

Mirafiori Magazine

by Modern Language students, Lettere e Filosofia



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December 2009

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Cover photo by Cinzia Bianco

Interview with Reform

by the Editors



Entrance to the Arts Faculty, 12/12/2009.
Photo by Cinzia Bianco.

The Gelmini reform means further cuts in funds for Italy's public universities, which has generated unrest throughout the country's educational system. When the reform was still at the draft stage, thousands of angry students and workers took part in demonstrations and strikes. Another demonstration was held on 12 December and involved cities all over Italy. The biggest march was in Rome, where fighting broke out among some demonstrators and the police, who had blocked demonstrators at Termini Station thus preventing them from proceeding to the Education Ministry building.

The demonstration itself changed nothing, however, and students remain extremely concerned about their precarious future. Press recognition of our difficult situation is

exemplified in an article published in Repubblica.it on 3 December: "Università, così cambia la Sapienza. Facoltà dimezzate: Lettere sparisce." Arts Faculty Dean Franco Piperno responded to this article via the University website: "It's true, Sapienza is in the process of reorganizing (...)". But, he added, "No faculty (...) will disappear. (...). The Humanities will be gathered in a new body".

Nevertheless, something has already changed in our degree course, the most obvious change being the closure of certain language sections. With this concern in mind, Ludovica Tranfaglia interviewed Portuguese language lecturer Marta Gomez. [Interview translated by the Editors of this issue: Cinzia Bianco, Fabiana Scacchi and Ludovica Tranfaglia].

LT: My first question is about your language section, which will be closed in two years. What reason has the University given you?

MG: Actually there has never been a real explanation. Students are continuing to ask me for a reason and many of them think that it will be closed because of few enrolments. This language section has always worked well - the classes had and still have the right kind of numbers for productive and useful lessons.

LT: Portuguese is the 2nd Romance language in the world, and the 8th language in the world. Do you believe it is feasible to erase this teaching in Sapienza, Europe's largest university?

MG: This is not going to happen because the subject will continue to be taught in the Scienze Umanistiche Faculty. Ours has never been a costly degree course because of the small number of teaching staff and the low salary. I've been working here as a lecturer on a short-term contract and I earn less than 1000 euro a month.

LT: What would you like to say to the person who took this decision?

MG: These 9 years of teaching have been very important for me. It's been a period of continuous cultural and personal growth. So the only thing I would question is the absurdity of losing the acquired heritage of those years, which is actually very sad.

LT: What do you think will be the fate of Italy's intellectual elite following the economic cuts affecting the very system that should guarantee culture?

MG: I believe there will be a growing tendency towards individualism. University access will be reserved for a minority, a step backwards, with perhaps a better education for fewer but wealthier students, as in the American system.

LT: What do you wish for your future?

MG: I don't want think about the future. I want to live day-to-day and continue working as I've always done, without thinking that tomorrow I may lose everything.

I would like to express my thanks to Prof Marta Gomes for agreeing to do this interview, and for the enthusiasm she transmits to us in her lessons.

Who's Afraid of the Girl in Black?

The words 'burqa', 'niqab' and 'hijab' are often confused. The burqa is a garment covering women from head to toe, allowing them to see the outside world through a net. The niqab, often black, also covers from head to toe but leaves the eyes uncovered. The hijab is a headscarf covering only the hair. As reported this autumn by the media, Italy's Minister for Equal Opportunities, Mara Carfagna, is intent on banning the first two types of veil at school, arguing that they are "symbols of the subjugation of women and an actual barrier to integration." She believes that behind the veils, women are victims of violence and oppression, and are being deprived of their right to education and employment. Minister Carfagna sees school as the primary site for integration and emancipation. Consequently, banning whatever clashes with her view of equality would send out an important signal. (Mariella Bologna)

Mariella Bologna argues against the veils

To consider burqa or niqab as religious symbols is questionable. And the idea that there are women who wear them voluntarily is even more questionable. Relatively few in number (the hijab is much more widespread), they are conditioned by their culture, and often do not even know what it means to express their independent will. These veils are symbols of segregation, an anthropological and historical model of the subjugation of women, incompatible with the fundamental rights and gender equality guaranteed by democratic constitutions.

An anti-terrorism law was passed several years ago prohibiting the use of hoods, so as to enable face recognition. This is not a religious issue. The new rules proposed by Minister Carfagna are simply to ensure greater safety in public places, and to protect women's rights, guaranteeing equal dignity. This is beyond religion.

I support Minister Carfagna's proposals. We must be able to identify a person's face in public places, especially in the street. With the proposed changes, women would be in a better position to challenge customs forced upon them, knowing that they are protected by the government of the country they live in.

In my opinion, burqa and niqab should both be prohibited. I consider them the same really, or rather, both are unacceptable.

Samanta Scalone argues for tolerance

I would like to live in a tolerant country where manifestations of cultural diversity are not repressed. But is this feasible? What happens to cultural diversity in Muslim countries? We must not hide the truth, namely, that Muslim countries force us to follow their traditions. This is hardly a good basis for building mutual cultural respect.

Even though we may not like Muslim intolerance towards other cultures, is there any need for us to be as intolerant as they are? Do we want to take on the role of cultural dictator? I

think this would be absolutely wrong! Where are the values of freedom and the hospitality we have always had towards others? Is this debate only related to a black veil or are we afraid of the girl in black? The truth is that in our so-called advanced society we find it difficult to accept diversity: it frightens us.

I believe there are two solutions that could promote peaceful and democratic coexistence. First, we could accept each other's culture, so Muslim girls could wear burqa in Italy, but we should not be forced to wear it in Muslim countries, unless, out of respect for their traditions and because we have integrated into their culture, we decide we want to wear it. Similarly, if Muslim women integrate into Italian society, they wouldn't wear it. Sometimes finding the way to coexist peacefully and respectfully is easier than we think.



Who's Afraid of the Girl in Black?

Amna Abd el Wahab argues for coexistence

As a non-Italian who has been living in Italy since 1995, I don't remember seeing Muslim women wearing a burqa or niqab here, especially in schools. Three years ago though, I heard about a woman who entered a large supermarket in Milan wearing the niqab, and people called the police. Everybody acted as if a moving bomb had walked towards them!

I arrived here in Italy in the mid-nineties, and as a Muslim myself I have to admit that I've never felt discriminated against, except after wearing hijab. Suddenly all my neighbours started to look at me suspiciously, as if I'd committed a crime or as if I'd just fallen from a UFO!

At the beginning I felt angry, because these people had known me for more than eight years. They didn't realise that it was still Me, the same person. The only thing that had changed was that I was wearing a headscarf.

Did anybody ever ask a nun why she chooses to devote herself to God? That's similar to what I did, nothing more; I just decided to practise my religion. What Carfagna is trying to say is that practising religion is in contradiction with personal freedom.

Religious beliefs are very personal, and in my view, trying to prevent Muslim women from choosing whether or not to practise their own beliefs is in itself a sort of oppression.

People who talk about tolerance are unaware of the word *coexistence*. This term describes better what the world really needs. We need to *coexist*, to live together and respect each other without judging other peoples' beliefs or cultures.

I think that the problem here in Italy is that people get their culture from TV and the mass media in general, which, as we all know, are political tools.

I once attended a philosophy lesson with a very respectful Sapienza professor who urged everybody to stop watching TV. What he advised was to "READ, READ, and READ!"

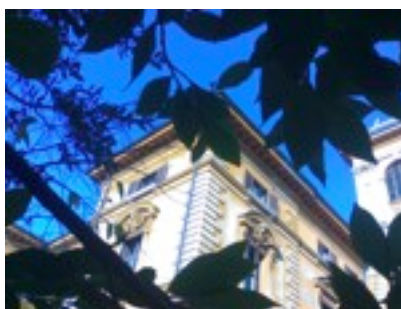


Photo by Cinzia Bianco

Is marriage really about love?

by Jacopo Sementilli

In certain African marriage cultures, bride and groom feast and dance for days within their community. In China, marriage is initiated through a series of letters: the request letter; the gift letter; the wedding letter. But however you do it, the principal aim of the different ceremonies in the world is the same: to join two people, bride and groom, "till death do us part".

Marriage is the pillar not only of society, but also of government and business. It goes in tandem with the nation: when marriage fails, the nation falls.

From this point of view, marriage isn't about the union of feelings or the ultimate expression of love, but simply a contract, a "piece of paper" that certifies a union between two people only to regulate business in society. This goes against the real meaning of love, but no-one seems to notice it, or they pretend not to see it.

What has happened to people's real desire to share their life with another person?

I think the world we are living in is too material; it breaks the spell of marriage. Think of the large number of marriages, the majority of them, that end due to economic problems.

In these situations, people forget about feelings, about love, because money and its problems are even more important than love itself.

I'm really fed-up seeing so many selfish people in the world, people who don't care about feelings, people who give up their marriage at the first sign of trouble, without remorse or even a scrap of conscience. And why? Just because of a mortgage or a high bill. Why don't they try to find a solution instead of just dropping everything and leaving? "Till death do us part"? Huh! It's only a cliché.

Winter Light in Stockholm

by Jennifer Vitali



From Skavsta to Stockholm, 3.20 pm.

I have just got back from a short trip to Stockholm. It was a great experience especially because of the festive atmosphere, with lights and decorations everywhere, Christmas carols in the streets and shops, on the buses and underground! The only thing I didn't like much was the fact that the sun starts to set at about 3pm, and it's so odd! I much prefer summer when the sun sets really late.

Stockholm is not a large city, so you can see a lot in four days. One of the best things is the boat-tour of the canals and islands. Stockholm is made up of 14 islands, all connected by bridges - that's why it's called "the Venice of the North" or "the city that floats on water". Unfortunately there were just a couple of tours available in December, but in summer it's a great way to see the city!

From the first week in December you can find Christmas markets almost everywhere. The most famous ones are in Stortorget (the big square) in Gamla Stan (the old town), and at Skansen, an open air museum and a zoo on Djurgården island. These markets sell all sorts of handicrafts, candles, Christmas decorations, traditional Nordic gloves, hats and scarfs, and Swedish sweets such as pepparkakor (gingerbread biscuits), cinnamon roll and glögg (a kind of spiced and sweetened wine).

One of the things I like most is the Skansen, an open air museum (the first in the world) with over 150 buildings and houses from all over Sweden (including Lapland) and ancient Sweden, with its traditional Christmas markets, and a zoo where you can see bears, wolves, eagles, foxes, lynx, elks, reindeer and more.

The city is very peaceful, not chaotic at all. Sometimes you don't even feel like you're in a European capital! At the weekends, foreigners come for the markets and you can also hear Italian in the streets! In the city centre there's a free open-air ice rink where you can hire skates or bring your own. Next to it, you will of course find more Christmas markets!

The language isn't a problem as everyone speaks perfect English! As soon as people realize you're foreign, they automatically talk to you in English! The only person I came across who didn't speak English was an old lady in a second-hand shop in the Old Town, so since I study Swedish I took the opportunity for some practice. In shops and cafes I also found people who spoke Italian and they were very happy to talk Italian with me and my friends! Even the young kids speak good English, mainly, I think, because movies and TV series are not dubbed but in the original language with Swedish subtitles.

The weather was not really a problem either since it wasn't particularly cold (around 0°-3°), and unfortunately it didn't snow! If you feel cold you can always go into a shop where the heating is turned up high (too high for me). Almost everyone was wearing short-sleeved T-shirts. Or you can go into one of the many cafes and taste some Swedish cakes. One of the best I had was apple pie with vanilla and cinnamon, typically Swedish! But forget the coffee, it really tastes like water!

If you like Christmas, shopping and having a relaxed time, I would really recommend visiting Stockholm! **God Jul!**



Sergel's torg (Sergel's square) in the centre of Stockholm, at the central station.



Stortorget in Gamla Stan, with Stockholm's most famous Christmas markets. Photos by J.Vitali, 2009.

The Cold Side of the Sun in Montreal

by Floriano Buono



A view from Montreal old port. Photo by Floriano Buono (2008).

Oh, Canada! Land of squirrels and trend setters, woods and high-end clubs, *frogs* and *blokes*, churches and strip-clubs, and all that together with *poutine* and maple syrup spread over. These are just a few oppositions you can find in this North American country, although ‘opposition’ might be the wrong word, for they all live quite harmoniously: they all agree on something. Maybe it’s because of the well-known syrup’s sweetness: you can’t help but long to be a bubbling particle of this dense liquid spilling from the trees.

“Why did you come to Canada all the way from Italy to study French? France is so near...” Countless times I’ve been asked this question and yes, there is a logic behind my choice, although I’m not very keen on giving logical answers to overly-rational people. The excuse - let’s put it this way - was that part of my family is there, so it was a way for me to be with them and, at the same time, to

live in this country for a while.

It was September when I arrived in Montreal, and the crisp Canadian air welcomed me outside the airport. For an Italian, especially if from the South, that’s the first sensation you get as you land in a colder country.

Right from the first glimpses of this city, you can tell you’re in the New World thanks to the structure of the apartment buildings, their five or six steps outside the main door, the metal fire escapes, no public squares, nor warm gazes, yet you can tell there’s something different from the usual North American city.

It doesn’t take long to understand why you feel that Montreal is different: first of all, when you approach someone, you don’t know which language to use. Yes, because Québec Region has two official languages: French and English. Everyone knows both and they’re able to switch as

they breathe but, of course, they're divided between Anglophones and Francophones (*blokes* and *frogs*, as they call each other in a racist yet joking way). I tried to speak French with everyone and it was so hard at



first: they speak with a heavy accent, *le québécois*, which made me feel as if I had never studied French in my life. Still, step by step you get accustomed to it, and it's like penetrating their culture, their way of seeing things, their way of moving the mouth. And getting into a daily routine in this big city makes it easier. So I found the most suitable language school and started attending an intensive course.

Montreal offers a wide range of cultural activities which, even though they're concentrated during the months from May to September, are well distributed throughout the year: all sorts of festivals, shows, exhibitions, a huge library, concerts, you only have to chose where to start from. For example, Pop Montreal, an annual music festival taking place in the early fall where more than 400 acts are scheduled to play in more than 50 venues across the city, and along with the music there are films and art events as well.

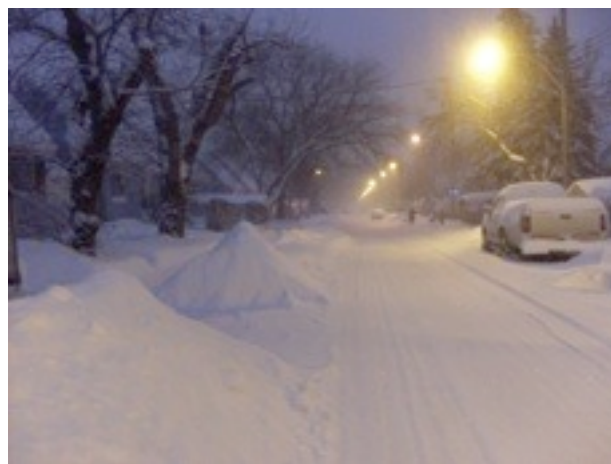
Describing people from Montreal is a particularly difficult task; their origins are so varied. Everyone has their own identity but shares some common features with others. So, if I have to give a few words explaining what they are like, I would say: kind, distant and multi-colored. For sure these attributes fit people from most big cities, but I find them even better suited to Montrealers.

Another impressive element is the amount of green around you, downtown but, most of all, just outside the very centre of the city. Once you are outside the city, it looks like you're in a totally different dimension: rough and untouched, the beauty of nature is haunting, especially in fall, when the leaves on the trees are tinged with gold, bronze and red. They even have a festival celebrating this amazing sight, called the Festival of Colors.

Montreal night life is very well-known too. People love to have fun here; the city's reputation draws people in from all over the world, and the city never lets them down. At night downtown turns into a big circus that is home to all kinds of leisure activities. Montreal has some of the most active clubs in the whole of North America, with a special mention for the gay clubs. The city also has a gay neighborhood placed in the very centre and it's specifically marked on official city maps as Le Village.

There is one question you cannot escape when talking about Canada: "Canada is so cold, isn't it? Why did you come all the way from sunny Italy to suffer in this cold weather?!" Living in Québec from September until February, I got the chance to experience the harshness of Winter and, I must admit, I really enjoyed it. And I'm not saying it's not that harsh, it *is*...But it's nothing compared to the peace you feel when walking on snow, whiteness all around, just your breath, the noise of your boots and the cold wind making you feel alive (except for your face muscles if you don't cover yourself up properly, so watch out!). Of course, I'm not seeing it all through rose-colored glasses: you *do* slip on the icy sidewalks and you *do* wish you had never worn those jeans that day, but, in that instant, the spirit of the country is getting under your skin.

When it's time to go, you sum up and rationalize all the impressions and sensations you were unaware of during your life in this country. You realize the warm feeling you get from Montreal: the will to be part of it, you can see a little space where you could fit comfortably. And I bet that's the feeling that urges people from every part of the world to move there.



Above: Let it snow. (2009)

Above left: Downtown Montreal. An old church reflecting in a very modern building. (2008)

Photos on this page by Floriano Buono.

Dorian Gray

reviewed by Martina Puglisi

The Picture of Dorian Gray is maybe Oscar Wilde's most famous work, and has been frequently adapted for the stage and cinema. This newest movie adaptation was directed by Oliver Parker from a script by Toby Finlay.

The story itself concerns Dorian (Ben Barnes), a handsome young man, whose portrait is painted by his friend Basil Hallward (Ben Chaplin). Dorian meets the charismatic and cynical Lord Henry Wotton (Colin Firth) who opens his eyes to a pleasure-seeking philosophy. During the last painting session, Dorian wishes he could remain eternally young and beautiful like his painting, in exchange for handing over his soul.

With Dorian's lust and sins growing ever larger, the painting becomes horrific and he turns to murder to protect his secret, eventually leaving London. When he returns some years later, he finds all his friends older, while he looks no different from the day he first arrived in London. Now Henry has a daughter, Emily, and Dorian becomes close to her. *But can Dorian really love anyone more than himself?*

Parker's re-visitation is inevitably different from the Oscar Wilde classic: the characters are more up-to-date and some elements have been changed. Basil's infatuation with Dorian becomes explicit; the blond, blue-eyed and angelic-looking Dorian of the book is lost, becoming a darker wide-eyed Ben Barnes; the superficial Lord Henry Wotton is not just a source of advice about Hedonism, but becomes an active protagonist of Dorian's drama because of his daughter, Emily. And the fact that he has a daughter makes him vulnerable. This Dorian Gray is a glamorous rock star. It is a version of a 1960s Mick Jagger, surrounded by groupies and hedonism. As producer Barnaby Thompson explains:

He was a young man who became a rock'n'roll star and was able to do whatever he wanted and in some ways was above the law. We live in an age of celebrity, we live in an age where good looks and pop culture have become more and more powerful elements in our life and the idea of the power of beauty and what that gives you is as relevant now as it ever was. The book still resonates today because of the fundamental theme of 'what if you were allowed to do anything?'

Today's technology provides striking images and the special effects are truly dramatic and explicit, probably to attract today's audience. The picture itself comes to life. It becomes an awful and rotten creature that exhales ghostly whisperings and groanings. And in the end it shows Dorian's corruption in a moving picture monster that is just too spectacular. The overdone visual effects drown the movie into a horror movie, incapable of doing justice to Wilde's masterpiece. If you want a perfect transposition of the original novel and you can't take the inevitable compromises of a movie adaptation, don't go to see it. But if you've never read the novel and have an open mind, you'll like it; you might even look forward to reading the novel at some point.

Inglourious Basterds

reviewed by

Leonardo Kam Pong Hau

I think this might just be my masterpiece.

Lt. Aldo Raine

In the words of Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt), this might be Quentin Tarantino's best work: in this film we have everything that sets him apart as a director, and crowns him "King of post-modernist film-making." There are his very-long-but-very-entertaining speeches, his cruel blood-and-gore scenes, his not-good-yet-not-bad characters, his tributes to other countries' film cultures. Months ago, the trailer stated "You haven't seen World War II Until you've seen it through the eyes of Quentin Tarantino", and now I can agree with every word.

Last year I attended some lessons on Quentin Tarantino at the DAMS and realized that he is a photography maniac: every scene of his movie has perfect photos, and every scene of this one too is beautifully shot and wonderful to watch. Brad Pitt's performance as Aldo Raines is terrific too, and the guy who played the main Nazi villain, the "Jew Hunter" SS Colonel Hans Landa (Christoph Waltz), in my opinion deserves to be nominated for an Oscar. His soliloquies are all memorable, but the first is the most Tarantino-esque in style. A suggestion for Italian viewers is to watch it in the original language: this would enable you to appreciate the entertaining dialogue more.

Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Oscar Night Fever

by Dario Fanara

At this time of the year, cinema lovers start making predictions about the next Oscar winners. In the past, prediction was easier, but this year the rules have changed, making the competition more exciting and guessing the winner more difficult.

Let's have a look at the Big Night developments we are talking about. There will be ten nominees instead of five for the Best Film, the most important category of the Academy Awards, while the category of Animated Feature Film will have five nominees rather than three.

The voting system will also change: *Hollywood Reporter* states that Academy members will no longer choose just one of the nominated films, but will vote to nominate three films as Oscar candidates. Italy's *Ciak* magazine reports, however, that they will list their preferences among the candidates for Best Film in order of priority.

The nominations will be announced at 2.30am on 3 February 2010 (Rome time, but in Hollywood the scheduled time is 5.30pm on 2 February). There are rumours that this time we might see a cartoon, a documentary, and a foreign film competing as Best Films (respectively: *Up*; *Capitalism: A Love Story*; Almodovar's *Broken Hugs -Los abrazos rotos*, this last being the most widely appreciated in the US).

The studios' strategies remain unchanged: most of the potential Oscar winning films come out in December, as is the case of *Nine*, a musical with Nicole Kidman and Penelope Cruz, Peter Jackson's *The Lovely Bones* and *Invictus*, Rome Film Festival competitor *Up in the Air*, and Tom Ford's *A Single Man* which was included in Venice.

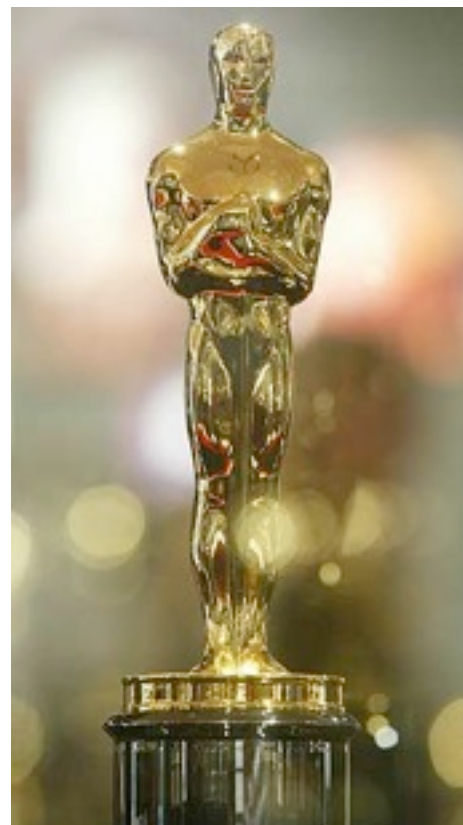
An Education, *Precious* and *The Hurt Locker* are also potential nominations for Best Film although they came out few months ago in the USA.

Many critics believe that Tornatore's *Baaria* is likely to receive a nomination as Best Foreign Film. Italy hasn't won an Oscar since 1998, when Roberto Benigni triumphed with *Life is Beautiful*. Rivals in this category might be *Los abrazos rotos*, *Un Prophète* and *Das Weisse Band*.

Possible candidates for Best Director: Kathryn Bigelow (*The Hurt Locker*), Peter Jackson (*The Lovely Bones*) and Jason Reitman (*Up in the Air*).

As Best Actor we might find Colin Firth (*A Single Man*), Morgan Freeman (*Invictus*) and George Clooney (*Up in the Air*), while as Best Actress the most likely names are Carey Mulligan (*An Education*), Gabourey Sidibe (*Precious*) and Meryl Streep (*Julie & Julia*).

But who will be The Characters of the next Big Night, stealing the show?



The Oscar Statuette



2009 Oscar-winners: Kate Winslet (Best Actress for *The Reader*), Sean Penn (Best Actor for *Milk*), Penelope Cruz (Best Actress in a Supporting Role for *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*).

MTV Europe music awards: if u like it, pull a leg!

by Aurora Mazzoni and Silvia Magazzù

ADVISORY NOTE

This review may contain satirical statements that may cause problems for sufferers of Fan Addiction Disease (aka FAD).

Dewdrop: Hi Ro!! What's up? You know, I've just been watching the MTV Europe Music Awards 2009!

Ro_pepper: Really?! Me too!

Dewdrop: Did u see Green Day's singer?? I was really impressed that he went all across the crowd and got back on stage safely!!

Ro_pepper: I was impressed by his new hairdo! Couldn't he just pay someone to dye his hair for him instead of doing it by himself?? And with peroxide too??

Dewdrop: AAAHAHAHA!!! What about Katy Perry's outfit then?? She looked and danced like she came out of the Moulin Rouge...in its early days!!

Ro_pepper: True! Anyways, I liked the way she personalised the songs! Did u see Snow White and the eighth dwarf introducing BEST LIVE ACT?

Dewdrop: Oh yes! That guy with the useless black circle around his left eye. Since he's a dwarf maybe we should call him Emoc or Punkey, even Rocky too!

Ro_pepper: Emo? Punk? Rock?? None of them would marry Ashley Simpson!! By the way, I'm so happy U2 won this category! They totally RoCK!!

Dewdrop: And then Joss Stone introduced BEST URBAN...maybe, she was the only European thing about the show...oops! I forgot Tokio Hotel... we're up to 2 now!!

Ro_pepper: Yess! Jay-Zwoon!! And just to keep it a family-thing, after his acceptance speech, his wife performed on stage! Were we watching the EMAs or The Sopranos??

Dewdrop: Speaking of performing!! Mitch Dukennon tried to act like he was sober when presenting BEST RoCK.

Ro_pepper: Unfortunately his jacket betrayed him! Nobody sober would wear a sequined jacket...!

Dewdrop: AHAHAHA!!! I'm thinking about Lil Kim who presented BEST NEW ACT. She was shorter than the table!!

Ro_pepper: Oh yes and her sunglasses were bigger than her face, and her earrings bigger than her. But she was surely better than Jean Reno who presented BEST

MALE. Will somebody explain to him that even if English has hypotaxis he can use conjunctions too??

Dewdrop: =)) maybe no-one ever told him! But Eminem won!! He's finally back and...can u believe it? He won't be killing anyone in his new song...not even his mother!

Ro_pepper: Maybe cos she's already dead from old age!! Shakira's language faculty also seems to be dead!!

Dewdrop: The web is full of parodies about her!! And, to be honest, I just can't understand what she's saying when she sings! Do you know why they let Jonas Brothers introduce the Michael Jackson tribute??

Ro_pepper: Not a clue!! It was the most disappointing thing!! Who are they? They weren't even born when Michael Jackson sang! Anyway, BEST PUSH ACT went to Pixie Lott. But what is Best Push Act?? Does it mean she composed the song with her pusher??

Dewdrop: I really don't know either!! And I wonder why in an Award which is supposed to be European,

European awards are listed randomly?? Did you see who won BEST ITALIAN ACT?! The Lost. (Why not Gianni Celeste?! Oh but we can definitely say that the "Backstreet's back all right", presenting BEST EUROPEAN ACT!!

Ro_pepper: Yeeees!! Guys??? You can't keep acting like the young boys you were at the start! You have crutches and dentures waiting for you backstage!!

Dewdrop: AHAHA. And after Manga's award, the moment all the girls were waiting for....A desperate househusband or rather, a garden-husband, Jesse Metcalfe presented

BEST GROUP!

Ro_pepper: Yes and then unfortunately came the moment all the teenyboppers were waiting for...Tokio Hotel won! Hurry up and say your bit cos your milk is ready and mom wants you to get to bed early tonight.

Dewdrop: Oh yes, and I would suggest that it's time they learned English now that they are international stars!! Anyway, at least at the end of the show, there were two well-deserved awards, BEST FEMALE ACT and BEST VIDEO, going to the incredible Beyonceeeeeeeee!!

Ro_pepper: It's true! She's beautiful and a very good singer!! And it was so touching too when she thanked jay-z for PUTTING A RING ON IT!!

Dewdrop: Yes soo cute!! Hey, I'm getting a bit tired now - are you coming to class tomorrow??

Ro_pepper: Sure! We'll catch up there =) Goodnight then! Bye

Dewdrop: Bye bye!!

Collage by Dewdrop © <http://ema.mtv.it/video>



Art

Laura Lobello reports on Boudoir Photography

Boudoir photography comes from the French word *boudoir*, a lady's private chamber. The term itself is associated with the Marquis de Sade's *La philosophie dans le boudoir* of 1795 (translated into English as *Philosophy in the Boudoir*), which caused a scandal at the time.



The book focuses on the private world of women, including their passions, hopes and gossip. Boudoir photography draws on the past, creating an atmospheric sensuality. Photographs in this style display a kind of fictionalised retro-world with soft colours and sophisticated clothes. The old-style garments suggest rather than flaunt nudity, never crossing the line into bad taste. The result is a dreamy and very modern kind of artwork. This form of art seems to me a sophisticated and enigmatic way of displaying feminine sensuality.



Many thanks to photographer Emma Jones for allowing us to use these photographs.

(<http://www.missboudoir.com>.)

EXHIBITION 19-22 December

Pensieri in Arte: Un percorso tra arte e letteratura.

An exhibition of works by 13 young artists inspired by the writings of 13 authors. The writers involved will also perform readings from the texts that in some way inspired the artworks. Vernissage and readings start at 6.30pm on Saturday 19 December, at the Scuola Romana di Fotografia, via degli Ausoni, 7A, in San Lorenzo. Tel. 06 495 72 64. Open Sunday-Monday-Tuesday 11am-7pm. Free event. For more details, see <http://www.scuolaromanadifotografia.it>



Chiara Guida reports on underwater art

Here's an unusual kind of artwork that I read about recently in the BBC News. For this project, artist Jason deCaires Taylor created four sculptures using PH-neutral concrete, which were then submerged in the Caribbean sea, near Cancun, in Mexico's eastern state of Quintana Roo. The sculptor believes that his creations will attract seaweed and marine life, thus helping to boost the local ecosystem. Financed by Mexico's government and donations, the project aims to reduce the pressure on the natural habitat in nearby areas that have been damaged by hurricanes and most of all by human activity. If you're keen on art projects of this kind, you will be interested to know that a number of underwater museums already exist around the world, such as the China Baiheliang Underwater Museum in Chongqing. The next to open to the public will be the one dedicated to Queen Cleopatra, in Alexandria (Egypt).

Just Another Sunday

by Stefano Monterosso



Flags and tension in the air.

The Rome derby is no ordinary match. The passion surrounding it; the mocking banners on the terraces making fun of even the most insignificant of the opposition's shortcomings; the agonistic temperaments of the players on the pitch, and the frequent episodes of tension among the fans all characterise this as Italy's fiercest derby and maybe even one of the most explosive games in the world.

The most recent *Derby della Capitale* took place on Sunday 6 December. The Eternal City had been buzzing since early evening and the atmosphere in the Olympic Stadium was tense, with hundreds of police officers lined up at strategic points near the stadium, ready to curb any fans for whom the tension became too much. At about 7.30pm, the first clashes broke out on the Lungotevere and V.le del Foro Italico, with fans throwing fireworks and police responding quickly.

Inside the stadium, the atmosphere reminded me of the derbies played before the Italian government decided to ban flares, banners, smoke bombs and unauthorised displays.

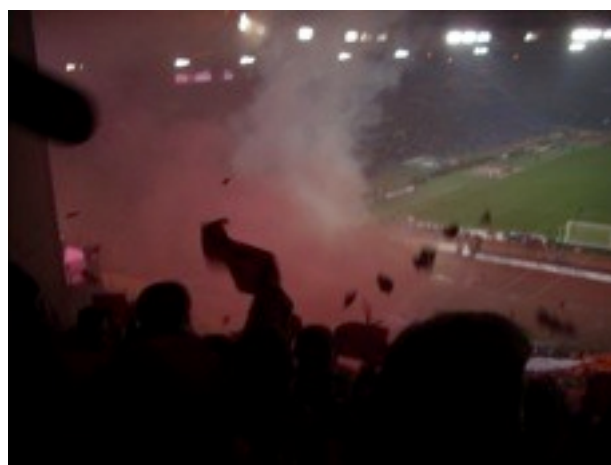
On this occasion, these restrictions seemed to have been forgotten, or at least not taken particularly seriously, and the fans used all their collective imagination to turn the Derby into the unique and exciting match that it once was. Lazio's display consisted of a wall of scarves raised as the players entered the pitch, while Roma's was more elaborate, featuring the two halves of the terrace covered by yellow and red sheets, and an enormous banner in the middle with the words: *Curva Sud Roma* (this could be translated as *South Stand*, but football fans everywhere will understand).

Despite the excitement on the terraces, the match

itself was notably less enthralling. The first half was remarkable only for a seven-minute delay in play due to the continuous launching of fireworks by fans of both teams in the Tribuna Tevere stand. In the second half, Lazio's striker Zarate took the ball as a result of a mistake made by the Roma defence: he was on the left of the pitch, ran, dribbled off the last defender, shot and hit the goalpost. The ball bounced to Lazio's midfielder Stefano Mauri who shot, leading everybody to believe a goal was guaranteed, but Roma goalkeeper Julio Sergio sprang up and turned the ball brilliantly over the bar to deny the midfielder.

The 77th minute brought the match-deciding move, Roma's midfielder Matteo Brighi passed the ball to Marco Cassetti, who passed to Mirko Vucinic on the right. Vucinic crossed back to Cassetti in the box who sealed the victory for the Giallorossi by shooting on the volley. The *Curva Sud* exploded in a red and yellow delirium. The last thirteen minutes were characterised by the same lack of action that had typified the period before the goal, with the one exception of a good volley shot by Roma's John Arne Riise which was saved by Lazio's goalkeeper. Roma's midfielder David Pizarro was sent off because of a double booking.

The referee blew the final whistle and Roma had secured the Derby, with the players celebrating their victory in front of the *Curva Sud*. With this match, Roma's Champions League qualification dreams have moved closer to reality, while Lazio's relegation nightmares are increasing.



"All those thousands of faces contorted with fear and hope." (Nick Hornby, *Fever Pitch*).

Photos by Stefano Monterosso (2009).

So This is Christmas

Can we kindle your interest in ... *Kindle*?

Kindle is an e-book made by Amazon. It's like an iPod, but with books instead of music, and has been available in the US for the past three years. Now you can buy it also in Italy. It has some advantages for students. For a start, although it's smaller and lighter than a book, it can hold the contents of 200 volumes, and includes free internet access to Wikipedia - very useful for copying material and passing it off as your own writing in articles for the *Mirafiori Magazine*! And just think of what wonderful essays you could write in any language, even in an exam! If you're an environmentally conscious sort of person, you'll also be pleased that no trees will suffer if you use Kindle.

Sadly, however, the price won't suit everyone's pocket, since it costs around €250. Maybe you could ask Santa for one? If you do, make sure you ask him for some extra spending money too, because this already costly toy has a built-in shopping mechanism: wherever you are, you have direct wifi access to the Amazon site advertising hundreds of books and magazines waiting to be purchased for your Kindle.

Based on Kindle information sent by Cassandra Tiberia.

A gift for job-hunters?

On 11 March 2010, an organisation called Brain at Work is holding a career day in Rome for students and graduates of Rome's universities. This workshop is being promoted as an opportunity for students to make contact with major national and international companies, government agencies and postgraduate training institutions. If you haven't already got your CV ready, maybe you should think about writing one now (in English too).

For more information about this workshop and how to participate, see www.brainatwork.it.

Based on information about Brain at Work sent by Laura Ranieri



Emanuela Labozzetta on reasons for not giving Christmas presents this year

Last week I found a curious article by Martin Lewis in the Times (online). This financial expert outlines six reasons why we shouldn't give presents this Christmas. This might sound like strange advice for a day when everyone is expecting to find gifts under the Christmas tree! He's not talking about the religious aspect of the event, just about the large amount of present-buying that goes on at this time of year.

He starts by explaining the theory of "the ceremonial gift-exchange", especially the strong impact that gifts have on our finances and he offers some practical examples of the problem.

I found some reasons more interesting than others, and I certainly agree with Martin Lewis when he says that: "...giving gifts crates an unfair obligation on others...by giving gifts to someone, you oblige them to do the same, whether they can afford it or not..."

In my view, it's not necessary to spend a lot of money on each adult. Some families are large and it must be very hard to buy presents for everyone if money is tight (as it is for many people). It's also true that we often receive presents that we don't like or that simply aren't used! So I'd like to spend the time making things that other can appreciate, that's the real spirit of Christmas!

The last reason Lewis gives is that "inflationary giving is a bad message for children...". I think that people have forgotten what Christmas is really about. I wouldn't be surprised if some kids didn't know anything at all about it. This journalist is clearly aiming not to stop Christmas fun, but to change the habit of gift-giving.



No Pampepato, no Christmas

by Michela Liberati

Pampepato is a traditional Christmas delicacy in Terni, said to have arrived around 1500 directly from the distant lands of the East. The word itself has two possible sources: *Pan del Papato* or *Pane pepato*. It tastes sweet, spicy and bitter, and has an intense aroma due to a skillful blend of many different ingredients. Tradition has it that you should keep at least one *Pampepato*, wrapped until Easter, or even until the Assumption on 15 August. Those in Terni who don't know how to make it will have one anyway, because there it's frequently given as a Christmas present.

Ingredients

200g walnuts; 100g hazelnuts; 100g almonds; 40g pine nuts; 120g raisins; 50g candied peel; 100ml honey; 50ml cooked must; 100g cooking chocolate; 25g cocoa powder; 15ml espresso; a pinch each of pepper; cinnamon and nutmeg; 40g flour.

Method

1. Shell the walnuts, hazelnuts and almonds, then toast them in a hot oven. Mix them with the pine nuts, and a pinch each of cinnamon and nutmeg.
2. Chop the cooking chocolate. Add to the mixture, along with the candied peel, cooked must, raisins and honey, and a pinch of pepper. If the mixture is too hard, soften over a bain-marie. Mix well.
3. Add the flour and continue mixing. If the mixture seems too dry, add a drop of water.
4. Form small bun-shaped mounds of about 200g each, 15cm diameter. Brush with honey if you wish.
5. Heat the oven to 200°C and place the buns about 3cm apart on a floured or greased sheet. Bake for approximately 20 minutes, then cover with kitchen foil and bake for a further 10 minutes.
6. Leave to cool, then place on a piece of rice paper the same size as the bun.

Pampepato should be served in small pieces, either with coffee, or, more traditionally, with a glass of sweet Umbrian wine such as Sagrantino di Montefalco Passito.

Enjoy!

What's brown, smells a bit like caramel, is made by cooking grapes, has been used since ancient Roman times, and appears frequently in traditional Italian recipes, not only for desserts but also for savoury dishes and balsamic vinegar? It must be... **must!**

Pumpkin Christmas cake

by Krassimira Usheva

This cake is a traditional Bulgarian pastry made by layering a mixture of grated pumpkin, sugar, walnuts and cinnamon between homemade (or ready-made) sheets of filo pastry (also known as Phyllo or fillo pastry). It is one of Bulgaria's traditional Christmas desserts. People mostly prefer to make it at home, one or two days before Christmas, and eat it after the Christmas dinner. It is usually served cold. It is easy to make and really delicious.

Ingredients

1 egg
100ml oil
1 teaspoon of salt
300ml warm water
600g plain flour

Method

Place the flour in a bowl and mix well with the egg. Add the oil and salt. Slowly add the water, stirring with a wooden spoon until the dough becomes soft. Knead well until bubbles appear in the texture of the dough. Divide into 8-10 balls and leave for 15-20 minutes. With extra flour, roll the dough into very thin circular sheets of pastry.

For the filling

500g pumpkin
100g sugar
100g crushed walnuts
1 cinnamon stick
butter

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C. Peel and grate the pumpkin. Melt the butter and add the pumpkin and sugar. Stirring the mixture continuously, cook until the pumpkin softens. Leave to cool, and then add the walnuts and cinnamon. Place 1 sheet of filo pastry on a clean tea towel and brush with oil, then add another sheet and repeat until 3 sheets are layered. Sprinkle with 1/5th of the pumpkin mixture. Use a tea towel to help roll the layered filo and pumpkin filling into a sausage shape. Place on a large greased baking tray. Repeat with the remaining sheets of filo and pumpkin mixture. Cut the rolls into 5cm slices. Brush with oil and sprinkle with extra sugar. Bake at 200C for 30 minutes or until golden-brown.

"Thin-leaved filo and finely shredded kadafi pastry from the Mediterranean require so much skill and time to make that most [British] people prefer to buy them ready-made."
BBC NEWS SITE

A Native Christmas Carol

by **Krassimira Usheva**

It is a snowy, chilly morning. She has just woken up and can hear the voices of her family. She feels this warm feeling that always comes over her at this time of year. She looks out of the window and watches the snow for a while. She sees her grandfather, roaming around the garden, looking for something. "They have started the preparations already", she thinks. She gets ready and goes downstairs.

Her whole family has gathered. Everybody is doing something, talking and smiling. "It's again this 'holy' time of the year", she says to herself. She thinks about how much warmth and anticipation it brings her. Today is the 24th of December – Christmas Eve. By tradition, this day is celebrated as a symbolic expectation of the birth of Christ. She has heard the legend that this was the last day of the Holy Mother's birth pains. For her own family the day has started early, because preparations for this holy day are very important.

Entering the garden she sees her grandfather again while he eagerly prepares the three-year-old straight Yule-log that is going to keep up the fire for this evening's dinner. She knows that he took it from the wood early in the morning because this is the tradition. While she is watching him, she remembers the story her grandmother told her about the symbolic meaning of this piece of tree. It is going to keep up the fire in this home's fireplace for "the whole year". She can already feel the fire's warmth on her skin.

Suddenly she hears her grandmother's voice calling. As she is walking towards the kitchen she remembers the promise her grandma made, to teach her how to prepare the traditional Christmas Eve round loaf. They get together and her grandma explains that the loaf has to be entirely meat-free, containing no animal products at all, not even eggs or milk, and it must be round. Her favourite part is putting inside the loaf a silver coin that later will show who's going to be luckiest in the New Year. She can't wait till dinner when the eldest member of the family will break up the loaf and give each of them a piece. She's hoping that this year the coin will be hers.

Now it's time to join her mother, aunt and cousin and help prepare the Christmas Eve dinner. She knows that a lot of cooking has to be done, because tradition demands that on the table there should be at least seven dishes completely free of animal products. Her mother is making the stuffed cabbage leaves; she wants to make the stuffed peppers and her cousin has started to prepare the stewed dried fruits. They are also going to make stewed beans with boiled wheat, whose swelling grains symbolize an increase in the household wealth. On the table they are also going to put honey, fresh fruit, nuts and wine. She knows that the food on the table has to be plentiful.

It's time to gather around the table, with all of her family. It's her favourite moment. For them the dinner is a kind of a ritual, an echo of their ancient Slav beliefs. The glittering Christmas tree and the fire burning bright make the atmosphere very cosy. The "ritual" begins with her grandfather incensing the table to symbolically chase away all evil. Now the dinner can start. When they finish dining, the table will remain as it for their deceased relatives to "come" and dine too.

She looks around and sees the faces of her favourite people and she feels great. In her small Bulgarian village, on Christmas Eve, she can free her soul and thank God that she has these great people around her, that her spirit is serene. Isn't this the real meaning of Christmas?

An Interactive Tale

Episode 3: 'Coral'

by Aurora Mazzoni and Laura Mazzatenta

...Sam decided to go back to Marianne's, hoping some memories would come to his mind again. He started looking over the place for papers or documents of some kind but it seemed like nothing relevant was in there. Then he found a box. A thin cardboard box about the size of a shoebox, with a seal. The word 'coral' was imprinted on the seal. He remembered that box: when they were children, Marianne used to put her toys in it, but she would never allow him to look inside.



Sam opened the box impatiently, but the only thing he found was a series of numbers written on a piece of paper, and some photographs of a younger Marianne with her parents. But there was something odd about the box: once open, it seemed smaller than it looked on the outside. He started to tear it apart and found a four-inch bottle, or at least it looked like a bottle. Once again, the 'coral' logo.

Sam felt that nothing was making sense. What he needed was a place where he could concentrate, and so he decided to look for his younger self at the University where he had spent his years as a student, and where he had embarked upon his career as a scientist. On his way there, his eye got caught by the TV News on display in a shop window. "the men killed by Marianne" he thought to himself. As he stood there staring at the TV, he couldn't think of a single reason why she should kill two policemen.

The sudden wail of a police siren jolted him awake, and he saw two officers jump out of their car shouting "There he is! You! Put your hands behind your head and don't move". All the people around him stopped in their tracks, but the pavements were quite crowded and the police officers would not have been able to avoid hitting someone if they had fired their guns. Sam took advantage of the situation and escaped down a nearby side street.

>> **1950** >> As an earthquake shook the Island, in a laboratory buried deep beneath the ground, Marianne and some Nordic-looking people were carrying out a series of experiments with lead. The laboratory was a spacious rectangular room, with white walls and ceiling, and the many doors along the walls suggested several more rooms, or perhaps corridors. On the right, there was a two-hundred-inch touch-screen monitor displaying the plans of a discoidal flying object. On the left, three shatter-proof glass containers of different sizes. The smallest contained a molten lead compound. Next to it was a monitor displaying the elements and temperature of this compound. The temperature was maintained by means of a built-in furnace.

A steel tube connected this small container to a refrigeration cell, while another tube on the opposite side connected to a mid-sized container that held millions of capsules. The monitor next to this mid-sized container displayed the sign '0% PRESSURE'. A third pipe led to the largest container, in which lay a 3-D layered model of the UK terrain. The monitor next to this last glass container displayed bars indicating the saturation percentage of the terrain, with details of the saturation temperature and speed. In the centre of the laboratory stood a white column one-metre high displaying the coral symbol, and on top of this, a circular tub containing transparent liquid....

<< 1940 << Sam had arrived at his old University, and went straight to his old office. Stepping inside, he caught sight of his younger self sitting at his usual desk, deeply engrossed in his research on the time machine. At first, 1940-Sam didn't pay any attention to the intruder, but after a couple of quick glances up at the familiar-looking man before him, he suddenly leapt out of his chair in utter astonishment.

"B...b...but who are you?" muttered the younger Sam.

"Don't be scared, and please don't shout! We have no time for this. I'm you...we need to get out of here now, please follow me," answered the other, placing his hand over 1940-Sam's mouth.

1940-Sam frowned slightly; he was still a little confused, but agreed to follow him nonetheless. It made sense: they were in this together, whatever it was. As they walked along the familiar white corridors, the older Sam summed up the situation for the benefit of his confused younger self: Marianne shooting at the police officers; the war that would later break out, in 1950, against unknown terrorists; the 'coral'; his memories of Marianne; the development of his time machine.

"And now, as if all that wasn't enough, the police are looking for me, I mean us", said 1950-Sam.

"You know, there's something about Marianne's arrival, I can't quite remember now what it was...", muttered the younger Sam.

He was interrupted by his concerned-sounding older voice: "Don't worry about that now - think about somewhere we can go, a place to hide for a while."

The buzz of a mobile phone brought their conversation to a halt. The younger Sam's mobile. It was Marianne texting him, asking him to meet her. As the older Sam promptly informed him, this was the day that Marianne was going to break up with him. Might it not be

too dangerous to go and meet her? After all, she **had** actually shot at him.

The echo of the buzz signalling the arrival of Marianne's text message still hung in the air as the two Sams wondered aloud: "**Is this a trap?**".



drawing by Aurora

To be continued...

Your Christmas Horoscope!



by Chiara Pietropaolo

ARIES: The keyword for you this month is SUCCESS! You will succeed in work, business, travel, but you will always be late... As for love, your stars say give it a chance: maybe you will find someone special at the Mirafiori bar, and have a different Christmas Holiday!

TAURUS: This month you will be very clever. Unfortunately you'll have to cope with a lot of stress: at work, at home, in your finances... but don't you worry! All of these things will go away...everything except your cleverness!

GEMINI: You will fly higher than ever. Everything is going well, especially work and money. But your stars advise you to relax: turn off the phone, chat with a friend in the beautiful garden at your University, and do some sport.

CANCER: Your family is stressing you out. Your work is creating more stress than ever. What should you do? Listen to your creativity and create something: this magazine could be an opportunity to show what you can do! Rules are not everything... sometimes you can break them!

LEO: This month will see you frantic and ready to quarrel with everyone. My advice is: calm down, stop being so aggressive (especially in the queue for the University bathrooms) and pay attention to your private life. You might forget an important date.

VIRGO: This is the month that could change your working life: focus on a major goal, your most important exam, and try to start your own business. Love? It is on its way, maybe you'll find it under the Christmas Tree, or the Mistletoe! Hold on to your money.

LIBRA: You may feel obliged to do things you hate (yes I know some subjects are a real bore). Reflect: what do you need right now? Maybe a wild, crazy night with your friends? Good sex, and good job opportunities.

SCORPIO: A good month: sex, love and work are going great, but a new idea is struggling to grow. What about being of service to others? Think about something like volunteering... it could be a nice Christmas gift for someone!

SAGITTARIUS: Your stars are still working in your favour to send you extra luck, which you receive like Tinker Bell's magic powder! Your sign brings the most luck, again! Follow your instincts and you will be even luckier!

CAPRICORN: A radiant Venus in your sign will bring a stream of secret admirers. Use your talent to appear younger each day that passes (like a Peter Pan!), to catch one of those fans of yours, find your way into a first year student's heart, and have a really good month!

AQUARIUS: An unexpected kiss will send you up on a pink, heart-shaped bubble-cloud. But be careful: you might be ultra-sensitive this month, and burst the bubble with your bad mood. Eat nutritious food - and stay well clear of the Mirafiori bar's sandwiches!

PISCES: Although your love-life is going well enough, at work things are crumbling around you because of lazy days. You'll just have to deal with this. However, your stars encourage you to revisit a goal you left behind some time ago (a study project): now is the time to get this idea off the ground.

Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print; never use a long word where a short one will do; if it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out; never use the passive where you can use the active; never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent; break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

GEORGE ORWELL

Some student magazines

<http://www.comuniclab.it/>

<http://issuu.com/qmunicatemagazine/docs/qmunicateissue73>

<http://www.thegown.org.uk/>

<http://www.cherwell.org/>

Guidelines for Contributors

How to publish your article in Mirafiori Magazine

Before rushing to email your material to our current editors (contact details on the back page), please take the time to read these Guidelines carefully.

We're looking for articles from Modern Language students who attend 3rd year Triennio or Biennio English language courses. We care about the overall **read-appeal** of your article as well as the topic you propose. You need to think about your readers, who are also students of English as a foreign language. You will have to do some research. All writers need to revise their work, perhaps several times. Your final draft has to show good use of English.

How good is 'good'?

As a guide: contributors should have at least B2 level writing. You don't need to worry about a few grammar mistakes or imprecise vocabulary and phrasing in your first draft - no-one expects it to be word-perfect. Being *good at English* doesn't mean getting all the answers right in a grammar or vocabulary exercise; it means being willing to use English language resources to help you research and write about your topic, and revising your text as many times as necessary to make it good enough.

Good can also mean experimenting if you want, providing entertainment... In short, trying to make your text appealing, making both the content and the way you convey it interesting and pertinent to readers.

Clear is good

Keep it clear. No-one can give you feedback on your written English if they don't understand what your text is saying. You need to write concisely too, because space is limited, and readers don't really want to see complicated, long-

winded writing in a magazine. Sometimes *less is more*. Check out George Orwell's advice on page 18, and the suggestions offered by the Plain English Campaign at <http://www.askoxford.com/betterwriting/plainenglish/?view=uk>. Here's a short wiki on journalistic style and presentation: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/News_style

Magazines vs essays

Writing for a magazine is not the same thing as doing English homework or exam essays. OK, so you know this already, but what does it mean in practice? Consider this: your magazine material is to be **enjoyed** by (we hope) many students. Your articles will also give other students opportunities to extend their English and their culture at the same time. But what about the English essays you write at university? Who reads them? How many people? Why do they read them?

Academic text is not what we're looking for here. But even if the university essay or *tesina* format isn't suitable, this doesn't mean that your essay **topic** isn't a good one for *Mirafiori Magazine*. It depends on how you can adapt it. Using a verbose, encyclopedic approach is no use: we want to wake readers up, not send them to sleep!

Other words, other formats

We're asking you to think of ways of lifting your writing off the library shelves and out of the traditional essay classroom. Think about what students of English might like to see in a magazine created especially for them (if you don't know, ask them!), what *you* would like to see. What kinds of written formats do you and your friends use outside of university? Could you adapt them for use in a magazine? Have you looked at the

ways other student writers in other magazines approach their topics? (see page 18 for links to examples).

What kind of subject matter?

For future issues, we especially welcome: interviews, news stories and debates about questions that concern students of language and culture; reviews of films seen in the original version (including your observations on subtitling or dubbing issues); reports on activities and events you take part in; accounts of personal experience, travels... This is just to give you a general idea - we are also open to suggestions!

Practicalities

Contact one of the student editors to make *initial arrangements*. She or he will remain your contact person throughout the drafting process, and you should discuss questions related to content with her/him. It's usually much better, and a lot faster, to talk face-to-face, but you can sort this out directly with your editor.

When bringing your work for review and for feedback on your use of language, bring it **typed** in double spacing (font size 12 Times New Roman or similar), on A4 paper. Indicate paragraph breaks with a line space. Number and staple your pages together. Add your name and contact details. If your English language lecturer agrees, take it to her or him for feedback on your use of English.

After receiving feedback, it's up to you to revise your work before emailing it to your editor. You can also propose your own illustrations or photographs, but send them in a separate email.

As you can imagine, all this takes time, so don't leave it till the last minute.

Is it worth it? Ask our editors, reviewers, contributors and readers!

The Back Page

EDITORS NEXT ISSUE: MARCH 2010

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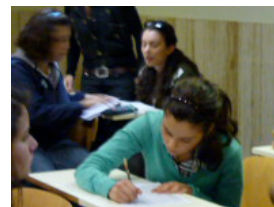
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Miriam Reale
Viviana Romaniello
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Giulia Sinibaldi



Daniele Solitano
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EDITORS THIS ISSUE: DECEMBER 2009

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Fabiana Scacchi
Ludovica Tranfaglia

PAST EDITORS

MAY 2009

Ylai Giardino
Drifa Gudmundsdottir
Silvia Persiani

OCTOBER 2009

Luna Proietti
Giulia Sinibaldi
Sara Tedesco

NOVEMBER 2009

Federica Pittori
Jennifer Romeo
Mariangela Vietri

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SEMESTER 1

1. Saturday 31 October 2009
2. Saturday 21 November 2009
3. Saturday 19 December 2009

SEMESTER 2

4. Saturday 27 March 2010
5. Saturday 24 April 2010
6. Saturday 22 May 2010

DOWNLOAD HERE

<http://elearning.uniroma1.it/course/view.php?id=1092>

<http://w3.uniroma1.it/LingueLetterature/>

HISTORY

In May 2009, students attending 3rd year English at the Arts Faculty of La Sapienza University produced a magazine which they called *We just wanted to say...* (subtitled *The Villa Mirafiori Magazine*), made available online in pdf format. Current 3rd year and post-graduate students of English are working to develop the project.

AIM

To provide contributors and readers with opportunities to extend their English and their culture.

Students from the English language section, Arts Faculty, La Sapienza University Rome