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# La Voce della Dante

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March 2008

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## **March English Program: Dom Sportelli—Marco Polo**

Wednesday, March 12th, 7:30 - 8:30 PM  
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle  
Pre-Dante pasta, 6:30 – 7:30 PM.

**O**n March 12, Domenic Sportelli will give a presentation on the life and times of Marco Polo, the famous 13th Century Venetian merchant-explorer. From Piazza San Marco to the dungeons of Genova by way of the court of Kublai Khan, Xanadu and Siam, Marco Polo was one of the best traveled merchants of his time. The presentation is based on the book "Travels of Marco Polo" which he dictated to a fellow prisoner after being captured during a battle between Venezia and Genova. The book was a sensation in its time. How much was real and how much was hyperbole, has been hotly debated ever since. . Domenic is a long standing member of DAS and has held a variety of board and committee positions. He and his wife, Louise, spend spring and fall each year in Italy at their mini-farm near Lucca. Be sure to bring a little cash; we're going to raffle off something very special.

## **March Italian Program: Carnevale a Venezia -Rebecca Albiani!**



Wednesday, March 26th, 7:30 - 9:00 PM  
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle

**E**ducating and entertaining art students and patrons at the Frye for more than ten years, art historian Rebecca Albiani consistently brings out capacity audiences for her popular art history lecture series. Whether examining a specific painting in the Frye Collection or exploring the relationship between wine and art, Albiani's twelve-part lecture series expands attendees' understanding of visual art, artists, and the culture of their time. Rebecca will speak to us in Italian about 18th century Venetian Artists. By the 18th century, Venice, no longer politically or economically dominant, became Europe's pleasure capital. Carnival revelry lies at the heart of a splendid outpouring of the visual arts by painters such as Canaletto, Guardi and the Tiepolos. Rebecca gave this talk in January at the Frye Museum.

# Upcoming Events

## **March English Program**

**Dom Sportelli**

Wednesday, March 12

5:30-6:30; Dinner preparation,  
6:30; Dinner, 7:30; Meeting  
Headquarters House

## **March Italian Program**

**Rebecca Albiani**

Wednesday, March 26

Antipasti and Social; 7- 7:30pm  
Meeting; 7:30;  
Headquarters House

## **Board Meeting**

Monday, March 24

7:00-8:30pm

Faerland Terrace—1421 Minor Ave

## **April English Program**

**tbd**

Wednesday, April 9

5:30-6:30; Dinner preparation,  
6:30; Dinner, 7:30; Meeting  
Headquarters House

## **April Italian Program**

**Daniele Favaro—UFO's**

Wednesday, April 23

Antipasti and Social; 7- 7:30pm  
Meeting; 7:30;  
Headquarters House

## **May Annual Meeting**

### **Free Pasta Dinner for Members**

Wednesday, April 9

5:30-6:30; Dinner preparation,  
6:30; Dinner, 7:30; Meeting  
Headquarters House

## **From the President's Desk**

It's A Privilege to Serve You:

This is the new mantra at the company where I work. People say it to our customers at every opportunity with the utmost sincerity. If it weren't for our customers, we wouldn't be here. It's the same at Dante. One of our Board Members commented just two days ago that it has been a privilege to serve, not only because they have become so much more engaged with the organization but because they have been able to spend extra time getting to know several of our members better. Many of us have new friends that we didn't have a couple of years ago and we wouldn't have had that opportunity were it not for you, so I thank you. I hope many of you will take the opportunity you now have to serve on a committee, make a dessert, share your program ideas, your creative talents and to use a little of your extra elbow grease to make the rest of this year and next fun and easy for everyone. If everyone carries a little load, the hills are not so hard to climb.

Thank you for your continued interest and participation in Dante. It has been a privilege to serve you.

A Presto.

Donna Lipsky

## **BATTUTE**

Una celebrità è una persona che lavora tutta la vita per diventare ben conosciuta, e poi si mette degli occhiali scuri per evitare di essere riconosciuta.

(Fred Allen)

Sai che stai invecchiando quando le candeline costano più della torta.  
(Bob Hope)

## **Language Program News**

**by Giuseppe Tassone**

*Italian Language Program - Director*

**T**his winter quarter we offered two sections of the elementary level, one intermediate course and the introduction to Italian class. In addition to the advanced level taught by Laura Ciroi, we added a new section of this level taught by our newest instructor Giuseppina (Giusy) De Luca.



Giusy De Luca has a PhD in French Literature from the University of Palermo where she taught French language for three years. While in college she taught Italian in Marseille and in Bordeaux. She obtained a postdoctoral scholarship from the University of Palermo to study literary theory. She has published different articles in various academic journals and she continues her research in French literature. She was born in a small Sicilian village, Altofonte, close to Palermo. She now lives in Washington State with her husband where she currently teaches Italian at the Dante Alighieri Society's language program .

For Spring quarter, we offer two sections of the elementary level, one intermediate course and two advanced courses. We will also offer the Introduction to Italian class if we have enough interested students.

Spring Quarter starts March 27th at 7:00 p.m. at Seattle University - Administration Building. Spring quarter is the third quarter for all levels. Pre-registration deadline is March 11<sup>th</sup>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER

Visit the Italian Language program web site at [www.danteseattle.org](http://www.danteseattle.org), contact the director Giuseppe Tassone at [info@danteseattle.org](mailto:info@danteseattle.org) or call (206) 320-9159 for a brochure. Remember: PayPal registration is now available and we also offer Gift Certificates to give the gift of learning a language.

**Please don't forget; your membership renewal was due 1 January 2008.**

If you joined before September of 2007, it is time for you to renew. Please use the handy form on the last page of this newsletter and mail it with your check right away. Our dues are still \$30.00 for individuals and \$40.00 for families. **Remember, dues must be paid in order to vote at the May 14 Business Meeting and partake of the free pasta dinner.** Thank you for supporting your Dante Alighieri Society. You will be taken off our mailing list for autumn if you have not yet paid.

## Opera Live from the Met! - by Carmen Fressola Flak

**A**s a teenager and young woman in New Jersey, the opportunity to attend the Metropolitan Opera house was the pinnacle of desire. In all, I had the great fortune to see four operas there, *La Bohème* [at the old opera house, way up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> balcony] *La Traviata*, *Faust* and best of all, *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Luciano Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland. I never had the bucks to go regularly but second best were Saturday afternoon broadcasts, live from the Met.



Then last year, the Met inaugurated a new program to bring opera to more people. A decision was made to broadcast in High Definition, a series of live

satellite transmissions to 600 theaters worldwide. For \$20 opera fans in a movie theater enjoy the same sound, but even better – wonderful camera work permits close-ups that only the opera-goer sitting in \$300 seats might enjoy.

It's the next best thing to being there. So much better than just hearing it on the radio. Imagine seeing the Metropolitan Opera without traveling to New York. With closeups! Digitally faithful sound! What a wonderful treat! If you haven't yet – do plan to go the Met – in your own neighborhood.

Coming up: Donizetti's *La Fille du Regiment*, (April 26) and Puccini's *La Bohème*. (April 5). For more information, go to <http://www.metopera.org/hdlive>.

## Ghiberti & Gelato

Sunday March 30th @ 12:00pm and 1:30PM  
Seattle Art Museum, \$40.00 per person, children \$20.00

**I**n Partnership with the Seattle Art Museum and the Center for West European Studies, the UW Italian Studies advisory board presents Ghiberti and Gelato! Bring your family and friends for a special fundraiser to benefit the University of Washington's Italian Studies Program. There will be private docent-led tours of two upcoming Seattle Art Museum exhibitions focusing on Italy: the Gates of Paradise and Roman Art from the Louvre. The price includes complimentary Gelato at Gelatiamo, 1400 3rd Avenue, which will be served at 1:00pm and 2:30pm, right after your tours. All proceeds benefit the Italian Studies program, which is a worthy cause!



## Le Notizie



## La Voce needs you!

Tell a story, write an article, send it to danteeditor@gmail.com. You can also mail it via regular US mail to Mimi Torchia Boothby, 8018 36th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118, USA.

Keep it coming! Thanks to everyone who is helping!

### Annual Membership Roster

We would like to provide the members with a roster of current members. If anyone objects to having their name or contact information shared, please notify the Membership Chairperson, Barbara Crawford, at [crawfb@comcast.net](mailto:crawfb@comcast.net)

### More Tosca!

If you are one of the lucky ones who has seen or will see the Seattle Opera's current production of Tosca, you might be interested in a short novel by Paola Capriolo: FLORIA TOSCA in English, and VISSI d'AMORE in Italian. It is a prequel to the opera that involves a passionate love affair between Tosca and Scarpia. You can google it to read the first two chapters. It is available to buy on Amazon and can be found at the Seattle public library.

## Pre-Dante Pasta

Join us for the pre-Dante Pasta dinner preceding the English language programs. **To attend the dinner, reservations are required. The only way to make these reservations is by calling the activity line at (206) 320-9159 by the Monday before the meeting.**

*Please remember to bring your homemade Italian desserts to finish off this great meal.*

This is a communally prepared meal – the preparations start at 5:30 and the meal is served at 6:30. People who come early help with set up and cooking, those who come late help with the clean up.

Pasta dinner cost is \$8 per person, \$15 per couple, plus BYOB, if reservations are received on the activity line by 5pm on Monday before the meeting. Late reservations and walk-ins are charged \$10 per person and subject to availability. We meet at Headquarters house, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle. (map and directions on page 11)



## Dante Alighieri Society of Washington

*"Società per la diffusione della lingua e della cultura italiana nel mondo"*

Mailing address:  
PMB #1244  
1122 East Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98122  
(206) 320-9159

The Dante Alighieri Society of Washington is a nonprofit corporation organized to promote Italian language and culture within the state of Washington. Membership is open to anyone interested in the goals and ideals of our society regardless of ethnic origin. *La Voce della Dante* is published eight times a year by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. All rights reserved.

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# Amarelli Liquorice

by Carmen Fressola Flak

The best liquorice (licorice), according to the Encyclopedia Britannica comes from Rossano, Calabria. More than a thousand years ago, the Amarelli family began extracting licorice from the plants that grow naturally over the Calabrian coastline. Licorice (from the Greek, “sweet root”) is used not only for the shiny black candy we’re all familiar with, but for curing many ills including diabetes, ulcer pain and arthritis. Licorice contains vitamins E, B-complex, biotin, niacin, pantothenic acid, lecithin, manganese and other trace elements. It is used for strengthening the body during times of stress and since the 14th century, has been used to soothe coughs, colds and bronchitis. It is still used for these reasons today and used in many European cough preparations.



The ancient method of harvesting licorice root has not changed because licorice roots have to be ripped manually from the ground, as they risk being damaged by a mechanized process. The concentration phase, which consists of exposing licorice to oxygen, is the most delicate and must be carried out manually and in open air, otherwise the finished product would not have its trademark black coloring. Pina Amarelli, the president of Amarelli Fabbrica di Liquirizia, says, “Only those with the great experience that is passed on from generation to generation, can understand – in spite of the daily variation of atmospheric conditions – the exact moment in which the paste has reached its optimal consistency.”



Although world famous for the fine flavor of their licorice candy, Amarelli has expanded its product line to licorice-flavored items such as grappa, chocolate, pasta, as well as beauty products such as perfumes and bath foam. However – Signora Amarelli says, “Amarelli’s core business is and will remain the production of pure liquorice .”

In 2001, the Amarelli family created the Giorgio Amarelli Liquorice Museum which was awarded the Guggenheim Enterprise & Culture Trophy. Tourists will see the family coat of arms, dresses and uniforms of the passed centuries, agricultural tools, and history of the licorice. In honor of the museum, Italy issued a commemorate postage stamp.

American devotees of licorice can enjoy Amarelli’s world-famous confection. Amarelli Licorice is available from Amazon.com, along with several other online retailers and candy shops all over the world. We bought some and our resident “licorice maven” pronounced it really good stuff!

## POESIE DI FLAVIO OREGLIO

Mi manca la tua dolcezza,  
Mi manca l'odore che avevi  
Che mi inebriava I sensi.  
Il solo vederti significava  
felicità',  
un bacio sul tuo morbido  
corpo era fonte di piacere,  
e mi dava forza, e vigore.  
Mi manchi. . . mi manchi  
Nutella.



## Federation of Damanhur

**T**he Federation of Damanhur, is a commune and spiritual community situated in the Piedmont region of northern Italy about 30 miles north of Turin. The community has its own constitution and currency, the *Credito*. It was named after the Egyptian city of Damanhur which was the site of a temple dedicated to Horus. It was founded in 1975 by Oberto Airaudi with about 24 followers, and had grown to 800 by the year 2000. They hold a mix of pagan and New Age beliefs. They gained fame in 1992 through the disclosure of their secret excavation of an extensive underground temple, the Temples of Humankind, which was begun in 1978 under complete secrecy. The Italian authorities ordered the work destroyed because it had been constructed without planning approval. This order was subsequently revoked. Damanhur's supporters claim the growth and activity of the community has revitalized the local area. The Federation of Damanhur has centers in Europe, America, and Japan. (from Wikipedia)

### Dante on the Internet!

We have a website. We have all the more recent newsletters there (including this one!), as well as the latest information on speakers. Our web address is:

<http://www.danteseattle.org/DAS>  
Remember that DAS must be capitalized!

### \* DAS Star List \*

While we appreciate those who support our Society through membership dues & volunteering, stars are awarded to those making extra cash contributions which allows us to provide services without having to raise membership dues.

Grazie Mille for supporting the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington.

#### Bronzo up to \$25

- \* Crawford, Dick & Barbara
- \* Cottrell, Jane & David
- \* Van Tilborgh, Peter
- \* Mazzola, Arthur
- \* Munizza, Joseph
- \* Shiroyama, Sylvia
- \* Tobe, Robert & Maddalena
- \* Rosa Borriello

#### Argento \$26 to \$50

- \* Gallucci, Ron & Delia

#### Oro—\$51-100

- \* Lipsky, Donna

#### Platino—over \$100

- \* Harmon, Gini

## Casa Italiana Scholarship

There is a scholarship available to Dante Members and their children. Unfortunately, we have extremely late notice. The application must reach its destination by March the 15th. If you are interested, call Mimi ASAP, 206 723 1587; I have the application form.

# Scoppio del Carro in Florence

Courtesy of APT Firenze



**E**very year on Easter Sunday, perfectly sane Florentine citizens gather in Piazza del Duomo to watch a dove-shaped rocket, called the "Colombina", fly out of the famous Duomo and ignite a huge wooden cart-structure in the square outside.

The history of this event combines religious artifacts with pyrotechnic machinery. While the ultimate purpose of it, as a good "pagan" ritual, is to secure a good harvest, its pagan roots are less clear than in many other similar events all over Italy.

Tradition holds that the explosion of the Carro, called the Brindellone, goes way back to the semi-legendary exploits of Pazzino de Pazzi, a Florentine warrior who was the first man to climb the walls of Jerusalem in July 1099, during the First Crusade. For this deed he received from his commander two shards of stone from the Holy Sepulchre, shards which were subsequently used to start an annual "holy fire" during Holy Week. This ritual fire used to be transported through the city as a religious relic for all to see.

By the Middle Ages this "holy flame" had come to be transported in a Carro, a simple carriage that transported a large candle through town on the 24th of June, the day of Saint John the Baptist, patron saint of Florence.

By the 18th century, the simple Carro had metamorphosed into a tremendous tottering structure, 30 feet tall, divided vertically into four niches that held little boys (?!), with a poor ragged fur-clad man on top, representing Saint John. The otherwise unemployed man was paid 10 lire for the job, which was to distribute candy, bits of food and other goodies.

Today the ceremony still bears a strong resemblance to the way in which it has been celebrated for centuries. On the morning of the day the Carro, pulled by two white oxen, leaves from Via del Prato for the Piazza del Duomo, accompanied by costumed revelers, city officials and clerical representatives. The holy fire, still started with the historical shards of the Holy Sepulchre, is lit in the Church of SS Apostoli and transported to the Duomo, where the archbishop of the city lights the sacred Colombina rocket with it during the Easter Mass. The rocket travels out of the Duomo along a wire, sets fire to the huge array of fireworks attached to the Carro and returns back into the church the way it came.

If this complex ritual goes smoothly, good luck is ensured for the city, not only with harvests but in the everyday life and business of its citizens.

## ***Dante in Thailand***

**O**n February 13th we were charmed and informed by the beautiful and young Nalina Satakul. Her childhood of world travel brought her in contact with Italy, and developed into a love that led her to a degree in Italian language and literature from the University of Washington.

Her presentation included the history of Italian architects, engineers, and artists in Bangkok, as well as information about the Dante Society and the Italian festival held in May and June. It was amazing to feel the connection with a country that seemingly is so different from ours.

She has promised to come back to do a talk in Italian.

## **La Voce Submission Deadlines**

Let's work as a team. If your story, article, photos or poem is submitted via email by the following date, it can be published in the next newsletter.

Deadline - publication date

March 26 - April 2008

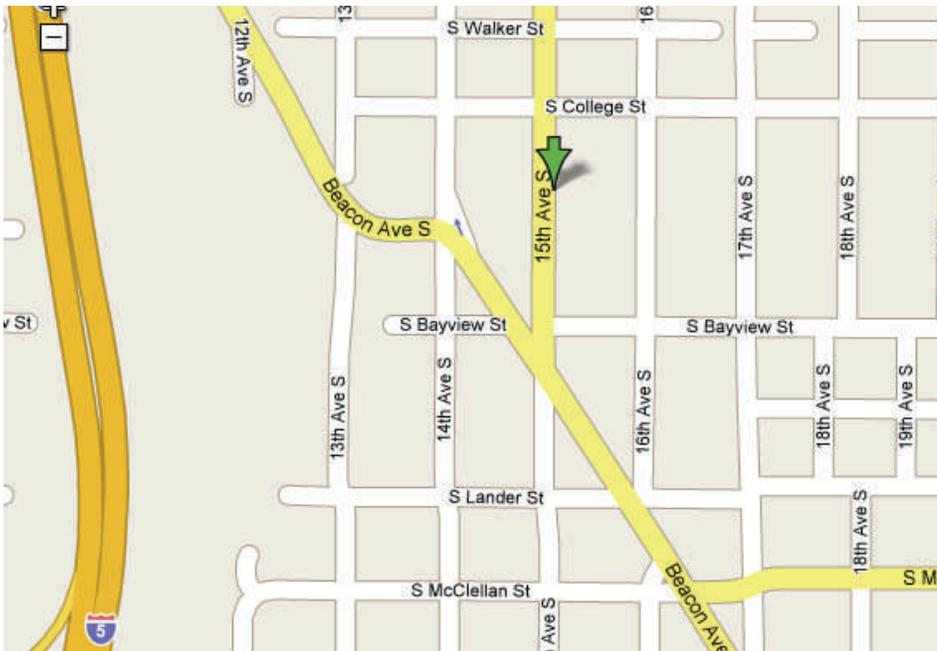
April 25 - May 2008

August 25 - Sept 2008

danteeditor@gmail.com

## **Directions to Headquarters House**

Headquarters House is located at **2336 15th Avenue South** in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. From I-5, take the Columbian Way/Spokane Street exit, eastbound. Turn left at the first light, Spokane Street and left again at the next light, 15th Avenue S. After crossing Beacon Avenue, Headquarters House will be on the right side between Bayview and College Streets.



**Membership Application**

I (We) want to promote Italian language and culture and request membership in the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. Enclosed is my (our) check in full payment of annual membership dues (\$30.00 for individual, \$40.00 for a family).

Mark one : (  ) **New Membership**    (  ) **Membership Renewal**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed:  
Membership Amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contribution: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Categories (For recognition stars):  
Bronzo (bronze) - Up to \$25  
Argento (silver) - \$26 - \$50  
Oro (gold) - \$51 to \$100  
Platino (platinum) - Over \$100

Please return completed membership application with check to:

Dante Alighieri Society of Washington  
PMB #1244  
1122 East Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98122

If you have any questions, please call (206) 320-9159 and leave a message.

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