

JOHN D.  
CALANDRA  
ITALIAN  
AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE

# *il Bollettino*

*dedicated to the history and culture of Italians in America*



2017 • VOLUME 10 • NUMBER 2

THE JOHN D. CALANDRA ITALIAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE IS A UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE UNDER THE AEGIS OF QUEENS COLLEGE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Cari Amici,

Welcome to volume 10.2 of the Calandra Institute's *il Bollettino!* We hope you enjoy its contents, and please do not hesitate to contact us for any additional information.

In this issue you will find exciting news about what we do at the Calandra Institute and what is happening in our communities. I ask at the outset that you mark your calendars for April 27–28, 2018, our tenth annual conference, devoted to “Corporeal Restrictions, Embodied Freedoms: Italian Interventions on the Body.”

We continue to enjoy support from many. Much still needs to be done, and our future activities will address many concerns of our community as we move forward.

As always, we are extremely appreciative of the unyielding support of Chancellor James Milliken's Office of CUNY and President Félix Matos Rodríguez's Office of Queens College. They and their staff continue to facilitate our greater development in all aspects.

So, again, I wish you all a *buona lettura* and look forward to seeing you at future events.

*Alla riscossa!*

Anthony Julian Tamburri  
Dean and Distinguished Professor

## GIAMBELLI FOUNDATION LECTURE SERIES

In 2017 the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute launched a new lecture series underwritten by the Francesco and Mary Giambelli Foundation. The Calandra Institute is grateful to the Foundation's board of trustees for its generous donation to this endeavor. Presenters selected for the first series of lectures include Donna Gabaccia, Fred Gardaphé, Maria Laurino, and Robert Viscusi and address topics ranging from migration and war history to storytelling and literature.

Philanthropists Francesco and Mary Giambelli spent most of their lives running successful Italian restaurants, where they served business people, world leaders, and most notably, Pope John Paul II. They also shared the fruits of their labors with those less fortunate through lifetime charitable donations and participation



in the Cardinal's program of feeding the homeless. Their legacy of charity and good works and their commitment to support Italian culture and heritage live on today through the Francesco and Mary Giambelli Foundation, Inc.

OCTOBER 24, 2017 AT 6 PM

## Monuments, Public Memory, and Group Identity: The Cultural Politics of Italian America in the Twentieth-First Century

Recent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, have highlighted a longstanding debate over how the past should be remembered in public spaces. Although the focus of this discussion has been on monuments associated with the Confederacy, the implications are significantly much wider. Italian Americans have a responsibility to participate in the larger national conversation in a thoughtful and measured manner regarding how they have chosen to remember and celebrate their own history in the United States. This event is a step in that direction. A panel of scholars will explore the implications of memory, identity, and politics by focusing on three cases of public art: statues to Christopher Columbus around the country; the ancient Roman column commemorating the 1933 transatlantic flight of Fascist aviator Italo Balbo in Chicago; and the proposed memorial to the victims of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in New York City.

The panel consists of: Laura E. Ruberto (Berkeley City College) and Joseph Sciorra (John D. Calandra Italian American Institute) on Columbus statues; Fraser Ottanelli (University of South Florida) on the Balbo Monument; Mary Anne Trasciatti (Hofstra University) on the Triangle Fire Memorial; and Fred Gardaphé (Queens College), discussant.



Connecticut Autumn, 1937, by Louis Guglielmi.

Calandra Institute Conference  
APRIL 27–28, 2018

SAVE THE DATE

## Corporeal Restrictions, Embodied Freedoms: Italian Interventions on the Body

The 1935 song “Faccetta Nera,” a paean to the Fascist imperialist enterprise in Africa, addresses the “little black face” that is the anonymous Abyssinian woman, an object of Italian colonial desire. This jaunty march with its suggestive miscegenation proclaims a gendered liberation of African women with the line “our law is slavery of love” (*la legge nostra è schiavitù d’amore*). The song was made famous by tenor Carlo Buti and eventually became a staple of *fiesta* band repertoires among the diaspora. In contemporary Italy black women are routinely taunted and humiliated with this Fascist-era tune.

The song is but one example of the myriad ways in which the body figures in discourses and cultural productions concerning Italy’s histories and identities, within and well beyond the country’s geopolitical boundaries. This interdisciplinary conference recognizes the body in its literal, metaphorical, and hybrid constitutions as found in the modern nation-state of Italy, the larger Italian diaspora, and among former colonies. It builds on the array of seminal work on body politics mainly developed in women’s and gender studies—French feminist theories of *jouissance*, Donna Haraway’s cyborgs, Judith Butler’s gender trouble, post-colonial conceptions of subaltern racialized bodies, and contemporary trans theories—where corporeal imaginaries construct and reposition identity and agency. Italy and *italianità*, with its complex position within a Western hegemony—connected to colonialism, transnational migration, and larger discourses of power—is a particularly interesting locus for focusing a series of critical interventions around the body.

The 2018 College Scholarship Handbook for Italian American Students and Students of Italian Studies is available to download at <http://qcpages.qc.edu/calandra/resources/scholarships/scholarships> or contact the Calandra Institute to request a printed copy.

## ITALICS: TELEVISION FOR THE ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

Highlights from recent *Italics* broadcasts:

May: *Italics* covered the New York Galas of two major Italian American organizations: the National Organization of Italian American Women and the National Italian American Foundation.

June: This episode featured historian and author John Gennari, professor at the University of Vermont, at a recent presentation of his new book, *Flavor and Soul: Italian America at Its African American Edge*.

July: In this rebroadcast from 2013, Anthony Julian Tamburri, Dean of the Calandra Institute talks with Donna Chirico, Dean at York College, and Fred Gardaphé, Distinguished Professor at Queens College, about Italian American studies in college curricula; Italian American culture and its dissemination to younger generations and university students at all levels; and what

Italian American organizations and philanthropists can do to ensure a future for Italian American studies.

Also discussed are the importance of knowing the Italian language and familiarity with Italy, in the historic and the contemporary; representations of Italian Americans and Italians in the media; stereotypes; ethnic community vs. the broader community; and the focus and role of anti-defamation groups.



*Italics* premieres the last Tuesday of each month at 9:30 pm and is rebroadcast the subsequent Wednesday at 10:30 am and 3:30 pm, Saturday at 7:30 am, and Sunday at 6:30 pm on CUNY TV Channels 25.3, 75, 77 and 30, in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and the Bronx.

*Italics* can be viewed on demand at



[cuny.tv/show/italics](http://cuny.tv/show/italics)



[ItalicsTV](https://www.facebook.com/ItalicsTV)



[@ItalicsTV](https://twitter.com/ItalicsTV)



[youtube.com/ItalicsTV](https://www.youtube.com/ItalicsTV)

### “Don’t Be Selfish!” Consumer Citizenship and Italian Colonial Identity in World War I-Era Pittsburgh, PA, by Lina Insana

This article explores the Italian-language advertising strategies that emerge from the early twentieth-century Pittsburgh, PA, newspaper *La Trinacria*, during the period at the end of and immediately following the First World War. The ads of the Kaufmann’s Department Store are of particular interest, given the wealth of extant archival documentation for this institution and considering the particularly rich and diverse nature of Kaufmann’s foreign-language advertising in those years. The Kaufmann archives reveal the family’s consistent commitment to a kind of consumer citizenship that confirms the scholarly work of De Grazia, Marchand, and McGovern in this area, as well as to the creation of store spaces that had the explicit goal of educating recent immigrants on the habits and values of American consumerism.

However, a thorough examination of these foreign-language ads reveals that calls to citizenship during these years are not nearly as monolithically “American” as this body of scholarly work suggests. Though the Italians of Pittsburgh were called to an American consumer citizenship defined by unfettered access to commodities and participation in common consumer practices, the products and rationale for those purchases were often linked to a sense of *Italian* belonging: the war effort, providing comfort to relatives in Italy, commitment to the Italian irredentist project. Further, the department store’s English-language advertising in these same years points to an even broader and more complex strategy: By leveraging their imported products and multi-lingual staff in even more mainstream press outlets, the family sought to create a Kaufmann’s brand that had both a

didactic purpose (“There is a liberal education right here in our store for those of us who will go into the study of the various articles of foreign merchandise carried in our stocks”) and cosmopolitan appeal for the “American” shopper.



Mariano Cancelliere founded the newspaper *La Trinacria* in 1900, and in 1903 he commissioned and copyrighted a short musical piece titled “*The Trinacria Rag*.”

### Transmigration/Transformation: Enrico Butti’s Angel in Milan and Pittsburgh, by Elisabeth L. Roark

The discovery of almost identical funerary monuments in Allegheny Cemetery in Pittsburgh, PA, and Milan Monumental Cemetery in Italy raises intriguing questions of mobility, context, and meaning. Both created by Milanese sculptor Enrico Butti (1847–1932) and located in cemeteries designed according to nineteenth-century burial reform, they encourage a basic question of how two versions of the same monument ended up in such disparate locations, and the more complex question of what the monument signified in a predominantly Catholic urbanized cemetery in Milan compared with a Protestant garden cemetery in Pittsburgh.

Unusual for cemetery sculpture, which is a resource often ignored by scholars, both monuments have comprehensive, complex histories that provide answers to these questions, accessed through cemetery records, contemporaneous Italian and English-language criticism, and research on their patrons, artists, and broader cultural and religious contexts. Butti designed the monument for the Cavi Bussi family in 1879; it was his first commission for Milan Monumental Cemetery, a prestigious venue for the city’s sculptors. It attracted notice when a full-scale plaster model won a prize at a local exhibition and when Butti installed the marble version at the cemetery in 1881. Butti’s monument contributed to a change in angel cemetery sculpture that reflects not only stylistic development but also the evolution of religious belief due to Positivist and Symbolist interventions in perceptions of death and the afterlife.

Henry Kirke Porter commissioned the Allegheny Cemetery monument from Butti during a trip to Italy in 1882. Compared to earlier angel sculpture in American garden cemeteries, it was unprecedented in scale, dress, and pose and also attracted press and public attention. Pittsburgh’s industrial air devastated Butti’s marble monument, and it was recreated in bronze and granite in 1932—its origin in Italy and transformation of medium are heretofore unpublished stories that correct its current confused historical record.

This study’s purpose is to demonstrate that the monument’s migration from Milan to Pittsburgh resulted in a transformation not only of medium but also of meaning. It begins by characterizing the Pittsburgh

and Milan cemeteries and then details the complex histories of each monument, including similarities and differences in appearance as well as Italian and American reactions to them. English-language writing suggests difficulty interpreting the monument due to conservative Protestant notions about cemetery sculpture and angels. Despite this, Butti's angel became a prototype, until now unrecognized, for cemetery monuments across the Western world.

Only in the last dozen years has the transnational mobility of Italian cemetery sculpture been the subject of much published scholarship. Yet evidence suggests that many figural sculptures in U.S. cemeteries are Italian in origin. This is a multifaceted phenomenon deserving more attention as Italian sculpture likely had a profound impact on what we see in American cemeteries today, suggesting a broad network of exchange. Although overlooked as an important facet of American visual culture, nineteenth-century cemetery sculpture can provide unique access to past perceptions of death, popular religious belief, and memorialization.



Enrico Butti, *Cavi Bussi Monument*, 1881. Marble. Milan Monumental Cemetery, Milan, Italy. Photo by author.



CALL FOR ENTRIES

Centro Culturale Italiano di New York

in collaboration with the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

### announces the International Competition for New Italian Theater titled "The Kindly Narrator"

Rules for Entering the International Competition for New Italian Theater "The Kindly Narrator" (henceforth referred to as the Competition)

1. The Competition consists of a written submission, in Italian, of an original one-act play, featuring no more than four characters; the script should be no longer than 36,120 characters (both letters and spaces).
2. Participants should also include one page of personal details including your address; an admission fee of \$25 (sent via PayPal using the link [italytime.org/donate/](http://italytime.org/donate/)); and a signed statement giving up all author's rights to italytime according to the details of Article 6 below and accepting the decision of the jury without question or exception; the emailed copy, in Microsoft Word, of the one-act play submission addressed to [maureen@italytime.org](mailto:maureen@italytime.org) and [vittorio@italytime.org](mailto:vittorio@italytime.org) should be sent no later than January 31, 2018.
3. The theme of this first edition of the Competition is "Histories of Italian Immigration to America" up to the present day.
4. The jury for this year's Competition will consist of: Professor Jo Ann Cavallo (Columbia University, New York), Director Vittorio Capotorto, Dean Anthony Tamburri (Queens College, New York), and Dramaturg Paolo Tartamella. The jury will be chaired by Dacia Maraini.
5. The winners will be the writers of the three best one-act submissions.
6. The three winners, with no further claims, will see their one-act plays produced on stage in New York in a one-time production staged by italytime, and they will need to freely concede all rights for the year 2018-2019 both to the staging and to the eventual publication (in English and Italian) of the dramaturgical series issued by italytime.



devastating blows into a new play about the end of their world. *Spettacolo* is a documentary film directed by Jeff Malmberg and Chris Shellen. It was released in the United States this fall by Grasshopper Film and in Canada by Blue Ice Docs. For more information: <https://www.spettacolofilm.com/>

Once upon a time, villagers in a tiny hill town in Tuscany came up with a remarkable way to confront their issues: They turned their lives into a play. Every summer, their piazza became their stage and residents of all ages played a part—the role of themselves. Monticchiello’s annual tradition has attracted worldwide attention and kept the town together for fifty years, but with an aging population and a future generation more interested in Facebook than farming, the town’s fiftieth anniversary performance just might be its last. *Spettacolo* tells the story of Teatro Povero di Monticchiello, interweaving episodes from its past with its modern-day process as the villagers turn a series of

## REIMAGINING THE LAST SEVENTY YEARS OF ITALIAN MIGRATION



On Monday, September 18, 2017, Laura E. Ruberto and Joseph Sciorra presented the first of a two-volume anthology they edited: *New Italian Migrations to the United States, Vol. 1: Politics and History since 1945*. They were joined by contributors

James S. Pasto and Donald Tricarico.

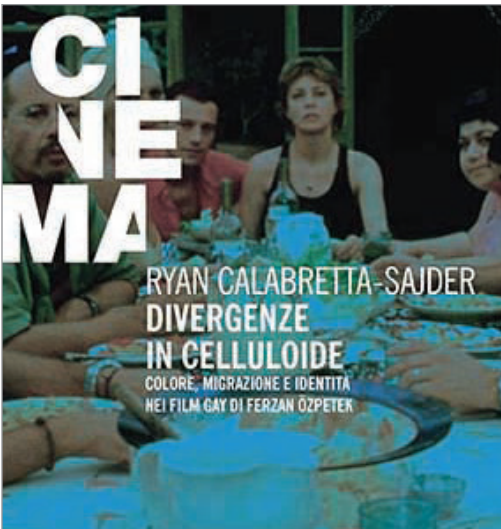
As the editors state in their introduction “Real Italians, New Immigrants,” Italian immigration from 1945 to the present is an American phenomenon too little explored in historical studies. To this end, the book offers a radical rethinking of conventional periodization about Italian migrations by challenging the conventional immigrant narrative of arrival-acclimation-assimilation. This anthology reevaluates the history, politics, and culture of these Italian immigrants and their descendants who, over the past seventy years, have helped reshape and reboot Italian American culture and identity.

Italians who immigrated to the United States in the first thirty years after the war were by and large working-class, from southern regions, and part of overwhelmingly town-based diasporas. Elite migrants who arrived more or less from 1974 to the present day did so often with college degrees in hand and can be generally understood as part of a more professionally intended migration often referred to as a “brain drain,” or *fuga dei cervelli*. Although there are differences between the two eras and groups and their relationship to each other, each wave of new immigrants positions itself and is positioned by others as “real Italians,” a phrase that has been used repeatedly in popular parlance that assumes an authentic, knowable cultural identity, conflated with a firm association to Italy.

The book is an interdisciplinary work that brings together an elite roster of scholars from the fields of history, sociology, and political science. Together the articles recount and explore the experiences, stories, and cultural expressivity surrounding the ongoing migratory flow of Italians to the United States.



Tuesday, September 12, 2017: The Calandra Institute co-sponsored an event with Italytime Theater, “Meet the Author: Anthony Tamburri.” Dean Tamburri presented his analysis of the perplexing array of apparent options that face immigrants everywhere as embodied by the Italians who landed in America: adapt to the host culture, remain faithful to one’s own heritage, or disown it completely. The discussion was followed by a one-act play written by Paolo Tartamella and took place at Our Lady of Pompeii Theater in New York City.



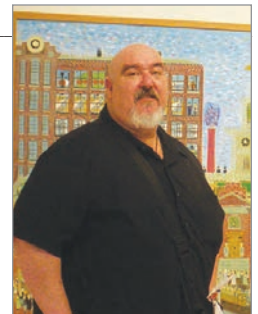
Thursday, September 14, 2017: The Calandra Institute presented the publication *Divergenze in celluloide: Colore, migrazione e identità nei film gay di Ferzan Özpetek*, with author Ryan Calabretta-Sajder, University of Arkansas; Anthony Julian Tamburri, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, CUNY; and Giancarlo Lombardi, The Graduate Center, CUNY. This volume (Mimesis edizioni, 2016) examines the cinematic production of Italian Turkish director Ferzan Özpetek through the themes of color, sexual identity, and migration. The author delineates a definition of queer theory and applies it to Özpetek’s gay series following the motifs of family, memory, and food. From a cinematic point of view, Calabretta-Sajder argues that Özpetek should be considered a contemporary Italian director as he has lost his “accent,” according to the theory of Hamid Naficy, and because his films recount and comment on the rapidly changing Italian society.

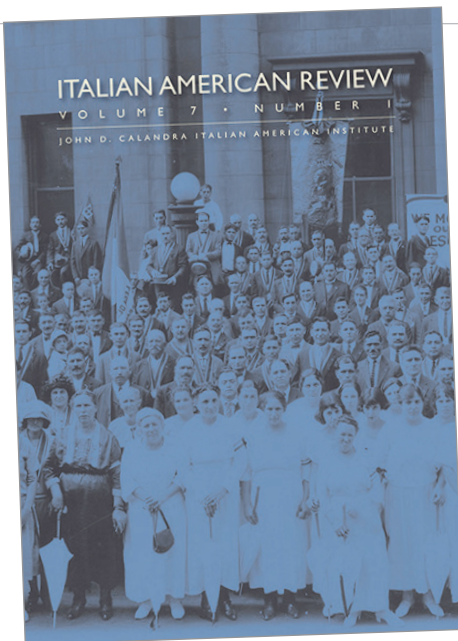


Tuesday, September 19, 2017: As part of the Giambelli Foundation lecture series, the Calandra Institute hosted “The Orphanage: Encounters in Transnational Space,” a discussion with Robert Viscusi, Brooklyn College, CUNY. Viscusi presented his writings on Italian storytelling: “Italian twentieth-century writing began with grandiose visions of empire. Then Italy passed through a period of rapid dispossession during World War I and twenty years of hectic reconstruction and extraordinary pretense under Fascism. At the end of the 1930s and during a second war, Italian culture endured a more total dispossession. When that war ended, Italy awakened into a period of misery and despair. This is not an easy story to tell, and often an impossible one to hear. If one studies the history of Italian storytelling in the twentieth century, this narrative of high ambitions and unbearable catastrophes recurs in many guises. This is a literary history that is itself as moving as any poem or novel.”

### AD MEMORIUM

William David Schempp passed away on September 2, 2017, at the age of 57. Mr. Schempp served as producer and director of the Calandra Institute’s cable television program, *Italics*, from 1987 through 2013. He earned his M.F.A. degree in Television Production from Brooklyn College, CUNY in 1986. His master’s thesis work, “A Well Founded Fear . . . Discussions on the Sanctuary Movement,” was included in two episodes of Paper Tiger Television’s *A Deep Dish of Central America*. Among Bill’s personal interests: music, craft beer and brewing, New Orleans culture, the soccer team AS Roma, and travel.





## ITALIAN AMERICAN REVIEW

The *Italian American Review* (IAR) features scholarly articles about Italian American history and culture, as well as other aspects of the Italian diaspora. The journal embraces a wide range of professional concerns and theoretical orientations in the social sciences and cultural studies. The IAR publishes book, film, and digital media reviews and is currently accepting article submissions.

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 2 includes:

- “Don’t Be Selfish!” Consumer Citizenship and Italian Colonial Identity in World War I Era Pittsburgh, PA, by Lina Insana
- Transmigration/Transformation: Enrico Butti’s Angel in Milan and Pittsburgh, by Elisabeth L. Roark

For more information, go to [qc.edu/calandra](http://qc.edu/calandra). Under the publications menu, click on *Italian American Review*.

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### FALL 2017 PUBLIC PROGRAMS

#### PHILIP V. CANNISTRARO SEMINAR SERIES IN ITALIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

**Monday, September 18, 2017**

*New Italian Migrations to the United States: Vol. 1: Politics and History since 1945*, LAURA E. RUBERTO, Berekeley City College, and JOSEPH SCIORRA, Calandra Institute

**Wednesday, October 4, 2017**

*On Second Thought: Learned Women Reflect on Profession, Community, and Purpose*, LUISA DEL GIUDICE, Independent Scholar

**Thursday, November 9, 2017**

*After Identity: Migration, Critique, Italian American Culture*, PETER CARRAVETTA, Stony Brook University

#### WRITERS READ SERIES

**Wednesday, October 18, 2017**

MARIANNE LEONE reads from *Ma Speaks Up: And a First Generation Daughter Talks Back* (Beacon Press, 2017) and HELENE STAPINSKI reads from *Murder in Matera: A True Story of Passion, Family, and Forgiveness in Southern Italy* (Dey Street Books, 2017), followed by a roundtable discussion with EDVIGE GIUNTA, New Jersey City University.

#### DOCUMENTED ITALIANS FILM AND VIDEO SERIES

**Thursday, November 30, 2017**

*Pizza Shop: An Italian-American Dream* (2017), 57 minutes, ANTONY OSSO, director. Post-screening discussion led by ROCCO MARINACCIO, Manhattan College.

**Wednesday, December 6, 2017**

*Underfire: The Untold Story of PFC. Tony Vacarro* (2016), 71 minutes, MAX LEWKOWICZ, director. Post-screening discussion with TONY VACCARO and the director led by EVELYN BURG, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY.

ALL EVENTS BEGIN AT 6 PM, ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AND TAKE PLACE AT:  
John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, 25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, New York NY 10036.  
RSVP by calling (212) 642-2094. Seating is limited; seats cannot be reserved in advance.

