



# THE CENTER FOR ITALIAN STUDIES



Dear Friends of the Center,

August 2021

Stony Brook University is looking forward to reopen its campus to the student population, and we at the Center for Italian Studies are eager to resume our in-person presence, welcoming as many of you as possible to our Fall 2021 line-up; the events are planned by keeping in mind that we need to meet both the needs of a community of students and researchers, as well as the desire for cultural enrichment of the community who generously participates in and supports the daily activities of the Center.

During the pandemic the Center has been open and active, but we had to move all activities online. Occasionally, going online gave us a possibility to expand our audience: the international conference “Danza Macabra: Ancient Pestilences and Contemporary Pandemics” of last October had a record attendance from both sides of the Atlantic, attracting many more people than we could have hosted in our conference room. On the downside, Covid forced us to postpone the conference honoring the legacy of Mario Mignone, initially planned for September 2021, to September 2022. We want to make sure that all of Mario’s friends and colleagues have the possibility to participate in person.

The Italian Classes for the Community moved online as well, and the interest was so high that we added a Summer Session. Enrollment for the Fall classes has begun. See information within if you want to learn or reacquaint yourself with the Italian language at the beginner, intermediate, or advanced level. Thanks to the generous endowment from a Friend of the Center, the language courses are offered once again at a subsidized rate.

Perhaps social distancing stimulated students to read more: The Essay Contest for Secondary School Students has had a record participation. Winners and honorable mentions came from Kings Park, Calhoun/Bellemore-Merrick, Herricks, and Baldwin High Schools. Congratulations to the winners, and many thanks to all participants for sharing your interest in our heritage and in Italian American Studies.

Since 2021 marks the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dante Alighieri’s death, there has been a flurry of Dante-related activities all around the world. We are participating with an ongoing series, of online conferences on Dante by leading scholars (recordings of which are available on our YouTube page) and by dedicating to Dante the annual special issue of *Forum Italicum*, edited this year by Lino Pertile and Rachel Jackoff.

And looking forward – what a semester we have in store! The **Concorso d’Eleganza** is back. On September 26, owners of vehicles *made in Italy* will once again have the opportunity to show their beauties and to mingle with like-minded enthusiasts on the lawn at Stony Brook. If you have a car or motor-bike to show, or even if you don’t, make sure to show up. Or you can visit for the movies in our semester-long cinema series, **Hollywood Dreams Italian**, on selected Mondays from 5 p.m. The movies are in English or subtitled, and are briefly introduced by a specialist in the field. Together with the D’Amato chair, the Dean’s office, and the English Department, we are bringing author **Maaza Mengiste** to campus for the Sir Run Run Shaw Lecture Series. Her latest novel, *The Shadow King*, chronicles the Italian invasion of Ethiopia at the beginning of WWII. The visit is a precious opportunity to reflect on misdeeds and crimes of the Fascist regime, as well as on the intertwining between individual stories and historical events. This semester’s international conference, on **Migration and Citizenship**, will again be online: but we have many more cultural events that will interest, challenge, and inform you. For the most up to date information about our events, please check our Calendar page: <https://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies>.

In cauda venenum, I’m terribly sorry to report the passing of Chancellor Emeritus Salvatore Rotella, a personal friend and a precious presence on the Center’s Advisory Council. You might remember he and Mario had organized together the conference “Quo Vadis, Europe?”, our latest in-person event. They are both sorely missed.

*Ci vediamo presto, Giuseppe Gazzola*

# Fall 2021 Preliminary Calendar of Events

All are invited. Free and Open to the Public

## **September 17, Friday, 2:00 p.m.**

Bruce Edelstein (NYU, Florence) will speak on the portrait of Eleonora di Toledo by Bronzino exhibited at the Uffizi Gallery: *Crafting Her Persona: A Closer Look at Bronzino's Iconic Portrait of Eleonora di Toledo and Her Son Giovanni*. Offered in collaboration with the Department of Hispanic Languages & Literatures. Location: Center for Italian Studies in the Frank Melville Memorial Library, Room E4340.

## **September 26, Sunday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

### ***Robert D. Cess Concorso d'Eleganza XV***

#### ***Annual Celebration of Italian Vehicle Excellence and Beauty:***

A display of "art on wheels" as a means of illustrating one form of Italian culture.

Display vehicles will rally at Stony Brook University campus on the lawn adjacent to the Graduate Physics Building and directly across from the Sports Complex off John S. Toll Drive.

Participation and viewing are free and open to the public.

Owners of Italian vehicles interested in participating in this display should contact [josephine.fusco@stonybrook.edu](mailto:josephine.fusco@stonybrook.edu) or call 631-632-7444.

### **2021 Dante Series Lectures/ Continued**

In honor of the 700th Anniversary of the death of the Great Italian poet...

## **September 28, Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.**

Zoom Presentation by Ann Pizzorusso, geologist and Italian Renaissance scholar, on *Gems of the Divine Comedy: An analysis of the epoch poem from a gemological standpoint*. Using passages from the *Divine Comedy*, the author will show how Dante used the attributes of gems to describe the characteristics of humans, souls and saints. Details and link to access the presentation will be made available on [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies).

## **October 26, Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.**

Presentation by Professor Peter Carravetta, (Philosophy, Stony Brook University) on *Poetics of Judgment: Dante and the Foundations of Humanism*. An analysis of how Dante's notion of free will (*libero arbitrio*) is the basis for his conception of a just society made up of empowered subjects. In person event in the Center for Italian Studies, Stony Brook University Library, Room E4340. For details/link for joining the meeting via zoom, view [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies).

### **The Joseph Tromba Lecture Series Events /Book Presentations**

## **October 7, Thursday, 4:00 p.m.**

*The Cradle Was Green*, by William Franza, father of local resident, August Franza. The story of a family's emigration from Italy to New York City in 1900 that provides a personal picture of a time which must be recalled and remembered, especially with questions of immigration very much on everyone's mind these days. In person presentation in the Center for Italian Studies, Stony Brook University Library, Room E4340. Details for joining the event via zoom will be made available on [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies).

## **November 9, Tuesday, 3:00 p.m.**

Zoom Presentation: *Bitter Chicory to Sweet Espresso, Survival and Deliverance from WW II in the Naples, Italy Area, 1940-49* with Author/Professor Emeritus, Carmine Vittoria (Northeastern University). Abstract: As per critics, this book is one of the few that exemplifies Italian heritage and culture in World War II. Offered in collaboration with the Long Island State Veterans Home. Details to access the virtual presentation will be made available on [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies).

**October 21, Thursday, 4:00 p.m.**

Presentation by Professor Luigi Fontanella (Stony Brook) of his book: *Raccontare la poesia (1970-2020) Saggi ricordi testimonianze critiche* (Bergamo: Moretti & Vitali Editori, 2021). Welcoming remarks by Center's Director, Giuseppe Gazzola. Introduction and commentary by Anthony Julian Tamburri (CUNY/Queens College). Location: Center for Italian Studies in Stony Brook University's Frank Melville Memorial Library, Room E4340.

**November 11-12, 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.**

International Conference: *Citizenship and Nationality: A Diachronic Perspective*. Organized by the Center for Italian Studies, Dr. Ludovica Rossi Purini, and Dr. Loredana Polezzi, D'Amato Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies. Program details to be announced.

**November 17, Wednesday, Time to be announced.**

Presentation by Novelist, Maaza Mengiste, Author of *The Shadow King* (*NY Times*, *Time*, NPR selection of Best Book of the Year). Offered as an event in the Dean of Arts and Sciences Sir Run Run Shaw Lecture Series, in collaboration with the D'Amato Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies and the Department of English.

**Richard Nasti Lecture Series Event:**

**Date and Time to be announced:**

Zoom Presentation by Valentina Giannella, Italian Journalist and Author of *We are All Greta: A world-wide best selling book that aims to explain climate change and the relevant scientific facts to children that also help parents answer their children's questions about the challenges we're all facing to save our planet*. In the author's own words: "The title of the book was inspired by a young Chinese girl who was holding a sign during the Global Climate Strike in Hong Kong that read: **My name is Greta**. I realized that Greta Thunberg has not only the power to raise awareness on such a vital matter, but also to create a sense of identity amongst young people all over the world." Details /Link for accessing the zoom presentation will be announced on [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies)

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**Center for Italian Studies Cinema Club**

**Co Hosted with the D'Amato Chair in Italian and Italian American Studies**

**HOLLYWOOD DREAMS ITALIAN**

**An opportunity to discuss and view together**

**Selected films featuring Italy as the setting.**

**Bi-Monthly Screenings in the Center for Italian Studies, Library E4340.**

**Program and Schedule to be Announced.**

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**ITALIAN CLASSES FOR THE COMMUNITY 2021-22**

22 Twenty-Two /2 Hour Classes, October through April for an annual fee of \$300.

Format-Virtual Online with some specially arranged in person opportunities.

**Program of Classes: Level, Day & Time, Instructor:**

**Beginner-Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., Instructor, Donna Di Natale**

**Elementary, Part 2-Saturday, 10 a.m.-Noon, Instructor, Anna Maria D'Agostino**

**Intermediate-Saturday, 10 a.m.-Noon, Instructor, Joseph Tursi, Jr.**

**Intermediate-Wednesday, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Instructor, Christen Visceglie**

**Advanced-Saturday, 10 a.m.-Noon, Instructor, Donna Di Natale**

**Persons interested in enrolling in any of these classes may call (631) 632-7444**

**for more detailed information, schedule and registration materials or**

**Contact via email > [josephine.fusco@stonybrook.edu](mailto:josephine.fusco@stonybrook.edu)**

**Also visit > [www.Stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.Stonybrook.edu/italianstudies) > Classes**

CENTER FOR ITALIAN STUDIES  
Stony Brook University  
Frank Melville Memorial Library, E4340  
Stony Brook, NY 11794  
(631) 632-7444 [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies)

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CENTER FOR ITALIAN STUDIES  
Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3358

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For the most current and additional information regarding Center for Italian Studies events and activities,  
please consult our web site: [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies)

Also to be kept informed about the Center for Italian Studies in a timely way,  
we would appreciate having your email address. If you have not already done so, please provide this by  
emailing [Josephine.Fusco@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Josephine.Fusco@stonybrook.edu) or [Annette.Palazzo@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Annette.Palazzo@stonybrook.edu).

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**The Center for Italian Studies is a community supported entity.  
We are happy to say that we have earned the trust and affection of our followers,  
Who, individually and collectively, have made it possible to carry out our mission.**

***Thank You For Your Ongoing Support.***

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**Center for Italian Studies, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY 11794-3358**

Phone (631) 632-7444

Website: [www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies](http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies)

Please complete and return this form with your contribution to the address noted above.

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