



YALE DEPARTMENT OF ITALIAN STUDIES:

A Celebration of the Past & Future



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We have much to celebrate this past year – most notably, the arrival of two spectacular new colleagues this fall, and a reunion of dozens of our alumni in November to honor the career of our beloved Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta. The pages within will introduce you to Serena Bassi and Alessandro Giammei, to the heart-warming festivities that took place on November 4, and to a number of other events that made it feel as though we were slowly, finally, emerging from two difficult years dominated by Covid: our undergraduate research conference, the annual Italian film festival, a panel on the Italian elections, the Pence Dante lecture, a successful summer program in Siena, and much more. In fact, thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of our faculty, staff, and students, that rough period between March 2020 and early last year felt like it went by relatively quickly. While the vast majority of classes, talks, and conferences have since then been thankfully in *presenza* (after a bumpy start to the spring 2022 semester when all was virtual for a few weeks), we are learning how to make things as seamlessly hybrid as possible. Finally, we're feeling much more settled now in our new home in the Humanities Quadrangle at 320 York Street, and we urge you to stop by and visit when you can!

JANE TYLUS
DEPARTMENT CHAIR

The Third Undergraduate Research Conference in Italian Studies by Simona Lorenzini, Director of Undergraduate Studies



On April 30, 2022, the Italian Studies Department gathered for the third annual Undergraduate Research Conference in Italian Studies. While the first two conferences went online, this past Spring we were finally able to meet in person for a day of stimulating and enjoyable talks.

This third meeting continued to see an ongoing interest from students who enthusiastically responded to the January’s call for papers submitting many excellent proposals; ten of them were selected for the final lineup. The 10 presenters were divided in three panels – “Neorealism and Beyond in Italian Narrative Cinema,” “From Laura to Sofonisba Anguissola: Art and Literature in Italian Studies,” and “Sicilian Landscapes: Industrialization, Migration and Social Progress” – chaired respectively by graduate students Giacomo Berchi, Wenbin Gao, and Federico Sessolo who moderated a lively and interactive discussion among the presenters and the audience. All the presentations, on subjects ranging from literature to politics, from environmental studies to art, brilliantly showed the diversity and interdisciplinarity of our programs (see below for a full list of presenters and titles).



The conference was as a delightful opportunity for our community to discuss in a very in-depth and diverse approach the literature and culture of Italy and how it appeals students from different backgrounds (philosophy, political science, environmental engineering, computer science, film studies, etc.).

There are many people to thank for the success of the conference: Prof. Millicent Marcus and Dr. Anna Iacovella for their remarks on the importance of humanities, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration; instructors and graduate students who worked as mentors and moderators (Zach, Giacomo, Nico, Antonio, Roberto, Francesca, Giovanni, and Federica); and Ann DeLauro for her untiring support. A special acknowledgment goes, of course, to our amazing students. Without their works and enthusiasm in Italian Studies, the event would have not been possible.

For the first time, we granted 2 money prizes of \$500 each to the best papers. The recipients were Eliza Spinna and our major Francesco Spirli (class of 2022). Eliza’s paper explored three Italian films, *Kaos*, *Stolen Children* and *Respiro* discussing how these films depict troubled Sicilian mothers and how these mothers also show a resilience that speak of the island’s endurance and hope in the face of the harsh socio-economic landscape. Francesco’s paper, instead, focused on the way art and imagery have been used to promote cultural and political agendas from the Italian Renaissance to the 21 st century by analyzing and comparing Giorgio Vasari’s portrait of Alessandro de’ Medici (1534) and Kehinde Wiley’s portrait of Barack Obama (2018), two works that share the same artistic strategy in constructing identities of power and in immortalizing two history-making political figures.

The Undergraduate Conference has now become a much looking-forward tradition of our Department and an enjoyable end-of-the-semester celebration that bring together our community of faculty, undergraduate and graduate students. We are now planning for the fourth annual conference, which will take place on April 28, welcoming contributions on literature, history, politics, art, cinema, language, translation, science, gender studies, philosophy, etc. Stay tuned for the January call for papers!

10:30 am -- Opening Remarks: Millicent Marcus, Professor of Italian and DGS

10:40 – 11:20 Panel I -- Neorealism and Beyond in Italian Narrative Cinema

Moderator, Giacomo Berchi

- Marco Muñoz
“Children in Charge: Neorealist Perceptions and their Inverse”
- Iris Zhao
“Subjectivity and Authorship in *Bellissima*, *Blow Up*, and *8½*”
- Christion Zapple
“Pain and Laughter: Analyzing Humor in Neorealist Film”

11:30 – 12:10 Panel II -- From Laura to Sofonisba Anguissola: Art and Literature in Italian Studies

Moderator, Wenbin Gao

- Francesco Spirli
“Portraits as Politics: Creating Power Through Portraiture from Medicean Florence to the White House”
- Se Ri Lee
“Sofonisba Anguissola and Jennie Kim: Their Strategic Self-Fashioning as Artists Against Cultural Norms”
- Gamze Kazakoglu
“The Dilemma of Being in Time: Immortality of Literature and the Abstract Lady Laura in Petrarca’s *Canzoniere*”

12:10 – 1:00 Break

1:00 – 2:00 Panel III -- Sicilian Landscapes: Industrialization, Migration and Social Progress

Moderator, Federico Sessolo

- Abigail Yadegar
“Land and Sea in Sicilian Film: *The Privilege of Belonging*”
- Eliza Spinna
“Sicilian Mothers: Endurance and Hope in a Harsh Homeland”
- Marcela Sanchez
“Industrialization and the Environmental Gaze in Antonioni’s *Red Desert*”

2:00 pm -- Closing Remarks: Anna Iacovella, Language Program Director

Conference Organizer: Simona Lorenzini

Undergraduate Mentors: Zach Aguilar, Giacomo Berchi, Nico Berrettini, Antonio D’Amico, Roberto Ferrini, Francesca Leonardi, Giovanni Miglianti, Federica Parodi



Schedule from Undergraduate Research Conference and list of student presenters

The 2022 Italian Summer Program in Siena by Simona Lorenzini, Language Program Director

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID pandemic, on the summer of 2022 the Italian Studies Department was happily back in Siena for the fourteenth-year anniversary of the Summer Program. It was a memorable summer for all involved, students (45) and instructors. We offered three language classes, two in Elementary and one in Intermediate Italian, and three 1-credit-culture classes paired with the language courses. Prof. Millicent Marcus and Dr. Anna Iacovella taught the course “History, Culture, and Film in Tuscany” engaging students with representations of Tuscany through literary texts and films. Dr. Simona Lorenzini taught the course “Tuscany between Past and Present” that explored Tuscan cultural history and its influence on the Italian culture from Dante to Giorgio Caproni.

As the Program Director, I was glad to work with wonderful colleagues. In addition to Professor Marcus and Dr. Iacovella, the instructors included Dr. Deborah Pellegrino and Dr. Giovanni Miglianti, Costanza Barchiesi, Roberto Ferrini, Federica Parodi, and Teresa Rossi. Lydia Tuan assisted Professor Marcus and Dr. Iacovella by helping their students to get the most out of their experience in Siena and in Italy.

Even though we still had to face the aftermaths of the pandemic, for 8 weeks our students took advantage of friendly relationships with the hosting families, and the social life of the small but lively reality of medieval Siena. Our students experienced the spectacle of the Palio and enjoyed the lively atmosphere that surrounds this unique event. The day of the Palio (July 2) was an exciting one. We could feel the importance of this event for the entire city who waited for two years to have the race back in the magnificent Piazza del Campo. The Contrada del Drago won the race in the photo finish ahead of Torre. In the days leading to the Palio, our students were fortunate to visit the museums of the Tartuca's and Nicchio's Contrada, and to attend the Contrada's cenino (hosted by the Pantera). Every summer, we are thrilled to offer these first-hand insights of a real Contrada's life to our students.

As in the previous years, we took several trips as a group, including visits to San Gimignano, Florence, Pisa, Livorno, and a weekend in Rome. One of the main highlights of this past summer was the visit to the Centro Culturale Islamico di Colle Val d'Elsa where we spent a joyful afternoon listening at the history of the center and tasting traditional and authentic Islamic food prepared by our generous and welcoming hosts.

During the past summers, many Yale students have taken advantage of a full immersion in the Italian life, exhibiting, with increasing confidence, their speaking skills in public contest, in the closing relationship with the hosting families, and in a great variety of events and activities. As every year, a pleasant moment of conviviality and friendships celebrated the end of the program and thanked the hosting families and whoever contributed to this wonderful experience. The final dinner at “L'orto de' Pecci” was also the occasion to sincerely thank our local coordinator Idelma Giannini, and Victoria Van Luit, the Siena Program Director of the CET Academic Programs, who helped us with student cultural adjustment and other issues related to living abroad.

Applications have now opened for the 15th edition of the Siena Summer Program. This summer we will offer Elementary and Intermediate language classes, plus two 1-credit culture classes paired with the Elementary course and taught by Prof. Millicent Marcus and Sarah Atkinson, and a 1-credit culture class paired with the Intermediate course and taught by Dr. Simona Lorenzini.

We are all looking forward to being back in Siena with a new amazing group of students. Ci vediamo a Siena!



Picture of Siena 2022 students

Reflecting on 2022: A Year Full of Achievements by Deborah Pellegrino

The Fall 2022 semester ended with a most compelling and fun competition between the students in my ITAL130 (Intermediate Italian) courses and those in Simona Lorenzini's 130 classes. The competition, held in true Jeopardy style, consisted of questions that ranged from Italian culture and grammar to vocabulary, and geography. Students competed against each other in a playful and spirited atmosphere: They jumped, meditated, and gathered ideas. The first round was won by Simona's class (Kala'i incredibly nailed all the geography questions). My class won the second round (Eli nailed the last and most difficult question, conjugating an arduous *passato remoto* that was worth 5 points!)

In this photos you can see students singing Andrea Bocelli's *Con te partirò* at the end of the contest. We examined (and sang) this song in class, while reviewing the future tense and investigating the creative connections between Opera and Pop music.

This moment was a perfect finale for our intermediate courses. During the semester students encountered and discussed a diversity of materials, such as music, films, arts, and longer written literary texts. They also participated in a tandem language exchange program with a student in Italy, delving into the language and Italian life. Students were engaged in the language and culture and conspicuously more confident in their speaking and writing abilities.

The cultural experiences in Italian language courses integrate many events and opportunities for students. ITAL130 classes and their instructors visited the Yale University Art Gallery and discussed Italian art in person, presenting on a favorite Italian work of art. I also planned a visit to the Numismatic collection at the Yale Art Gallery for my class, which resulted in a fantastic hands-on overview of Roman, Florentine, and Venetian coins (My heart melted at the sight and touch of a golden fourteenth century Florin!). Our meetings, *Il Caffè del Giovedì*, with coffee, cookies, and language practice continued to provide students of Italian and Italophiles the chance to connect in a friendly atmosphere. Of course, Anna Iacovella's Neapolitan coffee is one of the strengths of the meetings. The past semester a series of Queer Italian Pasta Events were co-hosted by the Office of LGBTQ+ Resources and organized by our new faculty Alessandro Giammei and Serena Bassi.



L3 Italian class



L3 Italian class


Notes from the Director of Graduate Studies by Millicent Marcus

While the DGS column usually offers me the chance to introduce the new student cohort to our readers, this year has been different. A moratorium on admissions meant that we would be postponing until next Fall that happy tradition. But thanks to a few excellent developments, our grad program moves ahead *a gonfie vele*. Our current student community has been extremely active both on campus and beyond. The Dante Reading Group, the Diversity speaking series organized in partnership with Berkeley, the Yale-Johns Hopkins yearly conference initiated last Fall in Baltimore, the Film Festival planning committee, our department's on-going First Draft presentation series, the extensive, interdepartmental conference on "(Re)thinking Landscape" are just some examples of the extra-curricular activism of our students to date.


This year, we've hosted 3 marvelous grad student visitors: in the Fall, Arianna Mazzola from the University of Molise researching Italian authors who wrote of their travels in the U.S. and Beatrice Scartezzini from the University of Trento researching the writings of Nicola Chiaromonte, and in the Spring, Irina Aguiari, teaching ITAL 120 as part of the Yale-Scuola normale di Pisa exchange program.

Now that the moratorium on admissions is over, we have been delighted to vet a particularly strong group of candidates, three of whom have been invited for on-campus visits to take place on February 27 and 28.

Give and receive motivation by Anna Iacovella, Language Program Director


One of the latest studies on language retention conducted by Professor Monika Schmid, Head of the Language and Linguistics Department at University of York between 2020 and 2022, revealed that the brain only needs a small amount of motivation to recall language learning. This gives us, as language educators, a strong drive to motivate students to learn a language or more than one language simultaneously. 

Nowadays, college students are global citizens and travel around the world to expand their experiences and knowledge. It is easy to see that when traveling or working in another country the use and skills in the country's native language is critical.

The Italian language courses saw a significant enrollment increase. L1 and L3 sections were exceptionally high in the number of students who are continuing with their interest and motivation to learn Italian. The return to activities in class with additional experiences outside of the classroom made it possible to reinforce the progress in learning. L3 courses (ITAL130) sections visited the YUAG, Yale University Art Gallery, to reflect and describe a piece of art by an Italian artist. 

The *History and Culture of Naples* course (ITAL159) visited the Center of British Art at Yale for an interactive session of "Visitors of Naples in the Past". The course also visited the Beinecke Library to deepen research into the discovery and analysis of original manuscripts from the 1500-1600s.

As per renovated tradition, students of Italian and community were invited to participate in the historical walking tour of Wooster Square & Little Italy in New Haven conducted by Rich Biondi from the SSMM Italian American Society. Although it was a rainy day, everyone enjoyed the "Slice of Haven" at the end of the tour.

 The Italian Department Studies offered more opportunities for students to practice the language skills at the monthly gatherings with biscotti e caffè. This is a great opportunity to meet students from other sections and levels of Italian, but also to meet with several instructors and graduate students reinforcing the community disposition.

The *Linguistic Futures* events organized in collaboration with Prof. Jane Tylus, included the participation of colleagues from the Spanish Department, Lourdes Sabè with "Applying Multimodal Tools at the Language Courses", and from the Arabic Department, Sarab Al Ani "Demonstration of asynchronous activities for L1/L2 courses".

The Methods and Techniques course for graduate students at Yale reinforces the concept of motivation in language teaching and promotes collaboration with colleagues from other departments at Yale and other institutions as well.

Our community can also interact and keep updated with our events posted on Instagram Page: Italian_Yale. https://www.instagram.com/italian_yale/?hl=en


Personal Updates by Deborah Pellegrino

Lastly, this past year has brought many accomplishments to my teaching career and academic research. During the summer, I participated in the Study Abroad program in Siena, where I taught a language course to a group of wonderful students who were immersed in the culture of Italy for two months. Indeed, it has been a meaningful experience of their undergraduate education as much as it has been a rewarding experience for my work as an instructor. As for the interdisciplinary research that constantly informs my teaching, in 2022 the volume *Women's Agency and Self-Fashioning, 1300-1600*, which I co-authored with Simona Lorenzini, was published by Viella Publisher, Kent State University European Studies. The volume celebrates early modern women's cultural experiences, featuring the amazing contributions presented at our conference in 2021. I also published the piece "Keeping Track of the Household: Accounting the Exceptional Spousal Collaboration between Margherita and Francesco Datini" in the *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*. This article offers new insights into Margherita's bookkeeping skills, revealing how she acquired a sound grasp of accountancy under the constant tutelage of Francesco and his apprentices, with whom she routinely worked and learned.



Southern Italy courtesy of goaheadtours.com

Faculty Notes by Millicent Marcus

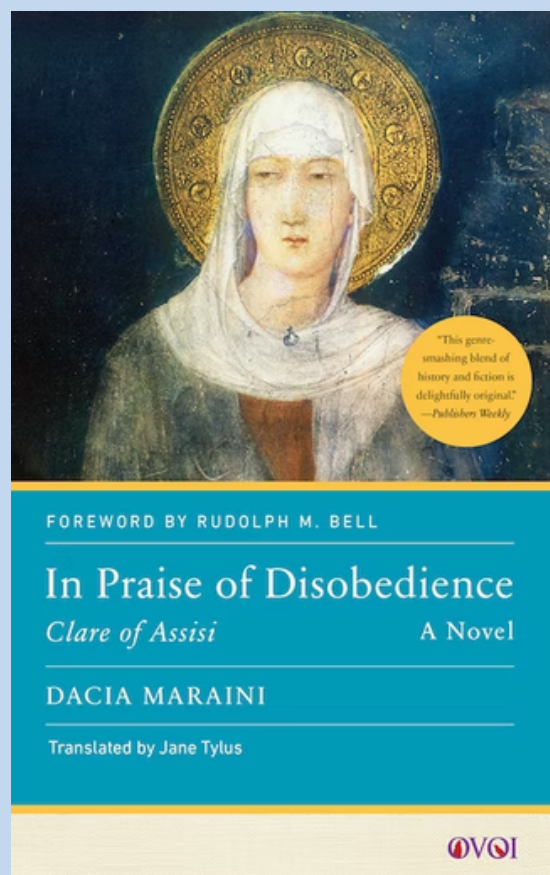
After a long, Covid-induced delay, my book, *Italian Film in the Present Tense*, will be coming out this March. For access to Italy's contemporary film out-put, I owe a great debt of thanks to our grad student planning committee which helped bring this body of work to campus for our Yale Festival of New Italian Cinema—an annual event that began back in 2007! 

In addition to the forth-coming book, I published a short article, "Germi's Mastroianni: The Opening Sequence of *Divorzio all'italiana*" in *Forme della regia. Scritti in onore di Vito Zagarrìo*, edited by Stefania Parigi e Christian Uva (Roma: Bulzoni, 2022). Among my presentations during the past year were a lecture on Fellini's *La strada*, via Zoom for an Italian film course at the University of Toronto, on March 22, a talk entitled "Nicholas Patruno, Primo Levi and the Chain of Witness," at Bryn Mawr College in a conference dedicated to the memory of Patruno, a beloved colleague, on April 22, and "Technomachia: How the Battle between Digital and Analogue Images Played Itself Out on Italian Screens," in one of two panels that I organized on contemporary Italian film at the annual conference of the American Association of Italian Studies in Bologna on June 1.

Personal Updates by Jane Tylus

2022 was a year about bringing marvelous new colleagues to Yale! I've noted the arrival of Serena Bassi and Alessandro Giammei, who have already begun to transform our vibrant program in so many ways. We were also fortunate to have Teresa Fiore, the Inserra Endowed Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies at Montclair State University, with us last spring to teach a graduate course on transnational and migration studies – and to assist us in our search for the two exciting candidates we've now brought to New Haven. In the fall, Sara Diaz, associate professor of Italian at Fairfield University, joined us to teach an undergraduate course on Dante – and she in turn brought colleagues such as Ron Jenkins from Wesleyan to do sessions in her class. And this spring, Alessandro Vettori, Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at Rutgers, is with us each Wednesday for a graduate seminar on Dante and poverty, which has attracted a number of students from the Divinity School as well as other departments.

As 2022 was ending, the first copy of my translation of Dacia Maraini's *Chiara di Assisi: Elogio alla disobbedienza* arrived, published in a new series called "Other Voices of Italy" with Rutgers University Press. An edgy, experimental novel that is not quite a novel – or you could say, a biography that is not quite a biography – Maraini's *Chiara* is a fascinating look at the complicated, contradictory figure of St. Clare through the perspective of a young, 21st-century Sicilian girl attempting to make sense of her own, complicated world. My thanks to the afore-mentioned Professor Vettori for offering to present the manuscript to his colleagues at the press after he heard me give an online talk about Maraini's book – the wonders of Zoom.

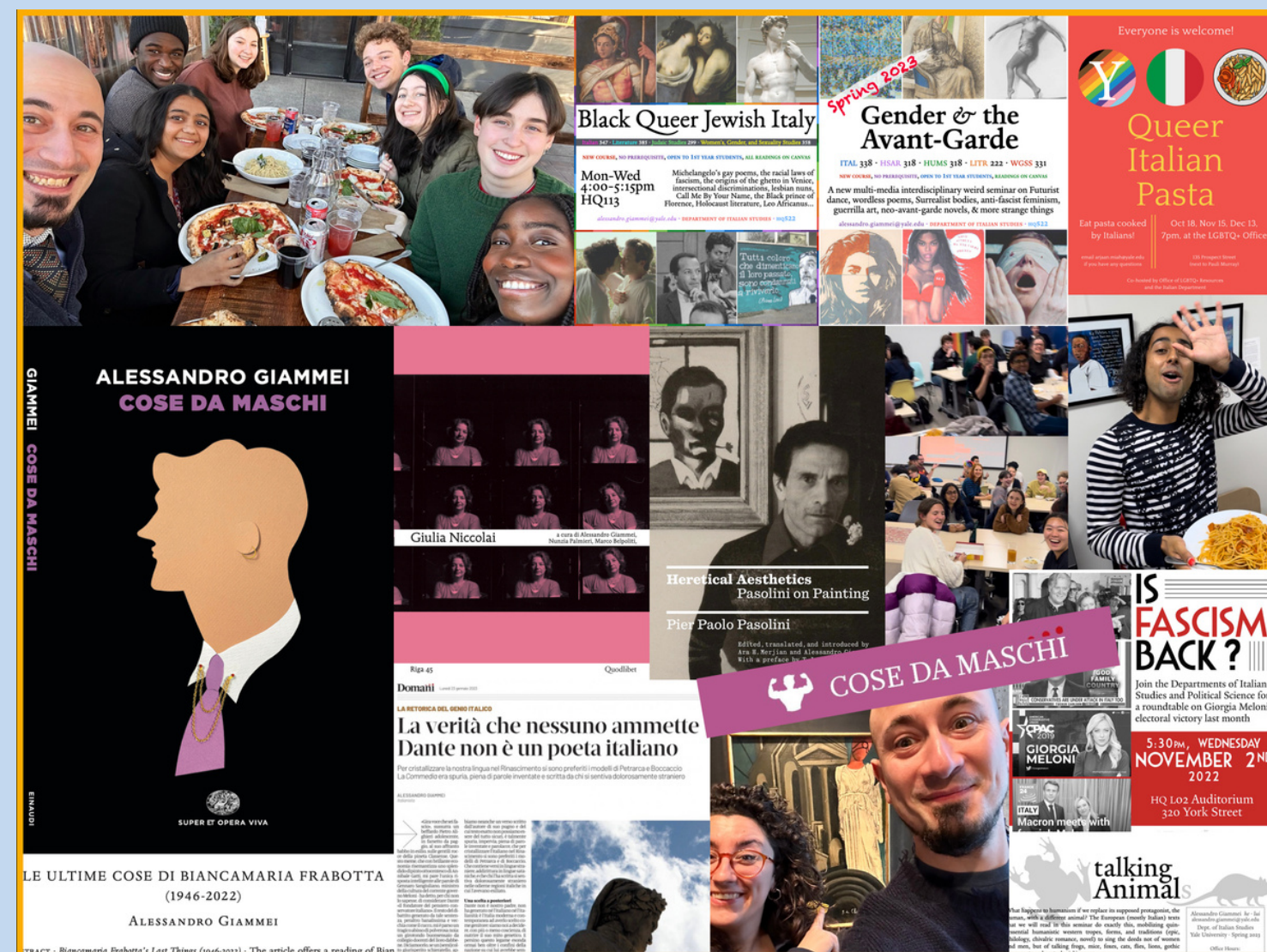


Cover of Jane Tylus' translated work

The other publication to show up at the close of 2022 was the final issue for which I served as general editor of *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*. After nine years, I'm delighted to pass the baton to Alexander Nagel of NYU, and his commanding and creative view of early modernity will no doubt bring new life to the journal. My hope now is that with all this free time, I'll finish a short book manuscript for Cambridge, "Who Owns Literature?", by the end of this year. In the meantime, it's a pleasure and privilege to continue chairing our spirited department.

New in New Haven: Some Personal News by Alessandro Giammei

Since I arrived at Yale, welcomed by the wonderful collegial atmosphere of our close-knit Italian Studies community, I felt empowered to write, teach, mentor, and bury myself in the library! It was truly exciting, in the Fall of 2022, to offer a new seminar on "Black Queer Jewish Italy" that gathered a diverse and enthusiastic group of undergraduates (here pictured at Zeneli's, where we had our hard-earned end-of-semester pizza!) around Renaissance and 20th century texts that are seldom explored in traditional curricula. With the help of a brilliant, Anglo-Roman-Bengali first-year student, I have organized "Queer Italian Pasta": an informal monthly meeting in the kitchen of Yale's LGBTQ center, where we cook and eat pasta in a bi-lingual environment. And this Spring I am offering a second undergraduate seminar, on "Gender & the Avant-Garde", as well as an interdisciplinary graduate course on "Talking Animals" that attracted students from English, Spanish, Slavic, and even Public Health, in conversation with our own Italianists.



New in New Haven: Some Personal News

by Alessandro Giammei (cont)

In the meantime, I have kept on writing my column about masculinity in the Italian newspaper *Domani*. This project, which started last year (and changed the way I look at early modern paintings, chivalric poems, Italian hip hop songs, and my own wardrobe), is about to become a book titled *Cose da maschi* with Einaudi. After Spring Break, when I plan to present it all around Italy, this book will be at the center of an event organized by the Early Modern Studies program at Yale: a show-and-tell seance to which everyone can bring their “*cosa da maschi*” and reflect on why we associate material things with gender.

Two other books of mine are coming out this semester. The first, which was just published by Quodlibet, is the first comprehensive volume of texts and studies devoted to Italian-American neo-avant-garde poet *Giulia Niccolai*. I have been working on Niccolai for ten years, exploring her experimentalism, her unique feminism, and her rapport with American culture. Co-editing this new book, simply titled *Giulia Niccolai*, with Marco Belpoliti and Nunzia Palmieri feels like the coronamento of a long season of research and admiration. The other book, forthcoming in August with Verso, is titled *Heretical Aesthetics: Pasolini on Painting*. I co-authored and co-edited it with Ara H. Merjian (a Yale alumn!) and it includes a preface penned by T. J. Clark. Ara and I wrote an innovative essay on Pasolini’s relationship with painting as an art critic, art historian, and artist, and we translated for the first time all of his (many!) writings on painting.

The most exciting new project that I took up in the Fall is a study of Leonardo Sciascia’s myth in Italian-American fiction, which I presented at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura and will form the core of an essay on Italianness as an ethnicity. I have also published an article on Biancamaria Frabotta’s poetry, gave a lecture on fascist commemorations at the ENS in Lyon, and collaborated with my wonderful new colleague, Serena Bassi, to organize a roundtable titled *Is Fascism Back?* The support, encouragement, warmth, and intellectual exchange that sustained me in the Department throughout these first six months at Yale really made me feel at home.

Title

by Serena Bassi

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Celebrating Professor Mazzotta

On a beautiful fall morning in early November, colleagues, former students, and friends of Sterling Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta gathered in the Humanities Quad – and then over lunch at the Elm City Club – to share their reflections on Giuseppe's vibrant career and how their own lives have been shaped by his teaching, his mentorship, and his stunning body of work. This is material that has ranged from books on the tre corone, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, to classes focused on Savonarola, Vico, and the Italian diaspora in the twentieth century – and that's only the tip of the iceberg. Giuseppe retired from Yale in June, 2021 and Covid's hold on our lives prevented us from doing anything at the time, but we were delighted to be able to invite fifteen people whose lives were touched by Giuseppe to honor him and his legacy.

Several of the speakers studied with Giuseppe as undergraduates, such as Walter Stephens (B.A., Cornell, 1972) and Wen Bin Gao (B.A., Yale, 2020) – note the almost half a century between their dates of graduation! Many others have had Giuseppe as their graduate mentors and dissertation directors at Yale: Mary Ann Carolyn (1989), Erminia Ardissino (1993), Pina Palma (1994), Virginia Jewiss (1995), Arielle Saiber (1999), Joseph Luzzi (2000), Giuseppe Gazzola (2008), Giulia Cardillo (2015), Eleonora Buonocore (2016), Robert Pence. And Penny Marcus, Carlos Eire, and Luigi Ballerini spoke affectionately of working together with Giuseppe as colleagues at Yale – and as friends. Many other former and current students and colleagues came to New Haven to attend the festivities, and we are grateful for the love and support of so many. The remarks presented during our morning session in the HQ are conserved online on the [departmental website at this link](#). And thanks to the initiative of Giuseppe Gazzola, the written versions of the presentations will appear in a forthcoming volume of the journal *Forum Italicum*. In the meantime, enjoy these photos of our lunch together, and warmest thanks to Kristin Phillips-Court for taking them and making them available for our newsletter!

Giuseppe Mazzotta's Celebration



Affiliated Faculty Updates

GUNDULA KREUZER DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

In 2022, Gundula Kreuzer was elected into the Academia Europaea - The Academy of Europe.

MORGAN NG HISTORY OF ART

I'm completing my first book project, a cross-disciplinary study of early modern military architecture, forthcoming with Yale University Press. Material from this project appeared in a 2022 article ("The Renaissance Superstructure," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*), which discusses elevated secret corridors that functioned like the early modern version of the helicopter. Next year, I'll be working my second book project as a Member of the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton.

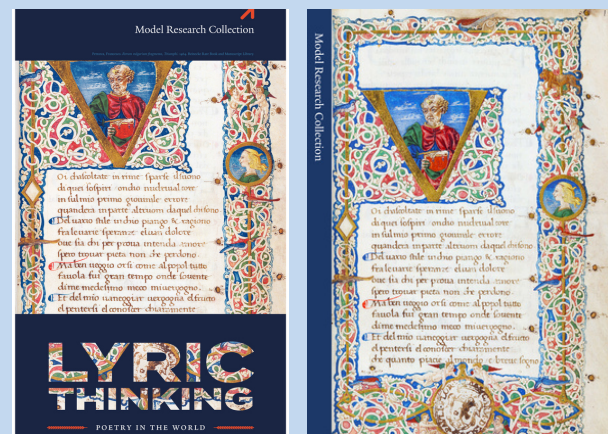
JESSICA PERITZ DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Affiliated faculty member Jessica Gabriel Peritz, assistant professor in the Department of Music, published her first book in November 2022, *The Lyric Myth of Voice: Civilizing Song in Enlightenment Italy* (University of California Press). The monograph shows how a long-forgotten network of late Settecento literary and musical practices reformed the Italian singing voice from a sonic spectacle into an agent of sensibility, interiority, and political subjectivity. In January 2023, the book received the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Award in Italian Literary Studies from the Modern Language Association.

AYESHA RAMACHANDRAN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

I'd love to feature the Lyric Thinking: Poetry in the World model research collection that I curated in Bass Library. There will be an online exhibit that will go live soon, but in the meantime, I attach some images featuring Italian materials. Here is a link to the Yale Library News story:

<https://library.yale.edu/news/model-research-collection-showcases-lyric-poetry-bass-library>



Lyric Thinking: Poetry in the World poster

LUCIA RUBINELLI POLITICAL SCIENCE

I recently published a chapter on Costantino Mortati, an Italian jurist from the 20th century, and a very influential member of the Assemblea Costituente, which wrote the constitution for the Italian Republic shortly after the war. Here is a link to the essay:

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-handbook-on-the-material-constitution/FA8886C066F9757CD1AED7C94C54E68D#fndtn-contents>

A Growing Department!

We are delighted that Amara Lakhous, award-winning novelist of *Scontro di civiltà per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio*, *Divorzio all'islamica a Viale Marconi* and other works in Italian and Arabic, will be joining us this fall as the department's first Professor in the Practice. Amara's appointment will allow us to significantly expand our offerings to undergraduates and graduate students in translation, creative writing, and Mediterranean Studies, while he will also be active in organizing workshops and talks aimed at bringing to New Haven a wide range of creative artists and scholars. We are grateful to Amara for choosing to come to Yale, and to FAS for giving Italian Studies the opportunity to continue expanding its horizons!



Cover of Lakhous' novel

Words from Amara Lakhous:



In 1995, I fled from a civil war in Algeria that targeted and terrorized intellectuals like me. In Italy, I lived for eighteen years, first as a political refugee and then as an immigrant. In 2008, I finally became an Italian citizen. Italy gave me the opportunity to live in peace and achieve my dream of becoming a bilingual writer in Arabic and Italian. The best way to pay this debt is to serve and promote the Italian language and culture everywhere. Yale is the ideal place to accomplish this mission!

Without the extraordinary support and the great enthusiasm of all the members of the Department of Italian Studies, this would not have been possible. I am very happy and thrilled. Thank you!

Pisa Connections

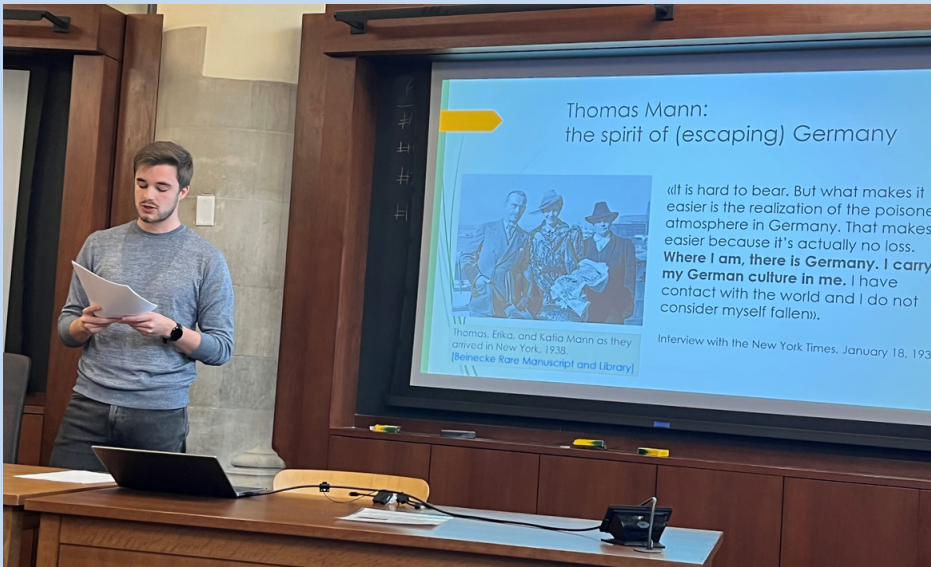
Alumni meeting up in Pisa!

Andrea Moudarres (), Alessandro Polcri (), James Coleman (), and Jane Tylus were all speakers at a three-day conference on Luigi Pulci organized at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa in June. They're taking a break in the Piazza dei Cavalieri in front of the imposing sixteenth-century Palazzo della Carovana where the university is housed.



Exchange with the Scuola Normale

We continued our very successful graduate exchange with Pisa last spring, when Federico Sessolo, a third-year student at the Normale, came to New Haven where he attended Anna Iacovella’s course on pedagogy, taught Italian 120, and continued work on his dissertation on the 20th century writer and professor Giuseppe Antonio Borgese. In early May, he presented a talk on his work to a full house, entitled “*An Inspired Journey. The transnational story of G. A. Borgese and Thomas Mann.*” We wish Federico all the best as he continues his studies and hope that he’ll return to New Haven soon!



Picture of Federico presenting

Note about Carlson's gift

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Graduate Student Updates

WENBIN GAO

In 2022 I co-directed the Yale Dante Reading Group with Simona Lorenzini and Giacomo Berchi. My personal interests have continued to develop around the concept of "the global Renaissance". Much of the summer was spent researching Anglophone Italophilia at the Lewis Walpole library. I have also become more involved with the Sinitic-Catholic subculture in Vietnam, paving my way for the upcoming research trip to Hanoi this spring. I remain deeply committed to broadening the scope of "Renaissance studies", which should focus on the global transmission of classical cultures, including but not limited to the culture of Catholic Europe.

COSTANZA BARCHIESI

This year I'm in Pisa at the Scuola Normale Superiore under the International Dissertation Fellowship. I am very much enjoying my time here and am so grateful for the new inspirational encounters I had at the university and at the delicious dining hall. I am also taking advantage of the material at the library here, the lovely "Capitano." (Photo of the leaning tower and the beautiful statue inspiring me to write on Parthenope, at the library :-)) As I told Jane and Penny more than once, I am also missing the department and my colleagues so much, and I am looking forward to coming back next year.



GIACOMO BERCHI

I am currently working on my dissertation from Lisbon, Portugal, where I am spending this academic year as visiting researcher at CHAM Center for Humanities of Nova University. In my thesis, I focus on Early Modern European literature, following a parable from Dante to Milton. My second chapter is dedicated to Luís de Camões, Portugal's national poet – hence my Lisbon year. This Spring semester, I am also teaching an undergraduate course of Modern and Contemporary Italian Literature at the University of Lisbon, in which I read texts of Giacomo Leopardi and Italo Calvino dedicated to cosmology.

Graduate Student Full Length Pieces

Revisiting Modigliani: Yale Italian Studies and "Modigliani Up Close" at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia

BY NICO BERRETTINI

This past January, I helped organize a trip to the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia on behalf of Yale's Department of Italian Studies and its affiliates. Amidst the chaotic tension—a raucous social climate particular to Philly when its beloved Eagles compete in the NFL playoffs—my colleagues and I experienced a jam-packed but superb exhibit on the Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani. Decentering the unimaginative narratives that tend to spotlight Modigliani's troubles with alcoholism and addiction, "Modigliani Up Close" carefully inspected the materiality and technical aspects that undergird the Livorno-born painter and sculptor's fascinating oeuvre of elongated human bodies and nudes. Memorably, the exhibit—in addition to the 15 pieces on permanent display at the Barnes—showcased 50 external works by the Italian expressionist who primarily operated in France during the first decades of the 20th century. While "Modigliani Up Close" has since ended, I am grateful that the department had the opportunity to appreciate Modigliani's artistry in such an intimate setting. Our gita was a delightful afternoon filled with great art, delicious food, and camaraderie *nella città dell'amore fraterno*.



Amedeo Modigliani. *Young Woman in a Yellow Dress (Renée Modot)* (detail), 1918. Collezione Fondazione Francesco Federico Cerruti per l'Arte, on long-term loan to the Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin

Notes on the Yale Diversity in Italian Studies Working Group

BY FEDERICA PARODI

Last year was quite an eventful one for me. I passed my qualifying exams, wrote my prospectus, and had the opportunity to be part of the wonderful summer program in Siena. One of the achievements I am most proud of is the continuity and success that the Yale Diversity in Italian Studies Working Group has had in the past years. Founded in the Spring of 2021 by Serena Bassi and I, the group's main goal was to foster an ongoing conversation about research and teaching in our field on diversifying and decolonizing the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. In the past years, a debate has arisen among scholars of the modern languages about the urgent need to reconsider what we teach and how, in light of current debates on racism, diversity and knowledge production in American higher education. Faculty and graduate students of our department met to discuss how Italian Studies can become more inclusive and reflective of today's multicultural Italian society, the global Italian diaspora and the diversity of students of Italian at Yale.

The following semester, I started organizing a speaker's series to showcase Italian Studies scholarship that complicates the modern fiction of a homogeneous nation. In the past few years, we have invited a number of scholars who work on different periods and sub disciplines in Italian cultural history and literary studies to present their research, while also reflecting on some core questions about race, sexuality, the nation, multilingualism and the translational circulation of knowledge. Some of them, like Angelica Pesarini and Pier Mattia Tommasino, have focused on question of race and identities, while others, like Emily Wilbourne tackled gender and sexuality; finally, Deborah Parker and Kenise Lyons approached it from a more personal perspective, reflecting on what it means to not be white in the field of Italian Studies.

All of this has been possible thanks to the generous contribution of the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration (RITM), to the support of my colleagues and professors at Yale and at Berkeley. Since Fall 2021, we have in fact joined forces with the Berkeley Italian Migration Studies Working Group and hosted many hybrid events together.

This semester, the speaker's series will feature two leading scholars in Italian Studies: Gian Maria Annovi (USC Dornsife) and Shane Butler (John Hopkins University). Stay tuned!

Notes on becoming social

BY FRANCESCA LEONARDI



At last, the Department of Italian Studies at Yale has its very own Instagram page!

As part of the department's outreach efforts into the greater Yale and New Haven communities, I created – and currently manage – our first Instagram page! It's been a pleasure to watch it gain a substantial following: we have surpassed 200 followers in just four months!

The project is one that I really care about because I believe it is essential to make the work that faculty and students do as visible as possible within and beyond the university via the accessibility afforded by social media. I turned to Instagram because it is a social media platform through which we can carve out space for special dialogue, regardless of how busy life gets or how short our attention span is. I soon realized that, if I wanted people to engage with this kind of content, I would have to meet them where they were. Accordingly, I began to insert this material into their everyday routines. I believe in the importance of our presence on social media. On our Instagram page, I translate scholarly humanities texts into bite-sized summaries available to public audiences.

I look forward to growing the page's following and expanding its content. In the future, my plan is to engage with more general aspects of Italian language and culture. This page will not just promote the department's events, but will aim to become a means through which to provide visibility to other "Italies": conferences, activities, trips, opportunities abroad, and much more. For example, starting next semester I will curate a series titled a series called "Dillo in Italiano." Every week it will present the origins and fun facts about typical idiomatic phrases in English and Italian.

Follow us at [@italian_yale](https://www.instagram.com/italian_yale) to keep up to date with all the news and events organized by our department!

Joining the Siena Program

BY ROBERTO FERRINI

Last summer I took part in the Siena summer program for the first time. It was truly an amazing experience, which is exactly what I was expecting. Nonetheless, I was still surprised by the effect that studying Italian while actually living in Italy had on students. Indeed, living in Siena under the roof of an Italian family allowed them to apply immediately to their everyday life what they were studying in class, which made their learning process extremely stimulating and productive. Even more importantly, living in Italy turned the learning of a foreign language and a foreign culture immediately into a full cultural immersion, so that Italy and Italian culture became both a new world to explore and a new point of reference through which the culture(s) they know from a different perspective. Something specular happened to me: working with them I started looking at Italy, my native country, through the eyes of my students, which was truly an enriching experience. I look forward to working again in the Siena program this summer, and I strongly encourage Yale students to consider applying in future.



Courtesy of italia.it

Upcoming Events!

Check out our events on our website: italian.yale.edu

Feb 20 4PM Il caffè lunedì, HQ 102

Feb 22 5.30PM, Aileen Feng, HQ 276

Feb. 23 5.30PM Shane Butler, HQ 276, Yale Diversity in Italian Studies Working Group

Feb. 27- March 2 prospective grad students visit –

Feb 27th 8PM, Zeneli Pizzeria, Wooster Street

March 7 5.30PM Gian-Maria Annovi, HQ 276, Yale Diversity in Italian Studies Working Group

March 27 4PM Il caffè lunedì, HQ 102

April 5, 5.30 Teresa Fiori, Linguistic Futures, HQ 132

April 14 10AM–3PM, Giornata di Studi su Dante, HQ 136

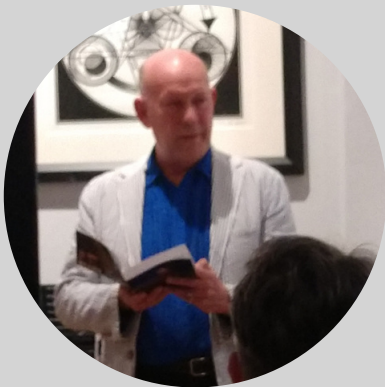
April 18 6:30PM – Alessandro Giammei's book launch *Cose da maschi*, a new book of essays on trans-historical 'dude things'

April 20-23 Annual Film Festival, 53 Wall Street Auditorium

April 24 4PM Il caffè lunedì, HQ 102

April 28 - Undergraduate Research Conference

Alumni News!



L. Zarker Morgan (PhD '83)

I've now been retired for almost three years and am looking forward to being able to start getting out a bit more – Covid has rather cut down on possibilities so far. I attended a Société Rencesvals conference in Lille, France, at the end of July 2022. The Washington DC MLA in January 2022 was via primarily Zoom; let's hope that we can return to some in-person meetings soon. I'm planning on going to the Philadelphia MLA in 2024, so if other Yale alums are going, I hope to see you there! I was pleased to attend a reading by John McLucas, our fellow grad and retiree who lives in the city of Baltimore, on Sept. 26, 2022 (see photo). He was reading from his third novel, *The Boxer's Mask*, that takes place in Rome. He is hard at work on his fourth volume now. I am currently completing an edition of the Franco-Italian Huon d'Auvergne, together with a colleague who is translating it into English. I hope to have more news about that printed publication soon. It is wonderful to have another Yale alum in Italian here in Baltimore- Arielle Saiber at the Johns Hopkins University – and are looking forward to an upcoming Dante Society of America meeting that she and Virginia Jewiss have arranged for April 29. Among the speakers is Ted Cachey of Notre Dame, who attended Yale briefly as well.

Massimo Scalabrini (PhD '98)

My book *Commedia e civiltà: Dinamiche anticonflittuali nella letteratura italiana del Cinquecento* (Ravenna: Longo, 2022) received the 2022 American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI) Book Award in the category of “Literary, Critical Theory, and Cultural Studies.” The AATI Book Award committee stated the following: *Focusing on the 16th century, the author reframes the very issue of Italian literature's propensity towards the comic in terms of anti-conflict and anti-tragic tendencies or tendencies towards mediation and exchange. The study persuasively demonstrates how the positive social/ civic/ courtly attributes of the comedic mode are grounded in ethically and rhetorically oriented sources (Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian), and then borrowed and repurposed by Castiglione, Della Casa, Ariosto, Machiavelli, and others endeavoring to create a modern civiltà. The book is also to be commended for its effective use of modern theory (Benjamin, Agamben, Bakhtin) and its exhaustive inclusion of relevant secondary criticism. Ultimately, the book serves as an important resource for a discussion on Italian (“literary”) “culture” that goes beyond the boundaries of the Cinquecento. This well-researched and eloquently written study succeeds in presenting material that is both enlightening to specialists of the commedia and the Cinquecento as well as accessible to non-specialists.*

Marilyn Migiel (PhD '81)

Marilyn Migiel (Ph.D., Italian Language & Literature, Yale University, 1981), Professor of Romance Studies at Cornell University, has been selected as the Kappa Alpha Professor in Literature at Cornell University, effective July 2022. In 2021, she received the Modern Language Association's Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a manuscript in Italian literary studies for her *Veronica Franco in Dialogue* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022). The prize committee's citation reads, “Marilyn Migiel's *Veronica Franco in Dialogue* is an extended study of the fourteen dialogic poems that Franco published in 1575, in each of which a female voice (Franco's) interacts and contrasts with a male voice (left anonymous). Migiel's powerful close readings and probing literary analyses reveal for the first time Franco's full identity as a poet. While earlier works have presented her as above all an iconic woman and proto-feminist figure, Migiel's work shows how Franco's consistent and subtle use of important model writers in Latin and Italian makes the poet a highly significant Renaissance author figure. Migiel's analysis will have a substantial impact on the canonical interpretation of Franco and on future analyses of early modern women writers.”

Megan Crognale (PhD '20)

Last year, I taught at Wesleyan as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Spring. Starting this past Fall, I have been a Visiting Assistant Professor at Fairfield University. In addition to teaching language, I've been able to develop and teach two topics courses here: “Southern Italian Culture after Unification” and “Italian for Professional Applications.” It has been such a great experience! The students enjoy/tolerate my antics. I've currently revising my third article for the journal Italian Culture. Unless I was catfished, I just won the NeMLA CAITY essay award for best essay developed from a paper presented at last years conference (amongst contingent faculty, adjunct, independent scholars and two-year faculty members).

Mary Ann McDonald Carolan (PhD '89)

I do have a bit of news: in September my new book, *Orienting Italy: China through the Lens of Italian Filmmakers*, was published by SUNY Press. It recently was awarded the 2022 prize for best book in performance and visual culture by the American Association of Teachers of Italian.

Jo Ann Cavallo (PhD '87)

I welcome proposals for contributions to two upcoming volumes: 1) *World Epics in Puppet Theater*, special issue of the academic journal *AOQU: Achilles, Orlando, Quixote, Ulysses* (<https://edblogs.columbia.edu/worldpics/cfp-journal-issue-on-world-epics-in-puppet-theater/>); 2) *Austro-Libertarian Literary and Media Criticism: Essays in Memory of Paul A. Cantor* (<https://mises.org/power-market/call-papers-essays-literary-and-media-criticism-memory-paul-cantor>). My most recent publications are “Six Characters in Search of a Puppeteer: Sicilian Opera *dei pupi*.” *Bodies of Enchantment: Puppets from Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas*, eds. Jill Baird and Nicola Levell (Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 2021), pp. 124-41, and “The Catanese-American Puppeteer Agrippino Manteo (1884-1947) and His Irreplaceable Scripts,” *Puppetry International* 50 (winter 2021): 8-11. My Columbia Humanities War and Peace Initiative project, titled *World Epics in Puppet Theater: Italy, India, Iran, Japan*, continued in May 2022 with screenings of puppet plays based on the Indian *Ramayana*, Japanese *Tale of the Heike*, and Iranian *Shahnameh*, as well as Q&As with the puppeteers and scholars (videos available at <https://edblogs.columbia.edu/worldpics/worldpicsinpuppettheaterindiairanjapanitaly/>).

Nicola (Nick) Camerlenghi (YC '98)

As Associate Professor of Art History at Dartmouth College, I have kept busy this year with several digital humanities projects that are based in Italy, particularly Rome: Many are collected at MappingRome.com. A co-edited book will be published this spring by the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome (Germany's premier Art history institute in the Eternal City), which collects the papers from a conference entitled: Visualizing Complexities: Practices and Heuristics of Digital Models in Art History. Additionally, this summer I should have completed a project funded by the NEH and Mellon Foundation on a Virtual Reality experience of the Basilica of St. Paul in Rome, which, this summer, is commemorating the 200th anniversary of a devastating fire in 1823.

Alumni News! (cont.)

Ken Browne (MA '78)

After some delay (40 + years) since earning an MA in Italian I finally began a career as an Italian teacher in 2022 at West Essex High School in North Caldwell, NJ. The wonderful Italian faculty at Montclair State University guided me in completing the Italian Teaching Certificate program as well as a year of student teaching at Pascack Valley High School in Bergen County. While it is a challenging "career change" from working in video and film production for many years, I am energized by the students, and enjoy being greeted as "Signor Ken." And best of all - parlo italiano tutti giorni!

Massimo Pesaresi (PhD '90)

The only update is about the publication of the anthology of poems on New York City, New York. Rinascimento postmoderno, ed. by Rosa Elisa Giangioia and Franco Zangrilli, Genova, 2022, for which I wrote the 'Presentazione' and contributed one poem. Also, In the literary journal XENIA, a poem of mine (both in English and Italian) was published.

Margie Karathanasis (BA '01)

I'm still living and working in Milan, Italy. I work as a college counselor and IB CAS Coordinator at the American School of Milan, and use my Italian daily with local colleagues, parents of my students, and with local charities doing volunteer/service work with my students. I also use it in my personal life, besides my Italian husband and his family, I have a radio show with a local web-radio project called Freedom Street Radio (www.freedomsr.com) out of Brugherio. The show is called Roadhouse Blues, in which I discuss social issues and art/culture in Italian live every Friday from 6-7pm CET. I also sing with a local women's choir called Coro Enjoy.

Giovanni Miglianti (PhD '22)

I completed my dissertation on "The Paradox of Affect: Exposure and Modesty in Primo Levi's Work" and earned a PhD in Italian Studies in May 2022. Currently, I am Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian at Wesleyan University. My latest article on affect theory and Holocaust literature, "Of Nakedness and Clothing: Primo Levi's Affective Compromise," recently appeared in a special issue of *California Italian Studies* (vol. 11.1). As a teacher, I was especially excited to offer the course "Crises and Emergencies in Contemporary Italy" (Wesleyan, fall 2022), which took inspiration from current biopolitical debates on the relationship between rule of law and state of exception during the Covid-19 pandemic to address representations of social, political, and environmental emergencies. I look forward to returning to the Yale Alumni College in spring 2023, when I will teach an online seminar on transnational approaches to the work of Primo Levi.

Arielle Saiber (PhD '99)

Some news: starting July 1, I will be Professor of Italian Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Also, Virginia Jewiss and I will be hosting the Dante Society of America conference this year at Hopkins in May. The topic of the conference is "Dante's Cosmos."

Nancy Harrowitz (PhD '86)

My news is that I am now the Director, Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, Boston University, and have started a major in Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies.

Erminia Ardissino (PhD '93)

Throughout 2021 I was involved in a number of events to celebrate the 700 th anniversary of Dante's death. In particular, I edited the volumes Tra "Monarchia" e "Commedia": filosofia e poesia della giustizia (Mimesis, 2021) and Dal paradiso di Dante all'inferno ecologico. Sulla poesia di John Kinsella (Mimesis 2022). The proceedings of the Conference hold at the University of Bern: Dante nel Rinascimento europeo. Religione e politica (with Giovanna Cordibella), will come out soon with the Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura (Rome). The catalogue of printed biblical literature in Italian between the beginning of printing and the middle of 17th c. (Repertorio di letteratura biblica in italiano a stampa, ca 1462-1650), with over 4,000 entries, for which I have been working since 2015 in partnership with Elise Boillet, CNRS-FR), is eventually in press with Brepols. I finished also the book on prayer and poetry, which will come out with Carocci (Poesia in forma di preghiera da Francesco d'Assisi ad Alda Merini). And also in print is the collective volume investigating religious writings by women in early modern Italy (Rivelazioni. Scritture di donne e per donne nell'Italia della prima età moderna, with Elisabetta Selmi, Un. Padova, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura). This is an opportunity to thanks Yale, for what I received in the Ph.D programme, and the professors I meet there (prof. Fiorenza Weinapple, Louis Dupré, Thomas Green, Lowry jr Nelson, Paolo Valesio). I especially thanks prof. Giuseppe Mazzotta, whose way of approaching literature has been determinnant for my research. All what I did is a fruit of their teaching.

Dr. Dina (Consolini) Dommett (PhD '93)

Dina is Dean of Faculty and Campus Dean of Ashridge, the executive education campus of Hult International Business School. Hult's undergraduate and postgraduate campuses are in Boston, Dubai, London and San Francisco. Ashridge and Hult are affiliated with EF (Education First), the pioneering global language and culture company founded by Swedish entrepreneur Bertil Hult, our benefactor. Dina held prior roles at Oxford University Saïd Business School, London Business School, the London School of Economics & Political Science, Duke Corporate Education, Columbia Business School and New York University Stern Business School, Connecticut College, Marconi plc and the Museum of Television & Radio (now called the Paley Center for Media) in Manhattan, New York City. She earned a PhD in Italian from Yale, a Fulbright fellowship to Rome and a BA in Italian and German from Boston College. She serves as Career Governor for Dr Challoner's High School, a top grammar school for girls in Buckinghamshire, and on the Executive Education Committee of the Chartered Association of Business Schools in the UK. She lives in England with her husband, Mike Dommett, Chief Executive of the British Motorcycle Racing Club (www.bemsee.net), and their two Abyssinian cats!



Christopher Kaiser (PhD '13)

Christopher Kaiser returned to the department for the Annual Homecoming Lecture to share his insights on opportunities for Ph.D. students after graduation. His talk, titled "After Yale: Pathways, Careers, Connections," explored the career trajectories of the 30 most recent Ph.D. graduates from the department, including his own path from Yale to an administrative position at the Columbia University Language Resource Center. He also spoke about migration in contemporary Italy with Professor Millicent Marcus's undergraduate course, *Spotlight on Sicily in Literature and Film*.