



PRESERVING AND PROMOTING
ITALIAN LANGUAGE
AND CULTURE

SOCIAL MEETINGS/EVENT OVERVIEW

Social meetings take place on the third Sunday of the month, September through May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center: 4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD (please see map on back cover)

January Social Event: January 15, NEW LOCATION: Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center, 3:00-5:00 PM, The Italian Cultural Society, in collaboration with Istituto Italiano di Cultura Washington DC will host: Friendship, Language, and the City: Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan Novels by Prof. Laura Benedetti, Georgetown University.

Please RSVP at RSVP@italianculturalsociety.org



Festa di Natale

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2017, Buon Anno! While the new presidency of the US will mean that this is likely to be a year full of, well, surprises, for the Italian Cultural Society, it will mean a year full of stimulating programs and the warmth of our socializing, the fun of our special events, the joy of presenting awards to our brilliant young people, and the glamour of an ICS Gala at the Embassy of Italy.

We begin this January 15th with a cultural event, a panel featuring Prof. Laura Benedetti of the Italian Department of Georgetown University along with Dr. Anna Lawton discussing the work of the brilliant and still mysterious Italian author who has caused such a literary stir with her now famous Neapolitan Quartet, Elena Ferrante. These works, excellently translated into English by Ann Goldstein, begin with the striking "My Brilliant Friend" (L'amica geniale) to map out the searing story of the deep, fraught relationship between two children, the shrewd, fiery Lila and the calmer, intellectually inclined Lenu, growing up in a vibrant, poor and crime-infested neighborhood in Naples as they grapple with the violence, the struggle to learn, and the harsh lives of their parents. In the process we learn also about the development of Italy from the early 1950s through the modern period. Come join us for this discussion, won't you?

We look forward to seeing you again after the Holidays.

Ronald Cappelletti
President



**The Italian
Cultural Society
of Washington D.C.**

Poche Parole

JANUARY 2017
Vol. XXXIII, No. 14

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FESTA DI NATALE

12/11/16

The nicely renovated Friendship Heights Village Center was the venue for the ICS annual Festa di Natale, sponsored in collaboration with MaPaCi (Italians in D.C) and Le D.I.V.E., allowing about 120 parents, 80 children and other members to enjoy a visit by Babbo Natale (the amiable Paolo Nascimbene), La Befana (the lovely Elisabetta Vidoli) and i folletti (the charming Ilaria Leone, Isabel Sofia and Nicole Krieg) who distributed presents; as we all enjoyed delicious food supplied by the guests themselves. While the children were engaged in Christmas activities arranged by MaPaCi and Le D.I.V.E., the opening of the afternoon party was a concert of classical music (by Scarlatti and featuring Beethoven's "Waldstein" sonata) played by Daniel Kuehler, 2016 winner of a Montanari-Mendola award for piano performance. Kuehler then led the guests in several Christmas songs. The children of the ILP were also featured in two performances. The first was a reading by them, one-by-one, in nicely-pronounced Italian of an entertaining Christmas story which they had composed, guided by their teacher Maura Guida-Maffia. The second was a choral performance of a modern Italian Christmas song, A Natale Puoi, guided by Francesca Casazza. Daniel then returned to accompany us all in singing "Here Comes Santa Claus" as the children streamed back in and Babbo and his team made their noisy, dramatic entrance into the hall. Guests also had the opportunity to purchase tickets for the Lotteria di Natale which featured several prizes provided by our partners and friends: a Wine Tasting for Ten from Via Umbria, a hand-made hat by Franca Bartoli, a gift certificate from EYMA Salon & Spa, a gift certificate from Ristorante Amici Miei, a collection of coffees from Illy, a gift certificate from Pizzeria Da Marco, a course from the Italian Language Program, a cookbook from the ICS, and a Pandoro di Verona from Bauli. Before the festivities began, Le D.I.V.E. had set up a mercatino di Natale on several tables in the hallways of the FHVC, displaying wares for sale throughout the Festa by members of that organization. Part of the income from the mercatino is donated to support projects linked to the promotion of the Italian language, like AP in Italian preparation courses. The festivities included a bar with bellini punch, prosecco and white wine for the adults and non-alcoholic bellini and juices for the children. We were also delighted to have two newly arrived members of the Embassy of Italy join us for these activities: First Counselor Catherine Flumiani and Education Coordinator prof.ssa Maria Fusco. Thanks to all who helped make this memorable annual event a success.





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12/11/16



LOTTERIA DI NATALE

1 TICKET \$5.00
3 TICKETS \$10.00



VIA UMBRIA
Wine Tasting for 10

Handmade hat by Franca Bartoli

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Pavli



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JANUARY SOCIAL EVENT

1/15/17

The Italian Cultural Society, in collaboration with Istituto Italiano di Cultura Washington D.C. will host:
Friendship, Language, and the City: Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan Novels

Laura Benedetti (Georgetown University), in conversation with Anna Lawton (New Academia Publishing), will lead a discussion on Elena Ferrante's tetralogy about two friends growing together and drifting apart during sixty years of Italian history.

Refreshments and a brindisi to the new year will follow.

NEW LOCATION: Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center
5311 Friendship Boulevard, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 Tel. 240-777-8088 (above Whole Foods Market)
Metro: Friendship Heights
When: 3:00-5:00PM
RSVP at RSVP@italianculturalsociety.org

The event is free, but please consider to purchase a raffle ticket, or donate \$5 to \$20 to defray the cost of these events.
(No movie and no Italian conversation class will be held this month.)

About the speakers:

Laura Benedetti is the Laura and Gaetano De Sole Professor of Contemporary Italian Culture at Georgetown University. Her publications include the volumes *La sconfitta di Diana. Un percorso per la "Gerusalemme liberata"*, *The Tigress in the Snow: Motherhood and Literature in Twentieth-Century Italy*, the edition and English translation of Lucrezia Marinella's *Esortazioni alle donne e agli altri* and, most recently, the novel *Un paese di carta*.

She was Guest of Honor at the annual meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies (2016), as well as the recipient of the Flaiano International Prize for Italian Studies, the "Wise Woman" award from the National Organization of Italian American Women, and the Gold Medal from the Federazione Associazioni Abruzzesi/U.S.A. She has published extensively on Elena Ferrante's work and was a guest on an episode of The Diane Rehm Show devoted to the author.

Anna Lawton has earned her PhD in Russian Literature at UCLA. She worked both in academia and in government. As a professor, she taught courses in literature, cinema and visual culture at Purdue University and Georgetown University. She also worked for USIA at the American Embassy in Moscow as the Deputy Director of Public Information and Media Outreach and the editor-in-chief of the magazine *Connections*, and at the World Bank in Washington, DC, as the managing editor of the magazine *Development Outreach*. She has served on the Advisory Film Committee of the National Gallery of Art, and directed conferences, seminars, film festivals, round tables, and editorial projects for the Kennan Institute, the National Gallery of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the Italian Embassy in Washington DC, among others.

She published three scholarly books—*Vadim Shershenevich: From Futurism to Imaginism*; *Before the Fall: Soviet Cinema in the Gorbachev Years*; and *Imaging Russia 2000: Film and Facts*—numerous scholarly essays and book chapters, as well as two novels—*Album di famiglia* and *Amy's Story*. She has received several awards, including the CHOICE Award as Outstanding Academic Title 2005 for *Imaging Russia 2000*. In 2003, she founded the publishing house New Academia Publishing, which is today a successful enterprise.



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FROM THE ILP

FRANCESCA CASAZZA

The year 2016 saw the ILP growing its annual enrollment to over 1,000. We are honored to have so many Italy lovers coming to enjoy our "corner of Italy" in Maryland!

Our primary goal is to offer an authentic learning experience, teaching through our native backgrounds the Italian language, literature, cinema, opera, art, history, cuisine, fashion, design and our way of life. We also enable you to experience the Italian lifestyle when you travel and hope that more of you will take advantage of our "Course + Trip" offerings and our "Study Abroad" recommendations. Carlo Ellena will teach a new course focused on Liguria, Piemonte and Veneto, with particular attention to the wine and the food, especially to the "slow food" philosophy. A new trusted contact of ours in Veneto is ready to welcome you in experiencing a unique trip. And like last year, you can enjoy personalized trips to Liguria, Piemonte, Puglia, Lazio, and Sicily (Riccardo Cannavò's class "Discover Sicily" will be back in March!) through our recommended local experts.

We are also proud to widen our offering with the addition of Latin, the origin of our language, to deepen the history of our civilization (for adults and 5-8 graders), and classes of Art (both Drawing and Art History) Creative Writing and Cooking (in English and Italian) to develop your talents, with the support of our Italian instructors.

Kids classes are also growing, including the 2-3 years old Italian Immersion class, where parents are welcome to participate and enjoy having their toddlers exposed to Italian songs and traditions.

Please visit our page <http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/italian-language-program/> and scroll down the menu to read about this year's (2017) schedule and the details of the classes.

I would like to thank all of our teachers for their passionate work and our great students for this successful year. I wish all of you a joyful 2017!

Buon anno!
Francesca Casazza



ILP students enjoying our trip to Puglia



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CANZONI E BRANI NATALIZI NELLA TRADIZIONE ITALIANA

In occasion of the event "Canzoni e brani natalizi nella tradizione Italiana" at the Embassy of Italy, the Italian Language Program - Italian Cultural Society got together with Casa Italiana Ente Gestore and MaPaCi choir "Zucchino d'oro" to celebrate Italian Christmas traditions.

Our little students recited "Balto" a very creative story written together with Maestra Maura in front of the Ambassador of Italy Armando Varricchio and the Italians living in Washington DC.

What a wonderful way to start the holiday season!



BALTO

ALESSANDRA, ARIANNA, LUCIA, MASSIMO, MATTEO, NICOLO, YUTA

Siamo a Venezia, il Natale è ormai vicino e la città, completamente addobbata per l'occasione, è ancora più bella e splendente che mai. Tra due giorni, il 24 dicembre, i più grandi maghi italiani gareggeranno in un torneo di magia, e solo uno di loro sarà il vincitore.

Sono tutti ospiti di un albergo elegante che affaccia su Piazza San Marco, sono arrivati chi da Milano, chi da Roma, chi da Firenze, chi da Bari, chi da Napoli... e ognuno di loro porta grandi valigie e bauli con dentro tutto l'occorrente per stupire gli spettatori.

Nel Teatro La Fenice, il più antico e famoso della città, i Maghi si sfideranno e la gara durerà dalle otto di sera alla mezzanotte del 24 dicembre. I concorrenti, in tutto quaranta, si esibiranno, e il pubblico in sala dovrà votare per decidere chi sarà eletto Mago d'Italia dell'anno 2222.

Nell'atrio dell'hotel c'è una grande confusione, i Maghi si stanno registrando e sono in fila per prendere le chiavi delle loro stanze, quando si vede arrivare un giovane ragazzo: si chiama Nicolò, ha diciassette anni, è molto muscoloso, ha i capelli biondi, baffi e barba per sembrare più grande. Indossa uno smoking, scarpe da ginnastica rosse, porta gli occhiali da sole, e dal taschino spunta un nuovissimo iPhone 71. Lui è molto "balto" – il che significa che è alto di sera e basso di giorno - ma visto che ora è mattina, al tavolo dell'accettazione nessuno si accorge di lui, che grida e si dispera per ottenere la chiave della stanza... ma alla fine grazie ad un microfono trovato per caso riesce a farsi sentire. Quando finalmente lo vede, il direttore dell'albergo si stupisce che un omino così piccolo faccia parte del Concorso, ma lui lo rassicura dicendo che la prima magia la farà questa sera, quando scenderà dalla camera, alto e bello.



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BALTO, CONT.

ALESSANDRA, ARIANNA, LUCIA, MASSIMO, MATTEO, NICOLO, YUTA

Adesso Nicolò è in camera, apre il baule delle magie e dal cilindro esce un coniglio bianco e nero, che però cambia colore secondo le emozioni che prova: diventa giallo quando è arrabbiato, blu quando è triste, nero quando morde, rosa quando è imbarazzato, e così via... si chiama Pecora, e mangia solo pizza condita con le patate fritte, e guai a non dargliela, perché comincia a strillare come un matto.

Questo strano animaletto è "maschiemmina" – mezzo maschio e mezzo femmina – sa volare, sa parlare, e anche se Nicolò non ne è consapevole, è lui che detiene la magia, e siccome è anche un po' pazzo, spesso la usa per fargli degli scherzi.

Sono le 8:00 di sera quando Nicolò esce dall'ascensore per andare a cena. E' in una forma smagliante, alto e bello come aveva promesso, e questo suscita un grande scalpore in tutti quelli che lo avevano visto poche ore prima, piccolo e imbarazzato per non essere in grado di farsi sentire. I maghi cominciano a guardarlo con diffidenza e a pensare che quel ragazzo potrà essere un concorrente pericoloso, perché la sua trasformazione è prova della potenza delle sue arti magiche.

Nicolò esce a piedi, cammina per le calli di Venezia e si ferma in Campo Santa Margherita. E' attratto dall'insegna dei "Do Draghi", un antico locale famoso per i suoi aperitivi. Si siede a un tavolo nel piccolo bar tutto foderato di legno, e subito nota una ragazza che aveva già incontrato nell'atrio dell'albergo, che al bancone, tutta sola, sta appunto consumando un aperitivo.

E' molto attraente: alta e magra, i capelli lunghi e neri come i suoi occhi, il sorriso misterioso, e lui vorrebbe avvicinarla, ma non sa come... quando in quel preciso momento, una coniglietta rosa, salta sul suo tavolo e butta tutto per aria.

La ragazza corre a riprenderla, si scusa dicendo che Fufù le è scappata, ma il ghiaccio è rotto e i due cominciano a parlare. Lei si presenta, si chiama Maya, è di Milano, ha diciassette anni ed è un po' preoccupata perché per la prima volta parteciperà al concorso di magia. Questa passione è iniziata esattamente dieci anni fa, quando sotto l'albero ha trovato un regalo speciale di Babbo Natale: una scatola con tutto l'occorrente per diventare una Super maga. Da allora non si è mai fermata, e adesso è il momento di vedere quanto ha imparato.

I due ragazzi escono ridendo, e Nicolò per conquistarla ferma una gondola, cavallerescamente le dà la mano per farla salire, e insieme vanno via nella notte veneziana, accompagnati dagli inseparabili Pecora e Fufù, che nel frattempo hanno fatto amicizia e si guardano con occhi languidi.

Il giorno tanto atteso è arrivato, la competizione è appena iniziata, e tutti i contendenti sono pronti a stupire gli spettatori. Alla fine di ogni numero si sentono applausi fortissimi, e Nicolò e Maya cominciano a essere molto preoccupati, perché gli altri maghi sono veramente potentissimi, e allora decidono di fare il loro numero insieme. Sono chiamati sul palco e Nicolò, con voce incerta, annuncia cosa hanno preparato: "Adesso ci terremo per mano e quando Maya avrà contato fino a tre, cominceremo a volare e intorno a noi si accenderanno i fuochi d'artificio".

"Uno...due...tre..." e non succede niente. Il pubblico comincia a fare "Booooooooooh". Maya e Nicolò sono imbarazzati. "Uno, due, treeeee"... e di nuovo non succede niente. In sala adesso c'è silenzio, Pecora e Fufù scappano fuori arrabbiatissimi, e lì vedono Babbo Natale che con la sua slitta sta volando proprio sopra al teatro. Lo chiamano a gran voce, gli raccontano tutto, e lo pregano di aiutare i loro padroncini.

Mancano due minuti alla mezzanotte, Nicolò e Maya stanno riprovando, ma ancora una volta non riescono... quando all'improvviso si apre la porta del teatro e Babbo Natale, con la sua slitta entra e comincia a volteggiare intorno ai due ragazzi che, sollevati da un forte vento, a loro volta cominciano a volteggiare nell'aria sempre più in alto. I fuochi d'artificio di tutti i colori si accendono, i ragazzi volano, il pubblico batte le mani come impazzito e Babbo Natale augura a tutti un felice Natale. Maya e Nicolò sono proclamati Maghi del 2222 e vanno via felici sulla slitta che li porta verso la luna.



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AMATRICIANA WITH LOVE

Thank you to everyone for making the second charity dinner - "Amatriciana with Love, a future for Central Italy" an unforgettable evening! Thank you for your donations to the Italian Red Cross - earthquake victims.

Many influential European and American friends gathered to savor a superb Amatriciana pasta (8 kilos of it, in fact), and tons of other typical Italian specialties prepared by the organizers and the participants from the US-ItalyGlobal Affairs forum, the Italian Cultural Society, SAIS Johns Hopkins University, COMITES. A special thanks goes also to the sponsors: Birra Norcia, Illy, Slow Food, Libera Terra, Pecorino Romano, Lenticchie Castelluccio di Norcia IGP, Krumiri.

The purpose was to collect money for the Italian Red Cross for the recent earthquake in Central Italy (Amatrice, Norcia, Visso, Arquata del Toronto). The organizers (Nina Gardner Olivieri, HOST of this event, Daniele Moro, Francesca Casazza, Maura Guida Maffia, Chiara Gastaldi and Susan High), the attendees, and a few generous donors who were unable to join the fun, contributed \$7,020. (The first event we collected \$5,530)

Pictures of the event can be viewed at <http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/past-events/> and <http://usitalyforum.com/upcoming-events>





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LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Please visit our web page <http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/upcoming-events/>

Also, check THE ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE'S calendar (Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC), which links to specific events and exhibits: http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/iic_washington/it

Simona Colonna presents "Folly and Goblins": Potter Violins: John Kendall Recital Hall, 7711 Eastern Ave, Takoma Park, January 7, 5:00PM, <http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/upcoming-events/>

CENA PIEMONTESE

12/16/16

In conclusion of Carlo Ellena's Food/Wine pairing course, we enjoyed a typical dinner from the piedmont region, at Amici Mieì with Chef and Owner Davide Megna (from Piemonte).

The antipasto included bruschetta with roasted pepper over a bagna cauda sauce. Bagna cauda is the most traditional sauce from Piemonte, made with anchovies and olive oil. This version was very light and not too fishy. Il primo (first course) was another very traditional and unique to Piemonte type of ravioli, called Agnolotti del Plin al sugo d'arrosto (sauce made with roasted meat.) Il primo was paired with Dolcetto di Dogliani DOCG Peccherino. A fresh and crisp dolcetto with strawberry and cherry aromas and flavors, medium bodied, that matches perfectly with the Agnolotti del Plin. For secondo (main course) we had Brasato di Manzo con polenta. It was so tender and delicious that you didn't need a knife to cut it! Polenta also was great, soft, but consistent. This time, the pairing required a more bodied wine such as a Barbera d'Asti. The election was a Barbera d'Asti DOCG Michele Chiarlo, with black cherry, raspberry and tobacco flavors, with firm tannins underneath. Powerful and a perfect match for the meat. The dessert included traditional cakes from Piemonte: Bonnet and Montebianco. Bonnet is rarely seen in Italy outside Piemonte and derived from French because it has the shape of a hat. Bonnet is a chocolate flan with amaretti, while Montebianco is made with sweet chestnut puree and whipped cream. The pairing was a Rosaregale Brachetto d'Acqui DOCG wine which is a typical wine from southern Piemonte, close to the border with Liguria. Brachetto is one of the few sparkling red wines from Italy. Every wine was a perfect match, but the wine that we liked most was the dolcetto: so smooth, fruity and crisp that we plan to buy it to bring home! We're looking forward to the next food and wine class that could have an ending at Amici Mieì !!!



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 the newsletter is the 22nd of the month preceding publication of the issue.

Please send submissions to: language@italianculturalsociety.org or on a computer CD/DVD to: Editor, Poche Parole, 4827 Rugby Ave., Suite 301, Bethesda, MD 20814

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meeting location

friendship heights village center
4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815

