

Yale Department of Italian

FALL/WINTER 2014-15



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SAVE THE DATE

March 6-7, 2015
The Legacy of Pier Paolo
Pasolini Conference

April 23-26, 2015
9th Annual Italian Film
Festival

The Idea of our Department



Il Dipartimento di Studi italiani alla Yale University (New Haven, Connecticut) è sorto e si è sviluppato negli ultimi anni con un programma ben preciso: segnare un momento di svolta nel panorama degli studi italiani, attualmente sempre più mortificati in un'apparente condizione di inferiorità. Questa finalità si può così riassumere come ricupero dell'identità della cultura italiana (all'interno dell'identità europea ed americana): un portare alla luce le sue radici, e cioè la radice delle sue interne differenze e le sue complesse dimensioni, che a ben pensarci sono il riflesso delle differenze che reggono l'Europa stessa. Il nostro progetto, per dirla in breve, è condotto attraverso rigorose letture dei testi onde pervenire a confronti serrati con il ricco deposito dei pensieri italiani.

Il percorso di questo cammino controcorrente non ha limitazioni di tempo o altro possibile compimento. E' una ricerca che dovrebbe durare sempre. Si raggiungono però traguardi provvisori partendo dalla convinzione che la cultura rappresenta la suprema manifestazione della creatività umana. E si procede studiando la letteratura italiana nell'ambito del teatro delle arti (pittura, architettura, cinema, teatro, "media", filosofia, ecc.) ed in questo contesto essa diventa la filigrana visibile della direzione del futuro.

I principi generali che ispirano l'attività didattica e culturale del dipartimento possono essere riassunti in una domanda di fondo: l'Italia come prospettiva sul mondo, frase che a sua volta implica un'altra domanda: qual è stata storicamente e qual è oggi la prospettiva italiana. Ma questi principi che orientano il lavoro del dipartimento non sono per nulla gratuiti. Essi derivano e sono radicati nei caratteri tipici dell'Università di Yale.

La Yale University e le sue facoltà umanistiche nel passato recente si sono distinte dalle altre università americane perché impongono uno stile e un linguaggio che si allontanano in una forma esplicita dai canoni europei circoscritti in fissazioni autarchiche e nazionali e da statici modelli ideologici in voga nell'Europa del dopoguerra. A Yale ogni disciplina, al contrario, si confronta con la coscienza di una "crisi" permanente, ripensa i suoi fondamenti, e con continui sforzi speculativi tenta il superamento, con risultati a volte folgoranti e a volte no, di pratiche abituali.

Ne consegue che il dipartimento d'italiano si mette regolarmente in gioco con gli altri dipartimenti di questa università e collabora con essi. In effetti, il nostro progetto di lavoro ci ha spinto ad associare alla nostra facoltà molti altri colleghi appartenenti a diversi dipartimenti (cinema, musica, storia dell'arte, letterature comparate, storia, studi latino-americani, inglese ecc.). Con loro abbiamo cura di circa 390 studenti ogni anno ("undergraduates" e "graduates"), e con loro raggiungiamo i successi più ampi e duraturi.

Giuseppe Mazzotta
Sterling Professor in the Humanities for Italian
Chairman of the Italian Department

From the Director of Graduate Studies



It is with the greatest pleasure that we welcomed to our Ph.D. program two new students: Julia Pucci and Sandro-Angelo De Thomasis. Julia is one of “our own”—she received her B.A. in Italian here at Yale in May, 2013 and spent the following year in Netanya Israel, working for a Business Intelligence company as a developer and strategist. Around the same time, she enrolled at Nishmat, a center of advanced Torah study for women. About the prospect of resuming her education at her Alma Mater, she writes “I’m thrilled to return to Yale where I

hope to continue working on post-WWII narrative, moral foundational thought, and the political philosophies that can be discerned from them.”

Sandro comes to us from Montreal's Concordia University where he graduated with Honors in Western Society and Culture and a Minor in Italian Studies. At Yale, he hopes to deepen and extend his undergraduate thesis work on “the methodology of ‘vertical reading’ of Dante’s *Commedia*; particularly, the relationship between the art of memory, visual arts, and compositional strategies in Duecento Italy.”

In the few short months that they have been in our program, Julia and Sandro have already enriched the intellectual and social life of our departmental community. We very much look forward to benefiting from, and supporting their work as they pursue their goals in the coming years.

- Millicent Marcus

From the Director of Undergraduate Studies

It is my pleasure to report on an exciting and innovative year for our department’s program of undergraduate studies. This fall, enrolment in our language program increased above and beyond our expectations, yielding our strongest numbers since 2010 and a record turnout at our Annual Fall Feast and *Pizzata* at the Yale Farm. I’m also thrilled to announce the reinstatement of *Lo stivale*, our undergraduate Italian Club, under the direction of our devoted majors, Karen Cruz (’15), Emma Soneson (’16), and David Mele (’17). Since September, the team has created a newsletter, organized an Italian culinary class at Davenport College, and hosted the first in a series of Italian film screenings that will continue in the spring. Looking ahead, I hope that our undergraduates may start to take advantage of our new B.A.-M.A. program, a combined degree that will allow majors to obtain a Master’s within four years upon completion of additional coursework at the graduate level. Thanks for the recent growth of our undergraduate program as a whole are due to our enthusiastic majors; the exceptionally devoted group of graduate students that comprise our teaching staff; and, last but certainly not least, to the extraordinary leadership of our new acting Language Program Director, Anna Iacovella. We are most grateful for her dedicated teaching since she joined the department in 2007, and now, as of this fall, for the additional time and energy that she has poured into her new position as LPD.

Finally, I wish to congratulate our department’s majors from the Class of 2014: Katerina Karatzia, Isadora Italia, and Cvetiva Popa. Their coursework in the department culminated in a Senior Thesis on which each of them is to be commended.



“Through the Looking Glass: Embodied Ekphrases in *Inferno X*, *Purgatorio X* and *Paradiso X*”
(Katerina Karatzia)

“Illustrating a Modern Journey of Conversion: Michael Mazur’s *Inferno*”
(Isadora Italia)

“A conscious madness: the disintegration of the truth and the fragmentation of the self as displayed in Pirandello’s *Henry IV* and *Six Characters in Search of an Author*”
(Iva Popa)

We wish them all the best in their post-college careers, and hope that they will maintain their vital connection with the Italian language, culture, and our program at Yale.

- Christiana Purdy Moudarres



Intellectual Exchange

As in previous years our department has been enriched by a number of events. We first hosted, Igiaba Scego, an Italian writer of Somali origin, born in Rome in 1974. Scego has published articles in newspapers and periodicals, and is the author of several recent novels, among which *La mia casa è dove sono*, won the Premio Modello in 2010.

In a rare public appearance in the United States, renowned Italian writer and scholar Umberto Eco gave a lecture on Friday, Oct. 18 to commemorate the Beinecke Library's 50th anniversary. The Italian Department invited him to participate in a symposium, entitled "Focus on Umberto Eco: Medievalism, Bibliophilia, and the Quest for 'Originals'". Other invited speakers included, Domenico Pietropaolo, Principal, University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, who spoke on "Varieties of Medievalism in Academia" and Walter Stephens, Charles S. Singleton Professor of Italian Studies in the Department of German and Romance Languages, John Hopkins University, who spoke on "The Lover of Books: Eco and Bibliophilia".

The Annual Dante Lecture was given by Kristina Olson, George Mason University, "Courtesy Lost: Boccaccio as *dantista* and *storico*." In addition, we hosted Massimo Ciavolella, who gave two seminars in November, "Francesca da Rimini: a Different Take" and "*Amor heroicus* and Girolamo Cardano's Horoscope on Himself."

We kicked off the spring semester with a lecture by Mary Watt, University of Florida, "'Per cedere al pastor si fece Greco': Dante, Constantine and the Specter of Sodomy." This was followed by a visit from Unn Falkeid, an Academy Research Fellow from the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, University of Stockholm, "The Sublime Realism of Gaspara Stampa". In March, in collaboration with the European Studies Council, Fred Kuwornu, Filmmaker, was invited to the campus for a Q&A after the screening of *18 IUS SOLI* (The Strange Case of Citizenship in Modern Italy).

To end, Professor Rita Zama, Dipartimento di Italianistica e Comparatistica della Facoltà di Scienze della Formazione dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, gave two seminars for the traditional Mini Spring Seminar Lecture Series in April. The first lecture, "La relazione tra la parola e il pensiero in Alessandro Manzoni" and the second lecture "L'amicizia (affettiva e intellettuale) tra Manzoni e Rosmini."

We are grateful to all those who travelled to share their work, and thereby enhanced the intellectual life of our department.

-Ann DeLauro

Pier Paolo Pasolini at Yale

2015 marks the fortieth anniversary of the death of Pier Paolo Pasolini, the renowned Italian essayist, novelist, filmmaker, and poet. In 1980 Yale commemorated the fifth anniversary of his death with a conference that attracted a wide range of scholars and intellectuals from the U.S. and abroad, including Alberto Moravia and Umberto Eco.

In the spring semester of 2015, the Italian Department will highlight Pasolini's work and influence through a graduate-organized conference and series of events. The conference will be held March 6-7 at the Whitney Humanities Center. Keynote speakers will be Karen Pinkus (Cornell) and Ara Merjian (NYU), and guests will include Ida Dominijanni (Cornell), Paolo Russo (Oxford Brookes), Evan Calder Williams (writer and artist), and David Ward (Wellesley). Because of the wide breadth of topics embraced by Pasolini scholarship, the conference will engage with interdisciplinary topics and include scholars from a variety of fields.

A retrospective on Pasolini's films will lead up to the conference: in January, February, and March, the following films will be shown at the Whitney Humanities Center: *La Dolce Vita*, *Mamma Roma*, *Porcile*, *Arabian Nights*, *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*, *Passione* (2014) by Hisham Bizri, and *Pasolini's Last Words* (2012) by Cathy Lee Crane. *Salò* will be shown on March 5th, with an introduction by curator and journalist Dennis Lim, and a post-screening discussion with Dennis Lim and Yale faculty. *Passione* and *Pasolini's Last Words* will be screened on March 6th, both directors will be in attendance.

Several working groups at Yale will also host events on Pasolini: the Dante Working Group will host a workshop on Pasolini and Dante, and the Gramsci Working Group will host a workshop and lecture on Pasolini and Gramsci with guest speaker David Forgacs (NYU). At the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, the Postwar Culture Working Group will hold a meeting on Pasolini and the neo-avant-garde.

For more information, please see our website: <http://campuspress.yale.edu/pasoliniatyale/2014/10/19/call-for-papers/>
Or contact pasoliniatyale@gmail.com

- Karen Raizen

Giuseppe Mazzotta's Renaissance Studies Recognition

Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta, Sterling Professor in the Humanities for Italian and Chair of the Italian department received a special recognition on Saturday, March 29th, 2014. His career and his contribution to the entire field of Renaissance Studies was honored by a day of study, which formed a part of the annual Renaissance Society of America (RSA) meeting in New York, March 26-29, 2014.

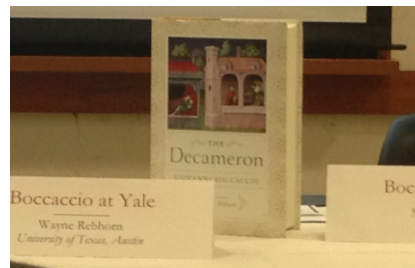
The event was articulated in a series of 3 panels of studies that had originated from Prof. Mazzotta's studies, followed by one final roundtable devoted to his overall contribution to the field of Renaissance Studies, starting with the publication of his first book, *Dante, Poet of the Desert* in 1979, 35 years ago.

More than twenty scholars from leading institutions in the USA, Italy and Canada spoke to celebrate Prof. Mazzotta's work in the Renaissance: renowned scholars such as Erminia Ardisino, Albert Ascoli, Domenico Pietropaolo, Deanna Shemek, Walter Stephens, Jane Tylus and Christopher Wood. This event is one of a kind, only one scholar per academic year in the entire interdisciplinary field of Renaissance Studies is honored in this way and this recognition adds a new prize in Professor Mazzotta's stellar career. The event was a huge success, it was well attended, and it sparked a lively and fruitful discussion on the future of Renaissance Studies. The organizers of the panels included our own Associate Professor Angela Capodivacca and from Stanford University, Assistant Professor David Lummus, as well as myself (Eleonora Buonocore).

- Eleonora Buonocore

Boccaccio at Yale

"Boccaccio at Yale" was celebrated on November 1-2, 2013. The conference celebrated the seventh centenary of Boccaccio's birth (1313-1375) by exploring his ground-breaking narrative (the *Decameron*) and his theoretical work on history and poetry, within the vast cultural geography and history of Europe. A number of Yale scholars (Howard Bloch, Roberto Gonzalez, Chris Wood, Millicent Marcus, and Giuseppe Mazzotta) along with their European and other American counterparts (Vicky Kirkham, Wayne Rebhorn, Elsa Filosa, Susanna Barsella, David Lummus, Jason Houston and Warren Ginsberg), came together



to re-assess the impact and influence of texts such as the *Decameron* on other literatures, on the arts and music of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

- Ann DeLauro

Italian Cinema for the New Millennium

The Department hosted the Ninth Annual Festival of New Italian Cinema on April 10-13, 2014. Featuring a handpicked selection of recent and culturally-relevant films, this year's festival also included a visit by renowned Italian director Roberto Andò, whose 2013 film *Viva la libertà* played to a full house on Saturday night.

The lineup included the following: *Reality* (2012) by Matteo Garrone, *La grande bellezza* (2013) by Paolo Sorrentino, *Viva la libertà* (2013) by Roberto Andò, *La piovellina* (2009) by Tizza Covi and Rainer Frimmel, and *Benvenuto Presidente* (2013) by Riccardo Milani.

The process of selection begins nearly nine months in advance, when members of the graduate student film committee get their first glimpses of the new year's cinematic offerings during their summer trips to Italy. The committee then convenes in the autumn to screen the most promising movies and discuss them as a group. After choosing the year's best films, each committee member becomes an "expert" on one of the selections, and prepares to lead a post-viewing discussion with the audience.

This year, the discussion for *Viva la libertà* became an opportunity for the audience to have direct contact with the film's director. Roberto Andò fielded questions in English for

nearly 45 minutes during a lively conversation that included, among other topics, an exposition of the director's theory of the *romanzesco*, that is, of the novel-like quality that characterizes his cinematic output.

Andò's visit was the occasion for a larger series of events, which also included the visit of Marco Olivieri, a journalist and scholar of Andò, who gave a discussion of Andò's *oeuvre* in Professor Millicent Marcus's graduate film class. In addition, the director himself led a scholarly discussion of his work on Saturday afternoon, which was attended by students from across the university.

The director's visit is part of the film festival's continuing personal engagement with the creators of these artistic works. In 2009, Vincenzo Amato, the star of Emanuele Crialese's *Nuovomondo* attended the festival. 2011 saw the visit of Giorgio Diritti, the director of the acclaimed film *L'uomo che verrà*.

The film festival committee has already begun to meet for the 2015 edition of the festival, which will be entering its tenth year. The dates for the next festival are **April 23-26, 2015** which will again be held in the Whitney Humanities Center auditorium.

- Christopher Kaiser

Dante Working Group

The academic year 2013-2014 was a busy and productive one for the Dante Working Group. With the aim of reaching a wider audience of students and scholars from all disciplines and encouraging conversations around Dante, his work and the intellectual culture of his time, the DWG organized diverse initiatives and events.

The DWG's activities attract a lively intellectual community each year, and this is reflected by the wide scope of topics that have emerged during our speakers' talks. Among the scholars who generously contributed to the DWG were Massimo Ciavolella, Kristina Olson, and Denys Turner. In a lunch meeting following his insightful lecture on "Francesca da Rimini: a Different Take," Massimo Ciavolella offered his deep insight on the state of Dante and Medieval Studies both in the American and Italian academic scene. The conversation on Dante Studies continued with Kristina Olson, after her thought-provoking Annual Dante Lecture on "Courtesy Lost: Boccaccio as *dantista* and *storico*." During our lunch meeting with Kristina Olson, faculty, graduate and undergraduate students gathered to have a conversation about the challenges and rewards that Medievalists and Dante scholars encounter, given the current state of the Humanities. With a talk provocatively titled "Is the *Commedia*

True?" Denys Turner touched on one of the most debated issues of Dante Studies: the truth claims of the *Divine Comedy*. This lecture opened up a lively debate, which drew a number of scholars from the Yale community and also from the surrounding universities.

In the past academic year, the DWG also featured talks from Yale graduate students. Henrike Lange, a Ph.D. student from the Art History Department, presented part of her dissertation research on the relationship between Dante and Giotto and the 19th century legend of their friendship. For the now-traditional *Lectura Dantis* series, Eleonora Buonocore presented a talk on *Purgatorio* IX, which analyzed the dream of the eagle and its complex symbology.

The screening of *Inferno* (1911), in conjunction with Christiana Purdy Moudarres's course on "Dante in Translation," and a reading marathon of the *Inferno*, together complete the picture of the rich activities organized by the DWG in 2013-2014, a year that attests to the liveliness of the interests around Dante's work and legacy.

- Giulia Cardillo

Associates in Teaching Prize

Last spring, "Italian American Literature and Film," a course co-designed and co-taught by Professor Millicent Marcus and myself as part of Yale's competitive Associates in Teaching program, was offered to our undergraduate students. The program allows advanced graduate students to work with a faculty member to create a brand new course in their department or to redesign an existing course. Professor Marcus and I agreed that it was a shame that Yale had never previously offered students a chance to study the many rich and varied literary and filmic representations of the Italian American experience, and we decided to fill that gap.

During the course of the semester we read, watched, analyzed, and discussed classic works like *The Godfather*, *Mean Streets*, *Ask the Dust*, and *Christ in Concrete*. We also attempted to expand our students' understanding of the scope of Italian American perspectives by including several texts by women writers and LGBT writers in the syllabus, as well as the Spike Lee film *Do the Right Thing*. Throughout the course we explored how perceptions and portrayals of Italian American identity have shifted over time, how Italian Americans fit into a wider multicultural and ethnic society, how stereotypes of Italian Americans have been formed and dismantled, and how Italians who remained in their homeland have interacted with Italian Americans, among other concerns. We concluded the semester with a walking tour of Wooster Square, New Haven's own Little Italy, and shared a delicious pizza dinner from Pepe's.

This opportunity to delve into texts that matter a great deal to me and to teach alongside and learn from Professor Marcus was easily among the most valuable and satisfying experiences I have had at Yale. I think I can safely say that Professor Marcus, the students, and I are all immensely grateful that the Associates in Teaching program allowed this course to become a reality.

- Taylor Papallo

During the Spring of 2014 Eleonora Buonocore won an Associate in Teaching award which allowed her to co-teach together with Prof. Giuseppe Mazzotta a class called "The Myth of Memory from Plato to Dante."

The course, a bi-weekly seminar, provided an in-depth analysis of the different views of memory and of the relationship between memory and poetry, starting from the Greco-Roman world and arriving at Dante. The course analyzed different perspectives on the problem of memory: memory as a seal in the wax, memory as a book, memory as a monument, memory as a river, the banquet of memory, in order to show the intrinsic poetic value of the act of remembering and the fundamental link between memory and its opposite, forgetting.

The larger aim of the course was to show how memory can be seen as an interpretative key for poetry and as a *fil rouge* throughout the Middle Ages, connecting Antiquity to the new poetic elaborations of the Italian Renaissance.

The course included two guided visits to the Yale Art Gallery in order to explore the role of memory in visual culture in the Ancient and Medieval worlds, and one visit to the Beinecke Library, to provide a hands-on encounter with the material manuscripts and books studied throughout the semesters. The class was a success and the students seemed engaged and satisfied with their learning experience.

- Eleonora Buonocore



From Siena to Singapore and Back

We close every academic year with the Commencement in the month of May. But our department does not wait for the Fall to open it again. As we have done over the past few years, we began the new year last June, with faculty, students, and staff gathered together to kick off the Siena Summer Session. It's an extraordinary time for the students, who are excited to be involved with Siena (and the rest of Tuscany and the unique, historical cities of Italy), learn the language, take courses on modern culture or the Italian Renaissance, and uncover their secrets.

In July I managed to put a quick, hectic appearance in Siena, long enough, however, to sit in a café at the Campo and savor the awe-inspiring beauty of the architecture at the magic hour of dusk. Siena, almost like Rome, is steeped in history and it has many hidden treasures that I tell myself I must explore or re-visit "next year." To make up for the omission, in August I took a different route. I went to Singapore largely to find out what the Yale University program in Singapore was like. Did it seek to pave the way for a new understanding of the role of the Humanities in a modern university?

I was startled by what I found out. It was at first difficult to adjust to the pace of Singapore. It is a city-state with a vibrant daily life. After a day or so I did quite handsomely. I taught my intensely committed students—from Indonesia, the Philippines, China, Japan, and Australia—a course on selections from Dante. But what I really enjoyed and is carved in my memory was meeting with a large audience of students, colleagues, and parents at a public lecture I gave on "The Italian Renaissance," its local and yet universalizing trait. In that kind of context it usually seems reasonable to me to communicate the spirit of that peerless period of Western history, such as Pico's sense of education as harmony. Normally, if any of my talk manages to engage two or three students I consider my efforts worthwhile and rewarding. The responses I had that afternoon in Singapore, from both

adults and students, however, were unique. One question kept coming up in a variety of ways: "Do you think we can ever have something like the Florentine Renaissance?"

That question, simple and yet exactly right, made me think about an idea I have had for probably the last quarter of a century, the idea of a program in the humanities for "Future World Leaders at Yale." The Yale Singapore University provided a sort of sketch for my plan. This is not a program where students chosen from anywhere in the world are taught techniques of solving, say, contentious issues over a boundary line or the finesse of our legal traditions. Quite the contrary: Bring to Yale future diplomats, politicians, economists, scientists, managers etc. and offer them a new, unique experience in the underlying intricate cultural values of the Western tradition, from Shakespeare to Dante, Cervantes, and Proust, from Plato to Machiavelli, Spinoza and Hegel, from music to paintings, to politics, theater, philosophy, etc.

The question some people in the audience, in Singapore asked me, I think in retrospect, was a way of envisioning other opportunities, for themselves and for those who will come after them, to study by full immersion the intellectual-spiritual traditions of the West with some of the best teachers in the world. They understood, I venture to say, the sense of the Renaissance I tried to convey: finding points of light for the future by studying the classics of the past and present.

Quite clearly, I had a great summer. But next summer I will hopefully be in Siena.

- Giuseppe Mazzotta

From Campus to Campo

This past summer saw another successful installment of the Yale Summer Session in Italy.

Last summer we were fortunate to host Italian language programs in both Siena and in Grado. In Grado, students completed an 8 week introductory language program along the shores of the Adriatic. The Siena program, featured introductory and intermediate courses, as well as a course on Cinema in Tuscany.



Kenise Lyons (PhD '12) and Karen Raizen headed a group of students who got to begin their Italian studies in Italy. *Che bello!* Monica Georgeo and Simona Lorenzini's group of Intermediate students came to Siena with excellent preparation and they flourished linguistically during the program. Siobhan Quinlan (PhD '14) was happy to collaborate with Monica and Simona as an instructor in New Haven and as a grader and assistant to Monica in Siena. Millicent Marcus and Eleonora Buonocore led a group of students in a course devoted to Cinema in Tuscany, with introductory language instruction for those students who had not previously studied Italian. The students visited Florence, San Gimignano, and Pisa to see firsthand the settings that had inspired and served as a backdrop to many of the films. Allison Hadley, a former participant in the Siena program and a current graduate student in the department, led students on a series of exciting tours around Siena. Highlights included a special "insiders" visit to the *contrada* of the *Civetta's* museum, a visit to Siena's *duomo*, as well as an

exploration of the presence and movement of water in the city throughout its history.

In addition to these tours and an animated edition of Siena's storied *Palio*, the students experienced some of Italy's cultural treasures during group trips to Florence and Rome. In Florence, the students visited *La Galleria degli Uffizi* and did a walking tour of the city. In Rome, we were all treated to a lovely guided, night-time visit at the *Musei Vaticani*. Students and teachers alike were struck by the beauty and vitality of Bernini's sculptures of Apollo and Daphne, David, and Pluto and Proserpina during a visit to the Villa Borghese.

For the second time, a group of students spent eight weeks learning introductory Italian at the seaside in Grado with Carol Chiodo (PhD '14) and Francesca Seaman (PhD '07). Through a partnership with Yale's Instructional Technology Group, iPads were provided to the students for the duration of the program, and many of the course activities and excursions incorporated this technology.

The success of the summer program in Siena has been a major driver in normal term-time enrollment in our language courses. This fall, for example, Introductory Italian had an enrollment of nearly 80 students—roughly twice the enrollment of the previous fall. We are excited to have such enthusiastic participation in our courses and we are looking forward to robust enrollment this summer. This summer, the department will be offering Introductory Italian with Francesco Rabissi (PhD '14) and Kyle Skinner, Intermediate Italian and History, Culture, and Film in Tuscany with Siobhan Quinlan (PhD '14), Anna Marra, and Millicent Marcus, and an L5 course, The Renaissance in Tuscany, with Giuseppe Mazzotta. Chris Kaiser will be serving as a grader for Academic Director Millicent Marcus and Program Coordinator Siobhan Quinlan. For alumni in Italy this June and July, we hope to see you in the *Campo*!



- Siobhan Quinlan

Faculty Notes

Giuseppe Mazzotta, Sterling Professor in the Humanities for Italian.

Where I try to find a thread to my scholarly activities, travels, and publications I would have to say that in the year 2014 my engagement with the RENAISSANCE grew in a way I had never planned. In retrospect, the signs are unmistakable: I accepted with genuine pleasure the appointment to Council member in the “Società di studi Giuseppe Castiglione” –an Italian-Sino cultural Institute, housed at Palazzo Rucellai, Florence. And with great emotion and intellectual curiosity I sat through the 4 panels and the Round Table in honor of my work, sponsored by the Renaissance Society of America (RSA, Ney Rok, March 27-29). My special teaching commitments took me for an unforgettable week to Singapore as Visiting Faculty at the newly formed “Yale-NUS College”. I taught six seminars on “Dante and the Classics”, but the highlight of my stay was the public lecture on “Florence and the sense of Universality in the Renaissance.” And I was proud of my Renaissance contribution in honor of a dear friend of mine: I am referring to the piece on the theater of both Ariosto and Machiavelli, and their sense of crisis in the early sixteenth century: “The Theater of Creation and Re-Creation” in *Jewish Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of David B. Ruderman*, eds Richard I. Cohen, Nathalie B. Dohorman, Adam Shear, and Elchanan Reiner (Pittsburgh, PA, 2014).

The strong presence of the Renaissance in my activities did not mean that I neglected—and how could I—the Middle Ages or their prolongation into modernity. 2014 saw the Italian appearance of the much abridged third part of my Dante trilogy, *Confine Quasi Orizzonte* (Florence, Edizioni di Storia e letteratura). It also saw the publication of the paperback editions of *Dante's Vision; The World at Play*, the book on Boccaccio; and *The New Map of the World*, the book on Vico. Most memorably, 2014 marked a memorable (to me) event: the publication of the German Translation of my *Dante's Vision* as *Dantes Vision Und Der Kreis Des Wissens* (Freiburg). I was honored to be included as a member of the Editorial Board of newly established, ambitious journal, *Le Tre Corone*. And I gratefully acknowledge the invitations to lecture at UCLA on some splendid days in February; at the Cologne Dante Workshop (in May); at the Free University in Berlin (in June); in Florence for the Dante NEH Summer Institute (in July), and in the Fall at Vanderbilt; at St. Michael's University (Toronto) in October; at the University of Florida (Gainesville) in November. And at the beginning of December I lectured at Borgoricco (Padua) on an old passion of mine, Aldo Rossi's architecture. Oh, yes, I spend quite a significant amount of time duly telling myself that I should slow down. Serving as the Department's Chair makes one say that.

Millicent Marcus, Professor of Italian and Director of Graduate Studies. The academic year 2013-14 began with a continuation of the “Boccaccio at 700” celebrations, culminating in a conference here at Yale which provided the happy occasion for me to bring together my passions for the medieval storyteller and his most prominent (and transgressive) cinematic interpreter. The paper was entitled “Boccaccio, Giotto, Pasolini: Realism and the Surface of the World in *Decameron* 6, 5.” In a more popular vein, I presented an introduction to Pasolini's *Decameron* for a screening at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. in November, 2013. Other presentations unrelated to the Boccaccio septuacentennial, included “Slow Film: Neo-regionalism in Contemporary Italian Cinema,” for the Symposium in Honor of Rebecca West at the University of Chicago, an introduction to the film *Focaccia Blues*, at the Casa Italiana, NYU, December 11, 2013, five presentations as the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Distinguished Visiting Professor at College of William and Mary, March 2014, “Liberating the Left: Toward a Humanist Language of Impegno for a Post-Political Age in Roberto Andò's *Viva la libertà*,” at the Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema, Indiana University, April 25, 2014, and “‘Cinema di poesia’ in Theory and Practice: The Case of *Edipo Re*,” San Antonio, at the convention of ACTFL-AATI, November 2014. Three essays came out this past year: “The Child as ‘custode della memoria futura’: *The Man Who Will Come* and the Massacre of Marzabotto,” in *Quaderni d'italianistica*, 34 (2013), “Boccaccio and the Seventh Art: The Decameronian Films of Fellini, De Laurentiis, Pasolini, Woody Allen,” in *Mediaevalia* (2013), and “Adventures in Interdisciplinarity: Teaching *The Periodic Table*, in the MLA “Approaches to Teaching World Literature” series (2014), along with a book review of *Landscape and Memory in Post-Fascist Italian Film: Cinema Year Zero* by Giuliana Minghelli in the *Journal of Italian Cinema & Media Studies* Vol. 2 No. 1, 2014, pp. 125-127. Pedagogically, I was thrilled to participate in the Associate in Teaching program with Taylor Papallo. The class was on “Italian American Literature and Film,” and the collaboration with Taylor enabled me to venture into an entirely new field, one that had tempted me for years but which I had never had the courage to enter on my own. Taylor's commitment, expertise, and clear vision of the contours of the discipline emboldened me to take up the challenge. Though my own career-long experience with teaching film provided me with the tools to approach the analysis of Italian-American films as cinematic texts, it was Taylor's deep connection with the issues of identity which helped me shape my own approach to an understanding of these works as a whole. His passion for the study of Italian-American culture, and his mastery of the subject matter, combined to make this a splendid semester for all of us who had the good fortune to share in the adventure. Collaboration was again the key to a memorable teaching experience over the past summer with Eleonora Buonocore, my co-instructor for the second time in “Language and Cinema in Tuscany” (Yale Summer Program, Siena). Eleonora taught the language component of the course, and in five short weeks, the students completed the work of first semester Italian, thanks to her consummate expertise, professionalism, and obvious delight in teaching the class.

Faculty Notes

Angela Matilde Capodivacca, during the academic year 2013-2014, was at Villa i Tatti with a Mellon Fellowship in Literature to work on a project on Machiavelli and the issue of translation, where she focuses on Machiavelli's own translations as well as his employment of translations done by other contemporary authors as key for the understanding of his concepts of language, history and politics. She has published articles on Machiavelli "La verità effettuale della cosa: *Machiavelli's Aesthetics*" in *Textures of Power: 500 Years of Il Principe*, Eds. Judith Froemmer and Angela Oster (Munich, forthcoming); and Gaspara Stampa, "Between Friends: Gaspara Stampa and Mirtilla" in Gaspara Stampa, Eds. Aileen Feng and Unn Falkeid, (Ashgate, forthcoming). While in Florence, she was invited to give a conference on her research at NYU and Stanford. Beginning July 1st 2014, Angela was appointed Associate Professor of Italian and Fellow of the Whitney Humanities Center.

Christiana Purdy Moudarres, Assistant Professor, Director of Undergraduate Studies. During the academic year 2013-14, she published an article in *Dante Studies*, "Legends of the Fall: Generation and Corruption in *Inferno* 27", an annotated translation of F.T. Marinetti's *Elettricità sessuale (Sexual Electricity)* in *Italian Poetry Review*, and organized the following panels for the annual meetings of the Northeast Modern Language Association and the International Congress on Medieval Studies: *Forces of Nature: Liberating Women in the Middle Ages* (NeMLA, April, 2014) and *Theologies of Consumption: Eucharistic Thought and Food Practices in the Middle Ages* (ICMS, May, 2014). She is currently at work on two volumes: her first book, *A Sacred Banquet: Medicine and Theology in Dante's Commedia*, under review with University of Notre Dame Press; and a collection of essays based on papers presented at the department's Graduate Symposium on Dante, *Dante's Volume from Alpha to Omega*, forthcoming with Arizona University Press. In addition to her course offerings within the Italian Department, *Women in the Middle Ages* (Spring 2014); *Science and Creation in Italy, 1870-1929* (Spring 2014); and *Dante in Translation* (Fall 2014), she was delighted to join the Literature faculty of Directed Studies for the first time this fall. In addition to research and teaching, she has thoroughly enjoyed her work as Director of Undergraduate Studies and Faculty Moderator for the Whitney Humanities Center's Dante Working Group.

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Erminia Ardissino (Ph.D'93) (Università di Torino) has eventually concluded the critical edition of the "Dicerie Sacre" by Giovan Battista Marino. This is the first volume of the *Edizione Nazionale delle Opere di G. Marino* which came out (Roma, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2014). Moreover, she just received a fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies Le Studium (Loire Valley) – Centre d'Etudes Supérieur de la Renaissance (Tours) to work on a project on "The Laity and the Bible: Religious Reading in Early Modern Italy" during 2015.

Stefano U. Baldassarri (Ph.D'99) writes, "I was appointed Director of the International Studies Institute (Palazzo Rucellai, Florence, Italy) in January 2014. The International Studies Institute (aka ISI Florence) is a study abroad program established in 2001. Stefano has been working for it since 2003, first as Professor of Italian Literature, then, from March 2011 to December 2013, as Academic Director."

Ashley Galvani Bell, (BA '06) is a opera singer, and is performing in and producing *Señora/Signora Rossini: A Celebration of the Life of Isabella Colbran Rossini* in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute of New York on April 10th and 11, 2015 at 8 pm at the new Sheen Center for the Arts on 18 Bleecker Street in New York City. The intrepid and innovative New York based Divaria Productions unveils a multidisciplinary theatrical piece for virtuoso classical singers, actor, piano and harp which tells the story of the Spanish born opera diva Isabella Colbran, toast of the opera stages of Europe in the early 19th century, and who subsequently became the wife of an Italian opera composer seven years her junior, the then unknown Gioacchino Rossini. *Señora/Signora Rossini* is an evening that combines rarely heard vocal works by Italian Neoclassical composers championed by Colbran, scenes and arias from Rossini's Neapolitan period which she premiered, as well as songs of Isabella's own composition for voice and harp. It features mezzo soprano Anna Tonna, tenor Hak Soo Kim, pianist Lucy Yates, harpist Caroline Cole and more. For more information and tickets visit: http://divariaproductions.com/Divaria_Productions/Performances.html

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Mary Ann McDonald Carolan (Ph.D. '89), Associate Professor and Director of the Italian Studies program at Fairfield University, is the author of *The Transatlantic Gaze: Italian Cinema, American Film* (SUNY Press, 2014). This book, which was originally published in hardcover and is now available in paperback, tracks the sustained and profound impact of Italian directors and films on American filmmaking from the postwar period to the present. For more information, visit <http://www.sunypress.edu/p-5834-the-transatlantic-gaze.aspx>.

Jo Ann Cavallo (Ph.D. '87), Professor and Chair of the Department of Italian at Columbia University, recently published the following: *The World beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); "On Political Power and Personal Liberty in *The Prince* and *The Discourses*," *Machiavelli's The Prince at 500*, ed. John McCormick, *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 81:1 (Spring 2014): 107-32; "Il corredo: Loss and Continuity in an Italian American Family," *Embroidered Stories: Interpreting Women's Domestic Needlework from the Italian Diaspora*, eds. Edvige Giunta and Joseph Sciorra (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 313-25.

Dina Consolini (now Dina Dommett), (Ph.D. '93), is still living in lovely Buckinghamshire, England, with her British husband Mike, and working for London Business School as Executive Director of Leadership Programs (mostly Executive MBA degrees, including EMBA-Global which she launched in 2001 with Columbia Business School, when she had a similar job with Columbia in NYC). She travels regularly for work to Dubai, NY, Hong Kong and Shanghai and to visit family in Italy (Rome and Lake Garda) as much as possible.

Zeke Farrow (BA '96) writes, "Italian was my major! Life has taken me in a radically different direction. I've written and/or produced several films, including *Gayby* (Indie Spirit Award Nomination - watchable on Netflix), and *21 Below* (Writers Guild of America Nomination (Amazon)). I just won The Peabody Award for my latest film, *Best Kept Secret*, which was acquired by POV/PBS, and can be found on iTunes. I'm currently working on several new TV and film projects and often think of the films we studied in my Italian Cinema class with the awesome Mary Ann Carolan.... So, indeed Antonioni, DeSica, Fellini, Leone, and Rossellini continue to affect American cinema!"

Alexia Ferracuti (Ph.D. '14) is the new Assistant Director of the Yale Teaching Center, where she looks forward to collaboratively overseeing the quality of pedagogical programs and services across disciplines at Yale. Alexia received a Ph.D. with distinction from Yale this past May from the combined degree program in Italian Language and Literature and Renaissance Studies, with a dissertation supervised by Giuseppe Mazzotta entitled *The Art of Ambiguity: Mirrors, Mimesis, and Metamorphosis in Italian Renaissance Comedy*. Her forthcoming article in the *California Italian Studies Journal* is entitled "Reflections of Isabella: Hermaphroditic Mirroring in *Mirtilla* and Giovan Battista Andreini's *Amor nello specchio*."

Marjorana Karathanasis (BA/P.h.D. '01) has published two novel translations for Mondadori Books in Milan. They are both novels of a noteworthy young author, Alessandro D'Avenia. The first one, *White like Milk, Red Like Blood* (*Bianca come il latte rossa come il sangue*), is available on Ebook and film on Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/White-Like-Milk-Red-Blood-ebook/dp/B00GSE3XY2/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1395238888&sr=8-1&keywords=white+like+milk. The second book will be released in English soon, called *Things No One Knows* (*Cose che nessuno sa*).

Joe Luzzi (P.h.D. '00) published two books in 2014: *My Two Italies* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) and *A Cinema of Poetry: Aesthetics of the Italian Art Film* (Johns Hopkins University Press).

John C. McLucas (Ph.D. '83) just completed six years' service as Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages at Towson University near Baltimore. He has an article forthcoming on the teaching of the *Orlando furioso*. His translation of Tullia d'Aragona's 1560 epic *Meschino*, edited by Julia L. Hairston, is due to come out in the 'Other Voice' series in the coming year."

Leslie Zarker Morgan, (PhD '83) is Professor of Italian and French in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Loyola University Maryland. She received an award from National Endowment for the Humanities' Scholarly Editions & Translations program in 2013. The three-year project, "Edition and Translation of 'Huon d'Auvergne,' a Pre-Modern Franco-Italian Epic," will provide the first comprehensive, digitized edition of the Franco-Italian epic poem, with a translation of one version. It brings together six collaborators, from the University of North Florida, Washington and Lee University, and University of Arizona as well as France and Italy. Along with other support, it allows Dr. Morgan and her team time to study the manuscripts housed in European archives and produce an online edition. For information about the participants, see <http://evergreen.loyola.edu/lmorgan/www/newsinfoSSB.htm>

Andrea Moudarres (Ph.D. '99) was recently hired as Assistant Professor of Italian at the University of California, Los Angeles. Over the last two years, during which he was an ACLS New Faculty Fellow at UCLA, he has begun revising his dissertation into a book

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manuscript and he has published articles on Machiavelli, Dante, and on views of Islam in fifteenth-century Italy. In Spring 2014 he was invited to deliver the keynote address at the Induction and Awards Ceremony of the Alpha Lambda Delta & Phi Eta Sigma Honor Societies at UCLA.

Emanuel L. Paparella (Ph.D '90) is now retired, residing in Sunrise Florida with his wife Cathy. Lately he has become grandfather for a third time with the arrival of Adriana (Campbell, her mother was born in the Yale Hospital in 1979) who joins Sophia and Nicholas (Andy). One of his daughters, Cristina, has recently graduated summa cum laude in Environmental science from Florida Atlantic University. However, he continues to teach philosophy and Italian at Barry University and Broward College, while also publishing regularly. Since last year, he has been coordinating a symposium for the on-line Helsinki based Ovi magazine. The project foments and promotes the liberal arts and humanities, envisions a new humanism and a re-examination of Vico and Croce's historicism. A close collaborator within the symposium is Professor Ernesto Paolozzi, an eminent Neapolitan Croce scholar. The symposium's sessions appear on a bi-weekly basis and can be downloaded from Ovi magazine.

Massimo Mandolini-Pesaresi (Ph.D '90) published a small collection of poems in the spring of 2014, the work of almost two decades. The title is *The Marble Wave*. *Kirkus Reviews* wrote of it: "Sharp as a razor but solid as stone, Mandolini-Pesaresi's (*Grecian Vistas*, 2012, etc.) poetry offers subtle charms for refined tastes. The title of this potent collection of verse offers a tension: the immovable hardness of marble and the fluid action of a wave. A similar tension drives the poetry inside, which is often beset by productive contradictions. Foremost among them is the poet's balance between his language's narrow precision and the remarkable breadth of his frame of reference. There is some of Emily Dickinson in his style." The book description reads: "From the casualties in Palestine to the final days in the life of Rimbaud, the elegantly wrought works of poetry in Massimo Mandolini-Pesaresi's elegiac collection trace a path of individual struggle as immutable and inevitable as story of humankind... Masterful and mournful ... submerges the reader into the great swell of the human experience."

Alessandro Polcri (Ph.D '04) was Visiting Associate Professor in the Italian Department at Yale University during the fall of 2013, where he taught the graduate course *Words on Fire, Contemporary Italian Poetry*. He won the Harvard University Fellowship at Villa I Tatti in Florence, Italy (July 2014 – July 2015), through the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies. In Florence, he will complete his book entitled *A Private Citizen's Magnificence between Theory and Praxis: Cosimo de' Medici and Florence (1434-64)*. Here the link about his research project: <http://itatti.harvard.edu/appointees/alessandro-polcri>

Arielle Saiber (Ph.D '99) is Associate Professor of Italian at Bowdoin College. Since 2011, she has published a long article entitled "Flying Saucers Would Never Land in Lucca: The Fiction of Italian Science Fiction" (which has been translated into Italian and Romanian) (2011), an essay on Boccaccio's *Caccia di Diana* for *Boccaccio: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works* (University of Chicago Press, 2013); a coda on experimental electronic music and sound art in Italy (*CIS*, 2014); an article on Niccolò Tartaglia's solution to the cubic equation for the *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts* (2014); and with mathematician Aba Mbirika, a long article on the topological and combinatoric configurations of the *tre giri* of *Paradiso* 33 (*Dante Studies*, 2014). She co-edited a special issue on "Italian Sound" with Deanna Shemek for *CIS* 4.1-2 (2014) and is currently co-editing a special issue on "Italian Science Fiction" for *Science Fiction Studies*. She is also putting together for Wesleyan UP what will be the first-ever anthology in English of Italian science fiction. She is nearing completion of a book manuscript on the conversation between mathematics and literature in early modern Italy, and getting ready to teach a course on World Science Fiction (in English) in Spring 2015, for which she has built a website she hopes will be of use to other scholars and teachers of science fiction. Arielle's other website, Dante Today, continues to expand, and as of 2012 she co-edits the site with Elizabeth Coggeshall of Stanford and our many wonderful student assistants. Arielle has served as a council member for the Dante Society of America (2012-2014), and is Vice-President for 2014-2015. She served as Chair of Bowdoin's Department of Romance Languages from 2009-2012. When not jetting around for research or to give talks on Dante, Renaissance math and literature, or science fiction, Arielle resides in a cheery, art-book-antique-filled historic house in Portland, Maine, with her magnificent husband Kavi and their perpetually hilarious, beloved cats: Serif (age 3) and Helios (age 2)."

Maria Rosa Truglio (Ph.D '99) writes, "I continue to teach at Penn State as Associate Prof. of Italian and Women's Studies. Last month I was very honored to receive the Malvin E. and Lea Bank Outstanding Teaching Award from the College of the Liberal Arts, and I'm looking forward to my article on the representation of Garibaldi in turn-of-the-century children's books appearing in the next issue of *Children's Literature*. Last year, my colleague Dr. Nicolás Fernández-Medina and I created the "Spanish and Italian Modernist Studies Forum" at Penn State, which has enabled co-taught seminars, guest speakers, museum trips, and other interdisciplinary activities. Most of all I'm extremely proud of my two "little ones," now 23 and 22. Anthony recently graduated from Penn State with majors in Classics and French and minors in Latin and Italian. He'll be off to Spain shortly to teach English for six months. Thomas is working toward his degree in Biology and Kinesiology, working part time at the hospital and preparing for a medical career."

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Alessandro Vettori (Ph.D. '95) writes, "My book entitled *Giuseppe Berto, La Passione della scrittura* (Marsilio, 2013) came out last summer. In spring 2014, I was promoted to Professor I at Rutgers University. I will be on leave in 2014-2015 and I will spend the academic year in London, UK."

Rebecca West (Ph.D. '74) writes, "My news is that I retired from the University of Chicago in December, 2013, after 40 years of being on the faculty here. I had a wonderful career with great students, both undergraduate and graduate. I served in several administrative capacities: Dean of Students in the Humanities Graduate Division; Chair of my department, Romance Languages and Literatures; and Director of the Center for Gender Studies. I was also very active in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies where I was a full faculty member. I shall be a visiting professor at the University of Zurich in the fall of 2015."

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