ONLINE SOCIAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS OVERVIEW

ONLINE CULTURAL MEETING - “Italian American County - Finding Italy in small-town America”
Sunday, September 27th at 2:00 PM. RSVP to receive instructions to connect.
VIRTUAL GALA 2020 - REAWAKENING - A NIGHT TO CELEBRATE ITALIAN INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT - Sunday, November 1st at 4:30 PM.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Buongiorno cari amici, and welcome to the September issue of Poche Parole! It’s been a busy Summer at ICS getting ready for our exciting Fall season. Our language program continues to expand, and we have added many fabulous classes to our schedule. Thank you to our Board Members and Italian Language Program advisors, Prof. Annelise Brody Morani and Dario Penzo, for all their work perfecting ICS’s rigorous yet highly accessible curriculum, and to our wonderful teachers for adapting to the current virtual environment with such ease and passion. Classes and events may be held online now, but the spirit that sets ICS apart--the warmth, dedication and deep human connections that lie at the heart of this organization--has continued to flourish in the virtual classrooms as well as at our online events (don’t miss our first social meeting of the season on September 27! More details here). We are very grateful to all of you, our members, students, teachers and staff, for this!

We were convinced by the inspiring response from our community to organize our annual fundraising Gala virtually this year, and to choose a theme that reflects the extraordinary resilience, enthusiasm and hard work that we have witnessed at ICS and beyond since the coronavirus pandemic started. We hope you will join us on November 1st for the Italian Cultural Society’s 2020 Virtual Gala, “Reawakening - A night to Celebrate Italian Innovation, Creativity and the Human Spirit,” featuring one of Italy’s best known journalists and authors, Beppe Severgnini, and an array of acclaimed Italian personalities who will shed light on the profound transformations occurring in their fields, and indeed in the whole world, as we venture together through these unprecedented times. We will be traveling to some of Italy’s most beautiful places during the event--from Lake Orta to Genoa; from Florence to Puglia. Thank you to our Gala Committee for putting together a truly remarkable program. Please show your support to ICS by attending the Gala. And also help us spread the word! Your contribution is essential to bolster our many programs, including our scholarship programs, at a time when cultural funding everywhere has been deeply wounded by the pandemic.

Grazie di cuore e a presto!
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Acting Board President
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JUNE ONLINE SOCIAL EVENT - THE HOUSE OF GUCCI

BY DARIO PENZO, ICS INSTRUCTOR

To conclude our great year of social events, the ICS on Saturday, June 7th held the online cultural meeting where Sara Gay Forden presented her non-fiction book “The House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour and Greed” in conversation with fashion editor and Pulitzer Prize winning writer Robin Givhan. Named one of the best books of the year 2000 by The Economist, House Of Gucci tells the remarkable story of the power of the Gucci Dynasty and their famed luxury goods fashion house. Maurizio Gucci, more than his murder story, was the driving factor that compelled Sara Forden to write the book.

She described him as the key figure for the fashion house and the entire family saga. He was the one that was able to connect the past to the future and pivot the whole story forward. An important key role was also played by Patrizia Reggiani, the ex-wife of Maurizio Gucci, who is often defined as a black widow by the media after being convicted for ordering her husband’s murder. Patrizia was always an outsider as her origin never made her part of the élite, but when Maurizio died, she reclaimed her status as “La signora Gucci” that became part of her identity. When asked about a movie, Sara is able to give us some good news. Despite the hardship of the movie industry during the pandemic, MGM has decided to continue financing the project that will depict the family saga from the perspective of Patrizia, portrayed by Lady Gaga.

The conversation then moved to the fashion aspect of the Gucci brand and the impact that it has left on American culture and society. Gucci was one of the first fashion brands that moved to New York in 1953, as well as the first Italian luxury brand. It was easily distinguishable because of the focus on the leather work, from Tuscan regional manufacturers, rather than a focus on textiles as the other Italian Major brands. It’s not by chance that Gucci is the only brand to be used in slang (“it is all Gucci”) or leave a mark on the halls of Congress with the “Gucci gulch”.

Gucci, through its success and difficulties, represents the Italian ability to innovate after crisis the most, and it will be interesting to see how the fashion industry’s production will be redrawn after this pandemic.

The event was fully recorded, click here to watch it on YouTube.
ITALIAN AMERICAN COUNTY - FINDING ITALY IN SMALL-TOWN AMERICA

Prof. PAOLO BATTAGLIA presents his book and documentary

SEPTEMBER 27, AT 2PM ONLINE, THROUGH MICROSOFT TEAM

Info and RSVP: www.italianculturalsociety.org/get-involved/social-meetings/

Discover The History Of The Small Italian American Communities In The Heartland Of The United States.
Italian American Country is a multimedia project with an illustrated book and a documentary which was released in September 2019.

The book follows the journey from New York to California. Each chapter is dedicated to one of the communities with historical photographs combined with photographs of the communities today. The chapters dedicated to the towns intertwine with themes that crossed the paths of most Italians in America.
The documentary is available for the buyers of the book and as a stand-alone product online. Produced as a 3-episode series, it is based on the conversations with the people interviewed along the way. The opening song is Questa terra è la tua terra, the Italian version of Woody Guthrie’s classic, written by Italian songwriter Maurizio Bettelli, supported by internationally renowned musicians such as Flaco Biondini, Michele Gazich, Antonio Rigo Righetti.

The voices are those of the descendants of the men and women who left as Sicilians, Venetians, Lombards, Campanians and who discovered themselves Italians once they arrived in America, facing a society that saw them with diffidence, if not even with an open discrimination.
GALA VIRTUALE 2020
For more information visit: http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/gala-2020/

The Board of Directors of The Italian Cultural Society of Washington D.C. cordially invites you to

REAWAKENING
A CELEBRATION OF ITALIAN INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Virtual Gala 2020
Sunday, November 1st at 4:30 pm ET

Italian leaders in their fields talk about transformations in their areas of expertise:

BEPPE SEVERGNINI
Columnist and Editor at Corriere della Sera, Opinion Writer for The New York Times, Author of bestselling books

FRANCESCO LUSINI
Chairman of the Peuterey Group SpA, top fashion and textile Tuscan company

MARCO BUCCI
Mayor of Genoa and Special Commissioner for the reconstruction of Genoa's Bridge

CRISTINA CASSETTI
Ph.D., Deputy Director of NIAID's Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases

MATTEO AMADASI, Viola, Teatro alla Scala Orchestra and KATIA SPLUGA, Piano, performing "Cinema Paradiso"

ConTemporary Guitar Duo FELICIA TOSCANO and LUIGI PICARDI performing "Once Upon a Time in the West"

MIMMO MICCOLIS' choreography "Timeless" performed by The Washington School of Ballet

KYEONGMI LIM's piano performance as winner of Luciana Montanari-Mendola award

For more information visit: http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/gala-2020/
REPORT OF THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM
BY FRANCESCA CASAZZA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This Summer, our teachers put all their efforts and creativity to teach and engage adults and children in courses and summer camps online. Complimenti a tutti for adapting to the situation! I am truly grateful for this positive and growing community.

Our courses will continue to be offered online through ZOOM for the Fall Term. The Fall Schedule is online and registration is open at http://www.italianculturalsociety.org/fall-2020-italian-online/.

Most of the courses started the week of Monday, September 14th..
You can choose from among 4 different Beginners courses to start your learning experience with us. You will also find 3 levels of Elementary and all levels included in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Among the advanced level courses, there are some that are interesting also for Italians, like Literature of Romanticism and Dante and his World: From the new life to the Comedy (C1-C2), starting with L’Inferno. Silvana De Luca will offer three courses Italian through Cinema, (B2-C2) “Il Mostro - La mafia uccide solo d’estate - Un eroe Borghese”; Felicia Toscano will teach Listening to music in italiano (B1-C2); Dario Penzo will teach Roman History and Archaeology (B1-C2); Journalist Nicoletta Nencioli will offer Italy Today, Live from Italy and Leggere L’Italia e Gli Italiani (B2-C2) and Camilla Presti will offer a Virtual Tour of Via Francigena (B2-C2). Sofia Caligiuri proposes How to read and critique a novel (B2-C2); Antonella Salvatore L’Italiano vien leggendo and Narrativa Classica & Contemporanea (C1-C2), a book club with the teacher.

Cooking Classes (we have the pleasure to work with Domenica Marchetti, our special Guest Chef for the Fall), Yoga and Guitar lessons are a wonderful experience to also reinforce your comprehension skills. The Cooking, Yoga, and Guitar courses might also be taught in English. In English, you can also study Latin (Beginners or Advanced levels) and Italy through the cinematic lens.

For the kids, besides language courses for all levels and ages, starting from 2 years old, Maestra Fiorenza is organizing Creative Workshops focused on reading and storytelling, and Maestro Felicia Toscano, Director of the ICS Music School will conduct a CORO - Chorus in Italiano for children from 4 to 13 years old, and LABORATORIO MUSICALE in Italiano.

Enjoy some pictures of Summer camps. Many more pictures and videos are on our Facebook page! The ILP is looking forward to starting a new exciting year of teaching and learning with you!
ESTATE DI IERI E DI OGGI AL TEMPO DELLA PANDEMIA
DI GIOVANNA GALLETTA, INSEGNANTE ICS

I ricordi dell’estate sono quelli che non spariscano mai, restano nel cuore per sempre.
La musica che invadeva le spiagge e i negozi di souvenir, il gelato che si mangiava nei caldi pomeriggi insieme alla comitiva estiva.


La spiaggia è il luogo d’incontro, un’agorà permanente da giugno a settembre dove nascono e muoiono amori e amicizie nello spazio di un’estate infinita piena di canzoni. Attraverso le fotografie prendono forma quei ritornelli che oggi chiamiamo tormentoni.
Con il passare del tempo le vacanze son sempre rimaste quel periodo in cui stacchi la spina e viaggi per nuovi luoghi alla ricerca di pace e relax, ma oggi 2020 in piena pandemia, l’estate ha rischiato di diventare un’utopia, forse per alcuni lo è stata, molti non son partiti.

Ci si chiede, come è stata l’estate 2020 al mare in Italia durante il coronavirus? Completamente differente rispetto al passato con nuove regole molto stringenti e le regioni hanno attuato nuovi piani di azione, differenti da zona a zona in base anche alla morfologia del territorio e dalla tipologia di spiaggia e di mare a disposizione dei turisti.

Sulle spiagge dell’Alto Adriatico veni ci sì è organizzati con postazioni di 50 metri quadrati mentre sulle spiagge della riviera romagnola si è pensato invece di consentire il pranzo direttamente sotto l’ombrellone. In Liguria spiagge libere e stewart, sulla costiera amalfitana e nel Cilento hanno cercato di contingere gli ingressi nelle spiagge affidando ai vigili i controlli sui tratti «liberi». Il litorale romano e laziale è stato molto affollato ma tutte le spiagge hanno avuto ingressi a numero chiuso e distanziamento garantito su arenile e ristoranti in spiaggia.

L’Italia è cultura è una terra ricca di risorse, umane e culturali, una terra che ha attraversato periodi storici bellissimi ma anche molto duri; sconfitte, epidemie, lotte. Oggi nel 2020 siamo arrivati a vivere in maniera globale un’epidemia, ci troviamo di fronte ad un nemico invisibile contro il quale non sappiamo ancora quale arma usare, ma siamo riusciti ad adottare delle nuove regole sociali: Mascherina, distanziamento, ulteriori regole d’igiene e smartworking.
Insomma i tempi son decisamente cambiati, ma gli italiani hanno saputo anche stavolta godersi le vacanze in tutta sicurezza, augurando a un ritorno alla completa normalità e libertà.
IL COPYRIGHT E L’ EDIZIONI PIRATA DEI PROMESSI SPOSI
DI ANN DYER, STUDENTESSA ICS

Ho letto recentemente un interessante saggio di Orlando Figes “Gli Europei” che tratta della vita intellettuale nel XIX secolo e particolarmente della questione del “copyright” in quest’epoca. Cita l’esempio dell’Italia dove fino alla riunificazione, non c’era nessuna possibilità di proteggere la proprietà intellettuale in uno Stato contro le pubblicazioni pirata pubblicate in altri Stati della penisola. I milanesi pubblicavano illegalmente i libri dei fiorentini e i fiorentini pubblicavano il doppio dei libri milanesi. Finalmente, nel 1840, negli stati sotto controllo austriaco, fu proclamata una legge che proteggeva i libri degli scrittori, le opere di musica e teatro, e anche tutte le traduzioni degli autori durante la loro vita fino a trenta anni dopo la loro morte. Ma il Regno delle Due Sicilie non prese parte a questo accordo che non si applicava neanche ai libri pubblicati prima del 1840.


Questo episodio diede la motivazione agli editori milanesi e fiorentini di fare pressione su Napoli per adottare la legge. L’editore di musica Giovanni Ricordi che aveva molti problemi con le opere pirata di Verdi, fu anche molto attivo nella richiesta di una nuova legge. Il risultato fu un rinforzo della legge del 1840 nel Nord, ma questa fu solamente adottata a Napoli dopo la riunificazione del 1865.
I just finished reading a book written by Orlando Figes “The Europeans” which looks at the artistic life of the nineteenth century and more specifically at the copyright issue at that time. He gives the example of Italy where until the unification “there was no effective means of protecting literary property in one Italian state from pirate publishers in other parts of the peninsula. The Milanese reprint the books of the Florentines; the Florentines will then reprint twice as many books of the Milanese.”

Finally “in 1840, a copyright law was passed in all Italian States under Austrian control. It protected books and music, dramatic works and translations for the duration of their author’s life and thirty years following the author’s death. But the Kingdom of Two Sicilies was not part of the convention” and the law did not apply either to books published before that date.

A good example of the problems this entailed concerns Manzoni’s The Bethrothed. Published in 1825, the book was reprinted by many editors, none of which consulted Manzoni. By 1839, there were fifty-three unauthorized editions in Italian and fourteen in other languages. Encouraged by discussions of the 1840 law, in 1839 Manzoni published a definitive edition with illustrations by his friend the wood engraver Francesco Gonin. He revised the text, basing it more firmly on the Tuscan dialect. He spent a fortune on the edition, hoping that the expense of the illustrations and the fine paper would prevent it from being pirated. Ten thousand copies were printed. They sold slowly. Manzoni had underestimated the ability of publishers to reprint illustrations.”

A pirate version of the new edition was soon “brought out by a publisher in Naples, which outsold Manzoni’s edition rapidly. Having suffered a large financial loss he wrote to Ferdinand II, King of the Two Sicilies, asking to compensate him for the money he had lost. His request was not answered.”

This affair motivated publishers from Milan and Florence to put pressure on Naples to adopt the 1840 law. Giovanni Ricordi, who had endless problems with the piracy of Verdi’s works was especially active in calling for new laws. A strengthening of the 1840 law was enforced in the Northern States but it is only after the unification of 1865 that a copyright law was applied in Naples.
TESTIMONE INCONSAPEVOLE DI G. CAROFIGLIO

DI CARLOS FRANZETTI, STUDENTE ICS

In base a una raccomandazione di Cristina Fabiani ho “scoperto” recentemente Gianrico Carofiglio, ex magistrato di Bari, il cui “Testimone inconsapevole”, suo primo romanzo sulle indagini dell’ avvocato penalista Guido Guerrieri, mi è piaciuto molto. Guerrieri, nel mezzo d’una crisi di mezza età, immediatamente dopo il suo divorzio, deve difendere un venditore ambulante senegalese accusato d’aver sequestrato e ucciso un bambino di 9 anni che giocava nella spiaggia vicino alla casa dei nonni. Tutte le prove, il quadro indiziario e la prova testimoniale, sembrano indicare che il senegalese sia colpevole, e anche il suo avvocato, Guerrieri, ha seri dubbi sul punto. Non voglio rovinare le attese raccontando il finale, ma quello che più mi ha colpito della trama, è la dettagliata analisi di come il pregiudizio, in questo caso da una parte il pregiudizio razziale e da un’altra parte la xenofobia, può distorcere, anche operando in buona fede, la percezione dei fatti per testimoni, investigatori e magistrati.

Insomma, un libro molto ben scritto e un tema molto interessante ed attuale che io raccomando volentieri.

Pursuant to a recommendation by Cristina Fabiani I have recently “discovered” Gianrico Carofiglio, a former Public Prosecutor at the city of Bari, whose “Testimone inconsapevole” (translated into English as “Involuntary Witness”), his first book about the labors of the criminal lawyer Guido Guerrieri, I enjoyed very much. Guerrieri, who is going through a mid-life crisis after his recent divorce, undertakes the defence of a Senegalese street vendor accused of kidnapping and murdering a 9-year old boy that was playing on the beach near the house of his grandparents.. All the evidence, preliminary discovery, inferences and witness depositions, seem to prove that the Senegalese is guilty, and even Guerrieri, his lawyer, has serious doubts about his innocence.

I don’t want to spoil the story telling how it ends, but what impressed me more about the plot was the detailed analysis of how prejudice, on the one hand racial prejudice and on the other hand xenophobia, can distort the perception of the facts by witnesses, investigators and magistrates, even when all of them are acting in good faith.

Summing up, a very well written book on a very interesting and current subject that I would gladly recommend.
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