

JOHN D.  
CALANDRA  
ITALIAN  
AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE

# *il Bollettino*

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



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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 12.1 of *il Bollettino*! 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 the Calandra Institute annual conference on April 26–27, 2019. This year's theme is "Eye-Centricity and the Visual Cultures of Italy and Its Diaspora." You can find the full program on page 6.

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute. Much has been accomplished over the years, and much still needs to be done! Our activities will commemorate this milestone and address many concerns of our overall community as we move forward.

We continue to enjoy support from many. As always, we are extremely grateful for the support of Interim Chancellor Vita Rabinowitz's Office of CUNY and President Félix Matos Rodríguez's Office of Queens College.

Finally, our heartfelt congratulations to President Matos Rodríguez on his appointment as CUNY Chancellor.

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

— Anthony Julian Tamburri  
Dean and Distinguished Professor

## DIVERSITY IN ITALIAN STUDIES

On January 17–18, 2019, the Calandra Institute convened a symposium to address diversity in Italian studies, a topic that has been largely overlooked in academia.

This symposium was organized as an expanded conversation with an article by Deborah Parker, University of Virginia, titled "Race and Foreign Language" (*Inside Higher Ed*, June 21, 2018). Parker, an Asian American and professor of Italian, discussed the issue of being "a minority (Asian) in a field (Italian) in which there are very few minorities."

The keynote address by Parker covered three overarching themes: Minority Voices in Italian Spaces; Other Models: More Inclusive Spaces; and What Can We Do?

Twenty-two scholars, from CUNY and universities across the United States as well as Canada, China, and Ireland, gathered to discuss their professional experiences of and scholarly perspectives on the state of diversity in Italian studies. The presentations identified innovative directions and collaborative potentials for the future of Italian studies.

Video of the symposium is available on the *Italics* YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ItalicsTV>

The *New York Times* invited

### STAFF NEWS

JOSEPH SCIORRA to write for its "Lens" blog about Philadelphia photographer David Maialetti's new book *Luzzara, Another Look*, a bilingual edition published in Italy last year. Maialetti spent four years documenting the town of Luzzara in the Emilia-Romagna region where famed photographer Paul Strand worked in the early 1950s. Sciorra's article can be found at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/31/lens/american-photographers-italian-village-luzzara.html>.

OLIVIA TURSI and Trisha Rossi presented "Italian American Women in Psychotherapy: Perspectives and Reflections" at Queens College on November 14, 2018. Tursi discussed her experience with cultural gender norms and its influence on her work as a psychotherapist, as well as gender norms affecting young Italian American women today.



*I make collages, prints, banners, and carved and painted sculptures that record a journey of ideas and memories around the unseen and the unknown, reflecting on time and mortality through facets of my personal history.*

— NANCY AZARA

[nancyazara.com](http://nancyazara.com)

On the cover: *Leaves in Shadow*, 2016, aquatint on vellum, 17 x 14 inches. Printed by VanDeb Editions. Above: *Crow Banner 1*, 56 x 42 inches, mixed media on mylar. © Nancy Azara.

This year's ITALIAN DIASPORA SUMMER STUDIES PROGRAM will take place June 17–July 5, 2019, at Roma Tre University, Italy. The collaborative program introduces doctoral students and professors to cultural studies of the Italian diaspora and fosters development of individual research projects.

The *Italian American Review* is pleased to announce it has a new film review editor, REBECCA BAUMANN, assistant professor of Italian at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Baumann received her BA from Vassar College and her PhD from Columbia University in Italian, with a specialization in Italian cinema. She has taught courses on film adaptation, Italian cultural studies, and Italian American culture and has lectured on Italian cinema at the Film Society of Lincoln Center and other film festivals.

THE LEGACY OF LOUISE DESALVO: A conversation moderated by Edvige Giunta with Rosemary Ahearn, Mary Jo Bona, Nancy Caronia, Fredric W. Nachbaur, Stanislaw Pugliese, Jennifer Romanello, Julija Šukys, and Anthony J. Tamburri will take place at the Calandra Institute on May 2, 2019, at 6 pm.



## FUORI COLLANA AT THE CALANDRA INSTITUTE

DECEMBER 5, 2018 Contextualizing Migrations and Notions of Belonging

This roundtable discussion was convened to explore migration within Italian American Studies, academia, and the larger culture. Participants included professors from across the City University of New York: Richard Alba (Graduate Center), George Andreopoulos (John Jay), Peter Vellon (Queens), and was moderated by Donna Chirico (York). Confronting what Richard Alba described as “one of the most important issues of the century,” the panelists explored contemporary trends in migration through historical examples, social customs and culture, and legal parameters.

Assessing various perspectives and challenges, the panelists debated ways of framing discourse on migration that do not minimize the potential obstacles for the receiving communities nor dehumanize individuals confronted with systemic violence, failing economies, or the threatening effects of climate change. Peter Vellon noted that such a conversation also required nations to discuss their role in affecting conditions that spur migration in greater numbers, citing policies of the United States in Central and South America as examples.

Considering differences between integration and assimilation, George Andreopoulos asked, “Is it possible for [an individual] to pursue a credible lifestyle with an education and economic security that will enable her to make an informed choice [between leaving or remaining in her community]?” Commentary of the participants and audience alike offered a solid foundation of the issues at hand, highlighted the rich potential of such a field of study, and demanded more informed, thoughtful analyses and policies on migration in academia, government, and society at large.

OCTOBER 23, 2018 Health and Nutrition: Italian Mediterranean Style  
This one-day symposium organized by Vincenzo Milione and Alessandra Moia investigated the health benefits of the mediterranean diet. Presentations were given by academics, municipal and business leaders, and medical professionals from Italy and the United States. Discussions focused on longevity among the Italian population, healing benefits for cancer treatment, and nutrition maintenance. A compilation of conference proceedings will be published by the Calandra Institute.

## TELEVISION FOR THE ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

### EPISODE HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2019

In January *Italics* featured the 2018 Italian Language Intercultural Alliance Fourteenth Annual Gala weekend. A Friday evening symposium, “The Dance of Culture and Business: How do the Arts Influence the Economy,” was held at the Calandra Institute, and a Saturday gala took place at the Queens Museum.

In February, Francesco “Kento” Carlo, one of Italy’s most noted rappers, discussed his memoir *Resistenza Rap: music, struggle, and (perhaps) poetry / how hip-hop changed my life*.

The March episode presented the annual Three Wise Women ceremony, hosted by the greater New York region of the National Organization of Italian American Women.



Mvula Sungani Physical Dance at ILICA's 2018 Gala

The Calandra Institute announces a new video platform, **Calandra TV**, as a complement to the regular *Italics* television program on CUNY TV.



Stay tuned for exciting new programming this season!

*Italics* premieres the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 pm and is rebroadcast the following 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



@ItalicsTV



youtube.com/ItalicsTV

### "Touching at a Distance": A Meditation on Italian American Soundfulness, by John Gennari

The lead essay, based on Gennari's keynote lecture at the 2017 Calandra Institute conference, considers the resonance of Italian American voices in the interpersonal family setting as well as in popular music and media. Reflecting on his own work on the intersection and overlap between Italian American and African American vernacular sonic cultures and inspired and guided by Jennifer L. Stoeber's theory of the sonic color line, Gennari suggests how figures like Enrico Caruso, Frank Sinatra, Annie Lanzillotto, and many ordinary Italian Americans of his parents' generation enacted modes of sounding and listening that diverged from conventional Anglo-American cultural norms.

### *Parla Comme T'Ha Fatta Mammata?*: Identity Formation through Sonic Codeswitching in 1920s Italian American Song, by Isabella Livorni

When the recording industry began to emerge in earnest in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century, American record companies became aware of large swaths of the population whom their records were not reaching: the non-English-speaking members of the population. Thus, the production of so-called "ethnic records" in the United States began. Italian American ethnic records were a large component of this industry and circulated widely among Italians and Italian Americans. The recording industry's focus on the coincidence of language, genre, performer, and audience in Italian American ethnic records enforced conceptions and stereotypes about Italian American identity within the rest of the American population. However, despite the recording industry's propagation of specific and stereotypical conceptions of Italian American identity, the corpus of Italian American ethnic recordings reflects a much more complex way of conceiving of an "ethnic" Italian American identity in early twentieth-century United States. This complexity is articulated through oral performance and the creation, within a recording, of a sonic code that uses various aural cues to promote ambiguity, fluidity, hybridity, and multiplicity in the face of the reification of Italian identity occurring beyond the Italian American community. Timbre,



*Enrico Caruso with Victrola*

vocal inflection, spoken or sung delivery, codeswitching between languages, and the presence or absence of an accent in either language provided a way for performers to explore a hybrid identity despite the imposition of the monolithic conception of ethnicity embraced by the recording industry and non-Italian communities in the United States. This paper examines recordings by famed Italian American performers like Eduardo Migliaccio, Giuseppe de Laurentiis, and the Coppia Ruby-De Russo and argues that despite the record companies' marketing and advertising, the recordings themselves found a way to sonically defy the imposition of an established conception of Italian identity in an American context. They lived in the interstices of the two identities, destabilizing the dominant narrative of Italian American identity through aural cues accessible to the listener who possessed the necessary materials to crack the code.

### What's Amore? Solarity and Subversion in an Italian American Pop Song, by Tad Tuleja

Dean Martin's recording of "That's Amore," one of the most successful popular songs of the 1950s, remains, six decades after its release, a pervasive sonic marker of Italian America. Locating its initial success within a postwar vogue for all things Italian, this paper explores both the "Long Fifties" cultural milieu that welcomed it so warmly and the intrinsic "catchiness" that sustains its popularity today. That quality reflected the melodic skills of a Brooklyn-born Puccini lover, the sly wit of a British lyricist, and the languid stylings of an Ohio-born nightclub singer. The Oscar-nominated song—particularly in its original setting in the Dean Martin-Jerry Lewis comedy *The Caddy*—reveals satirical elements that undercut its "Neapolitan solarity" and suggest a subversive tweaking of stereotypes about "Italianness" and love. The paper concludes by considering why a song sometimes dismissed as "trite" or "mock Italian" remains a beloved marker of *italianità* among Italians and non-Italians alike.

### "Goombish": On Italian American Vernacular English and the Sonic Color Line, by James Pasto

This article identifies an idiom of local speech labeled Italian American Vernacular English (IAVE), or, in North End tongue, "Goombish." Taking care to distinguish this spoken language from the hybrid Italo-English of first-generation immigrants, the article presents Goombish as a sonic bulwark of North End working-class community identity up through the 1980s, before the emergence of a middle-class Italian heritage tourist economy in which standard Italian has carried more cultural capital than the local vernacular. It points out that Goombish, and similar IAVE variants in other locales, have never been examined closely in the extensive sociological and historical scholarship on Italian American urban neighborhoods. This may at least partially explain why this spoken language—like the vernaculars of other white ethnic working-class groups—has yet to be adequately recognized in the growing field of racial linguistics, which continues largely to posit a sociolinguistic sonic color line separating an undifferentiated, presumptive middle-class whiteness from a presumptive working- and lower-class non-whiteness.

### Sonic Affinities: Sicilian and African American Musical Encounters in New Orleans, by George De Stefano

This paper revisits the much-trodden terrain of New Orleans musical culture to spotlight an enduring but under-recognized affinity between Sicilian Americans and African Americans. Noting, but moving beyond, the well-rehearsed story of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, led by the racist cornetist Nick LaRocca, and the vital Sicilian presence in early jazz, the article focuses on three Sicilian New Orleanians—recording engineer and studio owner Cosimo Matassa; jazz saxophonist Alphonse Belletto; and musician, songwriter, and producer Carlo Ditta—who, in pointed contrast to La Rocca, found the space of music making and listening one of enriching cross-racial intimacy and shared community. For these Sicilians, the "sonic attraction" of black music formed the basis for cooperative and mutualistic social relations during a period when the racial climate of greater New Orleans was becoming more and more fractious and antagonistic.

### A Fickle Soundscape: The Fisherman's Feast in Boston's North End, by Michele Segretario

The sounds the Italian American community in Boston uses to celebrate the Fisherman's Feast enact one of the area's most impressive spatial transformations. This article presents the results of field research conducted in 2016 in the North End during the annual religious feast venerating the Madonna del Soccorso (Our Lady of Help), which dates back to a sixteenth-century tradition from Sciacca, Italy. It contextualizes this Southern Italian cultural practice within new geographies, focusing on symbolic transformations and the role of sounds, musical included, in defining cultural hybridizations and new places of cultural identity related to the country of origin. It divides these sounds into nine specific categories based on their function or on their nature. The central question is: "How does this community select its sounds?" The feast's participants seem strategically to concern themselves with survival, adaptation, and domestication of space, as well as creating an alternative space to overlap onto the everyday space of the North End. This is a space of negotiation, contact, and interface that pertains to the mythic village of origin in Sicily and to the North End.



## FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2019

9:30–10:45 am

### Architecture and Site-Specific Viewings

Shades of *Italianità* on the American Campus, GIULIA GUARNIERI, Bronx Community College, CUNY

Promoting the *Bel Paese* in Radio City: The History of Rockefeller Center's Palazzo d'Italia, NICOLA LUCCHI, Queens College, CUNY

Virgil Cantini: The Preservation of Pittsburgh's "Renaissance Man," MELISSA E. MARINARO, Senator John Heinz History Center

11 am–12:15 pm

### Keynote

Signing Italian/American Cinema: A More Focused Look

ANTHONY J. TAMBURRI, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute

1:30–2:45 pm

### Depictions on Canvas

The Male Gaze and Women's Portraits in Renaissance Italy, JOANN DELMONICO LUHRS, Brooklyn College, CUNY

Beyond the Mirror: Constructing the "Italian Woman" in Late Nineteenth-Century Transnational Painting, FRANCESCA CANADÉ SAUTMAN, Hunter College, CUNY

Clothing and Literacy in the Paintings of Donatus Buongiorno (1865–1935), JANICE CARAPELLECCI, Carapellucci Design

### Visualized Literature in Italy

Visual Expression in the Work of Giovanni Verga, SUSAN AMATANGELO, College of the Holy Cross

Narrating Giovanni Ruffini's *Doctor Antonio* (1855), TERESA BERTILOTTI, Independent Scholar; IRENE PIAZZONI, University of Milan

Beyond the Futurist Words-in-Freedom: Marinetti's Final Poetics and the Invention of Visual Poetry, PATRIZIO CECCAGNOLI, University of Kansas

3–4:15 pm

### Marketing Politics, Consumerism, and Tourism

Italian Fascism in Brazil through the Lens of Propaganda Pictures, FULVIA ZEGA, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Made in Italy Fashion and the Italian Americans, MARCELLA MARTIN, New York University

Conflicted Gazes: Visual Depictions of Italy for the American Tourist Market, DAVID ALIANO, College of Mount Saint Vincent

4:30–5:45 pm

### Procession and Progression in the *Mezzogiorno*: Illuminating the Many Faces of the Mother

Walking to Visibility: The Women of Trapani's Procession of the Mysteries, SUSAN CAPERNA LLOYD, Independent Scholar

Caravaggio's Influence Takes to the Streets: Light and Darkness in the Spectacle of Procession, GARY CAPERNA, Gary Caperna Architecture and Planning

*Malocchio* in the Hands of *Mama del Sud*: When Grandmother Becomes the Black Madonna, CHRISTINA MARROCCO, Elgin Community College

## SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2019

9:30–10:45 am

### Seeing Is Believing

Fooling the Natives: Conversations about Migrants Who Pass in Contemporary Italy, ROBERT H. GAROT, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

How Seeing Influences Believing: The Psychological Influence of Images on the Persistence of Ethnic Stereotypes among Italian Americans, DONNA CHIRICO, York College, CUNY

Seeing Is Believing: Re-Visioning Italian Americans, JACQUELINE MAGGIO-MAY, Mayven Solutions

11 am–12:15 pm

### Spiritual View(ing)s in Italian American Writing and Visual Arts

Imagery in Pietro di Donato's *Three Circles of Light* (1960), CARLA FRANCELINI, University of Siena

Ancestral Mothers, Feminine Icons, and Black Madonnas in the Works of Susan Caperna Lloyd, ELISABETTA MARINO, University of Rome Tor Vergata

Bill Viola's Deserts: Sites of Vision and Revelation, SABRINA VELLUCCI, Roma Tre University

1:30–2:45 pm

### Sonorities and Resistances

Modernity and Tradition in the Music Videos of Canzoniere Greco Salentino, GEORGE DE STEFANO, Independent Scholar

*'O paese d' 'o sole*: Acoustic-Visual Synesthesia in the Italian American Imaginary and a Call for a New Southern Imaginary, KENNETH SCRIBONI, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

What Does Resistance Look Like? Images of Steadfastness and Dignity in Italian Culture, DARIO DEL PUPPO, Trinity College, Hartford

3–3:50 pm

### Illustrating Identities

Preserving the Culture of Molise in Romeo Musa's (1882–1960) Woodcuts, ADELIA WILLIAMS, Pace University

Espresso in a Teacup: Graphic Storytelling and Intersectional Italian Canadian Life in *Bella Comics*, TERRI FAVRO, Author; RON EDDING, Visual Artist

4:05–5:20 pm

### Cinematic Takes

The Duality of the Ethnic and the Erotic in the Films of Rudolph Valentino, ANTHONY CAVALUZZI, SUNY Adirondack

The Americanization of Italy in the 1950s: Constructing Italianness in *Roman Holiday* and *Un Americano a Roma*, CHIARA DE SANTI, Farmingdale State College, SUNY

The Transmedia Stories by Emanuele Craiese and JR about the Italians' Arrival at Ellis Island, PAOLA ZACCARIA, University of Bari Aldo Moro

## AD MEMORIUM

### LOUISE DE SALVO 1942–2018

Beloved wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, friend, mentor, and lifelong writer and scholar, Louise A. DeSalvo, PhD, died in her home in Montclair, NJ, October 31, 2018, at the age of seventy-six, with her loving husband of fifty-five years by her side.

Louise was born in Hoboken, NJ to Italian American parents in 1942. After finishing high school in Ridgely, she attended Douglas College in New Brunswick, where she majored in English and graduated in 1963. She taught at Wood-Ridge High School for four years and went on to pursue a PhD in English at New York University. After teaching at Fairleigh Dickinson University, she was hired in the English Department at Hunter College, where she became Jenny Hunter Endowed Scholar for Creative Writing and Literature. Even after her retirement for health reasons, she continued writing and stayed in touch with many beloved former students. Teachers and students everywhere continue to be influenced by her powerful voice and lessons.

Memoirist, biographer, scholar, teacher, and mentor to myriad students and writers, Louise had a literary career as distinguished as it was groundbreaking. Her biography of Virginia Woolf, *Virginia Woolf: The Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on Her Life and Work*, and her textual scholarship on Woolf, have been profoundly influential, as have been her many single-authored and edited books, including *Conceived with Malice: Literature as Revenge*; *Vita Sackville-West's Letters to Virginia Woolf*; *Between Women: Biographers, Novelists, Critics, Teachers and Artists Write About Their Work on Women*; *Territories of the Voice: Short Stories by Irish Women*; *The Milk of Almonds: Italian American Women Writers on Food and Culture*; and *Melymbrosia: A Novel by Virginia Woolf*. In 1987, DeSalvo published a novel, *Casting Off*, and by the mid-1990s turned almost exclusively to memoir, essay, and a historically and culturally grounded exploration of her Italian American identity.

As a third-generation Italian American, she proudly claimed and wrote about her working-class ethnic origins with a profound understanding of the transformative power of cross-cultural solidarity. *Vertigo*, published in 1996, has been recognized as the most influential memoir in Italian American literature. As a memoirist, DeSalvo was a trailblazer who understood the complexity and contemporary relevance of memoir to disenfranchised communities. *Vertigo* was followed by several other

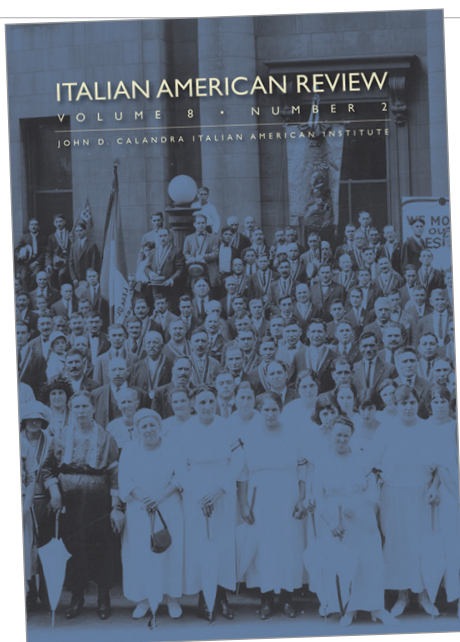
memoirs, including *Crazy in the Kitchen*, *Chasing Ghosts*, and *The House of Early Sorrows*. DeSalvo believed that words can be an instrument of change and lived her life accordingly, following that principle in her daily writing practice and in her immeasurably influential work as a teacher. Mentor to countless writers, she authored *Writing as a Way of Healing*, *The Art of Slow Writing*, and wrote the blog “writingalife,” each of which demonstrated her genius and generosity as a writer who demystified the craft and broke it down into a practice essential to the lives and well-being of so many people.

Louise's passion for family created a home and hearth. Her creative pursuits were driven by her thirst for knowledge, deep curiosity, and desire to make a beautiful gathering place for her family. She was an avid and gifted knitter, weaver, painter, and cook. She famously wrote that life is too short for even one bad meal and lived every day fully, making and spreading beauty as an ever-present force in her family's lives.

She is survived by her husband, Ernest DeSalvo, MD, two loving sons, Justin and Jason, beloved grandchildren Steven and Julia, and daughters-in-law Lynn and Deborah. Family, friends, scores of students, and the literary world have all suffered the loss of a beautiful person and a brilliant mind.

*Reprinted from baristanet.com*





## 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 9, NUMBER 1 includes:

- “Touching at a Distance”: A Meditation on Italian American Soundfulness, by John Gennari
- *Parla Comme T’Ha Fatta Mammata?*: Identity Formation through Sonic Codeswitching in 1920s Italian American Song, by Isabella Livorni
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For more information, go to [calandrainstitute.org](http://calandrainstitute.org). Under the publications menu, click on *Italian American Review*.

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## SPRING 2019 PUBLIC PROGRAMS

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

**Thursday, February 28, 2019**

*Assassins against the Old Order: Italian Anarchist Violence in Fin de Siècle Europe*, FRASER M. OTTANELLI, University of South Florida

**Thursday, April 11, 2019**

*Whom We Shall Welcome: Italian Americans and Immigration Reform, 1945–1965*, Danielle Battisti, University of Nebraska–Omaha

**Thursday, May 9, 2019**

*Pre-Occupied Spaces: Remapping Italy’s Transnational Migrations and Colonial Legacies*, Teresa Fiore, Montclair State University

### WRITERS READ SERIES

**Thursday, March 7, 2019**

Christopher Castellani reads from *Leading Men* (Viking, 2019)

**Tuesday, April 2, 2019**

B.G. Firmani reads from *Time’s a Thief* (Doubleday, 2017)

### EXHIBITION

### Goombarooch Resigned Works by John Avelluto

**On view May 7–September 13, 2019**

Gallery Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 am–5 pm

**Opening reception: Tuesday, May 7, 2019, at 6 pm**

Free and open to the public, all events begin at 6 pm at the 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 and cannot be reserved in advance.

