4,000 feet to 6,000 feet above sea level at its high point. One of its most unusual features is an enclosed passageway, protected from artillery, containing 4,000 steps connecting all levels of the fort. Throughout its history the fort was never taken by the enemy. Indeed it was never attacked because it would have requred a lengthy siege and cost the lives of tens of thousands of troops. Napoleon, in a deal with the Savoys, briefly gained possession of the fort until he fell from power. In the 19th century the fort was also used as a civil and military prison.

One cloudy Monday, along with two cousins, we set out by car to take the three hour guided tour. (We opted against the six hour tour, which would have involved climbing nearly all 4,000 steps). Our British tour guide spoke in Italian with occasional explanations in English. We visited many of the parts of the lower section of the fort. These included the "church", which was really an ammunition storage building, and the dark underground soldiers' kitchen, where bread was baked and stored only once every few months, became hard as a rock, and needed to be dipped in a thin broth to be eaten. We visited a cell exposed to the elements and without heat, where Cardinal Pacca, who had crossed Napoleon, was imprisoned for over three years. We learned of the horrendous conditions suffered not only by prisoners but also by the soldiers, especially in winter. One fact that became widely known only in the last few years is that the fort was a prison for about 10,000 soldiers who had fought for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies against the Savoys during the Risorgimento. They were chained together in cramped quarters with no sanitation and made to work like slaves. Nearly all died there in that horrible place -- Italians, who

LA FORTEZZA DI FENESTRELLE

di Arrigo Mongini

Lo scorso giugno Ingrid e io intendevamo passare un paio di giorni visitando parenti a Torino e abbiamo letto per caso un articolo nella rivista Smithsonian che descriveva un sito storico poco conosciuto, la Fortezza di Fenestrelle, nell' alta Val Chisone a 60 miglia dalla citta'. Abbiamo deciso che meritava sicuramente una visita. La fortezza e' essenzialmente una muraglia di pietra lunga due miglia, costituita in realtà da parecchi forti collegati da spalti, bastioni, risalti, e scale con postazioni di cannoni, caserme, depositi, altri edifici di servizio, coprendo 320 acri lungo una cresta sulla parte sinistra della vallata. Fu costruita dalla Casata di Savoia per proteggere la pianura torinese da eventuali tentativi francesi di invasione.

La costruzione fu iniziata da Vittorio Amedeo II (Duca di Savoia e più tardi, pur conservando il ducato, Re di Sicilia ed infine Re di Sardegna) e continuò a tappe durante la maggior parte del settecento fino alla metà dell' ottocento. Alcuni l' hanno nominata La Grande Muraglia d' Europa, ma certo molto meno estesa di quella cinese. Si sviluppa per oltre 5 chilometri su un dislivello che parte da un'altitudine 4,000 piedi per raggiungere 6,000 piedi nel punto più alto. Uno dei suoi tratti piu' distintivi e' un passaggio chiuso, protetto dall' artiglieria, con 4,000 gradini che connette tutti l livelli del forte. Per tutta la sua storia il forte non è mai stato preso dal nemico. Infatti non è mai stato assalito perch& ci sarebbe voluto un lungo assedio che avrebbe costato la vita a diecine di migliaia di truppe. Napoleone, in un patto con i Savoia, s' impossessò brevemente del forte prima che lui cadesse dal potere. Nell'ottocento il forte servì anche da prigione militare e civile.

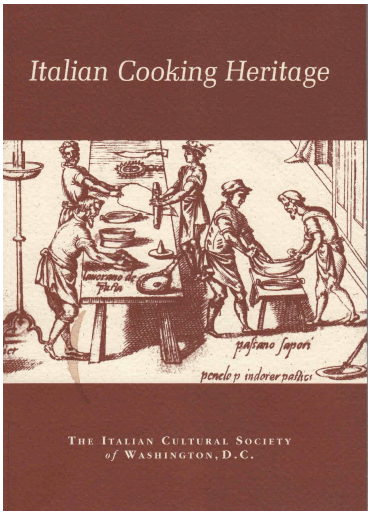
In un lunedi' nuvoloso, insieme a due cugini, siamo partiti in macchina per il tour di tre ore. (Abbiamo escluso quello di sei ore, che ci avrebbe fatto salire quasi tutti i 4,000 gradini). Il nostro cicerone britannico parlava in italiano con spiegazioni occasionali in inglese. Abbiamo visitato molte parti della sezione bassa del forte, comprese la "chiesa", che in verita' era un deposito di munizioni, e la buia cucina dei soldati, dove veniva cotto e conservato il pane solo una volta ogni pochi mesi, e poi diventava duro come un sasso e doveva essere immerso in un brodo leggero per essere mangiabile. Abbiamo visitato una cella esposta alle intemperie e senza calore, dove il Cardinale Pacca, che aveva contrariato Napoleone, fu imprigionato per più di tre anni. Siamo venuti a sapere le orrende condizioni sofferte non solo dai prigionieri ma anche dai soldati, specialmente d' inverno. Un fatto rivelato solo pochi anni fa è che il forte era una prigione per circa 10,000 soldati che avevano combattuto per il Regno Delle Due Sicilie contro l Savoia durante il risorgimento. Erano concatenati l'uno all'altro in stretti quartieri senza

happened to be born in the South, in a concentration camp, some 70 years before Hitler.

After many decades of abandonment the Fortress of Fenestrelle is being restored by the private San Carlo Project Association, with the help of private contributions and grants from governmental bodies. The Association also gives the tours and sponsors cultural events on the site. If you visit Torino, check it out. Go to the website www.fortedifenestrelle.com and for reservations call +39 0121 83 600.

servizi sanitari e costretti a lavorare come schiavi. Quasi tutti morirono in quel luogo orrendo, italiani, nati per caso nel Sud, in un campo di concentramento, una settantina d' anni prima di Hitler.

Dopo molti decenni di abbandono la Fortezza di Fenestrelle viene restaurata dall' Associazione Progetto San Carlo, con l' aiuto di contributi da privati e doni da enti governativi. L' Associazione offre anche i tour e presenta eventi culturali sul sito. Se fate conto di visitare Torino provate ad andare alla Fortezza, e visitate il sito internet www.fortedifenestrelle.com, e per prenotazioni telefonate a +39 0121 83 600.



"ITALIAN COOKING HERITAGE", a cookbook published by the Italian Cultural Society is now available in its sixth printing. It was compiled by members of the Society, who met and tested the recipes before selecting them for the cookbook. The first edition was presented to the First Lady in a 1979 White House ceremony. Its 110 pqges contain over 200 recipes in chapters each devoted to the cuisine of a different region of Italy. Copies will be on sale at the next Sunday social meeting for $20, or you may order one from the ICS for $20 plus $5 for shipping and handling.

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LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

The National Gallery of Art: The Beffi Triptych, rescued from the earthquake in Abruzzo, is on display only through Sept. 7. See the web site www.nga.gov/press/exh/3147/index.shtm

Italian Cultural Institute and Casa Italiana: Michele Mariotti, director of Gioacchino Rossini's Barbiere di Siviglia programmed at Washington Opera in September 2009, in dialogue with Monica E. Lapenta, writer and publisher of books on opera. 6:30 PM Thursday, Sept 17, 3000 Whitehaven Street NW, Washington, DC 20008, RSVP 202-638-1348.

Album di Famiglia, by Anna Maltese Lawton, book presentation, video, panel discussion and reception. Wednesday, Sept. 23, 6:30 PM, for details see ad on page 6. RSVP required. ►►►►►►►►

Holy Rosary Church and Casa Italiana: "Opera Night" , a tribute to Luciano Pavarotti in two acts, with music, song, poetry, and dance. 7:30 PM, Saturday, Oct. 10 at Casa Italiana. Tickets, $25, children and students $15, payable to Holy Rosary Church. Send to Maestro Bruno Fusco, 5113 Saratoga Ave., Bethesda, MD 20816

Holy Rosary Church: 47th annual Italian Festival, 11 AM to 6 PM Sunday, Sept. 13 at Villa Rosa Home, 3800 Lottsford Vista Rd. Mitchellville MD. For details see.
www.holyrosarychurchdc.org/Events/italianfestival.html

FESTA ITALIANA 2009

The annual Festa Italiana was held at Casa Italiana on Sunday, June 28 this year. It is the Washington Italian-American community's way of celebrating our Italian heritage with a traditional festival similar to what occurs on certain saints' days in major U.S. cities. It is organized by the Holy Rosary Church, Fieri, and your own Italian Cultural Society. ICS members had lead roles in most of the activities, including hiring the entertainment, running the raffle and silent auction, setting up the audio visual system, and preparing and staffing the cultural displays, which this year celebrated the Region of Puglia. Here are pictures, courtesy of Francesco Isgro, editor of Voce Italiana.

LA BANDIERA

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LA VOCE DI BEATRICE

UN PO' DI PIOGGIA?

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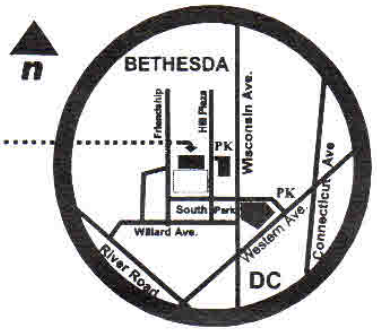

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