SOCIAL MEETINGS/EVENT OVERVIEW

MARCH SOCIAL EVENT: "How Did a Twelve-Foot Bronze Statue of Dante Alighieri End Up in Washington’s Meridian Hill Park?” by Prof. Charles Russell at the ICS headquarters, 4833 Rugby Ave., Suite 201, Bethesda, MD 20814 - March 11th, 3:00-5:00PM. Conversation in Italian and movies at 1:00pm. Details and RSVP online.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

At our recent social we celebrated Carnival, and both children and adults alike had a most wonderful time! The Italian word “Carnevale” refers to a Christian interpretation of the expression “carnem levare” (to abstain from meat) or the more pagan one “carne vale” (enjoy flesh), a celebration of merry making that reached its climax in Italy in cities like Venice, Rome, Florence, Naples, Ivrea and Turin during the middle ages, and is believed to have derived from the pagan Saturnalian feast of ancient Rome. This city in fact has been most notable as a center of carnival activity, and the splendor and riches of the festivities that marked its observance in Rome have rarely been surpassed elsewhere.

It is also relevant to mention that, in the course of its long history, Carnival has played an important role in the development of the popular theater, of vernacular songs and of folk dances. Carnival coincides with the period from Christmas to Lent. The beginning of Carnival is December 26, the day of Saint Stephan, which in Italy coincides with the opening of the Opera season in many cities. The Carnival period ends with the first Sunday of Lent. The last three days of Carnival are spent in merrymaking and in eating lavishly. In Calabria, in old times, anyone found working during Carnival was paraded scornfully through the streets on a donkey’s back.

At our Festa di Carnevale we wore colorful costumes, played interesting games based on testing our knowledge of Italian culture (thank you Chiara Gastaldi for organizing this game), ate “chiacchere” or “frappe” traditional for this period in different regions of Italy (thank you to all that prepared and donated this and other delicious desserts), and enjoyed the fun our children and grandchildren had. I have never seen a group of children so happily roaming around in their unbound enthusiasm (thank you Fiorenza for organizing this part of the Carnival) or so seriously and movingly interpreting the parts of different personages like Arlecchino, Colombina, and Pulcinella, assigned by their teachers of Italian (whom we also thank from the bottom of our hearts). It was a wonderful occasion!

The next event will be of a more serious nature and will feature Emeritus Professor Charles Russell speaking on the history of a beautiful statue of Dante Alighieri in Meridian Park on March 11 at 3PM, at our headquarters on Rugby Ave. I hope to see many of you there.

Luigi M. De Luca
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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS
SINGLE:
Ana V. Fournier-Herrera
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Victoria Kidd and family
CARNEVALE
2/11/18

Trivia game on Italian culture

Trivia prize for the winning team

Carnevale Italiani illustrated in our students’ posters

Kids’ recital: La commedia dell’arte and "Arlecchino malato"
I DUE ZANNI - I Bergamaschi precursori delle più famose tra le Maschere del Carnevale Italiano
"A Carnevale ogni scherzo vale, ma che sia uno scherzo che sa di sale!"

Le Festività del Carnevale anche qui a Washington DC come ogni anno riportano alla nostalgia delle tradizionali maschere italiane, ai coriandoli, alle stelle filanti, ai cortei carnevalese con carri allegorici che si tengono in molte città del nostro Bel Paese!

Sarebbe impossibile in questo spazio descrivere le caratteristiche individuali della numerose maschere italiane, alcune delle quali sono di origine Romana ed Etrusca.

Quest’anno ci limitiamo a menzionarne tre, ben note non solo in Italia: Arlecchino, Brighella e Colombina.

Le circostanze storiche della loro origine sono collegate alla tragica situazione degli emigranti bergamaschi del XVI secolo quando la Repubblica di Venezia aveva esteso il suo dominio nell'entroterra italiano a spese del Ducato di Milano. Milano, Brescia e Bergamo erano diventate quindi parte della Serenissima.

Si calcola che circa ventimila bergamaschi emigrarono dai loro villaggi montani in cerca di lavoro a Venezia. L'afflusso di tanti stranieri alterò l'equilibrio socio economico di Venezia.

Gli emigranti raramente potevano sostituire i veneziani nei mestieri ben pagati e dovevano perciò accontentarsi dei lavori più umili e faticosi. Potevano considerarsi fortunati se trovavano impiego come servitori.

Un serio svantaggio dei bergamaschi era che parlavano un loro dialetto, quasi incomprensibile, che li faceva sembrare stupidi e rozzi: erano perciò vittime di derisione.

Vennero quasi subito soprannominati ZANNI che divenne sinonimo di servi sciocchi, scansafatiche, furbi, approfittatori e ladruncoli.

Nella Commedia dell’Arte sono famose molte maschere che prendono spunto dagli ZANNI. Ma il pubblico del teatro veneziano voleva commedie non tragedie. Perciò gli autori del palcoscenico trasformarono la tragedia umana dei servitori, che vi andremo a raccontare, in brillanti personaggi comici, ancora ben noti ai giorni nostri.
Arlecchino e' probabilmente la maschera più nota e tradizionale del Carnevale oltre che una delle più amate dei palcoscenici della tradizionale Commedia dell’Arte. Non tutti sanno che ha due nomi: ARLECCHINO e ZANNI...

Il termine "ZANNI" deriva da "Zuan" che è la versione dialettale veneta del nome Giovanni ed anche dal cognome tipico bergamasco. A Bergamo infatti tutt’ora il cognome ZANNI è molto diffuso.

Arlecchino lo ZANNI si dice sia nato a Oneta in Val Brembana in provincia di Bergamo, ad 8 km a nord ovest dalla città, dove si può visitare l’interessante museo "Casa di Arlecchino" allestito all’interno di uno storico edificio di origine quattrocentesca che si dice abbia dato i natali agli Zanni, la famiglia di Arlecchino appunto.

Ancora oggi a Bergamo si dice ad un bambino o a qualcuno che fa ridere o è fuoriluogo con qualche atteggiamento: "Non fare l’Arlecchino da!"

Il viso di Colombina non è coperto da maschera per non nasconderne la bellezza.

Cameriera intelligente e spigliata, Colombina può essere anche pettuggia ed intrigante, non essendo la discrezione una delle sue virtù, a contatto con la classe nobile veneziana talvolta dimentica la sua origine contadina.

Nella commedia goldoniana la servetta dichiara: "Sono da dieci anni in questa casa, sono più padrona io della padrona medesima". Malgrado la sua impudenza,

Colombina è pur sempre una figlia del popolo e conserva ancora la sua semplicità ed il suo buon umore ma, se provocata diventa battagliera e intimidisce l’avversario, esibendo un fornito vocabolario di epitetti ed insulti.
MARCH 2018
Vol. XXXV, No. 7

ICS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS: Apply by April 23rd!

Each year the Italian Cultural Society provides the following awards made possible through donations and fund raising events:

**The Cesariina Horing Awards**
- to students of Italian at universities in the Washington, DC area: One student from each of Georgetown University, The University of Maryland, and Catholic University, all of which have Italian Major programs, will be eligible for awards of $500; and one student from each of George Washington, American, and George Mason Universities, each of which have an Italian Minor program will be eligible for an award of $300. The awardees are selected by the Departments of Italian at these universities. The awards are funded by donations in honor of former ILP director, Cesariina Horing.

In addition, the ICS sponsors an annual competition for the following awards for younger students:

**The Maria Gualerara Wilmeth Awards:**
Two awards of $500 each for outstanding Washington metropolitan area high-school students of a public school in which the Italian language is part of the curriculum. To apply: Applicants must write a letter in their own hand, which includes a short biographical presentation and saying why they are studying Italian; a letter of recommendation, a creative video of 2 to 3 minutes, in which the student (or a group of 2, or 3 students maximum - who will share the award) speak in Italian: acting, talking about themselves, cooking, or doing/presenting a subject of their choice, as long as they speak in Italian. The winners will be expected to make remarks in Italian accepting the award at the May Gala at the Embassy.

**Scholarship for children to take a free ILP course:**
- Students of elementary or middle school interested in taking one of our courses are eligible for a scholarship. The scholarship can be used to enroll in any suitable course of the ICS Italian Language Program. To apply: Applicants must write a letter in their own hand saying which course they would like to take and why. A letter of support from a parent willing to bring the student for classes and a letter from the child’s classroom teacher attesting to the student’s academic ability must also be provided.

Other Awards for students who have not reached their 31st birthday by May 1 (except for the Young Scientist award):

1. **The Elena and Antonio De Luca Award:**
   - one $1000 award to be given to a university student who has excelled in the study of Latin and/or Greek.

2. **The Luciana Montanari-Mendola Awards:**
   - one $1000 award for a university or conservatory student showing promise in piano performance, and one $500 award for a high-school age pianist showing promise in piano performance. Examples of recordings must accompany your application and must include one piece for solo piano by Frederick Chopin.

3. **The Anna Menapace Award:**
   - one $500 award to be given to a high-school student who has excelled in the art of painting.

4. **The Patricia Segnan Award:**
   - one $1000 award to be given to a university student who has excelled in the creation of Art or the study of Art and Art History.

5. **The Young Scientist Award:**
   - The Italian Cultural Society is pleased to announce again for this year a modification of its Young Scientist award in order to recognize the accomplishments of Italian scientists working in the Washington area.
   - A $1,000 award is to be given to an Italian national working in the Washington area as a doctoral student or as a post-doctoral student or equivalent (e.g., in connection with NIH, NIST or with NASA or a university) in the physical, biological or medical sciences, mathematics, or engineering. The applicant must give evidence of having distinguished him/herself in research while working in the United States. Applicants should not have reached their 36th birthday by May 1, 2018. The deadline date for the application, Monday April 23rd, 2018.

**Materials to be included in the application for the Young Scientist Award are:**
- A document verifying the Italian (or American) university degree held by the applicant
- A cover letter in English or Italian describing why the candidate is a valid contender for the award
- A short biographical presentation of the candidate (curriculum vitae)
- Three letters of recommendation from superiors knowledgeable with the work of the applicant, at least one from an American.
- Evidence of excellence of work in the U.S., e.g., list of publications, patents, or other equivalent documents.

**Materials to be included in the application for 1.-4. Awards are:**
- College transcripts or, for high school awards, high-school transcripts
- Three letters of recommendation
- An essay in Italian written by the applicant describing why the applicant is a valid contender for the award.
- A short biographical presentation of the candidate (curriculum vitae)
- Anything that would demonstrate the ability of the candidate, including publications by and/or about the candidate, photographs, CDs, a portfolio of works, etc.

**ICS Award Applications deadline: Post-Marked Monday April 23rd, 2018.**
Send to:  
Awards Committee  
The Italian Cultural Society  
4833 Rugby Ave., Suite #201  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Selection will occur during April and awards will be presented at the ICS Awards Gala, which takes place on a date to be announced at the Embassy of Italy, as will be advertised in our newsletter Poche Parole and website. Attendance at the Awards Gala is required for all award winners except Horings and awards will be reassigned if the winner is unable to attend, except for exceptional circumstances as determined by the Awards Committee. The winners of the Luciana Montanari-Mendola award may be asked to perform at the Awards Gala.
Charles Russell, Emeritus Professor, Department of French and Italian, University of Maryland presents:

**How Did a Twelve-Foot Bronze Statue of Dante Alighieri End Up in Washington’s Meridian Hill Park?**

SUNDAY MARCH 11th, 3:00-5:00pm
at the ICS Headquarters, 4833 Rugby Ave. Suite 201, Bethesda, MD 20814

Movie at 1:00pm; kids' movie at 3:00pm; conversation in Italian at 2:00pm (call 301-215-7885 for details)

**Brief summary:**
The city of Washington is well known for its wonderful monuments, but not for monuments to famous Italians. Yet there is in the city an extraordinary statue of an extraordinary Italian: the lonely figure in Meridian Hill Park of Dante Alighieri. The statue was brought here in 1921 by Carlo Barsotti, founder in New York City of the extremely successful Italian language newspaper Il Progresso Italo-Americano. It was welcomed to the Park by none other than the President of the United States, William G. Harding, by ambassadors from many European countries, and by members of our own local Italian Catholic church, Holy Rosary. How the statue, sculpted by Ettore Ximenes, reached this city is a complicated story that involved not only Barsotti and his newspaper, but also Italy’s most renowned lyric poet, Giovanni Pascoli, who wrote an anthem for its unveiling, “Inno di emigrati italiani in America a Dante”, and a famous Italian opera composer who agreed to put the anthem to music. The newspaper’s sponsoring of a Dante statue in Washington, as well as earlier statues in New York of Giovanni Verrazzano and of Cristoforo Columbus, was in part a reaction to ethnic groups that did not always want to recognize Italian accomplishments. The unveilings were an expression of pride in being Italian and an assertion of national worthiness. In addition, the Washington ceremony played a significant role in the first international peace conference ever held in this city. The unveiling was a stunning success: an apotheosis it was called: an apotheosis of Dante, of Italianità, and of international friendship. “A love feast,” headlined the Washington Star the following day. Two thousand spectators were on hand to welcome Italy’s world-renowned poet, but since that day Dante has been left pretty much alone in Meridian Hill Park and it would seem perhaps somewhat forgotten.

Charles Russell:
Taught at the University of Maryland for many years: Medieval Literature, Dante, Renaissance Literature, History of the Italian Opera Libretto. He is author of Italo Svevo, the Writer from Trieste, The Legend of Don Juan Before Mozart, and of various scholarly articles in Italica, Music and Letters, The Opera Quarterly, etc. His research on the Washington Dante statue has been done since retirement for his own entertainment.

**RSVP at:** RSVP@italianculturalsociety.org

Please consider a donation of $5 (ICS Members) or $10 (Non Members) to offset the cost of hosting this event. You can pay online at http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/get-involved/social-meetings/by clicking the Donation button, or at the door. Thank you!
Save the date for

THE ITALIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

Gala Awards Dinner 2018
"L'ITALIA E IL CINEMA"

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23rd, 2018
6:30 PM
Embassy of Italy
3000 Whitehaven St. NW, Washington, DC 20008
SILENT AUCTION, COCKTAILS, DINNER,
AWARDS CEREMONY FOR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS
HONORARY GUEST'S PRESENTATION, MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

FROM THE ILP

We are pleased to announce the opening of

The ICS Italian Language Program - Virginia Chapter
at the Green Acres Recreation Center, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA 22030
with classes for kids and adults on Tuesdays and Saturdays
Visit our web page for details and enrollment: http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/ilp-virginia-chapter/
Starting Saturday, March 17th

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"Regional Italian cuisine – history, traditions and recipes"
at the NIAF headquarters at 1860 19th St NW – Washington, DC 20009
Tuesdays 6:30-8:30, starting March 6th
Details at http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/courses-at-niaf/

Spring schedule at Bethesda headquarters and Friendship Heights is online. Classes start April 2nd!

Looking forward to enjoying the Italian language and culture with a growing community. Saluti,
Francesca Casazza
Executive Director
The location of the garden is in itself quite peculiar. In the middle of nowhere, on a wild hill, the visitor’s eye is immediately attracted by an explosion of colors and different materials used for the sculptures. Such sculptures are not only to be admired for their beauty and majesty, but can also be explored and “lived” as they are empty inside. Thus the sculptures become an abode and the visitor gets lost in their wonderful structures, captured by the colors, all the images reflected in the thousands of small pieces of mirrors, the murrine, the quotes, the symbols and all the hidden allegorical and esoteric references of which the park is full. Thus art and architecture melt wonderfully in one another. I visited the garden with my mother and daughter and all three generations enjoyed getting lost in the park looking for more colors and surprises. Therefore, an enjoyable destination for everybody.

The Tarot Garden is a unique piece of work that offers a rewarding visual experience. If you are in Tuscany or are planning a trip to Tuscany, it is worth adding this destination to your itinerary.

by Valentina Asciutti
RACCOMANDAZIONI LETTERARIE DAI NOSTRI STUDENTI

Articolo Il fu Mattia Pascal
Marjory Stoller

Il Fu Mattia Pascal di Luigi Pirandello, scritto nel 1903, è un ottimo esempio di un libro che può essere letto su molti livelli, una qualità che io credo essenziale in un libro classico. Prima di tutto abbiamo un romanzo comico costruito attorno alla storia di un uomo che tenta di cambiare vita per trovare una nuova identità, ma quando l'esperimento non va, scopre che non può tornare alla sua identità originale.

Dietro questa storia ci sono un conflitto tra realtà e illusione, sentimento e ragionamento, il se e il non-se, maschera e verità, lo specchio e la controparte. Inoltre c'è una questione dell'arte verso la vita. Che gioia riflettere su questi temi universali che sono cominciati con un triste, semplice protagonista che vuole trovare una vita felice.

The Late Mattia Pascal by Luigi Pirandello, written in 1903, is a fine example of a book that can be read on many levels, a quality that I believe essential in a book considered a classic. First of all it's a comical novel constructed around the story of a man who tries to change his life in order to find a new identity but when the experiment doesn't work, he discovers that he can't return to his original self.

Behind this story is the conflict between reality and illusion, feeling versus reason, the self and the non-self, a mirror and the counterpart.

Moreover, it's a question of art versus life. What joy to reflect on these universal themes that began with a sad, simple protagonist who wants to find a happy life.

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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

Special thanks to Lucy Fonseca, ICS-ILP Office Manager, for the final editing and layout of Poche Parole.

To advertise on Poche Parole, please contact language@italianculturalsociety.org, or call 301-215-7885:

Rates per month, per 3 months: Business card - 1/8 page: $60; 1/4 page: $100; 1/2 page: $150; Full page: $200; For the year (9 issues): discount of 20%

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, 4833 Rugby Ave., Suite 201, Bethesda, MD 20814

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