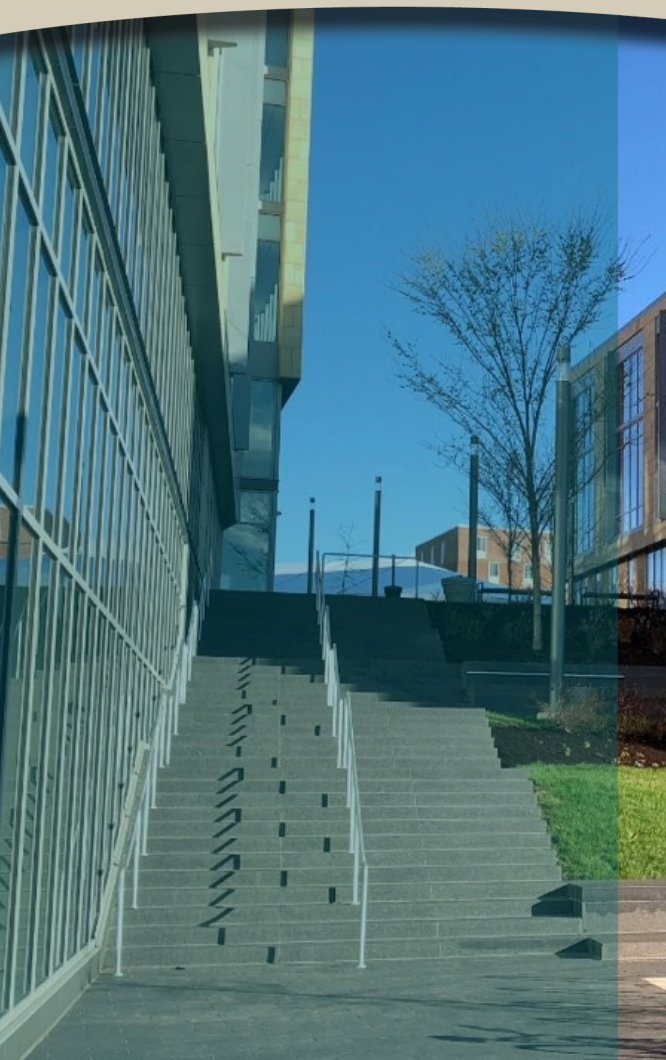


The Rutgers

Libretto

Spring 2022



From the chair's desk:

Care amiche e amici del Dipartimento d'Italiano a Rutgers,

The biggest news is that we have hired a new faculty member, Prof. Vetri Nathan, who left his position at University of Massachusetts Boston to come to Rutgers as Associate Professor and Mellon Fellow of the Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice. His expertise in De/Postcolonial Italian Studies, Migration, Race, Diaspora, Cinema, Media, Food, and Mediterranean Studies will greatly enrich our scholarly profile and add much to our course offerings. We are very happy to welcome him as a member of our community. We also welcome two new PhD students into our graduate program, Ariana Guzman and Diletta Pasetti.

Carmela Scala has received two very important grants, one is a €5,000 grant by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for her project entitled "Diversity, Social Justice, and Inclusion in Italian Classes." The other is a \$25,000 grant which was awarded by TechAdvance to develop an app project Carmela has been working on for the last few years; the app is called CAMILE: Culturally-and-Emotionally Aware Machine-Learning-based Intelligent Language-Acquisition with Experiential-Learning; this means she can now start building the application and develop a very useful tool new generations of students can use in order to learn Italian.

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The Rutgers Libretto



A note from: Vetri Nathan

New Associate Professor Italian
Andrew W. Mellon Associate
Professor in Global Racial Justice

I am so honored to be joining one of the premier Italian Studies programs in North America, and that too in one of the most diverse college campuses in U.S.A. I am also delighted by my position through Rutgers' *Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice*, which shows that relatively small programs such as Italian have the potential to provide outsized impact on the whole university community. I hope my courses and research on global migrations, food studies, environmental and public humanities will communicate the importance and, may I say it?-- joy -- of the humanities to students of *all* majors!

My husband, four Siberian Huskies and I look forward to getting to know my new *famiglia* of students (both grad and undergrad), our alumni, fellow-professors and staff, and to contributing towards a collaborative, happy and fulfilling global community here at Rutgers.

(from the chair's desk, continued)

In the spring semester we invited a visiting professor to teach a Digital Humanities class for our graduate students, as we have done for the past 7 years now. Prof. Lisa Tagliaferri taught a course entitled "Digital Humanities: Theories and Practice," which was very successful and was audited even by faculty members.

This past academic year we also welcomed our new Italian Government Lecturer, Dr. Rosario Giovanni Scalia, who has been teaching a broad array of courses for us very successfully. Students love his commitment, his expertise, and his rigorous and yet easygoing approach. His scholarship ranges from classical philology to the Mafia in contemporary society. We are happy to have him and we rely on him for much more than just teaching courses of Italian language, literature, and culture.

Thanks to our very generous Donors and to our Ambassadors, who made great efforts to encourage everyone to make donations, on March 23rd Rutgers Giving Day produced very nice revenues for us. We collected \$7,110! Thank you all who gave and to those who didn't get a chance to donate in March, please consider a donation to our department at any point! Here is the link: <https://tinyurl.com/RutgersItalian>

We have had some terrible losses in the past few months: Our beloved Carol Feinberg, the administrator of our department for over 30 years passed away in January after a short illness. For those of us who were lucky to work with her, Carol was a crucial point of reference not just for everyday administration but also for words of encouragement to students, faculty, and fellow administrators; she always knew how to solve problems large and small, she knew the department and the university inside out and was the institutional memory for anything to do with Italian at Rutgers. She was calm and composed and always had a smile on her face, a perfect personality for the job. This is the link to her obituary <https://memorials.gleasonfuneralhome.com/carol-feinberg/4850051/>

Prof. Rudy Bell, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History, a loyal friend of the department and a mentor to many of us, passed away in April. Having been at Rutgers for over five decades he was well known around campus, but Italian held a special place for him; it was part of his expertise and scholarship, but he also had family links to Italy through his wife Laura. Rudy participated in a lot of our initiatives, sat on many promotion committees of our department, and was always happy to join us at our events. All assistant professors of Italian have benefited from his shrewd (and sometimes blunt) advice; he always had reliable suggestions on where to place articles and where to send books for publication. Even after retiring he continued to attend some of our online lectures and presentations.

Here is his obituary <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/24557371/rudolph-m-bell>

This past year we tasted again what it's like to be back in the classroom for at least part of the time. After three years we could also have an in-person event for our graduating majors and minors at our Italian Night and we were happy to see a lot of our PhD alumnae and alumni back for a reunion in May. We look forward to welcoming our students back to campus this September and going back to teaching in the classroom again at the beginning of the fall semester. We also look forward to the Year of Languages, an initiative that will involve all language programs with a number of events aimed at drawing attention to the importance of learning languages if we aspire to be a truly global university and a flexible, peaceful, and welcoming community.

This Newsletter is coming out later than usual this year, so instead of the best wishes for a great summer, here is wishing everyone a great new academic year!

Alessandro



Alessandro Vettori, Professor, Italian Department Chair



Congrats to Class of 2022 Italian majors shown on the left:

Eliana, Talane, Gianna, and Giana

Above: Professor Baldi presents Adela Bravo with 2 scholarships from the Coccia Foundation. Adela used these scholarships to help pay for her summer study abroad experience - RU in Rome.

A shout out to: Rosario Scalia,
Italian Government Lecturer
for providing one on one tutoring sessions to undergraduate students, in addition to teaching Italian courses.



MEET WITH ROSARIO GIOVANNI SCALIA
ITALIAN GOVERNMENT LECTURER

RUTGERS ITALIAN DEPARTMENT

DROP-IN ITALIAN TUTORING

MONDAY FROM 3PM TO 4PM (IN PERSON, OFFICE AB-S108)

ON TUESDAY FROM 9AM TO 10AM (ONLINE VIA ZOOM)



<https://italian.rutgers.edu/academics/undergraduate/italian-tutoring>

Another shout to:
Sheri La Macchia, Program Co-ordinator, RU in Rome Administrator, Dept. of Italian
for sharing your graphic design abilities on this newsletter and in the marketing materials you create throughout the year.



You are an asset to the department. We appreciate you.



Undergraduate News

from Undergraduate Director, Asst. Teaching Professor and Director of the Italian Language Program, Carmela Scala



This academic year was a slow journey towards 'normality' again, and we were able to go back to in-person classes. It was still an adjustment, but our students and instructors worked hard to make it a successful year. Once again, our students made us proud and produced excellent work. We awarded many prestigious prizes: Catherine Schoenfeld, received the prize for Best Essay in Italian at the 200 level. Marlene Zuberger received [another prize for best essay at the 300 level in English](#), and Michela Di Florio received the Stephanie E. Fiore award [for the paper in 300-level Italian](#), entitled: I giovani e il mondo del lavoro in Italia dopo la pandemia.

Nicolette Brit-Cruz, Adela Bravo, and Giana Graziano received generous 2022 scholarships from the Coccia Foundation allowing support for their study abroad experiences in Italy. <https://italian.rutgers.edu/news-events/scholarships> This year we were able to celebrate our students with a small in-person gathering, and it was nice to be together once again.

We wish lots of luck to all our majors who graduated in May and wish all of us a happy new academic year.

Rutgers Italian Club

Officers: Tricia Cole, Rebecca Nitti, and Pasquale (Nico) Auletta



Last year the Rutgers Italian Club was excited to plan and host various in-person events to educate and explore Italian culture and history.

The club held events ranging from cannoli making, playing tombola, having guest speakers like Professor Alessandro Vettori speak about the Medici family, and also took a trip to Ellis Island, The Statue of Liberty, and Eataly.

The Rutgers Italian Club is thrilled to start back up again with the first meeting on September 21st at 8pm in LSC 201B.

Join Here: <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/italianclub>

Follow: @RUItalianRU on Instagram

Graduate News

from Acting Graduate Program Director, Professor Andrea Baldi



Despite the lingering effects of the pandemic, the past academic year has been very exciting for our graduate program. We have accepted two incoming doctoral students: Ariana Guzman, who, after her participation in the RISE program last summer, was granted a SUPER-Grad Fellowship, and Diletta Pasetti, who will join us with a Teaching Assistantship. Many thanks to Sheri and our students and faculty for facilitating their transition to our program and for welcoming them.

Allison Selvig obtained her M.A.T. degree, while Raffaella Fusco successfully defended her dissertation and received her Ph.D. in May. We wish them all the best in their future careers!

Among our current students, Paolo Scartoni and Federica Soddu received a Teaching Assistantship from the Writing Program, while Chiara Degli Esposti was awarded a prestigious University and Louis Bevier Fellowship for 2022-2023. Moreover, Paolo Scartoni and Teresa De Luca won a DH graduate seed grant for 2022-23 for their project titled *Divine Networks: An Interactive Visualization of Dante's "Comedy,"* while Eilis Kierans was accepted in the *Italian Diaspora Studies Summer Seminar*, held at the Università degli Studi Roma Tre. Great news all around! Congratulations to all.

Last Spring, we offered a new graduate seminar in DH, *Digital Humanities Theories and Practice*, taught by Dr. Lisa Tagliaferri. Our doctoral students continued to present papers at national and international conferences and to publish essays in renowned venues. Our *Food for Thought* series featured Dr. Silvia Stoyanova in the Fall (*Semantic Digital Edition and Research Platform for Giacomo Leopardi's "Zibaldone"*) and Paolo Scartoni in the Spring (*"In loco aperto, luminoso e alto": Artificiality and 'Latinitas' in Dante's Limbo*).

Under the leadership of Maria Teresa De Luca, Giuseppe Grispino, and Natascia Cappa, the Italian Graduate Society organized and held their biennial multidisciplinary Conference, titled *Signs*, in a hybrid format on April 1-2. After the gap caused by COVID-19, this was a remarkable event, which saw the enthusiastic participation of numerous students from different programs and universities.

Finally, all the members of the Department actively were engaged in the *Equity Fundamentals Workshop*, which promoted "a shared understanding of foundational JEDI concepts including diversity, inclusion, equity, social justice, and intersectionality." This was the first of a series of initiatives that will help us to better confront these crucial issues.

Thanking you all for fostering our community spirit and pursuing our scholarly and pedagogical mission, I wish you a productive academic year!

HEARTFUL THANKS

WE APPRECIATE OUR DONORS.



On March 3, 2022, RUTGERS GIVING DAY, the Italian Dept. received several generous donations, many from first-time donors. Thank you all for the support. Your contributions can help Rutgers students in many ways.

Tuition scholarships for NJ teachers pursuing a Masters in Teaching Italian degree.

Name Awards for Graduate and Undergrad Students

Graduate Scholarships and Student Travel Grants

Study Abroad Scholarships for Undergraduate Students

Click the link below to give a one-time donation or monthly contribution, or save the date...

RUTGERS GIVING DAY
is March 23, 2023

<https://tinyurl.com/RutgersItalian>

Graduate Fellowships and Awards

Best Graduate Paper – Marius Rusu

"Depistaggio e salvezza: Casanova e il cibo nella prigionia dei Piombi"

Rutgers Community Building and Engagement Award—Giuseppe Grispino

William E. Roney Awards

Innovative Teaching – Angela Mininni

Dedication to Service – Maria Teresa De Luca

Excellence in Scholarship – Federica Soddu

Paragano Family Foundation Endowed

Scholarship for MAT students – Jeremy Barish

Dr. Vito and Mrs. Carolyn DeSimone Endowed

Fellowship for Italian Studies – Chiara Degli Esposti

Italian Dept. Summer Research Fellowships – Natascia Cappa,

Steven Jacobs, Angela Mininni, Marius Rusu and Salvatore Taibi

Joseph E. & Marie E. Laggini Memorial Endowed

Graduate Fellowship – Paolo Scartoni

(Photo: Morgan, Paolo, donors Stephanie Laggini Fiore and her husband Michael)



Marius Rusu



Italian Graduate Society

This year the Italian Graduate Society focused on organizing the hybrid interdisciplinary graduate conference '[Signs](#)'. The conference was very successful and provided an occasion for discussion of the interaction of signs and systems of signs in different texts and media, and across history and culture. The event was attended by almost 30 scholars, travelling from different states (New Jersey, New York State, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin), with a small portion joining online, also from the UK. Two scholars of international reputation, Professor Sabrina Ferri (University of Notre Dame) and Professor Jason Stanley (Yale) gave outstanding keynotes that contributed to the lively discussion.

We were very happy our conference was the first opportunity for so many returns to Rutgers, and for seeing each other again (and sometimes even for the first time!) after two years of daily zoomings.

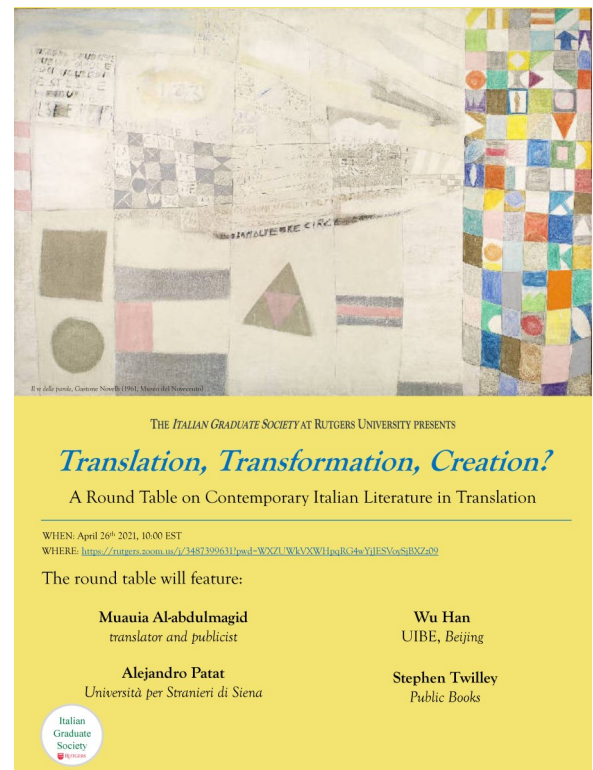
During the past year we also published *La Fusta* Vol. XXIX. We devoted the issue to Translation and selected and edited contributions from both American and Italian graduate students. We also interviewed Oonagh Stransky, a professional translator who works in the publishing industry. The forthcoming issue of *La Fusta* will host papers from graduate students who participated in the conference. Finally, we partnered with EBSCO in order to assure a wider circulation for the journal.

We also created the [IGS](#) website and substantially redesigned [La Fusta website](#). We made current information available and easier to access. We also retrieved previous records (name of previous officers, programs of past conferences, original covers for *La Fusta*...) in order to preserve the decades long history of our IGS.

Last but not least, last year the IGS was awarded the Graduate Student Organization of the Year 2020-2021 by the Rutgers Graduate Student Association.

This coming Fall we will pass the baton to new graduate student officers. Being part of the IGS has been a transformative experience. We have enjoyed and learned from the opportunity to be part of an organization with a long and glorious history.

Click hyperlinks here: [website](#), [Facebook page](#), [Instagram account](#).



IGS officers in front row.

Giuseppe Grispingo, Natascia Cappa, and Maria Teresa De Luca—all supported by Rutgers Italian Dept. faculty and students in background.



News from Current Graduate Students

Natascia Cappa

Natascia spent this academic year focusing on and successfully passing her Qualifying Exams and Defense of the Dissertation Prospectus entitled *Fascist Spectralities: Haunted Imaginaries in Italian and Latin American Fascist and Anti-fascist literature*. She also worked as part of the leadership of the Italian Graduate Society to organize the IGS Conference "Signs." In the Spring, she presented a paper "Clock Time and Individual Times in Dino Buzzati's Apocalyptic City" at the AAIS Conference that took place in Bologna. Currently, she is writing her dissertation and will be teaching an online course at Rutgers in the fall semester.

Maria Teresa De Luca

The past year has been an intense one. Maria Teresa presented three papers: *Cranes and divine skywriting in the Heaven of Jupiter* at the Modern Language Association Annual Convention; *Mathematical knowledge and economic dynamics in the Italian South* at the conference 'Cultures of Exchanges: Mercantile Mentalities Between Italy and the World' organized by the Center for Medieval Studies at Fordham University; and 'Fervore' and *lexical semantics in the 'Convivio'* at the Dante Society's sponsored panel at the International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University.

As Officer of the IGS she co-organized the graduate conference 'Signs' and contributed editorial work for *La Fusta* XXIX. This Fall she will do her Qualifying Exams.

Chiara Degli Esposti

Throughout the academic year 2021-22, Chiara continued to focus on her dissertation on contemporary Italian cities. She presented part of her research at the AAIS online conference, where she delivered a paper on the Milanese writer Gabriella Kuruvilla. During the academic year 2022-23, Chiara will receive a University and Bevier Dissertation Fellowship, that will enable her to complete her dissertation manuscript. She is also extremely thankful to the department and donors for

having been awarded the Dr. Vito and Mrs. Carolyn De Simone Endowed Fellowship for Italian Studies at the 2022 Alumni Reunion.

Giuseppe Grispino

Giuseppe spent the past academic year reading, preparing for and taking his Qualifying Examination. He has ultimately decided to focus his research on illness narratives and, in particular, the representation of HIV/AIDS in contemporary Italian literature. During the past academic year, Giuseppe taught two classes: *Doing Business in Italy* (Fall) and *Elementary Italian I* (Spring). He also had the privilege to assist Professor Scala in running the Rutgers in Rome program. In the domain of scholarly presentations, Giuseppe presented a paper at the Graduate Research Symposium at Rutgers and he attended for the first time the NeMLA conference in Baltimore. The past year Giuseppe was also a Fellow both at the PreDoctoral Leadership Academy (PLDA) and at the Rutgers Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (RASTL). Together with Maria Teresa and Natascia, he organized the biannual Italian Graduate Society Conference. In addition, he continued to grow his passion for diversity, equity and inclusion issues by participating in a number of professional development sessions and by actively volunteering within Rutgers and the New Jersey central area.

Steven Jacobs

Steven had an exciting and varied year. He thoroughly enjoyed teaching three different classes for which he applied new pedagogical approaches. He is looking forward to receiving a certificate in pedagogy. Steven was very grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Rutgers in Rome program this past July during which he completed a project on immigration and integration in Italy, featuring a series of interviews that highlight the experiences of foreigners in the country. He is looking forward to a productive year in the department as the graduate liaison, and a member of the IGS, as he prepares for his comprehensive examinations.

Eilis Kierans

Eilis embraced the bittersweet winds of change the past year whisked her way. She bid farewell to her home in Madrid and is currently setting up shop in Queens, a hop and a skip away from her Rutgers pals. She is happy

to put away her suitcase for a spell after spending much of the break trotting Europe. The summer conference tour brought her to AATI in Lucca, AAIS in Bologna, and CAIS in Sorrento, where she relished old and new faces alike. To top it all off, she savored her time at the Italian Diaspora Studies Summer Seminar in Rome where students discussed by day and danced by night. In spring, she was elated to see her Clara Sereni article come to fruition in *Forum Italicum*. Additionally, she was delighted to present her work at the online Queering Italian Culture Symposium. Eilis has spent many of her in-between moments peacefully editing translations to be published with Other Voices of Italy, her fav pet project. She looks forward to teaching translation, gender and sexuality, and Italian courses at Rutgers and Drew in the fall. But most of all, she is excited to take her NYC niece to the park.

Dora Labate

2021 and 2022 has been a time of self-reflection for me after a long hiatus from my graduate studies at Rutgers. Originally from Polignano a Mare (BA), I moved to Pittsburgh, PA after receiving my M.A. Summa cum Laude in Foreign Languages and Literatures. During my years as a graduate student, I was exposed to a variety of professional experiences: teaching classes, attending conferences, and taking on some leadership roles. But the outside world was changing. And I felt I was missing relevance. The years away from my graduate studies were filled with new and diverse experiences. I became involved in volunteerism in the arts and social justice. Returning to 2021-2022, I completed with distinction a Certification in Student Affairs and Higher Administration with UC Berkeley, which has helped me find a new purpose: to better the lives of people through the power of education and the arts. With a clearer path ahead, my research interests have come to focus: Women's Studies, Cultural Studies, and Social Justice are areas I am interested in exploring.

Angela Mininni

This has been a truly exciting year! I mainly focused on completing coursework and papers, and because of it I have been writing and reading a lot. This allowed me to

get a better and clearer idea on what I would like to focus on for my long-term research goal. But the greatest joy of all was that of becoming a mom. And turns out, baby Zoe is the perfect study-pal to prepare the Comps with!

Marius Rusu

The past year has been challenging, but the warm welcome from the faculty at Rutgers made the transition from the Italian academic system to the American one almost seamless. During the academic year I taught three undergraduate classes and published an article on the review «Quaderni dei Seminari "Aldo Manuzio" di Sermoneta». In October, I gave a speech at a conference in Lucca (Italy) on the book trade and cultural relations in 19th century Tuscany, and submitted the related article. In summer I joined the RRR Group (Rivoluzione Restaurazione Risorgimento) for a conference in Rome, where I presented new documents on a publisher and bookseller from the 18th century. My future projects for the next year include additional publications on book history and two conferences: Rennes (France) and Reggio Emilia (Italy).

Paolo Scartoni

[*L'ascesa a Dio. Tipologie della preghiera nella Commedia di Dante*](#), Paolo's translation of Alessandro Vettori's latest monograph on Dante, came out in March 2022. In the spring, Paolo taught an undergraduate seminar on Dante's *Divine Comedy*. He also co-founded the [Graduate Group](#) of the Dante Society of America with fellow Ph.D. students Mario Sassi (University of Pennsylvania) and Leonardo Chiarantini (University of Michigan). With Maria Teresa De Luca, he won a grant to develop a digital humanities project entitled "Divine Networks: An Interactive Visualization of Dante's *Comedy*." Together with Isabella Magni, he taught a workshop on TEI and digital editions for the "Days of Digital Learning" organized by the RSA and gave an invited talk at Stony Brook University entitled "From Renaissance Letters to Digital Communities: Research Projects and Methods in Digital Humanities."

Federica Soddu

This past year has been very productive for me. In September, my essay on Elena Ferrante's *The Days of*



RUTGERS

School of Arts and Sciences



The Rutgers Digital Humanities Initiative Graduate Seed Grants awarded Maria Teresa De Luca and Paolo Scartoni a \$1,500 grant for their proposed project, “Divine Networks: An Interactive Visualization of Dante’s Comedy.” Divine Networks will map the internal cross-references in Dante’s poem and will identify and bring to the surface for the first time in a systematic way the hidden and multidirectional pathways created by Dante. Thanks to the capacities of interactive network visualizations, DN will offer students and scholars a simple way to begin their research and interpret obscure passages of the Comedy by situating them in the broader plan of the poem.

Pictured above: Maria Teresa De Luca and Paolo Scartoni. Logo design: Elena Molino

More news from Current Graduate Students

Abandonment titled “Olga fra ‘vuoto di senso’ e lingua materna ne I giorni dell’abbandono” came out as a chapter in the book *Ferrante Unframed. Authorship, Reception and Feminist Praxis in the Works of Elena Ferrante*, by Società Editrice Fiorentina.

I’ve successfully discussed my prospectus in the Fall and thus started to work on my dissertation, which so far has been equally arduous and exciting!

The Spring has been full of events. While focusing on my bigger project, I’ve also worked as a grader for two professors and had the chance to learn more about fairy tales and Italian Americans in cinema. At the end of March, I finally travelled back to the US to take part in the Graduate Conference “Signs” organized by my colleagues of the IGS where, besides listening to stimulating presentations and moderating a panel, I also finally reunited with old and new friends from the Italian Department and beyond.

Between May and June, I’ve travelled around Italy to present parts of my research. At AAIS, in Bologna, I presented a paper titled “Dig Where You Are Standing”: Decolonial Discourses in Contemporary Sardinian Literature”, whereas at CAIS, in Sorrento, I discussed travel literature in a presentation titled “Thinking from the South. Travelling and writing in contemporary Sardinia” and had the pleasure to introduce my dear colleague and friend Eilis at her panel on Queer Italian-Canadian literature. Both conferences have been very rich in intellectual and interpersonal inputs, giving me also the chance to explore wonderful places, eat scrumptious food and make sweet new memories. While teaching online Italian for Reading Knowledge, I escaped every evening to the beach to enjoy wonderful sunsets and the beauty of the Sardinian summer.

Salvatore Taibi

Salvatore completed his first year at Rutgers and made the most of his time as a Dean’s Fellow by focusing on his coursework and exploring different areas of potential research. He was thrilled to present a paper at the NeMLA conference, taking place in Baltimore during March, titled “America Was Like A Religion.” This was a continuation of his work involving Spaghetti Westerns, specifically discussing the impact of Sergio Leone’s Italian and Catholic roots and their influence on his Dollars ‘trilogy.’ Salvatore looks forward to continuing his coursework in the fall and finding new and challenging topics to examine.

From the diary of a grad instructor, Giuseppe Grispino

A summer full of memories for life

I had the privilege to teach the Elementary Italian class during the RU in Rome program. It was indeed a life-changing experience. I have taught Elementary Italian classes at Rutgers several times, but seeing students immersing themselves in Italy and practicing the language every single day was a whole different experience, both as an instructor and from a personal perspective. The RU in Rome program gave me the opportunity to teach and study with students not only within the classroom walls of our beautiful Borgo Pio residence, but also each time we were out exploring the Eternal City and cities nearby. I saw students going beyond what we studied in the classroom, bringing back to class new content and experiences that they had while interacting with locals. To see them interact in Italian to buy an ice cream or a souvenir to bring home was so rewarding as a teacher. To interview them at the end of the program and see them so enthusiastic about the program really moved me. Some of them are already making plans to come back to Rome before the end of the year, while others have decided to continue to learn Italian while being back in the United States.

One of the funny anecdotes that I will remember was the day after I taught the verb 'to have' and the vocabulary for food in Italian. I walked into the classroom to find that one of the students had humorously translated the American expression "we have beef" into "noi abbiamo manzo" and had written it on the whiteboard. I explained the (very!) different connotations that this expression has in Italian and they all started laughing and then using the expression jokingly throughout the course. Jokes aside, it made me realize how much effort they were putting into the class and how relaxed, enthusiastic and passionate they were about learning Italian. I could not have been happier to be in the same classroom with them. They truly had a huge impact on me and my career.

<https://global.rutgers.edu/program-search/details/summer-rutgers-ru-rome>



Summer
2022



Alumnae/i Reunion



Roberto Pesce, Rutgers'11—University of Oklahoma
Assistant Professor, Alumni Reunion Keynote Speaker



On May 6th, 2022, it was great to get back to an in-person reunion this year, after two years of holding it remotely. A lot of former PhD students came back to listen to Roberto Pesce's presentation on his research, catch up, socialize, and enjoy dinner. We also greeted some of our donors and we were very happy and honored to have Dr. Annavaleria Guazzieri, the Director of the School Office of the Italian Consulate in New York City, join us for the celebration. Roberto Pesce's lecture was entitled "Medieval Folklore and Manuscript Traditions: Venetian Literature in the 13th and 14th Centuries" and in it he examined some aspects of his research on the tradition of Attila the Hun in the Middle Ages, highlighting the importance of a philological approach to the study of the text.

Pictured at table: Dr. Annavaleria Guazzieri, Director of the Education Office, Consulate General of Italy in New York, Rutgers Professor Andrea Baldi, Alumnae Lidia Radi and Simona Wright with Rutgers Professor Paola Gambarota.

Alumnae/i News

Caterina Agostini (Rutgers'21) University of Notre Dame, Postdoctoral Research Associate Caterina was The Edison Papers' Postdoctoral Associate, and Princeton's Center for Digital Humanities Project Manager. Recent publications: medical humanities (<http://digital.casalini.it/10.19272/202111802008>), Benvenuto Cellini (<https://ideah.pubpub.org/pub/rcyaqntb/release/3>), maps and digital humanities (<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3486187.3490207>). Invited speaker: Alberto Institute, Fundação Getulio Vargas, University of Göttingen. Visit Caterina's exhibit "Currency, Culture, and the D'Argenio Collection" at Seton Hall University.

Eny V. Di Iorio, (Rutgers) Dean of Academic Development, LdM-Lorenzo de' Medici Institute. I have published "Sinestesie newyorkesi (Village lost & found)", *New York. Rinascimento moderno*, De Ferrari Editore, Genoa, 2022.

Marino Forlino (Rutgers'15) As of July 1, 2022, Marino has been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure at Scripps College.



Andrea Guiati (Rutgers'91) Distinguished Teaching Professor, Coordinator, Italian Section, SUNY - Buffalo State. Dissertation: *Giorgio Bassani: il poeta ed il narratore*, Director Dr. Umberto C. Mariani. His latest book *Itinerari del 900, Scrittori Singolari*, was published in 2021. More info. here: <https://italian.rutgers.edu/people/alumni-menu/131-departmental-info/people/alumni/465-guiati-andrea>

Giovanna Miceli Jeffries (Rutgers'75 M.A. Rutgers'83 Ph.D.) Emerita U. of Wisconsin Madison. Her latest books are collections of short stories: *Mondo nuovo* (in Italian, 2022, Rubbettino.it, available also in Ebook) and *Bitter Trades* (2018, Legas). More info. here: <https://italian.rutgers.edu/people/alumni-menu/131-departmental-info/people/alumni/464-miceli-jeffries-giovanna>

[departmental-info/people/alumni/464-miceli-jeffries-giovanna](https://italian.rutgers.edu/people/alumni-menu/131-departmental-info/people/alumni/464-miceli-jeffries-giovanna)

Deena Levy (Rutgers'10) I still work (remotely) for Penn State, where I am an Instructional Consultant/ Associate Research Professor & Affiliate Faculty in Italian. This year, I've been enjoying digging deeper into the topic of developing intercultural competence. This has enabled me to uniquely leverage my academic background & experience in Italian/Italy in my work in teaching, learning, educational development, and learning design, which makes me happy :).

Francesco Pascuzzi (Rutgers'14) Assistant Professor with the Rutgers English Department Writing Program. I'm currently co-authoring the first English translation of Porpora Marcasciano's autobiography *Antologai* with Dr. Sandra Waters, to be finalized for publishing by the end of the year.

Massimo Riva (Rutgers'86) Professor of Italian Studies, Brown U., has published the first born-digital monograph in Italian Studies: *Shadow Plays: Virtual Realities in an Analog World* (Stanford UP, 2022). Many thanks to Alessandro Vettori and Paola Gambarota, who invited me, and the Rutgers students who helped me refine my ideas in a 2018 graduate seminar.

Johanna Rossi Wagner

(Rutgers '11) Assistant Dean in one of the seven residential colleges at Princeton University (New College West). More info. here: <https://italian.rutgers.edu/people/alumni-menu/131-departmental-info/people/alumni/425-johanna-rossi-wagner>



italian.rutgers.edu/people/alumni-menu/131-departmental-info/people/alumni/425-johanna-rossi-wagner

Interested alumni who would like to have an Italian Dept. webpage, should contact Sheri La Macchia, Web-Administrator, at slama@rutgers.edu. Please provide your bio, current email and square headshot, plus year of graduation and degree received.

Events

Promoting Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion
in the Language and
Culture Classroom



**JOIN US FOR LUNCH & PRACTICE
YOUR ITALIAN AT**

TAVOLA ITALIANA 2
TOPIC: SANREMO FESTIVAL



FEBRUARY 22, 2022

DROP BY BETWEEN 12PM AND 1.30PM
ACADEMIC BUILDING, ROOM 5050

COORDINATOR: GIUSEPPE GRISPINO

Food For Thought AY 2021-2022

Silvia Stoyanovia

Paolo Scartoni

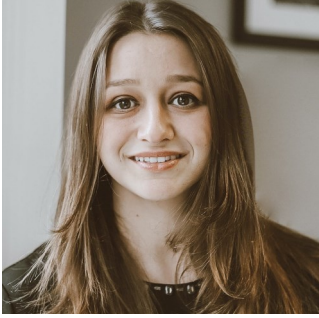
RUTGERS
School of Arts and Sciences

Connecting with the community on
Rutgers Day, Saturday, April 30th.
Visitors learned how to order
coffee in Italian. Over 350 cups
served by our volunteers.

3 shown below, instructor, Giusep-
pina, Italian Club President, Alessia,
and Italian Dept. student staff, Dio.



Best wishes to our latest Ph.D. graduate



Raffaella Fusco, RU '22

This past academic year was rewarding in a variety of ways. For one, I taught in-person and it was a lovely return to engaging with students face-to-face. I continued my qualitative research study and presented my work at several conferences. I

also successfully defended my dissertation and soon after graduating from Rutgers, I joined the Office of Distinguished Fellowships as Assistant Director. I'm beyond excited to serve the Rutgers community in this capacity and look forward to seeing familiar faces on campus.



Is the M.A.T. in Italian degree right for you?

Meet with the Graduate Program Director, Professor Paola Gambarota. Email paola.gambarota@rutgers.edu

<https://italian.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/mat>

← Angela, MAT grad 2019



Italian Quarterly

The Department's journal *Italian Quarterly* has two upcoming volumes, one is a special issue on Dante (which was supposed to come out last year but its publication was delayed), followed by a regular issue. Editor Alessandro Vettori and managing editor Sandra Waters invite specialists in literature, culture, film, pedagogy, and history to send article submissions to sandra.waters@rutgers.edu. Send proposals for creative reviews to Eilis Kierans emk177@italian.rutgers.edu. To start your subscription to Italian Quarterly, contact the department at itquarterlybilling@gmail.com.

Connect with us @italianrutgers on Instagram



News from the Faculty



Andrea Baldi
Professor

This past academic year was marked by the uneasy transition to the post-COVID environment. The Fall semester still posed a few challenges in terms of teaching strategies for online and hybrid courses, but I learned a lot from this experience. I have a forthcoming essay: "Matilde Serao, Flânerie, and Women in Urban Spaces," which will appear in *The Palgrave Handbook of Transnational Women's Writing in the Long Nineteenth Century*. I participated in the International Conference *Italia sí, Italiano. Una cultura para el mundo* (Seville, Spain), giving a talk on "Il Ragionamento a Donna Lavinia": Annibale Guasco e la sua "creatura". At the University of Seville, I also taught a class on *Anna Maria Ortese e il disagio della modernità*. Finally, I presented a paper titled "Vulnerability and Empathy in Anna Maria Ortese: Toward an Ethics of Care" at the 2022 NeMLA Convention. Moreover, I served as a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the NJIHC and chaired the panel of judges that selected the 2021 recipient of the Coccia-Inserra Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Teaching of Italian.



Paola Gambarota
Associate Professor

During my sabbatical I made great progress on my book *American Naples*. I was happy to be able to concentrate again on my large database of interviews, letters, photographs, newspapers, memoirs, diaries, journals, poetry, and novels, and to try to tell a rich story of the occupied city.

I enjoyed being involved in the job search that resulted in the hiring of our inspiring and delightful new colleague Vetri Nathan, and to participate in the many initiatives of our department, from the exciting conference organized by our graduate students in April to a heartwarming Alumni Reunion, finally in person again, in May. I am very much looking forward to going back to class and to teaching my courses face to face.



David Marsh
Professor

In the past year, Prof. Marsh published "Alberti and Lapo on Human Behavior" in *Leon Battista Alberti Intercenales: Eine neulateinische Kurzprosasammlung zwischen Antike und Moderne*, ed. Hartmut Wulfram (Stuttgart 2021); and half a dozen reviews in *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Italian Quarterly*, and *Sixteenth-Century Studies*. He also delivered the lecture "Giannozzo Manetti: Fifty Years of Research" at the Conference of the International Association of Neo-Latin Studies. Louvain, Belgium, in August 2022.



Carmela Scala
*Assistant Teaching Professor,
Director of the Italian Language
Program*

This year I welcomed the opportunity to go back to in-person classes, and it was amazing to be in class with my students again. It was also a very productive year. I was able to complete and publish my book *Granting Our Students an Engaging Learning Experience Online: From Design to Teaching*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021. I also completed several articles: How to Foster Equality in The Language Classroom, in "Rhetoric and

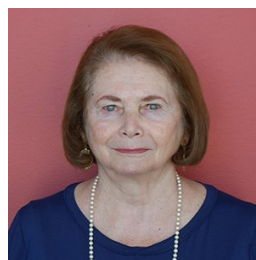
Sociolinguistics in Times of Global Crisis," (IGI Global, April 2021); Replacing the "Melting Pot" With a "Colorful Mixed Salad" in the Language Classroom, in Global and Transformative Approaches Toward Linguistic Diversity, (IGI, June 2022); Learning English and Teaching Italian: The "Egos" of a Bilingual and Bicultural Soul, in Autoethnographic Perspectives on Multilingual Life Stories, (IGI Global, May 2022.) Finally, in collaboration with my colleague Chiara De Santi, I organized the virtual conference *Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Language and Culture Classroom* (April 2022) which attracted a good crowd and many international presenters.



Alessandro Vettori
Professor

This past year my research focused on the concept of money as related to Franciscan poverty in Dante. I published 6 articles and 4 more are forthcoming; I also gave 9 papers and presentations in the US, Italy, France, and Israel (remote). I was invited to teach a course on the idea of Love in the Italian literary tradition at the Università degli Studi di Torino in May/June. I continue to edit *Italian Quarterly* with Sandy Waters; two issues are coming out in the next few months. With Eilis Kierans and Sandy Waters I edit the translation series Other Voices of

Italy (OVOI) with Rutgers University Press. I was appointed board member of the Center for European Studies; I was elected councilor of the Dante Society of America (2022-2025); I was an NEH review panelist and a member of the AATI book award.



Laura S. White
Professor

In the past year, I spent a significant amount of time teaching well-attended online culture courses (i.e. Italian Food Culture: 180 students). Teaching has become more demanding, but continues to be very rewarding (thanks also to my wonderful graders!). Much more time, than in the past, has been devoted to mentoring students, which was equally rewarding.

I continued as recorder of departmental Faculty meetings and I did my first year as liaison to the alumni of our department. I continued in my role as Vice-President for IACE (Italian American Committee on Education) sponsored by the New York Italian Consulate, with regular virtual meetings. I also continued serving as member of the New Jersey Italian Heritage Commission, also conducted virtually. We resumed our in-person meetings of the Advisory Board for the Departments of French and Italian at Princeton University, which were suspended during the previous two years because of the pandemic.



Rosario Scalia
Italian Government
Lecturer

Rosario has received his MA in Classics (1996), his PhD in Philosophy and History of Ideas (2001) from Catania University and a Post-Doctoral scholarship from UNIFESP (Federal University of São Paulo). He has been teaching Italian, Latin, Greek and Classical Philology in Italian High Schools for twenty years and has been cooperating with many Universities all over the world (Catania; Roma, Tor Vergata; L'Aquila; Firenze; São Paulo; Middlebury College). At Rutgers University, he teaches courses of Italian language and culture as a governmental lecturer. He loves being a teacher and a student as well. For that reason he has recently attended a program of Doctorate of Modern Languages (DML) at Middlebury College, Vermont and is writing his final dissertation about the myths and representations of Italian mafia. His first book, "Il mito di Cosa Nostra. La vera storia del Padrino", co-authored with Antonio Nicaso, has just been published in Italy. In the rare moments when he does not work/study/write he likes walking with his daughter in New York City and watching movies.



School of Arts and Sciences

Department of Italian

Rutgers University—New Brunswick

15 Seminary Place, #5105

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

We'd like to stay in touch...

As part of the Rutgers community we invite you to join us for innovative intellectual and celebratory events. We are grateful for the generous support of alumni, individuals, and our partner Italian foundations and organizations, who have helped to positively shape our students' experience through academics, programming, and financial means. Feel free to stop by the Italian Department for a visit or visit on social media @ItalianRutgers on Instagram or @RutgersDepartmentofItalian on Facebook and our website. We welcome opportunities to collaborate.

Italian.Rutgers.edu