



CALANDRA  
ITALIAN  
AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE

# *il Bollettino*

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

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## LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to the sixth issue of the Calandra Institute's newsletter, *il Bollettino*! Here you will read about our recent activities including the 2010 annual conference dedicated to "Terre Promesse," the Mapping Project, newly appointed members of the Italian American Faculty and Staff Advisory Council, and more.

We have continued to make progress in these initial years of moving the Institute forward, while maintaining its original goals and overall mission that date back to its founding in 1979 as the Italian American Institute to Foster Higher Education.

These past six months proved challenging and satisfying, as expected when new ideas are brought to the table. We continued our regular programming and added a number of special events. The *Italics 2.0* webcasts began well, delivering coverage of a series of issues, one of which was the campaign to preserve Brooklyn's Our Lady of Loreto Church. Jeff Dunston and Charles Piazza provided us with the history of the initial negotiations during one of our webcasts. Our "Documented Italians" series, in turn, revisited the theme of immigration with the film *Merica* (2007), which investigates the complexities of migration and the migrant's desire for national belonging using the parallel stories of Italian immigration to Brazil in the 1800s and the current Italian-Brazilian migration to Italy.

Many new events are in the planning. In September, we shall host the first gathering of Distinguished Professors of Italian American Studies in an effort to

create some form of national dialogue. In early October you can join us again for our Italian American Mental Health and Wellness Conference. In addition, we have included herein a call for papers for next spring's fourth annual conference, dedicated to food, fashion, and film and how they are articulated within the Italian and Italian/American cultures. We look forward to seeing you at these and others events.

The overall task that lies ahead is one of a long-term commitment that asks us to gather as a community of Italian Americans at large—and not boast as individuals—and investigate the myriad of topics that others have defined for us. This is one of the fundamental goals that subtend our many activities and events: to create a broad-reaching dialogue. That said, the Calandra Institute shall indeed continue to engage with the greater Italian/American community. So, keep your eyes and ears open for future announcements, as our activities will continue to explore the multifarious sectors of our extended community as we move forward.

We enjoy great support from all. Our colleagues and friends within CUNY continue to be supportive, and many of the Italian/American community are most encouraging. We continue to benefit from the unyielding support from both Chancellor Matthew Goldstein's Office of CUNY and President James Muysken's Office of Queens College. *Dulcis in fundo*, a most sincere "thank you" to our Italian-American state officials and their colleagues!

*Buon'estate a tutti!*

Anthony Julian Tamburri, Dean

## RE-THINKING ITALIAN-AMERICAN STUDIES, A NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM September 10-11, 2010

### COORDINATORS

Fred L. Gardaphé, Distinguished Professor  
Anthony Julian Tamburri, Dean

The Calandra Institute will host a symposium of distinguished professors and holders of endowed chairs whose work includes Italian-American studies. In light of recent developments—such as those in the state of Arizona—regarding immigration and ethnic studies and their reverberations around the nation, the Calandra Institute sees the need to gather our colleagues who, among other tasks, may also develop and direct programs in Italian-American studies, in order to discuss their work as it pertains to twenty-first-century "ethnic" studies. The symposium will examine the definition of Italian-American studies and the development of the field; new methodologies of examining the various modes of articulation of cultural expression; the building of national and international networks, sharing of resources, and bridging of gaps; and the relationship between cultural brokers and elected officials.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

5:00-6:00 p.m. Press conference  
6:00-6:30 p.m. Welcome and opening  
6:30-8:00 p.m. Roundtable discussion  
*What is Italian-American studies and what are the responsibilities of a Chair?*  
Reception to follow

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

9:00 a.m. to 5:50 p.m.



### PERSONAGGI

## ALFREDO BASCETTA

*Joseph Sciorra*

In the pantheon of Italian-American singers recording in the Neapolitan tradition is the versatile tenor Alfredo Bascetta. Born on September 14, 1889 in the town of Pietrastornina (Avellino province), Campania, he arrived at Ellis Island on November 6, 1911 and settled in East New York, Brooklyn. The singer began recording in 1917 and worked for Columbia, OKEH, Victor, and other noteworthy recording companies. His records include "Le ragazze di New York," "O squarcione," and "Se n'è fuiuoto

banchiere." Bascetta was also a prolific composer of comic and sentimental tunes, many recorded by singers like Nina de Charny and Giuseppe Milano. In 1922, the Italo American Corporation produced a film (now lost) based on his hit "Mamma luntana!" (Distant Mother!) that was filmed in Naples and starred Bascetta. In 1927, Bascetta wrote and recorded the topical song, "Lacrime e cunndannate" (The Tears of the Condemned), protesting the arrest, trial, and death sentence given Sacco and Vanzetti. Contemporary Italian artists continue to perform this song. The aging Bascetta moved to Port St. Lucie, Florida, to reside with his daughter Gemma, where he died on December 6, 1982, at age 93.

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printed copy of the newsletter.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE TERRE PROMESSE

Rosangela Briscese

The Calandra Institute's third annual conference, "Terre Promesse: Excursions Towards Italian Topographies," held from April 22-24, 2010, was dedicated to the theme of cultural landscapes. Scholars, writers, architects, filmmakers, and visual artists presented work on issues concerning place-making in Italy, amongst the Italian diaspora, and in colonial locales.

Dean Anthony Tamburri, President James Muyskens of Queens College, and Consul General Francesco Maria Talò opened the event with welcoming remarks. A small sampling of the conference's thirty-nine presentations is outlined below.

In the opening panel, "Traveling Writing," Joseph Cosco presented the creative non-fiction piece "The Dead Sang with Dirt in Their Mouths," which recounts his visit to Italy in an attempt to make sense of his grandfather's death in World War I. Fulvia Masi's paper "Found in Translation" considered symbolic representations of *la madreterra* in literary and vernacular writings. In "Click to Enlarge: Connecting Memories, Places, and Cultures in the Virtual Paese," Robert Oppedisano discussed the Internet as a way to "rewrite your own personal geography," using his own virtual exploration of Cittanova, his family's hometown, as an example.

The "Sacred Spaces" panel featured examinations of Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic experiences in relation to place. Dennis Barone presented "To Struggle for a Place at the Table: Italian-American Protestants in Italy," and Christina Bettin looked at the architecture and style of synagogues established by Italian families in Israel in her paper "The Role of the Holy Place: Memory and Nostalgia in Italian Jews Who Emigrated in Israel After World War II." Joseph Sciorra discussed the religious feasts staged in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in light of the neighborhood's recent gentrification by newcomers unfamiliar with Italian Catholic devotional practices. His paper showed that many long-time residents are "plagued by a nagging 'feeling of discomfort'" as hipster spectators "turn neighborhood religious processions into exotic rites staged by the local natives—ethnographic subjects captured in the gentrifying gaze."

In Friday's closing panel, "Little Italies," Stefano Luconi examined the features that characterized Italian urban settlements during the period of mass immigration. Such neighborhoods were hardly homogenous, with Italian immigrants and their descendants typically comprising about 65% of various Little Italy populations. Jerry Kruse explored how the meanings of neighborhood space are changed by their inhabitants. Some of America's most famous Little Italies, he pointed out, are preserved as spectacles or "ethnic theme parks." Dana David looked at the *questua* bread distribution procession by parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Williamsburg. David described the *questua* as a "visual map of relationships" that has the potential to foster new connections between long-established residents and newcomers in the neighborhood.

The "Creative Spaces" panel included Antonino D'Ambrosio presenting two films from his multimedia visual art series, *La Terra Promessa*. D'Ambrosio's art installations, made from found materials such as volcanic tuff rocks and hand-carved stone, are influenced by his father and uncles, who were masons and bricklayers. Sound space designer Lorenzo Brusci discussed his project "Architettura Sonora/ Applied Acoustics." Brusci creates "sound environments," integrating innovative acoustic tools into the designs of public spaces such as urban parks. His goal is to provide everyday life with areas where the extraordinary is possible by making "a more active sound experience" available.

In the panel "Points South and West II," Jim Cocola provided a topographical analysis of John Fante's fiction in his paper "A Northern Southern Italian of the Eastern Western United States." A Colorado native who moved to California, Fante (and his alter-ego character Arturo Bandini) occupied an unstable ethnic position in the West. In the novel *Ask the Dust*, Bandini reflects that while he was not considered white among the "Smiths and Parkers" of Colorado, in Los Angeles he is almost—but not totally—Anglo. Simone Cinotto's presentation drew on case studies of the Rossi, Gallo, and Gausti wineries in California. Cinotto attributes their success to business knowledge and social capital and networks.

Joan Saverino combined personal reflections and scholarly research in "Il Fuoco di Minonga: The 1907 Mine

Disaster, the Landscape of Coal, and the Making of Transnational Identity in West Virginia." Many victims of the Monongah tragedy emigrated from San Giovanni in Fiore (Calabria), where popular aphorisms using misheard or mispronounced versions of "Monongah" emerged to convey irony or cautionary advice: "Te piensi che vado a Mironga?"; "Non vado mica a Mironga"; or "È una Minonga." These sayings "reflect the collective trauma delivered to the town's psyche when disaster struck so many . . . The dislocated memories are vocalizations of the forgotten connections between the emigration destination and the home *paese*."

Luisa Del Giudice gave the closing keynote address, "Gastronomic Utopias, Promised Land," in which she discussed the mythic land of plenty known as *il paese di Cuccagna* (Cockaigne) in relation to Italian emigration. With origins in Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, Cuccagna motifs circulated widely in oral and semi-literary culture. Eighteenth-century street performers sold broadsides that described in lavish detail the mountains of cheese, cauldrons of maccheroni, rivers of fine wine, and roasted chickens falling from the skies. As such, Cuccagna documents the deprivations of Italy's lower classes, for many of whom hunger and poverty persisted well into the 1950s, and it functions as a symbol for many peasant immigrant experiences. The aspiration for abundance that could not be achieved in the old world was a driving force for immigration, and food was a primary element. America was in fact referred to as "Cuccagna." Del Giudice believes Cuccagna continues to animate the Italian immigrant worldview and its cultural practices. Her presentation may be viewed on the Internet at [www.livestream.com/italics](http://www.livestream.com/italics).

The Calandra Institute staff extends their gratitude to all the conference participants whose engaging academic papers and stimulating creative explorations made the event a tremendous success. •



Luisa Del Giudice discussed Cuccagna, "a perpetual Carnival of abundance and indulgence."

## ITALICS

# THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN TV MAGAZINE EXPANDS ITS ROLE AND BROADCAST VENUES

*William Schempp*

Throughout the winter 2009 and spring 2010 season, the *Italics* team continued to provide the Italian-American community with innovative programming on CUNY TV (channel 75) in addition to creating new Internet and live streaming formats. Such efforts resulted in offering programs to a wider audience and expanding *Italics'* role as a valuable national and international Italian-American news network.

The *Italics* team documented for viewers a colloquium entitled "Guido: An Italian American Youth Style" convened at the Institute. The colloquium was conceived to address perceptions about Guido culture that emerged in the wake of the reality

television show "Jersey Shore," and featured Professor Donald Tricarico, Queensborough Community College, CUNY. Tricarico provided an in-depth analysis of Italian-American youth culture from a social-psychological perspective. In response to the high degree of interest in this symposium, *Italics* employed an additional format with a live broadcast via the Internet. The colloquium can be viewed in its entirety at [www.livestream.com/italics](http://www.livestream.com/italics).

*Italics* also featured a rally organized to help save Our Lady of Loreto Church in Brooklyn from real estate developers. Built more than 100 years ago by Italian immigrants who settled in the area, Our Lady of Loreto is considered architecturally and historically significant by scholars, architects, and clergy. The church has been closed and deconsecrated for more than a year by the Diocese of Brooklyn. Activists in the Italian-American community are attempting to preserve the church in keeping with the larger community's desire

for redevelopment and housing renewal. To help bring attention to this issue, *Italics 2.0* inaugurated an Internet outlet which premiered with the leaders of the Save Our Lady of Loreto Church Committee (on [www.livestream.com/italics](http://www.livestream.com/italics)).

Additional programming includes *Italics TU*, an Italian language production with Dean Anthony Tamburri, *Nota Bene*, hosted by Dr. Fred Gardaphé, Distinguished Professor of Italian American Studies, and the annual October special *Italics Jukebox*, hosted by correspondent Lucia Grillo.

Tune in to *Italics* at the start of the new season in September! And be sure to see October's coverage of Italian Heritage and Culture Month with a special four-part series in collaboration with CUNY TV.



## NEWLY CREATED ITALIAN AMERICAN STUDIES ADVISORY COUNCIL FORMED

*Fred Gardaphé*

Designed to advise the Calandra Institute on its research and service projects, the Italian American Studies Advisory Council met in February and created an agenda that includes the development of Italian-American studies and the coordination of that development in relation to Italian language studies within the CUNY system. A second meeting was held in March and a subsequent meeting in May.

The Chair of the Council is Dr. Fred Gardaphé, Distinguished Professor of English and Italian American Studies, who teaches at Queens College. Professors involved in Italian-American studies programs and/or research were invited from each of the CUNY units to participate. The following professors attended the initial meetings: Grace Bullaro from Lehman College, Fabio Girelli-Carasi and Robert Viscusi from Brooklyn College; Morena Corradi from Queens College; Samuel Ghelli and Donna Chirico from York College, Giulia Guarnieri from Bronx Community College; Antonietta D'Amelio from Baruch College; Steven Belluscio, Maria Enrico and Tom Means from Borough of Manhattan

Community College; Maryann Feola from the College of Staten Island.

A number of other professors have expressed interest in the Council and plan to attend future meetings.

The Council's collaborative efforts resulted in the following recommendations for future consideration:

1. Since CUNY does not formally count the number of Italian-American students we serve, the Council agreed there is a need to develop a voluntary questionnaire to identify Italian-American students in attendance at the various units.

2. The Council agreed that it would be beneficial to create a listing of qualified adjunct instructors in the areas of Italian language, Italian literature and cinema, and Italian-American studies that would serve as a hiring resource for all schools.

3. The Council discussed the creation of courses that would meet the general education requirements for students and to serve as a resource to those members who will develop such content

4. The Council agreed for the need to create an Internet space for communicating ideas in between the Council meetings. Professor Gardaphé will investigate the CUNY Academic Commons feature and establish a group entitled Italian American Studies Advisory Council.

5. The Council suggested that the Calandra Institute create a Faculty Expert

Guide that would feature the specialties of individuals who might serve as guest lecturers throughout the system.

6. The Council discussed the possibility of utilizing Calandra Institute speakers as guest lecturers when possible.

7. The Council discussed online and hybrid course development and agreed that it should sponsor a Calandra workshop led by Professor Guarnieri to assist in creating awareness of online/hybrid possibilities and to help develop courses. We will pursue the possibilities of producing the workshop during the fall semester 2010.

8. The Council expressed interest in re-establishing the Calandra Faculty Fellows program and in exploring the possibilities of pursuing grants to support pedagogic and professional development.

9. The Council suggested that the Calandra Institute create a web page for the Council that would contain members' names, affiliations and email addresses.

10. The Council suggested the exploration of creating a certificate program in Italian and Italian-American studies, for the community colleges.

11. The Council expressed an interest in regularly offering courses in Italian-American studies at the Calandra Institute.

To learn more about the Council, or if you are interested in becoming a member, contact the Chair, Professor Fred Gardaphé at 212-642-2037.

# CALANDRA INSTITUTE'S ITALIAN ANCESTRY MAPPING PROJECT

Vincenzo Milione, Itala Pelizzoli and  
Christine Gambino

The initial wave of Italian migration to the United States primarily occurred during the turn of the century, and scholars have chronicled this movement largely to the major sea ports of New York City, Baltimore and New Orleans. These eastern seaports were especially attractive to first and second generation Italians because they provided employment opportunities along with established Italian-American communities which made adaptation to the new host culture more manageable. After enhanced educational opportunities and acculturation, subsequent generations moved from the urban Italian enclaves to regional suburbs and other geographical locations throughout the United States. Italian Americans were no longer dependent upon utilizing the Italian language in daily life and the lure of professional mobility helped to fuel this migration pattern. While in some cases elderly Italians followed their children and functioned to preserve language and culture within the family, a pattern of assimilation seemed more clearly evident

The historical migration of Italians to the United States has been and continues to be the subject of scholarly inquiry, although a more comprehensive geographical analysis will enhance our understanding of the changing nature of residential mobility in contemporary America. The Institute is pleased to announce that staff members are currently engaged in the analysis of a geographic mapping project which will depict Italian ancestry residency patterns in the United States and how such patterns have changed over time. The proposed monograph will contain a county by county directory of Italian-American residence in the United States using data from the decennial census and annual American community surveys. The proposed Mapping Project will also analyze data related to the following categories: age, gender, level of occupational attainment, and level of education.

## ITALIAN-AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

As of year 2008, in the United States, Italian Americans represent 5.5% of the population. The highest concentration of

Italian Americans is in the northeast region. States with the highest percentage of Italian Americans are, in descending order: Rhode Island (19.0%), Connecticut (18.6%), New Jersey (17.9%), New York (14.4%), Massachusetts (13.5%), Pennsylvania (11.6%), Delaware (9.3%), and New Hampshire (8.5%). There are also higher-than-average percentages of Italian Americans in Nevada (6.6%), Vermont (6.4%), Florida (6.3%), Illinois (6.0%) and Ohio (6.0%). Fifty percent (50%) of the remaining states have less than three percent of the overall state population who are of Italian-American ancestry. This data suggests that residents in such states would encounter approximately 33 individuals prior to encountering an individual of Italian ancestry.

## CITIES AND REGIONS

Detailed maps depicting New York City and the tri-state area (including parts of New York State, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania) have been analyzed in efforts to capture the suburbanization of the Italian-American community. This type of regional analysis of select urban and suburban areas is also being replicated for other cities and their surrounding suburban areas, including: Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New Orleans. In each region, a clear trend demonstrates movement of younger and middle-aged Italian Americans from urban centers to suburban counties since 1990.

## NEW YORK CITY

Many of the Italians that arrived in New York City through Ellis Island found their way to downtown Manhattan into the tenements of Little Italy neighborhoods. By the 1970s, Italian Americans were dispersed throughout New York City with approximately 25% of the population of Italian ancestry.

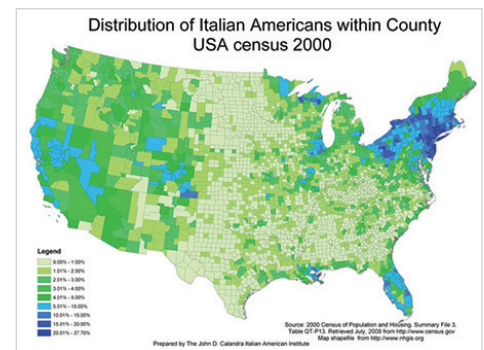
From 1970 to the 1980s, approximately 40% of the New York City Italian-American population migrated to the suburbs of Long Island, Westchester, Connecticut and Northern New Jersey. In recent years (year 2008) Italian Americans represent only 8.2 percent of the population of New York City.

The figures at right demonstrates residential patterns for the year 2000. City-wide, Italian-Americans represented 8.6% of the population in the five boroughs of NYC. Italian Americans comprised 5.5% of the population in Manhattan, 5.2% in the Bronx, 7.5% in Brooklyn, and 8.4% in Queens. However, in Staten Island, Italian Americans represented 37.7% of the population and

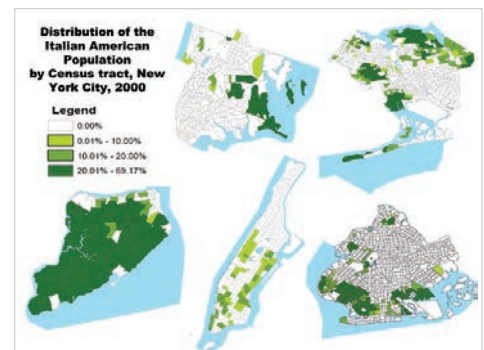
this high degree of concentration is similar to the large population of Italian Americans residing in New York City during the 1970s.

## NEW YORK CITY TRI-STATE REGION

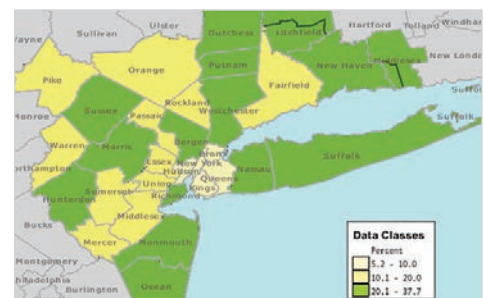
Maps of Italian-American ancestry in the New York City tri-state area clearly demonstrate the trend toward suburbanization. Italian Americans represent 16% (one out of six) of the population in the region. The counties surrounding New York City have more than double or triple New York City's percentage representation of Italian Americans (with the exception of Staten Island). As data for the Mapping Project is further analyzed the Institute will provide updates regarding the publication of the forthcoming monograph. For further information, contact Dr. Vincenzo Milione by telephone at 212-642-2091 or email at vincenzo.milione@qc.cuny.edu. \*



Distribution of Italian Americans within county, US Census 2000



Distribution of the Italian American population by census tract, New York City, 2000



Geographic distribution of Italian Americans in the New York City tri-state area, 2000

# TEACHING ITALIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE, FILM, AND POPULAR CULTURE

Rosangela Briscece

Editors Edvige Giunta (New Jersey City University) and Kathleen Zamboni McCormick (Purchase College) presented their new book *Teaching Italian American Literature, Film, and Popular Culture* at the Calandra Institute on May 17, 2010. Part of the Modern Language Association's Options for Teaching series, the collection features more than thirty scholars and teachers discussing innovative ways of teaching Italian-American works in courses ranging from American literature and history to multiethnic and women's studies. The editors were joined by contributors Mary Jo Bona (Stony Brook University), Rose De Angelis (Marist College), Fred Gardaphé (Queens College), Joseph Sciorra, and Anthony Tamburri (Calandra Institute) for a discussion of the book.

Giunta and McCormick opened the evening with an overview of the book's background, themes, and objectives. As noted in their introduction, scholars have been studying largely-forgotten Italian-American history and literary production

since the 1980s. *Teaching Italian American Literature, Film, and Popular Culture* aims to facilitate the process by which this literature and culture can be used in the classroom to recover an intellectual and ethnic past, and create a more complex understanding of American history and culture. As Giunta emphasized, "the classroom is the protagonist of this book." Informational essays survey scholarship in literature, cinema, television, performing arts, history, and ethnic studies, while pedagogical essays address classroom instruction in these subjects. Discussing the pedagogical pieces, McCormick stressed that there is "no self-aggrandizement" from the teachers who contributed to the book—they "do not believe they are spoon-feeding truths to their students." Rather, they view teaching and learning as hard work, and are willing to acknowledge and overcome student resistance.

Bona's contribution, "Rich Harvest: An Overview of Italian American Fiction," surveys approximately 120 years of writing. She noted the material reality of Italian-American lived culture and the "aesthetic thematic" that emerges from this literature as early as the 1880s. De Angelis's essay "Stripping Down: Gender Roles in Italian American Fiction by Women" guides instructors in the use of texts including Helen Barolini's *Umbertina* and Mari

Tomasi's *Like Lesser Gods*, which she teaches in her Italian American Women Writers course. Gardaphé stressed the importance of what happens outside the classroom. In his essay, "Creating a Program in Italian American Studies," he concludes that "the future of Italian-American culture will rely on the continued relation between the academy and ethnic communities of the United States." In "A Lived History under Scrutiny," the first essay to survey Italian-American performance art, Sciorra describes a "continuum of Italian-American vernacular expression, from religious processions to performance art." Tamburri, who contributed two essays about television and cinema, stressed the importance of the Modern Language Association, a major cultural institution, publishing the book. Giunta and McCormick echoed his belief that *Teaching Italian American Literature, Film, and Popular Culture* can strengthen Italian-American studies programs and, by extension, foster a deeper appreciation of Italian-American studies in the United States. •



Editors Kathleen Zamboni McCormick and Edvige Giunta

## STAFF NEWS

**LUCIA GRILLO** participated in the prestigious Cannes Film Festival Short Film Corner this past May, with her third short film, *Ad Ipponion (Ode to Hipponion)*, shot on location in Calabria, Italy. Lucia's short documentary, *Terra sogna terra (Earth Dream Earth)*, about Calabrian immigrants' gardens in New Rochelle, New York, which had its premiere screening at the Calandra Institute's "Terre Promesse" conference, was honored with a Special Screening at ModaMovie Film Festival in Calabria in June. More news about Lucia's acting and directing projects, complete with video trailers, can be found on Calabrisella Films' website: [www.calabrisellafilms.com](http://www.calabrisellafilms.com).

**JOSEPH GROSSO** published the sixth volume of *il Giornalino*. Started in 2005 to highlight the writings of his students studying Italian in high school, this latest edition features the writings of more than 200 college and high school students studying Italian in the New York metropolitan area. Copies of the journal can be obtained by contacting Mr. Grosso at [joseph.grosso@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:joseph.grosso@qc.cuny.edu).

**DR. MARIA LA RUSSO** was invited to participate in the interview selection process of Holy Cross High School (Flushing, Queens) students applying to a highly competitive summer Service Program. Selected candidates participate in an intensive leadership seminar conducted at the University of Notre Dame, Southbend Indiana, or the College of Notre Dame du Sacre Couer, Montreal, Canada. The philosophy undergirding the program espouses that youngsters who are responsive leaders within the school setting can help others to be responsive citizens outside the boundaries of the classroom. The Service Program emphasizes leadership development and commitment to one's school with special focus to serve the Queens community.

**JOSEPH SCIORRA's** article "A Lived History under Scrutiny: Italian American Performance Art" was published in *Teaching Italian American Literature, Film, and Popular Culture*, edited by Edvige Giunta and Kathleen Zamboni McCormick (Modern Language Association, 2010). In March, the publisher Legas reprinted the 1994 *Malidittu la lingua/ Damned Language*, a bilingual collection

of verse by the late Sicilian-American poet Vincenzo Ancona that Joseph edited with Anna L. Chairetakis. Joseph presented his paper "Vernacular Exegesis of the Gentrifying Gaze: Saints, Hipsters, and Public Space in Williamsburg, Brooklyn" at the "Terre Promesse" conference. The Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota awarded him a grant to consult the papers of poet, playwright, and lyricist Alessandro Sisca aka Riccardo Cordiferro.

**ANTHONY JULIAN TAMBURRI** delivered a series of lectures this year on Italian-American studies, from critical analyses of movies and books to the representation of Italian Americans in mainstream media at the turn of the twentieth century. He also published several articles and book chapters in English and Italian on similar topics. His book, *Una semiotica dell'etnicità. Nuove segnalature per la scrittura italianolamericana*, was published this past April in a series he edits, entitled "Americana," by the Florentine publisher Franco Cesati Editore. He also received the honor of "Cavaliere dell'Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana" this past spring.

## COUNSELOR'S REPORT

# ITALIAN AMERICAN CLUB AND CULTURAL INITIATIVES EXPAND AT QUEENS COLLEGE

*Joseph Grosso and Pierre Tribaudi*

Throughout the 2009-2010 academic year, there were many exciting Italian-American educational and cultural initiatives offered on the Queens College campus. Enrollment in Italian language classes continue to increase, interest in the Calandra Institute's summer Study Abroad language program in Perugia is at an all-time high, submissions for *il Giornalino* (the publication of writings from students studying Italian throughout New York) have significantly increased, courses offered in the Italian American Studies program and student registrations have expanded, and the faculty and staff association (ARIA) sponsored several events.

The most dramatic change, however, has been the success of the Italian American Club. Under the leadership of newly elected club president Italo Talerico, the club has become one of the most active on campus. The club initiated the academic year by marching with students from other CUNY campuses in the Columbus Day parade, organized bake sales, bowling tournaments, film events, participated in club fairs and international festivals, and sponsored Italian language tutorials. Regarding these activities, Talerico states, "I'm happy to have become president of the Italian American Club. To have helped turn this club around, from being barely active to where it is today, has given me great satisfaction and a sense of personal achievement. To make positive changes like this is good for the Italian-American community."

Recently, the club hosted an alumni roundtable, inviting Joseph Muzio ('55) to read excerpts from his memoir, *Buddy Remembers: Then and Now*. The book recounts his parents' life emigrating from southern Italy to Queens, New York. Muzio believes that every family has a story that needs to be told. His exploration into his family story helped him to have a "clearer understanding of myself and who I am." Muzio discussed how his parents attempted to make him and his sister "Americanized" and the inherent conflict in choosing to identify as Italian or American. He also explored themes of religion and education

and his experience with the outstanding faculty at Queens College, who helped guide him in his transition to higher education. He was the first in his family to graduate college and become a college professor. He intertwined the McCarthy Era with Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* and examined the struggle Italian immigrants encountered. Muzio encouraged attendees to learn about their ethnic heritage and family history and to maintain a "positive attitude" in efforts to foster self esteem.

Following this animated presentation, a small number of student members of the Italian American Club participated in a multi-faceted survey designed to assess attitudes toward their ethnic identity. The sample included eight female and six male students ages 18 through 23. In addition, personal interviews were conducted with four of the club officers. Following is a brief summary of the findings:

- The majority of students reported being third generation Italian American.
- When queried about their ethnic heritage, eight students reported being Italian (regardless of place of birth). One indicated Italian American; one reported Sicilian; two students reported mixed heritage, including Italian; one indicated Latino-Hispanic; one Croatian.

- When asked how they preferred to identify themselves five students reported "Italian"; five students reported "Italian American"; one student identified as "Italian/Sicilian"; one student as "Sicilian"; one student identified as "Columbian"; and one student as "Croatian American."

- English is the primary language spoken at home for six respondents while Italian and Sicilian was reported by two students. Spanish and Croatian each received one response.

- The median grade point average for respondents is 3.3 (ranging from 2.8 to 3.8). Students reported a range of majors including Italian. 50% of respondents reported career plans to become teachers with remaining students reporting interest in law, psychology and business careers. Thirteen students reported plans to attend graduate school.

From both the preliminary quantitative and qualitative data analysis it was evident that the issue of ethnic identity is very important to students. Similar to the discussion by Professor Muzio, some club members reported that their family "negated their ethnicity in favor of assimilation to

American society." In addition, concerns about "stereotyping" and "negative perceptions about being Italian American" emerged for several students. A diverse range of opinions about television programs including *Jersey Shore* and *The Sopranos* were expressed. Talerico and other club members reported that *Jersey Shore* presents a "distorted image of Italian Americans." Students unanimously expressed that open discussion of such issues and Italian-American studies programs are essential to an increased understanding and acceptance of what it means to be Italian American in contemporary society.

We are pleased with the accomplishments of the club leadership and members, and eagerly look forward to next year's programming and events. •



*Joseph Muzio reads excerpts from his memoir "Buddy Remembers: Then and Now."*

## ITALIAN HERITAGE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE OF NEW YORK, INC.



Members of the Board of Directors of the IHCC. Cav. J. Sciame, second from right, is holding this year's poster. For more information on the IHCC and this year's theme, you can visit <http://www.italyculturemonth.org>.

## IN PIAZZA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF THE MOLISE REGION IN AMERICA

*Joseph Sciorra*

The latest venue for Italian-American culture has been established in a former optometrist's storefront in Long Island City, Queens. In what has been rechristened the "Buzzeo Building" at 31-16 36th Avenue, Alfredo Brunetti founded the "Cultural Association of the Molise Region in America" in 2007 to feature the central Italian region's artistic and culinary offerings. Brunetti, the Association president, arrived in New York City four years ago from Oratino (Campobasso province), where he previously served as town mayor.

The Association's space is a gallery where several exhibitions have been mounted over the past three years. The first show, "In

the Realm of Fantasy," opened in March 2007 and featured the fantastical necklaces of Italian artist Bianca Peracchi. This craft exhibit was followed by another, "Caprice in Wood," highlighting the woodworking of Italian-American Michele Brunetti, who immigrated to the United States in 1958. He worked as a carpenter for twelve years before turning his talents to creating carvings out of ash, mahogany, walnut, and other woods.

In 2008, the Association mounted two separate exhibitions of Italian photographs by Mauro Presutti and Paolo Cardone. The following year, a "photographic reportage" of the 2009 earthquake in Abruzzo by Flavio Brunetti depicted the haunting devastation in the city of L'Aquila. Renowned Italian-American photographer Tony Vaccaro presented works from his opus, including portraits of Sophia Loren, Pablo Picasso, Georgia O'Keefe, and Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as dramatic images of post-World War II Italy, in a striking show held December 2009–April 2010. Vaccaro has his roots in

the town of Bonefro (Campobasso province) and has lived in Long Island City since 1994.

Along with his wife Rosemarie Buzzeo, Alfredo Brunetti has also sponsored Molisani wine tastings, classes in Italian conversation, and film screenings. The Association recently held its third annual barbecue in Ridge Road Park, in Hartsdale, New York. For more information email [abrunettiusa@aol.com](mailto:abrunettiusa@aol.com) or call 917-734-8964.



*Alfredo Brunetti, President of the Cultural Association of the Molise Region in America*

## AUDIENCE PROFILE CLAIRE AND ANNA PIPOLO

*Rosangela Briscese*



Anna and Claire Pipolo ride the express bus from Bay Terrace, Queens, to attend the Calandra Institute's monthly events. The sisters were born in East Harlem during the Great Depression—at 114th Street and Pleasant Avenue, near Rao's Restaurant—and lived in a brownstone with their parents and grandparents, who came from the Campania region. They have fond memories of East Harlem, from its Italian bakeries to the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Feast, where they once saw Carlo Buti perform. "People who were not from the

neighborhood thought it was dangerous," Claire, 78, shares, "but we always felt it was extremely safe." In the 1950s, they moved to the Wakefield section of the Bronx, then to Jackson Heights, Queens, before settling in Bay Terrace. While Anna and Claire agree their current neighborhood does not have the "heart and soul" of East Harlem, they enjoy the relative calm and quiet Bay Terrace offers for "kids and old people," Anna, 80, jokes, "and we're old!" Avid golfers for the past thirty years, they live within walking distance of the Clearview Golf Course. The Pipolos are also opera enthusiasts and hold subscriptions to the Metropolitan Opera. They estimate they have been attending Calandra events for close to fifteen years. Their favorite programs include the documentary film screenings of *I Build the Towers* (September 18, 2007), about Sam Rodia's Watts Towers, and *Louis Prima: The Wildest!* (April 15, 2008). Since their parents and grandparents spoke to them only in English, the sisters feel they had limited exposure to Italian language and culture while growing up. They come to the Calandra Institute to "connect with their roots." Anna and Claire share a deep appreciation for "Calandra keeping us in touch with all things Italian and Italian American!"

## FROM THE ARCHIVES



*The Fugitives at the 1964-1965 New York World's Fair, September 13, 1965. From left to right: Eugene Gregoretti, John La Barbera, unidentified drummer, Dennis La Barbera, and Billy Giramonte.*

*The World's Fair (1964-65) in Flushing Meadows Park, Queens, introduced me to many cultures. By 1964, my brother Dennis, my best friend Eugene Gregoretti, and I formed the Fugitives, named after the popular TV show. Having the opportunity to perform at the World's Fair was an incredible experience. Our stage was the New York State Pavilion, which seemed at that time right out of a science fiction fantasy. It was worlds away from our small neighborhood in South Ozone Park, even though the distance was only a few miles. It was raining hard that day, but we performed anyway. We did not want to disappoint the audience, made up entirely of our families.*

— JOHN T. LA BARBERA  
Bergen Community College and I Giullari di Piazza



## ITALIAN AMERICAN FACULTY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL CAMPUS DELEGATE SPOTLIGHT: BARUCH COLLEGE

Donna Chirico



**CARMINE R. TEDESCO**  
Delegate

Carmine R. Tedesco is the Controller of Baruch College where he is responsible for the management of all facets of the Office of the Controller. Carmine is a true finance professional with extensive experience in developing, implementing and administering finance and accounting functions for organizations ranging from multi-billion dollar international operations (Alitalia Airline) to family owned enterprises (Global Equipment Corporation) to not-for-profit operations (Queens Library).

Carmine and his family immigrated to New York from Andretta (Avellino province), when he was eleven years old. Carmine received his undergraduate degree from Fordham University and MBA from Adelphi University. He is married and has two sons, Gregory and Louis, who are both interested in business related careers. Wife, Anne, is on the music faculty of St. Johns University and is a concert pianist.

Carmine, one of the newest members, is pleased to serve as Council delegate.

The Italian American Faculty and Staff Advisory Council works to ensure that Italian Americans are treated fairly in accordance with their affirmative action status at CUNY. The Council raises awareness about the position of Italian Americans through its presence on each campus in the work of its campus delegates.

At present, the Council is working with representatives from CUNY Central Office to update the online student application for admission. The current version does not permit students to indicate ethnic identification, but instead asks for "country



**MICHAEL LOVAGLIO**  
Alternate Delegate

Michael Lovaglio is the Director of Student Affairs and Graduate Admissions for the School of Public Affairs at Baruch College. Prior to working at Baruch, he held management positions in admissions at Brooklyn College and City College as well as other administrative positions at the Julliard School, Columbia University, and Polytechnic University. Michael holds a BA in psychology/art history from New York University, and has taken coursework in the Experimental Psychology program at Brooklyn College. A seasoned student affairs and admissions professional, Michael is particularly experienced in international admissions and credits his work at the City University for his familiarity with global trends in international education.

Although born in Brooklyn, Michael's parents and three of his seven siblings immigrated to the United States in 1957 from Sala Consilina (Salerno province).

Michael is honored to serve the Council as Baruch College's alternate delegate.

of origin." Students who are born in the United States are not able to identify their ethnicity because of this shortcoming. A new approach would permit the counting of students across ethnicities, serving both CUNY as a model of student diversity and scholars interested in the study of ethnic identity and educational attainment.

To learn more about the council, or if you are interested in becoming a campus delegate, contact Dr. Donna Chirico, Chair of the Italian American Faculty Staff Advisory Council, by telephone at 718-262-2687 or by email at [chirico@york.cuny.edu](mailto:chirico@york.cuny.edu)

## STUDENT NEWS



**GABRIELLE PATI**

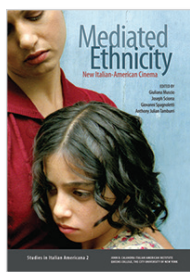
The Calandra Institute is pleased to announce that Gabrielle Pati, a part-time staff member in the Institute's archive library, is the recipient of two scholarship awards. This past May, Ms. Pati received the Francesca Pagano Award from the Department of Romance Languages at Hunter College. In June, she was recognized for her academic excellence by the National Organization of Italian American Women at their 30th Anniversary Gala, where she was awarded a prestigious scholarship bestowed to "outstanding candidates to nourish and support educational advancement." Gabrielle earned a Bachelor's degree in English literature and Italian at Hunter where she founded the Dante Club, demonstrating early in her academic career her passion for Italian literature. Ms. Pati is currently a graduate student at Hunter College matriculated in the Master's program in Italian and Adolescent Education. *Auguri!*



**ITALO TALERICO**

Queens College student and president of the Italian American Club, Italo Talerico received a Solomon Levine Memorial Scholarship Endowment from the Department of Secondary Education. The scholarship is awarded to undergraduate or graduate students who have earned a minimum GPA of 3.0 and are pursuing a career in secondary education. *Complimenti!*

**ON THE COVER** of this issue is a detail of the work of Italian-American artist Joanne Mattera, whose paintings have been exhibited and collected internationally. Says Mattera, "My work is chromatically resonant, physically tangible, and compositionally reductive. I call it lush minimalism." Her work will be on view at the Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, in September, and in a solo show at the Arden Gallery, Boston, in November. Mattera is the author of the Joanne Mattera Art Blog ([www.joanemattera.blogspot.com](http://www.joanemattera.blogspot.com)) that explores art and culture in New York City and elsewhere. She plans to blog from Ortona a Mare, her mother's hometown, in the spring.



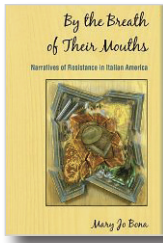
Coming soon from the Calandra Institute!

### Mediated Ethnicity: New Italian-American Cinema

\$28, 320 pages, ISBN 978-0-9703403-6-8

Edited by Giuliana Muscio, Joseph Sciorra, Giovanni Spagnoletti, Anthony Julian Tamburri, and featuring essays by twenty-two authors, *Mediated Ethnicity: New Italian American Cinema* is an English translation of the anthology *Quei bravi ragazzi* (2007), part of a growing analysis of Italian-American history and culture by scholars in Italy.

Fred Gardaphé



*By the Breath of Their Mouths: Narratives of Resistance in Italian America*

Mary Jo Bona  
\$24.95 paperback  
978-1-4384-2996-0  
www.sunypress.edu

Mary Jo Bona, Professor of Italian American Studies at Stony Brook University, and the chairperson of the Women's and Gender Studies Program, is renowned for her teaching, scholarship and poetry. She has published essays and critical studies that have become essential reading in the field of Italian-American studies. Bona advises graduate students, edits a book series at SUNY Press, has directed the Italian American Studies Program at Stony Brook and is past-president of the American Italian Historical Association. It is difficult to locate anyone as committed as she is to the field of American multicultural studies and Italian-American studies in particular, and now she has brought the best of her experiences and knowledge to bear in a new publication.

*By the Breath of Their Mouths: Narratives of Resistance in Italian America* is Bona's latest publication, a unique study of Italian-American literature old and new. She uses a thematic approach that focuses on issues of justice, faith, storytelling, land, history, influence, death and revival. Through this work she builds a bridge to the next phase of Italian-American literary criticism—the integration of Italian-American writings into the U.S. canon.

The entire work is pedagogically sound. Whether you are reading the novels for the first time or teaching them for the tenth, you discover insights that transport you beyond your own thinking to new levels of perception. The elegant, careful style of writing is erudite without being opaque. Each essay is constructed through rigorously informed criticism, the result of working and rehearsing ideas for years before putting them down on the page, of testing those ideas in conference presentations, public lectures, and classrooms, distilling those experiences into wisdom appearing in the written word.

"Acts of writing ensured Italian Americans of at least two things: that they would not forget an ancestral heritage replete with communal and inclusive storytelling traditions; and that assimilation in America could be deflected by recording and establishing resistant voices in narratives expressive of folk practices and family cultures."

Justice and, more specifically, the relation of private justice to folklore traditions situated

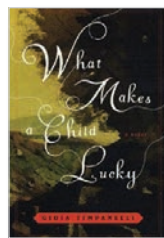
in the writings of Pietro di Donato, Mari Tomasi, Jerre Mangione, Tina DeRosa, and Tony Ardigzone are explored.

Bona's essay on faith brings new perspectives regarding women and Catholicism, confessing, and interpretations leading to insights such as, "Italian-American authors have regularly developed characters whose brand of Catholicism—unorthodox at best—requires them to function in a doubly marginalized way—as Italian-American Catholics and as Italian-American citizens."

If you have ever thought that Italian-American literature does not matter then doubt no more! Bona's mastery of the history and criticism of U.S. American literature demonstrates the centrality and vitality of this vein of the American literary goldmine. This is employed best in her chapter on the writer Guido D'Agostino, co-written with one of her graduate students, JoAnne Ruvoli. The co-authors observe D'Agostino's attempt to contribute to U.S. literature as "allow[ing] him to discover echoes of his soul, which also remained tied to his parents' ancestral homeland—Sicily." You don't have to shed your roots in order to become American and you don't have to write about your roots to be an Italian-American writer.

Bona's comparative style exacts readings of such writers as Tina DeRosa and the Barbadian/American writer Paule Marshall that invigorate the field. She examines intracultural influences by applying that approach to her readings of Louise DeSalvo, Mary Cappello, and Maria Gillan with Rose Romano.

Her chapter on death and bereavement explains much about the way Italian Americans examine their lives and mourn those they love in the context of their cultural history. She concludes with a finale that will easily become the prelude to the next important study of Italian-American literature.



*What Makes a Child Lucky*

Gioia Timpanelli  
\$19.95 hardcover  
978-0-393-06702-6  
www.wwnorton.com

Gioia Timpanelli might be called the "Dean of American Storytelling," but I like to think of her as the *Commare* of the word. Like a wise friend, her stories and writings counsel as they console, enliven as they entertain, and unite us all with narrative threads that bind us to ancient truths. Like a midwife, her labor with words assists in the birth of new thinking about old things.

Timpanelli has won many awards for her storytelling in television and literature; her last

novel *Sometimes the Soul: Two Novellas of Sicily*, won a 1999 American Book Award. Her new novel, *What Makes a Child Lucky*, brings us to her beloved Sicily, origins of much of her art and many of the great stories of Western civilization. Based on a Sicilian folktale of a boy who is sent by his brothers to steal an ogre's treasure, the narrative takes off from this familiar tale and moves in new and interesting directions that renew the story for a contemporary world.

It doesn't take a village to raise a child if you have one good godmother—and ultimately that is what thirteen-year old Joseph realizes after he is betrayed by his jealous brothers who send him to the mayor's office. The mayor forces him on an errand into the hills to deal with the very bandits who killed Joseph's best friend, Pasquale the wine carrier. Joseph knows this terrain well from gathering food for his mother's cooking, but he has no idea what he is about to encounter when he meets an ancient woman and the bandits she cares for.

Joseph's experience and familial separation are clarified one day as he listens to a shepherd piping a song: "As a child I had lived inside my own life with whatever I had found there, so I never imagined life as separate from my family, but now I saw and heard something new, something greater than my small life, something that had been created." Joseph discovers the personal power that comes from creating and it leads him to live a life in favor of art and against destruction. He finds that his stories have power that he never could have imagined; they can make him visible or invisible, and through these strange experiences, mediated by Immaculata, the woman who cooks for the bandits, he learns how to prepare meals that sustain and nurture him in addition to learning how to construct a life in the balance of good and evil.

It's not just Immaculata's words that teach Joseph how to handle things; it's sometimes just the way she looks at him, as when he leaves her to live with the bandits. As he turns to wave goodbye he sees her non-verbal behavior is that of indifference, "Then her face changed, and without hesitation she looked right into my eyes with the most compassionate look I have ever seen in my life . . . Before this moment I had only understood that word 'compassion' in terms of deeds and actions. Deeds and actions I understood; but a 'look' that could change you?"

Creativity and compassion are just two of the many lessons learned by Joseph in this tale of adventure and maturity. Timpanelli adapts her verbal art to meet the needs of the page and rewards the eye with rich imagery and the soul with strong sentiment. Often what she writes is pure music, and the songs she creates invite us to sing along. She maintains a sense of presence that is key to the oral tradition, and is able to meet the demands of the written word. This master storyteller has concocted a strange brew out of familiar ingredients. *What Makes a Child Lucky* deserves a special place on every family's bookshelf. *Brava maestra* Timpanelli!

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# The 3 Fs in Italian Cultures: Critical Approaches to Food, Fashion, and Film

The Calandra Institute announces its fourth annual conference dedicated to the theme of food, fashion, and film. The conference will be held on April 28–30, 2011 at the Institute offices.

In the second half of the twentieth century, food, fashion, and film became fundamental icons of Italian culture. These three cultural *fora* have become critical arenas where the notion of an “Italian style” is formulated, marketed, and consumed as an articulation of identity at local, national, and global levels. Food, fashion, and film are key points of encounter in the symbiotic circuitry between Italy and its diaspora, and have contributed to the construction of identity within geo-political/economic spheres. This conference offers a venue for the exploration of such identity markers and how they have shaped general perceptions of Italians around the world.

Suggested paper topics include, but are not limited to:

- The history and culture of *la miseria* (poverty and hunger).
- Notions of authenticity and nostalgia in the invention of an Italian cuisine.
- Food as labor, e.g., the domestic kitchen, African immigrants in Calabria.

- Food as spectacle, e.g. *sagre*, the religious street *feste*, television cooking shows.
- Regional Italian-American hybrids; e.g., St. Louis toasted raviolis, New Orleans muffuletta, Manhattan clam chowder.
- Cinematic depictions of food, e.g., *Big Night*, *Dinner Rush*.
- Literary depictions of food.
- Cinematic, culinary, and fashion tourism, e.g., slumming in Little Italies, agriturismo.
- The Italian diaspora as a market for Italian food and film.
- Current trends in Italian-Australian and Italian-Canadian filmmaking.
- Film and fashion, e.g., *Roma*, *Blood and Black Lace*, *Valentino: The Last Emperor*.

In addition to scholarly papers and panels, this conference is open to presenting creative work (fiction, poetry, memoir, film, performance, etc.). The official language of the conference will be English. All presentations are to last no longer than twenty minutes, including audio and visual illustrations that accompany presentations.

Deadline for submissions is September 15, 2010. Abstracts for scholarly papers (up to 250 words, plus a note on technical requirements, and a brief curriculum vitae) should be emailed as an attached document, by September 15th to [calandra@qc.edu](mailto:calandra@qc.edu), to whom other inquiries may also be addressed.

We encourage the submission of organized panels (of no more than three presenters). Submission for a panel must be made by a single individual on behalf of the group, with all the paper titles, abstract

narratives, and individual curricula vitae.

Proposals to present creative work must include the work itself (plus a note on technical requirements, and a brief curriculum vitae). Films or videos must be mailed as a DVD by the deadline to: The 3 Fs in Italian Cultures Conference, Calandra Institute, 25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, New York, NY 10036.

Proposals will be evaluated anonymously through peer review and prospective presenters may expect to be advised of their acceptance or otherwise by December 1, 2010.

## AUTHOR AWARDS

We would like to congratulate two past Calandra Institute presenters whose work has recently been acknowledged:

- Author Salvatore Scibona was named a 2010 Guggenheim Fellow and was included in the New Yorker’s “20 Under 40,” a list of twenty young writers who “capture the inventiveness and the vitality of contemporary American fiction.” Mr. Scibona read from his acclaimed novel *The End* (Graywolf Press, 2008) as part of the Calandra Institute’s Writers Read series on November 4, 2009.
- Angela Dalle Vacche received the Choice Magazine 2009 Outstanding Academic Book Award for *Diva: Defiance and Passion in Early Italian Cinema* (University of Texas Press, 2008). Professor Dalle Vacche presented as part of the Philip V. Cannistraro Seminar Series in Italian American Studies on February 25, 2010.

## SAVE THE DATE: NOVEMBER 5, 2010

# Hybrid Moments: Independent Music in Italian America Symposium

Rosangela Briscese

How is it that an Italian-American grandmother’s gesture against the evil eye became the internationally recognized symbol for heavy metal music? What does the “Frank Sinatra of the punk scene” sound like? And why do so many punk bands—the Ramones, the Rezillos, Fugazi—want to be Italian?

The Calandra Institute has explored the Neapolitan song, jazz, doo-wop, and rap in relation to Italian Americans in past lectures and symposia. While these histories of Italian Americans are well documented, little is known about their contributions to various types of alternative, independent,

or underground music—metal, punk, experimental, singer-songwriter—and their associated subcultures. Artists from Ronnie James Dio (Black Sabbath) to Vinnie Stigma (Agnostic Front), from Natalie Merchant to Ani Di Franco, represent an Italian presence—sometimes veiled, sometimes overt—in the American music scene. Ethnic identity has not been the defining feature of alternative musicians’ creativity, yet Italian-American artists’ *italianità* is revealed through name change or retention, lyrics, cultivated persona, or performance style.

On November 5, 2010, we are pleased to present the symposium “Hybrid Moments: Independent Music in Italian America,” which will bring together artists and scholars to discuss topics including the Italian-American influence in independent music-making, the experience of negotiating ethnic identity and subculture identity, and the assertion, or lack thereof, of Italianness

in performers’ musical personae. Antonino D’Ambrosio (author and filmmaker), Gerry LaFemina (poet and musician), Carl Porcaro (Killing Time), Cliff Rigano (Dry Kill Logic), and Vic Ruggiero (The Slackers) are among the scheduled participants. Prior to the event, the Institute’s “Documented Italians” film and video series will feature a screening of *Average Community* on November 4. The documentary, by brothers Fred, Christopher, and Joe Zara, is a cinematic reflection on their experiences playing in the punk band Prisoners of War in 1980s Trenton, New Jersey.



Members of the 1980s punk band Prisoners of War



John D. Calandra  
 Italian American Institute  
 Queens College, CUNY  
 25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor  
 New York, NY 10036



# ITALIAN AMERICAN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 7–9, 2010

The John D. Calandra Italian American Institute (Queens College, CUNY) announces a conference dedicated to counseling and psychological issues in the Italian-American community. The conference will examine issues concerning ethnic identity development, grief and loss, personal narratives, women and family issues, and Italian Americans as consumers of mental health services. Ultimately, the conference will focus on the development and changing nature of psychological and familial structures in the Italian-American community.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Psychologists, mental health counselors, social workers, family therapists, couples counselors, academic researchers, students, and those providing services to the population. The conference will also be of interest to members of the Italian-American community.

## CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday evening reception and keynote address by:

- Richard Gambino, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Queens College, author of *Blood of My Blood*

Friday conference sessions include:

- Joseph Giordano, MSW, co-editor of *Ethnicity and Family Therapy*
- Aileen Riotto Sirey, PhD, founder of National Organization of Italian American Women, pioneer in ethnotherapy.
- Saturday evening special film screening of *Canvas* with writer/director Joseph Greco and others.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE. TO REGISTER CALL 212-642-2094.

For further information, contact Dominick Carielli, PhD: dominick.carielli@qc.cuny.edu

## MONTHLY SERIES CALENDAR

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

Wednesday, September 22, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City  
 JENNIFER GUGLIELMO, Smith College

Thursday, October 14, 2010 at 6 p.m.

"The Power of What Comes After": Italian-American Death Talk  
 MARY JO BONA, Stony Brook University

Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Anti-Catholicism and National Security Politics in World War II San Francisco  
 WILLIAM ISSEL, San Francisco State University

Thursday, December 9, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Performing Italian in the American Songbook  
 MARK ROTELLA

### WRITERS READ SERIES

Monday, September 27, 2010 at 6 p.m.

MARY CAPONEGRO reads from *All Fall Down* (Coffee House Press, 2009)

Tuesday, October 5, 2010 at 6 p.m.

Readings from *Avanti Popolo: Italian-American Writers Sail Beyond Columbus* (Manic D Press, 2008)

Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at 6 p.m.

GIOIA TIMPANELLI reads from *What Makes a Child Lucky* (W.W. Norton, 2008)

Monday, December 13, 2010 at 6 p.m.

FRANK LENTRICCHIA reads from *The Italian Actress* (SUNY Press, 2009)

### DOCUMENTED ITALIANS

Wednesday, September 29, 2010 at 6 p.m.

*Zampogna: The Soul of Southern Italy* (2010), 82 min.  
 DAVID MARKER, dir.

Monday, October 18, 2010 at 6 p.m.

*In Altro Mare* (2010), 56 min.  
 FRANCO LA CECLA, dir.

Thursday, November 4, 2010 at 6 p.m.

*Average Community* (2010), 86 min.  
 FRED ZARA, dir.

Monday, December 6, 2010 at 6 p.m.

*Totó* (2009), 128 min.  
 PETER SCHREINER, dir.

Special Guest Presentation

Thursday, December 2, 2010 at 6 p.m.

*Italy in Early American Cinema: Race, Landscape, and the Picturesque*  
 GIORGIO BERTELLINI, University of Michigan

> All SEMINARS, READINGS, and FILMS take place at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, 25 West 43rd Street, 17th floor, Manhattan  
 All events are free and open to the public. Pre-register by calling 212-642-2094. Photo ID requested by building concierge.