



Book Presentation:

Leonardo da Vinci: A Chinese Scholar Lost in Renaissance Italy by Angelo Paratico

Date: Thu, 30 Jul 2015

Time: 19:00 – 20:30

Place: Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong

Fee: \$150 per person

(Guests receive a free signed copy included in the price)

Registration: www.ladante.cc/event_registration.html



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Place: Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong

Fee: \$1,920

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Time: to be confirmed

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(età 9-13 anni)

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Place: Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong

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For further information, please go to www.ladante.cc/bambini.html

For further information and registration, please go to our website www.ladante.cc or call us at 2832 9799.

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THIS IS A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM DANTE ALIGHIERI SOCIETY IN HONG KONG

DANTE ALIGHIERI SOCIETY IS AN ITALIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY THAT PROMOTES THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES AND CULTURE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WE PROVIDE ITALIAN COURSES FROM BEGINNER TO ADVANCED LEVELS TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN. TO SUIT YOUR EXACT NEEDS. WE CAN ORGANIZE PRIVATE ONE-ON-ONE OR SMALL GROUP LESSONS AND OUR TEACHERS CAN ALSO TEACH IN YOUR COMPANY AND TAILOR-MAKE A COURSE TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS.



An evening with Giovanni Allevi

By Giulia Joynt

The evening of July 2nd we were lucky enough to host the internationally renowned musician and composer, Giovanni Allevi. We organized an exciting Q&A session between Giovanni and our students, and he (shyly at first!) but always happily obliged us with our many questions. The discussion topics ranged from the basic facts of his life, to his music and unique composing style, to the musical significance of Asia and Asian culture in his own work and more generally in music.

One memorable highlight amongst many that evening consisted of an especially interesting question posed by one of our students, "quale sono le differenze tra la musica cinese e la musica occidentale, e quale preferisci?", asking Giovanni to explain the differences between Asian and Western music, and identify his favourite. He simply yet expertly explained the concept of a Western musical scale - the

familiar, *do re mi fa so la ti do* - further explaining to us how the *pentatonic* Chinese musical scale excludes the 'semi-tones' - *fa* and *ti* - resulting in a different basic model for all musical composition. While unable to identify his favourite between the broad two styles, Giovanni has long been and remains to be uniquely inspired by Asia and Asian culture, sharing a special bond with Japan. This connection and appreciation on Giovanni's part will surely allow him to be a lasting influence in modern Asian culture.

Giovanni's unique personality shone through not only in our discussion - which ended up lasting almost an hour longer than expected! - but also after as members of the audience got to engage with him on a more personal, conversational level as well. Being also a published author, Giovanni shared with us his experience with the various trials and tribulations that every artist must go through before - and if - they achieve success. Especially mem-

orable and truly inspiring is Giovanni's unique insight into and for those who are a little different to everyone else. This is how he characterises himself and many of his fans. He explained his belief that it takes someone who is a little divergent, a little different from the crowd, to advance beyond it. Taking a page from the book of this uniquely inspiring man, it seems worthwhile to nurture, rather than intuitively suppress those things that make us a little different from everybody else, as these are the very differences that allow us to be those innovative and pioneering members of society - like Giovanni Allevi.

We were especially lucky to have authentic Italian gelato that evening thanks to **i-Scream Gelato**, which was promptly demolished by all those attending. The support of the **Italian Cultural Institute in Hong Kong** is also always greatly appreciated, as they made the evening possible and undoubtedly a success!



Italian Summer Festivals

By Giulia Joynt

Based on actual, exciting historical events, Italian summers offer a whole host of festivals. Some are unique to villages, towns, or regions, while others are celebrated nation-wide in fancy dress, with special food and fun activities. Festivals offer the opportunity to witness not only people dressed in outlandish period costumes, but also contests between neighbourhoods or towns, flag throwers, carnival masks, historic regattas and fireworks.

Historic festivals

La Quintana - Ascoli Piceno, Marche - the first Sunday in August

The procession and joust that make up this festival are revived traditions, based on medieval documents and artwork. The festival begins with a medieval-themed parade through the town's beautifully preserved centre, it includes some 1,500 residents of the town, all wearing impressive 15th century costumes, marching to the beat of a drum. After the parade, spectators crowd into grandstands around the jousting field to watch the exciting event unfold. Residents of the town cheer for one of six champions, each representing a specific sestiere (neighborhood) in the town. Scores are posted and loud cheers erupt from fans of each sestiere.

Historic Regatta - Venice, Veneto

Every year, on the first Sunday of September, Venetians row like they are in 1489. If you are travelling in Venice during this period, you will have the chance to see spectacular rowing races on the Grand Canal commemorating the welcome given to Caterina Cornaro, wife of the King of Cyprus, who

in 1489 renounced her throne in favour of Venice. The event involves a parade of boats decorated in 16th-century style and powered by crews in period costume.

Music festivals

Arena di Verona festival - Verona, Veneto - July-August

The Verona Arena Festival is an annual celebration of (predominantly) opera that takes place throughout summer months. Taking place since 1936, it is a much revered cultural event that has made the names and careers of a number of singers, including Maria Callas. The performances take



Source: www.batiuska.it

Source: www.hoteldelloperavenice.com



Source: www.languageoffootball.com

place in the Verona Arena, an ancient Roman amphitheatre which can seat up to 30,000 spectators. Performances traditionally begin at dusk and spectators on the stone seats of the arena bring small candles ('i mocoletti') which are lit as darkness falls and the performances begin.

Sporting festivals

L'ardìa di San Costantino - Sedilo, Sardinia - 5-7 July

One of the biggest festivals in Sardinia,

it commemorates Constantine's victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge in 312, where Constantine is reported to have seen a flaming cross inscribed with the words "in this sign thou shalt conquer". Every year Constantine's charge is recreated with a monumental horse race held on the grounds of the Santuario Di San Costantino.

Calcio Fiorentino - Florence, Toscana - third week of June

Calcio fiorentino, or calcio storico (meaning historic football) is an early form of football originating in the 16th century. Every year matches between four teams representing each contrada are played in Piazza Santa Croce. Santa Croce (Blues), Santa Maria Novella (Reds), Santo Spirito (Whites) and San Giovanni (Greens) all battle it out to win the prizes. These include not only the Palio, but also a Chianina cow for the team winner! The final occurs each year on June 24, the day of San Giovanni, Patron Saint of Florence.

Bizarre festivals

Game of the bridge - Pisa, Toscana - the last Sunday of June

Every year, the city of Pisa celebrates a festival known as The Game of the Bridge, an ancient tradition dating back to 1568, when opposing factions from different parts of the city fought for ownership of a bridge over the Arno river. On this day, before the 'battle', a parade of people dressed up in wonderful 18th-century costumes representing both the northern - known as Tramontana - and southern - Mezzogiorno - sides of the Arno River, march along the banks of the river. The following 'battle' consist of pushing a wooden trolley into the opposing team's territory, and the winning faction claims the ownership of the bridge. 🐞

L'estate nel Nord Italia

Ho passato tre settimane stupefacenti in Italia questa estate. La prima settimana sono stata in vacanza alla spiaggia, San Michele vicino il Conero, nelle Marche.



Poi sono stata a Bologna per le ultime due settimane. Bologna è il capoluogo dell'Emilia Romagna conosciuta per la sua architettura, la cultura e la cucina. Qui c'è la più antica università del mondo, fondata nel 1088.

Le prime cose che ho notato erano gli edifici bassi e i tetti rossi. Gli edifici sono in colori pastello dal giallo all'arancione, e creano un bellissimo quadro.



Molti sapranno che Bologna è famosa per la sua cucina. Per esempio, le tagliatelle al ragù, La mortadella, il prosciutto, la piadina, i tortellini in brodo e i gelati sono anche parte fondamentale della cucina Bolognese. Ecco perché ha il soprannome di "La Dotta, La Grassa, La Rossa". Trovavo un nuovo posto per mangiare tutti i giorni, anche

attraversando tutta la città. Il centro di Bologna è piccolo, con la forma di un esagono. Si può girarlo tutto in un'ora circa. E' stata un'esperienza attraversare i vicoli, i vie, le piazze e strade e perdersi. Scoprivo sempre qualcosa di nuovo.



Ho fatto un corso di italiano per due settimane mentre ero a Bologna. Le lezioni erano dalle nove all'una del pomeriggio. C'erano tra i quattro e i sei studenti tutti i giorni. Alle undici, tutti andavamo al bar vicino per il caffè. Sedevamo fuori al sole e parlavamo delle cose divertenti che avevamo fatto il giorno prima. Quindi tornavamo a finire la lezione. Il pomeriggio era pieno di attività, come la visita alle due torri – un torre famosa per la bella vista della città, solo dopo aver salito 498 gradini!! Abbiamo visitato anche la Basilica Santuario di San Stefano con le sette chiese.



Con gli studenti ci incontravamo per l'aperitivo la sera e cenavamo insieme, seguito dal Jazz in Via Mascarella. La via è chiusa in estate e molti gruppi jazz si esibivano dal vivo. Siamo andati al cinema sotto le stelle con Isabella Rossellini che ha presentato il film "Casablanca".



Sono state tre settimane memorabili. Ho conosciuto nuove amiche, ho fatto grandi esperienze e ho migliorato il mio italiano!! 🐞

Caryn Lee, from our Beginner V course. All photos included are courtesy of Caryn Lee.

