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Reflections from the Chair



I am thrilled to dedicate this column to a momentous development in the life of our department: the appointment of Jane Tylus to the senior Renaissance position, starting July 1, 2018.

Professor Tylus comes to us after serving on the faculties at the University of Wisconsin and NYU, punctuated by a visiting position at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. She has compiled a prodigious record of scholarly achievement, spanning topics in late medieval and Renaissance literature, and within these periods, including concentrations in genre—lyric, epic, autobiography, pastoral, romance, and national literatures—French, Spanish, English, with a special

focus on Italian. Her research has appeared in all manner of academic publications (monographs, book chapters, articles, edited collections, textbook contributions and critical translations), and has been the subject of numerous public lectures presented in prestigious venues, both at home and abroad. This active scholarly agenda has not stood in the way of a distinguished administrative career, including her service as Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and as founding director of the Humanities Initiative, at NYU.

But this dry listing of C.V. items cannot begin to explain our euphoria over Professor Tylus's appointment. We had already gotten a foretaste of her collegiality and her teaching excellence during the academic year 2015-16, when she generously filled in at the last moment for a colleague who was away on medical leave. What we sensed then, and have come to fully understand as a result of the vetting process, is the “transformative energy” (as one of our students noted) that she has brought to the field of Renaissance Studies, and that she will bring to our program at Yale.

Among the most striking qualities that emerge from her work are her power to reframe our thinking about Italian literary history (adding a fourth “Corona”—Catherina of Siena—to the founding triumvirate of the Italian literary vernacular), her ability to enter into the creative process of writers and artists and engage us in the excitement of their achievements, her ingenuity in conjuring up the cultural environments which shaped these writers and were in turn shaped by them, her focus on the ethical dimensions of literature, art, and the workings of the imagination, her reconfiguring of Renaissance studies within a concept of global literature, her attention to urban histories with a focus on material as well as cultural influences, her expertise in the theory and practice of translation, her elevation, through critically acclaimed work on Catherine, Gaspara Stampa, and Lucrezia Tornabuoni, of women's place in the canon, and her genuine collaborative spirit, as expressed in the numerous collective projects in which she has taken part.

In short, it is we who will be the direct beneficiaries of the “transformative energy” that Professor Tylus has brought to all of the scholarly and institutional communities fortunate enough to include her in their ranks. For all this, we welcome her *a braccia aperte*, and look forward to her friendship and her energizing presence for years to come.

- Millicent Marcus

From the DGS

It has been a great pleasure to welcome Mario Lorenzo into our program. Mario comes to us from Boston College, where he completed his MA with a focus on the study of Galileo.

Three students received their doctorates last year: **Karen Raizen**, Ph.D. 2017 (whose dissertation, "Arcadian Madness: The Language of Orlando in Eighteenth-Century Opera," won of the Elizabethan Club Dissertation Prize), **Kyle Skinner**, Ph.D. 2017 (dissertation entitled "Law, Pardon, Oath: Sacramental Language and Political Life in *I Promessi Sposi*"), **Patrick Waldron**, Ph.D. December 2016 (dissertation entitled "Al Dolor Fenestra: Voice and Complicity in Dante's Inferno")

I am delighted to announce the following job placement news: **Eleonora Buonocore**, Ph.D. 2016 (Lecturer at the University of Calgary), **Giulia Cardillo**, Ph.D. 2015 (Assistant Professor, James Madison University), **Siobhan Quinlan**, Ph.D. 2014 (Program Manager at Yale University Principal Gifts), **Karen Raizen**, Ph.D. 2017 (Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian, Bard College), **Patrick Waldron**, Ph.D. 2016, teaching English Literature, Charter School, Chicago.

Finally, we have established a new lecture series entitled "First Draft," which offers our students the chance to present their work before a departmental audience. "First Draft" is designed to serve as a dress rehearsal for conference papers, invited lectures, or presentations of dissertation research. **Luca Peretti** inaugurated the series on April 17, 2017 with a talk entitled "Industrial Cinema and Italian Culture: The Case of Eni." Followed by **Giovanni Miglianti's** presentation on "Exhibitionism and Modesty in Primo Levi's Works." **Anna Marra** will be initiating the 2018 season of "First Draft" with a presentation on the theme of meditation in the *Commedia*.

- Millicent Marcus

From the DUS

In my capacity as DUS, I am glad to report on an exciting start of the academic year for our department's program of undergraduate studies. This fall, enrolment in our language program showed good numbers and a record turnout at our Annual Fall Feast. Many of our summer students continued their Italian studies proving the importance of the Siena Summer Program for our overall enrollment.

I am also pleased to report about the continuity of the collaboration between our department and *Lo stivale*, the undergraduate Italian Club, under the direction of our majors Amanda Corcoran and Caroline Amos, and our former student Camilla Franco. The club has organized visits to the YUAG, a bocce tournament, screenings of Italian film and, more recently, an Italian cooking class at the newly opened Benjamin Franklin College. Working in three different groups, students prepared bruschetta, penne al Pomodoro and cannoli dip under the supervision of Italian instructors. The preparation culminated in a great moment of conviviality and togetherness as in the best tradition of our Department! I am looking forward to seeing other exciting events that brings together students and faculty members.

Finally, I wish to congratulate our major Amanda Corcoran who will graduate with a major in Italian (2018). I was privileged to oversee her senior thesis "Lo stato attuale dell'immigrazione femminile in Italia: l'accesso ai servizi sanitari" that she submitted in December. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors and we are proud to have had her as our major in Italian!

- Simona Lorenzini

From the Language Program Director

During this year the Italian Department Language Program undertook a variation in adopting new textbooks which offer students the opportunity to explore supplementary materials online including short films and speaking practice through self-recording activities. As the LPD, I have been involved with re-evaluating the online placement test to accommodate students' best fit within the Italian Department language courses. Additionally, for this next year I am planning to revise the already successful online placement test by implementing its accuracy with the support of a grant for graduate student instructors' collaboration.

By the creative initiative of graduate teaching instructors, the *Italian Conversation Tables*, as an expanding language exercise, have been mixed and multifarious with the insertion of film screening night events, poetry readings, and opera performance showings.

In order to strengthen the language courses in the Italian Department, all instructors have been empowered to propose projects, creative lesson plans, and reading materials for all course levels. In sustenance of teaching practices, the Italian Department lectors have offered their encouragement by sharing useful exercises among themselves as well as among graduate student instructors. All language course instructors have regularly supported students' cultural clubs and the Italian Department events such as *Fall Feast* and *Cena Italiana*.

The *Siena Summer Programs*, in its eleventh year, has gathered numerous motivated students to reinforce their cultural awareness together with the full immersion language learning experience. During summer 2017 students explored new sites for cultural expansion purposes. The courses will be even more culturally immersed during 2018 since students will be in Siena for the 2 month program, instead of spending the first 3 weeks at Yale as has been the previous policy.

- Anna Iacovella

Dante Working Group

The Dante Working Group had an exciting, engaging and productive year. We were able to organize a number of diverse events that drew in a vast audience of scholars and students from many different disciplines. In addition, we held informal lunch meetings featuring professors and scholars from other universities. Finally, we collaborated with the course “Dante’s Journey to God” in organizing a joint visit to the Beinecke Library.

This year’s speakers reflected the breadth of interests of our group. We began our spring semester on February 8th with our first organized guided visit to the Beinecke library. Griffin Oleynick, Ph.D. 2014, was our guide in viewing and discussing the Beinecke’s vast holdings of important manuscript and early print editions of Dante’s *Commedia*. In addition to a beautifully illuminated 14th-century exemplar, we viewed several *incunabula* editions of the *Commedia*, all produced during the decades following Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press in the mid-15th century. We examined the famous 1502 edition of Aldo Manuzio – the first portable edition of Dante’s poem ever produced.

We ended the semester in April with an inspiring talk by Maria Luisa Ardizzone, professor of Italian Literature at New York University. She presented her recent book “Reading as the Angels Read. Speculation and Politics in Dante’s *Convivio*” with a talk titled “Dante’s Tormented Writing of *Convivio*: The Ethics of Doubt and the Making of a New Intellectual”. This very well attended event drew a number of scholars from different departments for a lively and noteworthy encounter.

We began our fall semester with a talk by Professor Gur Zak, Senior Lecturer and Chair of the Department of Comparative Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who spoke about “Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and its scholars”. The talk was followed by a lively debate and a vigorous question and answer session about the presentation of his inspiring ideas.

Finally, we ended our semester on November 16th with a talk by Giulia Cardillo, who earned her Ph.D. in Italian language at Yale University and who is currently Assistant Professor of Italian at James Madison University. She gave a talk titled “*Invidia* and *Antivedere*: Envy and Prophecy in *Purgatorio* XIII and XIV” that was attended by a large number of Yale students and was followed by a robust and interactive debate about the role of prophecy in Dante’s entire *Commedia*.

We thank the Whitney Humanities Center for its continuous and unwavering support of our activities.

Mazzotta Day in Rome

The Università degli Studi di Torino, ISI Florence International Studies Institute, Gonzaga University (Florence), Kent State University (Florence), Temple University (Rome), and Yale University are co-sponsoring a day honoring the scholarship of Giuseppe Mazzotta. The Mazzotta Day will take place on June 18, 2018, at Temple University (Rome) located at Lungotevere Arnaldo de Bescia 15, Roma, Italy.

The schedule for the day will be as follows:

10.30: Stefano U. Baldassarri (ISI Florence), Hilary Link (Temple University): Discorso di benvenuto

10.45: Piero Boitani: Mazzotta e Dante.

11.15: Dibattito.

11.30: Luca Marcozzi: Mazzotta e Petrarca.

12.00: Dibattito.

12.15: Susanna Barsella: Mazzotta e Boccaccio.

12.45: Dibattito.

13.00: Pausa pranzo.

14.30: Fabrizio Ricciardelli: Mazzotta e il Rinascimento.

15.00: Dibattito.

15.15: Salvatore Nigro: Mazzotta e il Barocco.

15.45: Dibattito.

16.00: Andrea Battistini: Mazzotta e Vico.

16.30: Dibattito.

16.45: Giuseppe Mazzotta: Discorso conclusivo

17.00: Rinfresco di chiusura.

Please RSVP at npeci@isiflorence.org.



Italian Cinema for the New Millennium

Last April, the Italian department at Yale presented the 12th Annual Yale Festival of New Italian Cinema, a weekend of film screenings celebrating the finest in contemporary Italian cinema. The festival featured five films, all of them released in Italy over the course of 2016, offering a wide range of genres and styles for the enjoyment of the Yale and greater New Haven communities.

On the screen opening night was *Fuocoammare*, a film that mixes documentary style with a coming of age story as it follows the lives of the people from Lampedusa and the migrants who land there. The island, just 70 miles from the coast of Tunisia, has very much become a hot point of media attention as Europe tries to grapple with the increased flow of migrants from Africa and the Middle East. Director Gianfranco Rosi investigates to what extent the Lampedusan world and the migrant world collide and how, paradoxically for such a tiny island, they sometimes remain so far apart.

Piuma, the self-titled “lightest film of the year,” is the story of a young couple and their unexpected pregnancy. While deciding whether or not to keep the child, they must deal with their two dysfunctional families and navigate a quickly vanishing adolescence. The film is both laugh-out-loud funny and deeply moving, supplementing realism from the suburbs of Rome with an impressionistic flair.

One of a number of recent films to deal with incarceration in Italy, *Fiore* follows a young girl, Daphne, through her experience in a juvenile prison. Daphne falls in love with an inmate from the male ward named Josh, and at the same time she reconnects with her father, himself just out of prison. The story is both deeply personal and socially conscious, and features stunning performances from the non-professional Daphne Scoccia (playing Daphne) and the award-winning Valerio Mastrandrea (playing Daphne’s father).

The first of two Sunday matinees, *La Stoffa dei Sogni* is a tragic-comedy with layers of literary homage and meta-fiction. When a ship carrying a theater troupe and a band of *Mafiosi* wrecks on an exotic Mediterranean island, the presiding governor must sort out who is who. He decides to engage them in a performance of Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, making for a poignant (and comic) meditation on art, crime, and punishment.

Rounding off the festival was *Veloce come il Vento*, the story of Giulia, a young girl destined to become the next big thing in GT racing. With a professional squad of automotive stuntmen and the high-speed cars to boot, the film features classic racing tracks like Imola and Monza alongside more unconventional settings (a race through the ancient city of Matera for example). But this is more than just a heart-pounding action movie; it is about the Italian family and the promise of redemption.

As happens every year, a distinguished guest is invited to comment on the films. Last year saw the Consul General of Italy in New York Francesco Genuardi speak on the current state of Italian cinema and its success in the States.

The festival was the result of a yearlong project of screening and researching movies, a process that begins during Yale’s Summer Session in Italy. Special thanks goes to the students, faculty, and administrators of the Italian department and the technical experts who make the festival possible.

This year’s festival will be held from April 19-22 and the search for the newest and brightest in Italian cinema is well underway. Look for our posters around town!

- Kyle Mancuso

SAVE THE DATE

April 19-22, 2018

13th Annual Italian Film Festival

[See the poster here](#)

Pif



In the beginning of November 2017 the Italian Department welcomed the visit of Pierfrancesco Diliberto, nicknamed Pif, one of the most successful media celebrities to emerge in Italy in recent years. Pif is a versatile showman who became famous with his “candid camera” style gags for the Italian TV show *Le Iene*, and then gained an increasing fame - especially among young people - with his own show, *Il Testimone*, for the Italian MTV. In *Il Testimone* (Italian for “the witness”) he sharpened his style: amateur-like reportages from all over the world filmed with a hand-held camera. Pif has developed a very subjective approach, a way of telling stories that is both light and serious. He brought this same style to his feature-length films, the first of which, *La mafia uccide solo d'estate* (*Mafia Only Kills in the Summer*) was screened at Yale in 2015 as part of the 10th Annual Yale Festival of New Italian Cinema. The screening of his second film, *In guerra per amore* (*In War for Love*), was the climax of Pif’s visit in November: the young director/actor introduced the film and delighted the audience with a fun and informed Q/A. The film recounts the journey of an Italian American soldier during World War II, from Brooklyn to Sicily. The post-screening discussion lasted over an hour: Pif entertained a full-house theater, filled with members of the Yale and the New Haven communities alike, many of whom, especially Italians, kept talking with Pif long after the end of the screening and Q/A.

Pif remained in town for three days, interacting with students and faculty members of the Department of Italian, effectively becoming part of it for the time of his stay. But while at Yale he also carried on his work-activities, including hosting a show for the Italian public radio directly from campus. Pif’s visit to the United States was sponsored by James Madison University, University of Virginia, and Films at the Whitney here at Yale.

First Draft, Graduate Students’ Series

Our graduate students will present the following first drafts of papers in the Romance Language Lounge, at 5:30pm:

April 17, 2017: Luca Peretti’s “Industrial cinema and Italian culture: the case of ENI”

In the 1950s and 1960s the Italian oil state-owned company ENI made several short films, mostly in the south of Italy and in the Middle East. Like many companies of the time, ENI used cinema to promote its work, but also to educate and instruct its employees. Usually overlooked in the studies of Italian cinema, industrial and sponsored films reveal important aspects of the cultural and geopolitical situation of the time and they help trace and unearth parallel histories of cinema.

October 16, 2017: Giovanni Miglianti’s “Pudore in Primo Levi’s Works”

On October 16th, Giovanni Miglianti presented a paper entitled *On Exhibitionism and Modesty in Primo Levi’s Works* in preparation for a talk he delivered at Johns Hopkins University on October 20th. The presentation, based on Giovanni’s ongoing research on the notion of *pudore* in Italian Holocaust literature, was followed by a lively conversation with the audience, with several colleagues and professors providing generous feedback on the paper.

March 5, 2018: Anna Marra’s “Boccaccio’s Notes on Meditation”

On Sunday, October 23rd, 1473 Boccaccio gave his first public reading of the Divine Comedy in the church of Santo Stefano di Badia. Boccaccio’s notes for the lessons written in the solitude of Certaldo, were collected under the title *Esposizioni Sopra la Commedia*. In this work, Boccaccio expounds the literal and allegorical meanings of each canto of the Inferno. Among these notes, there are some truly interesting considerations on meditation, its meaning and its role in writing and reading.

Those Who from Afar Look Like Flies Conference

On November 10th and 11th of 2017, the Italian department held a two-day symposium on contemporary Italian poetry, poetics, and translation titled: *Those Who from Afar Look Like Flies*.

The impetus for this event however dates back to the spring semester of 2016, when the Italian Department had the honor of having poet, translator, and historian, Professor Luigi Ballerini, teach a class on contemporary Italian poetry from Pasolini until today.

During this seminar, students were presented with a unique opportunity: instead of writing an end-of-semester final paper, Professor Ballerini offered the alternate possibility of translating contemporary Italian poetry into English and to experience the toilsome yet rewarding craft of editorial work, from writing critical essays and biographical notes to proof-reading and fact checking.

This translation project involved no less than six members of our department: Sarah Atkinson, Eleonora Buonocore, Sandro-Angelo de Thomasis, Simona Lorenzini, Giovanni Miglianti, and Julia Pucci, and extended itself well beyond the confines of the classroom.

Furthermore, it provided English readers access to previously untranslated texts since selected translations have found their way into publications such as the *Journal of Italian Translation* and, eventually, in the second tome of a bilingual anthology of contemporary Italian poetry titled: *Those Who from Afar Look Like Flies* (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

In order to showcase the work done by the students from our department, Professor Ballerini and our Senior Administrative Assistant, Ann DeLauro, suggested hosting a symposium here at Yale. This wonderful initiative was carried out by Simona Lorenzini, Giovanni Miglianti, and Sandro-Angelo de Thomasis – with the obvious and indispensable assistance of Ann.

The two-day symposium was held jointly at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and at the Whitney Humanities Center the following day. The first day of the symposium featured our very own Professor Marcus, who kicked off the event with her delightful opening remarks and introduction of artist, poet, and translator, Professor Jennifer Scappettone (University of Chicago) as keynote speaker. This was followed by a reception where items of the literary archive of the Beinecke, selected by our very own Anna Marra, were showcased exclusively for the people attending the event.

The following day, our Language Program Director, Anna Iacovella, introduced Professors Ballerini and Giuseppe Cavatorta (University of Arizona), co-editors of the aforementioned anthology. They set the pace of the proceedings by providing opening remarks to two panels dedicated to Italian contemporary poetry. The first panel featured Giovanni Miglianti's work on the poet Gabriele Frasca and "neo-metricismo," as well as Simona Lorenzini and Sandro-Angelo de Thomasis's work on the poetry of Alessandro Broggi and Lorenzo Durante respectively. The second panel, chaired by Yale University's very own Cynthia Zarin (English Department), featured scholars Gianluca Rizzo (Colby College) and Federica Santini (Kennesaw State University). The closing remarks, by Professor Giuseppe Mazzotta, were a heartfelt appeal to divulging poetry beyond the confines of academia.

The symposium, despite the niche character of the event, was a success. The quality of the papers presented and of the audience truly showcased the talent and promise of our department.

- Sandro-Angelo de Thomasis



Memory Studies in Europe Working Group

Life-Writing and War in Twentieth-Century Europe

A Workshop Sponsored by the Memory Studies in Modern Europe Working Group

Yale University, 21 April 2017
WLH 112 (100 Wall Street), 3-6pm

- **PANEL 1: 3:00-4:30pm**
 - Victoria Baena (Yale, Comparative Literature)
Representing the "latest catastrophe": The Case of Vercors' "Le silence de la mer"
 - Benedetta Carnaghi (Cornell, History)
From "Heroes" to "Traitors": Challenges of a Comparative History of Spies in the Second World War
 - Giulia Sbaffi (NYU, Italian Studies)
Civitella Val di Chiana and the Ardeatine Massacre: Retracing the Memory through History
- **BREAK: 4:30-5:00pm**
- **PANEL 2: 5:00-6:00pm**
 - Harry Merritt (Brown, History)
"As I Went off to War": Uncovering Latvian World War II Soldiers' Motivations and Identities in their Memoirs and Novels
 - Anna Duensing (Yale, History and African American Studies)
"To Humiliate Old Men": Mythification, Racial Politics, and the "Liberators" Controversy

Refreshments will be served, courtesy of the Whitney Humanities Center

Founded in 2015 by a group of graduate students from several humanities departments, the Memory Studies in Modern Europe working group (MeME) – sponsored since 2016 by the Whitney Humanities Center – is now in its third year of activity. The group gathers graduate students and professors on a monthly basis, promoting events that range from paper presentations to film screenings, from reading discussions to workshops on research in progress. First and foremost, the group aims at serving as a venue for open discussion, providing opportunities to connect with fellow scholars at various stages of research in an informal setting.

While the scope and composition of the group are interdisciplinary, in the past year at least three meetings touched upon Italian-related subjects and benefited from the active participation of colleagues from the Department of Italian Language and Literature. In April, we hosted a workshop on *Life-Writing and War in Twentieth-Century Europe* with speakers from Brown, Cornell, NYU, and Yale. Topics included a comparative study of Italian and French spies in World War II as well as an oral history approach to the memory of Nazi massacres in Italy. In the fall, Manuela Consonni from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem joined us for a lunch discussion about her book *L'eclisse dell'antifascismo. Resistenza, questione ebraica e cultura politica in Italia dal 1943 al 1989* (Bari, 2015), co-sponsored by the Department of Italian. Last but not least, Millicent Marcus provided a grand finale to

the group's activities for 2017 with a talk on comedy and commemoration in the Italian anti-mafia martyr film genre.

For 2018, our biggest effort is an international graduate student conference on *Resistance and Collaboration in Occupied Europe*, scheduled to take place on April 2 at the Whitney Humanities Center (53 Wall Street), in Room 208 from 9:00 am. The keynote speakers will be Marci Shore and Timothy Snyder, from the Department of History. We were thrilled to receive a record of seventy applications for only nine available slots, and we look forward to a full day of learning and exchange on themes of memory across all regions of Europe thanks to the promising speakers joining us from European and North American universities. The conference is generously sponsored by the Dean's Fund for Research Workshops, Seminars and Colloquia, the Departments of English, French, German, History, the History of Art, and Italian, the European Studies Council at the MacMillan Center, the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, the Judaic Studies Program, the Yale Divinity School, the Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism, and the Whitney Humanities Center, and it can rely for its organization on the invaluable administrative support of Ann DeLauro, to whom we are truly grateful.

Another event scheduled for April of this year is a workshop on *Representations of Resistance and the Shoah in Post-War Italy*, co-sponsored by the Jewish Studies Program at Johns Hopkins University (April 18 at 12:30 in the Romance Languages Lounge, 82 Wall Street). Even beyond the academic merits of each event, a key trait of the group's activities lies in the spirit of collaboration that emerges also from this brief report: a constructive cooperation among scholars and between institutions, within and outside the borders of our campus. We plan on continuing down this path for the years to come, and we look forward to welcoming interested participants at all our future events.

- Giovanni Miglianti



From Campo to Campus

The 2017 edition marked the eleventh-year anniversary of the Yale Italian Summer Program in Siena and it was, as always, a memorable summer for all involved, students (42) and instructors.

That summer, the Department of Italian Language and Literature offered three language classes, one in Elementary and two in Intermediate Italian, and a 1-credit culture class paired with the Intermediate language course. Professor Millicent Marcus taught her course on “History, Culture, and Film in Tuscany” during which the students engaged deeply with ideas about and representations of Tuscany through films and literary texts.

As the Program Director, I was glad to work with wonderful colleagues. In addition to Professor Marcus, I taught with the Language Program Director Anna Iacovella, Giulia Cardillo (Ph.D.’15), Eleonora Buonocore (Ph.D.’16), Megan Crognale and Sandro-Angelo De Thomas. Luca Peretti assisted Professor Marcus helping her students to get the most out of their study of Tuscan culture.

After three intense weeks at Yale, instructors and students left New Haven with a baggage of great expectations but also trepidation. However, as in the past, the program was an unforgettable experience for everyone. Fully immersed in the small and safe reality of Siena, the students took advantage of close and friendly relationships with the hosting families, and the inhabitants and the social life of Siena. During a five-week period, 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; the Contrada of the Giraffa won this spectacular race. In the days leading to the Palio, our students were fortunate to visit the museum of the Pantera and to attend the Contrada’s cenino. We are delighted to offer these first-hand insights of a real Contrada’s life to our students thanks to the generosity and hospitality of our local coordinator Idelma Giannini and her husband Paolo.

As in the previous years, we took several trips as a group, including visits to San Gimignano, Florence, Pisa, and a weekend in Rome. In addition to these trips, Prof. Marcus’s class visited the charming town of Lucca with the dedicated guide of Luca, while the Elementary Italian class spent a day at the crescent-shaped seashore of Golfo di Baratti. For the first time, we had also the great opportunity to visit the Bottini, Siena’s underground network of aqueducts that supplies water to fountains and wells. It was a unique experience walking along these passageways and learning about the story of this labyrinth of over 25 kilometers.

Over the past summers, hundreds of 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 outstanding and generous hosting families and in a great variety of events and activities. As every year, a pleasant moment of conviviality, friendships and greeting celebrated the end of this intense and exciting program and thanked the hosting families and whoever contributed to this wonderful experience. That summer, our farewell dinner had a guest of honor, Kelly McLaughlin – Director of Study Abroad – who visited our Program for a few days, meeting with students and instructors.

Applications have now opened for the 12th Siena Summer Program. The 2018 summer will mark a terrific novelty for our Program that, for the first time, will be entirely held in Italy. We are all excited to spend 8 weeks in Siena and we are looking forward to sharing the Senese and Italian cultural with a new amazing group of students. Arrivederci a Siena!

- Simona Lorenzini

Faculty Notes

Millicent Marcus, Professor, Chair.

During the academic year 2017, I dedicated most of my energies to departmental leadership, serving as Chair, and also as DGS and DUS in the Spring, and DGS in the Fall. At the same time, we devoted a great deal of attention to the search for a senior Renaissance scholar, which reached its splendid denouement in December.

On the scholarly front, two articles appeared in print: “Unnatural Child Birth: Naples, the Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit, and the Blank Space of Possibility in Francesca Comencini’s *Lo spazio bianco*,” in *Italian Motherhood on Screen*, eds. Giovanna Faleschini Lerner and M. Elena Damelio (Palgrave MacMillan), pp. 195-209, and “The Resistance on Screen: Modes of Remembrance,” in *The Concept of Resistance in Italy: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, eds. Maria Laura Mosco and Pietro Pirani (Rowman & Littlefield), pp. 27-42. Shorter writings that came out last year include “*Sprovincializzarci* and not just *un po’*” in *La galassia Casetti: Lettere di amicizia, stima, provocazione*, eds. Ruggero Eugeni and Mariagrazia Fanchi (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2017), pp. 162-164, and entries in “Forum” in *A Companion to Italian Cinema*, ed. Frank Burke (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), pp. 555-57, 564.

I delivered a paper on “From the Mirror of Narcissus to Mirror Neurons: New Reflections on the Neuro-aesthetics of Italian Film,” at the annual conference of the American Association of Italian Studies, The Ohio State University, April 22, and lectured on “From Comedy to Commemoration: Pier Francesco Diliberto’s *The Mafia Only Kills in the Summer*,” for the Yale Memory Studies in Modern Europe Working Group on December 7. My most thrilling invitation to lecture came from University of Tel Aviv, where I presented on “Italian Cinema and Holocaust Memory: Focus on the Ghetto of Rome,” December 21.

Pedagogically, my Spring graduate course in “Representations of the Holocaust in Italian Literature and Film” was the source of considerable personal discovery and pleasure (if this last term may be applied to a subject matter of such solemnity). The Spring semester offered me the chance to serve as Yale Study Leader on an Alumni Association cruise to Malta and Sicily from April 28-May 7. A great perk after an intense semester.

In terms of major research, I am continuing my on-going project—a book on contemporary Italian cinema—to stand as the culmination of my career-long series of monographs in the field. This semester I’m on leave, enjoying the breathing space to dive back into this multi-year study.

Giuseppe Mazzotta, Sterling Professor in the Humanities for Italian.

I am proud to begin this brief account of my activities in 2017 by mentioning most of the past year was spent by me in the writing or re-writing the last volume of my Dante trilogy, *At the Frontiers of Thought*.

I wish my task now were to try to guide my gentle readers through the maze of my manuscript. In truth, I do not feel yet that I have finally reached that special observational plateau from where I can look back and describe the work as a whole as if it were a landscape, with its boundaries, its peaks and paths. The sort of general sketch by which only you could get to the heart of the matter. The very mentioning of this ideal possibility reawakens in me the need to keep working through the jumbled pages of the manuscript till I can realign some of my arguments, reconstitute and set limits to my scope.

As I reflect on this fairly familiar interiorized sense of crisis in my work I cannot but recall the distinct, less personal, external crisis which emerged during the last year: the mood of professional depression enveloping the Humanities, and above all, the departments of modern languages.

We all hear bleak accounts of language departments closing or on the verge of being shut down, and these reports are all written in an unmistakable tone of anguish, as if our colleagues were walking on a narrow path along a precipice of ruins and lost ideals, haunting the heart of the traditional structure of the Humanities and its legacy of the liberal education (such as the values of historical experience, the sense of self, the cultivation of memory as the avenue to new thinking etc.).

I do not share this sort of pathos, this sense of defeat, which looks like a generalized fatalism in viewing the future of the humanities. In fact, the possibility of such a crisis makes me open my eyes and see or look for a likely solution. Let us suppose that indeed, as seems to be the case, most universities will do away with whole language departments. If this is to happen, it is inevitable that we should look for alternate routes to remake the map of education. How and where would they come back to life? One can think of those universities which, at the very heart of the Middle Ages, in places such as Bologna, Paris, Oxford etc., organized and put into first place the fundamental importance of the Trivium and the Quadrivium. Those structures shaped the thinking of the founders of Modernity or what we call the Renaissance, such as the Cusan, Alberti, Copernicus, Galileo, Machiavelli, Bacon, Bruno, Descartes, Vico and so forth. *Intelligenti pauca*.

Alumni News

Erminia Ardissino (Ph.D. '93) (Università di Torino)

"The census of printed Biblical literature in Italian (1463-1650), on which I concentrated my energies in 2014-5 working at the Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance (Tours, FR) with a Fellowship of the Institut for Advanced Studies Loire Valley, is now in print (Brepols). We found (the research was done with Elise Boillet) more than 3500 issues, that will be a source for further studies on the spread of Biblical knowledge among Italians in the early modern period. I also published the critical edition of the two poems by Lucrezia Tornabuoni de' Medici still in manuscript, *Istoria di Ester* and *Vita di Tubia* (Lugano, Agorà, 2015) and a volume on Dantean anthropology, *L'umana Commedia di Dante* (Ravenna, Longo, 2016). My research is now directed on women interpretations of the Bible in Renaissance Italy and on prayer as literary genre, a topic already explored with essays on Vittoria Colonna, on Italian *Pater nosters* in the 16th c., and on Giorgio Caproni. And finally, the greatest news!!! We founded a Yale Club in Milan! We are a group of twenty (circa) alumni very eager to meet and to give to Italian society what we learned at our *alma mater studiorum!*"

Raymond Carlson (B.A. '11)

"This year I received the Anthony M. Clark Pre-Doctoral Rome Prize of the American Academy in Rome. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University, and my dissertation is titled: 'Michelangelo between Florence and Rome: Art and Literary Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy.'"

Mary Ann Carolan (Ph.D. '89)

"In spring 2019, I will hold the Tiro a Segno Fellowship in Italian American Studies at New York University where I will teach an undergraduate and graduate seminar as well as deliver public lectures under auspices of the Tiro a Segno Foundation."

Jo Ann Cavallo (Ph.D. '87)

Professor and current Chair of the Department of Italian, Columbia University, published the essays "National Political Ideologies and Local *Maggio* Traditions of the Reggio Emilia Apennines: *Roncisvalle* vs. *Rodomonte*" in *Conquistare la montagna: la storia di un'idea. Conquering Mountains: The History of an Idea*, eds. Carlo Baja Guarienti and Matteo Al Kalak (Milan: Mondadori, 2016, 121-134), and "Contracts, Surveillance, and Censure of State Power in Arienti's Triunfo da Camarino novella (*Le porretane* 1.1)" in a volume she co-edited entitled *Speaking Truth to Power from Medieval to Modern Italy* (*Annali d'italianistica* 34 [2016]: 141-162). Her 2013 book *The World beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto* came out in Italian translation as *Il mondo oltre l'Europa nei poemi di Boiardo e Ariosto* (Mondadori, 2017), and she launched the website eBOIARDO (Epics of Boiardo and Other Italian Authors: A Resource Database On-line) at <http://edblogs.columbia.edu/eboiardo>. She also returned to Venice to teach "Nobility and Civility: East and West" in the Columbia Summer Program at Ca' Foscari 2017 and continues to serve as area editor for Italian Literature at *The Literary Encyclopedia* (<http://www.LitEncyc.com>).

Carol Chiodo (Ph.D. '14)

"I am currently a lecturer in the Department of French and Italian at Princeton University. My post-doctoral project with the Digital Humanities Lab at Yale, entitled Dante at Hand, will be officially launched in early 2018. This summer, I will return to the European Summer University at the University of Leipzig to teach once again the hands-on workshop, "Data in the Humanities - Creation, Discovery and Analysis."

Zeke Farrow, (B.A. '96)

"'Before the Sun Explodes,' a feature film I co-wrote and produced, premiered at South by Southwest Film Festival in 2016. It played a bunch of festivals and I won Best Screenplay at NewFilmmakers LA. Before the Sun Explodes is now available on tons of digital platforms - including iTunes, Amazon, Vimeo, YouTube, Fiona, GooglePlay, and COX. My latest short film, 'A Film by Vera Vaughn' is a Vimeo Staff Pick, and you can all watch it there. A feature version is in the works. As always, I encourage everyone to check out my Peabody Award Winning documentary, 'Best Kept Secret' on iTunes and Amazon. I have a bunch of new projects in development and I'm finishing up post production on my new film, 'Ride or Die' which I wrote and directed."

Brendan Fitzgerald (B.A. '87)

"I own and run a television production company called Pomodoro Stories LLC, pomodorostories.com. We develop and produce fiction series in Europe, in Latin America, and in the U.S. in Spanish. Based in Miami, remarried, one 17-year-old son, Liam, a 5-year-old daughter, Kate, and a 2-year old-daughter, Alessandra."

John McLucas (Ph.D. '83)

"My first novel, *Dialogues on the Beach*, will be published in September by BrickHouse Books in Baltimore. It reflects, in small part, my affectionate reading of Pavese in the 1970s - especially *La spiaggia* and *Dialoghi con Leuco*'. The plot mostly revolves around conversations among old and new friends, gay and straight, during a vacation at Rehoboth Beach in 1993. My translation of Tullia d'Aragona's 1560 epic, *Il Meschino*, edited by Julia L. Hairston, is forthcoming in the 'Other Voice' series from University of Toronto Press. This fall, I begin my 34th year of teaching Italian and Latin at all levels at Towson University in Baltimore."

Alumni News

Tekesha Geel (formerly Tekesha Brown) (B.A. '03)

"My husband and I moved to Charleston, South Carolina and have a 16-month-old baby girl named Ainsley. I work part-time as a lawyer/law clerk for a small, boutique firm in downtown Charleston, practicing copyright/trademark/entertainment law and defamation litigation."

Rachael Nyabadza (formerly Rachael Streeter) (Ph.D. '16)

"This fall, I begin my 3rd year teaching history at Pacifica Christian High School in Santa Monica, CA. Last Spring, I presented a paper at the RSA meeting in Chicago. The name of my paper was "*Concordia Discors* and the Fatal Duel of *Adone's* Seventh Canto." It was a wonderful experience. Last, but not least, I celebrated my wedding to Godwin Nyabadza this summer! We had formally wed at a courthouse May of 2016, but on August 5th, 2017 we said our vows and celebrated among close family and friends."

Arielle Saiber (Ph.D. '99)

"I won the Scaglione ms. Award and a Weiss-Brown Newberry Award for my forthcoming book, *Measured Words: Computation and Writing in Renaissance Italy* (Toronto): <http://www.utppublishing.com/Measured-Words-Computation-and-Writing-in-Renaissance-Italy.html>."

Federico Schneider (Ph.D. '02)

He has won a competitive grant issued by the Università degli Studi di Padova with the specific purpose of internationalizing its course offerings. As a result, he was invited to teach two series of seminars (graduate and post-graduate levels) on the American reception of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (official flyer is attached)

Barbara Spackman (Ph.D. '84)

She is the Giovanni and Ruth Elizabeth Cecchetti Professor of Italian Studies and Professor of Comparative Literature at UC Berkeley. She published a new book in 2017: *Accidental Orientalists: Modern Italian Travelers in Ottoman Lands* appeared in a new series entitled "Transnational Italian Cultures" brought out by Liverpool University Press. In fall 2016, she was honored with a Distinguished Teaching Award by the Division of Arts & Humanities at Berkeley.

Maria Truglio (Ph.D. '01)

"I am happy to be continuing at Penn State as Associate Professor of Italian and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and to be serving my department in 2017-2018 as Interim Head. My book *Italian Children's Literature and National Identity: Childhood, Melancholy, Modernity* was just published by Routledge in their Children's Literature and Culture series. Last year, as part of a Mellon funded grant to Penn State to promote classical music, I had the chance to develop and teach a new undergraduate 'general education' course on Artistic Patronage in Europe Cultural Sponsorship and Social Networks. I'm continuing to work on children's literature and to co-direct the Spanish and Italian Modernist Studies Forum with my colleague Dr. Nicolás Fernández-Medina."

Rebecca West (Ph.D. '74)

"I am keeping busy in my retirement, writing an essay on 'Luigi Malerba in America' for a Roman journal, composing a keynote talk on screenwriter supreme Tonino Guerra for the annual 'Italian Culture' event here at the Chicago Italian Cultural Institute, the theme of which this year is Italian cinema, and advising my very last Ph.D. student. I've also agreed to write a short piece on Fellini's *Roma* for a Fellini volume being co-edited by Frank Burke and Yale alumna Margie Waller, who is a dear old friend from our graduate school years. An essay of mine on Gianni Celati is being reprinted in a wonderful volume on the writer being put together by Patrick Barron; the volume will include essays and at least part of his new translation of Celati's *Verso la foce*. I'm still very close with my Yale graduate school pals Rachel Jacoff and Penny Marcus; it seems like yesterday that we sat in classes together, listening with awe to John Freccero and Giuseppe Mazzotta! And now Giuseppe and his once student Penny carry on the grand tradition! Long live Italian Studies at Yale!!"

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Alumni!

If you want your news to be featured in our next Newsletter, please email any updates by October 1, 2018, to: Ann.Delauro@yale.edu.

In your email, please include your degree and graduation year.