

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY FLORENCE PROGRAM

# VILLAROSSA VOICE

Number 23 | Fall 2010

## In this issue

### Cover story

"The colors are bright"  
SUF interns at  
Pecci Museum

### Lecture

"A day with  
George Saunders"

### Lecture

"Shooting the real"  
by artist  
Giovanni Ozzola

### Volunteer Program













"Superheros"  
by Jenece C. Reyes

(re)drawing the future










# Contents

	<b>Shooting the Real: Meeting an Italian Artist</b> by Hannah Gorton (Syracuse University)	4
	<b>A Day with George Saunders</b> <b>Meeting an SU Writer in Florence</b> by Ericka Kirk (Loyola University)	6
	<b>The Colors are Bright / The Experience is Generous:</b> <b>SUF Interns in the Pecci Museum of Contemporary Art in Prato</b> by Calvin Main (Brown University)	10
	<b>Superheroes</b> by Jenece C. Reyes (Syracuse University)	12
	<b>SEND-A-SMILE! (and Reach for the Stars!) Gets to Florence</b> by Lauren Maldonado (University of Southern California)	13
	<b>Tasting Culture: One Sip at a Time</b> by Angela Laurello (Syracuse University)	15
	<b>Studying at the University of Florence</b> by Option III Students	16
	<b>Discovery Florence Program</b> by Amy Kleine	18
	<b>In Famiglia! Staying with Italian Hosts: A Retrospective Look</b> by Jim Kauffmann <b>Student Comments</b>	20
	<b>Exchanging English for Italian (and viceversa)</b> <b>Tandem Exchange in Fall 2010</b>	21
	<b>A Visit to Pietrasanta: Traveling with a Pen and a Brush</b> by Elizabeth Lewis (Syracuse University)	22
	<b>I Giullari di Syracuse Performance</b> by Eric Nicholson	23

# Contents

	<b>Studio Art Competition</b> by Kirsten Stromberg	24
	<b>SUF Portfolio</b>	26
	<b>Faculty Watch</b>	29
	<b>News from SU: 2010 Remembrance Week</b> by Emily Allen (Syracuse University) and Duncan McNab (Lockerbie Scotland)	31
	<b>SUF's It's All About You: Semester End Program</b>	33

**Florence & Syracuse University in Florence!** I can't imagine a more beautiful city or a better place to work. Over the past 27 years I have been director at SU Florence three times, and this program just keeps getting better. The theme of this issue of the *Villa Rossa Voice* is *(re)drawing the future*. Although we are reminded daily of Florence's Renaissance splendor, contemporary life in Florence is now sharing center stage. And at SUF the new ideas emerging from our faculty and staff are impressive. Through revision of our curriculum as well as activities such as service learning, internships, workshops, an exciting lecture series, and co-sponsored events with the city and the University of Florence, our students will return to their home campuses with a rich understanding not only of Italy's past, but also of its present. At the beginning of the semester I urged all students to take full advantage of what this program has to offer. I'm especially delighted and encouraged by the response of our first-year students who are a relatively new (three years) addition to our program. You'll find their work along with the other stakeholders of SU in Florence in this issue of the *Villa Rossa Voice*. Enjoy!

Michael J. Calo  
SUF Director

**P**rofessor Antonella Francini, who has edited this Fall 2010 edition of the *Villa Rossa Voice*, would like to thank the contributors and wish the SUF community Happy Holidays. To all students: here's to (re)drawing your future!



# Giovanni Ozzola



Poltrona, 2003

In a world that relies more and more on technology, it can be hard to distinguish reality from what has been altered. I had the fortunate opportunity to attend a Studio Arts lecture at SU Florence with the world-renowned, young, up-and-coming artist Giovanni Ozzola. Ozzola takes on one of art's greatest challenges and does his best to expose reality in his work. In Florence I am constantly being pushed into a world of the past. While this is great for my education (not to mention very interesting), it is a refreshing breath of air to see a contemporary artist in action. While Ozzola works with various media, including video and installations, as a beginning photography student I was mostly interested in his shooting. I have learned just how important light is in photography and this is exactly what Giovanni touched upon. "Light has a body.... It shows and reveals, but it also changes reality and makes it disappear." said Ozzola. He discussed the challenge of obtaining 'true' colors, those that he really sees, and making them appear real in his prints (and we as a class have learned firsthand just how hard that can be).

My personal favorite of the photographs shown was a floral chair with light streaming in the window. "The real presence is the absence," explained Ozzola. His work is especially impressive when seen in exhibition, for Ozzola works in full-scale dimensions. See the photograph of the chair: it appears directly on the floor as if sharing your space. He does this with many of his works to best show the reality of what he sees, so that onlookers may share the space and begin a relationship with his work. It was very inspiring to hear about his thought process while shooting such incredible photos and to see the results right in front of me.

by Hannah Gorton (Syracuse University)

On Tuesday November 16, art curator Dott.ssa Paola Bortolotti introduced Giovanni Ozzola, a young, Florence-born artist, to students of SU Florence's art department to talk about his work in photography and video art installations. Ozzola's informal and provocative talk was part of an ongoing lecture series ideated by Stefania Talini, SUF professor of photography, to acquaint American college students with young, contemporary Italian artists, a category in which Giovanni Ozzola is an unquestionable leader. Born in 1982, he participated in his first group show at the age of 17 and his first solo exhibition at the age of 24. Since then his work has appeared in some of the most important art shows and galleries in the world and today can be found in leading public and private collections. Ozzola's most recent exhibition was a one-man show at the Elgiz Museum in Istanbul, Turkey.

Giovanni Ozzola's extraordinary, "larger than life" photographs can be seen in his monographic work *Skip\_Intro '09*, while his particular style and artistic vision are perhaps best described by critic/curator **Elisa Del Prete** on Ozzola's website: <http://www.giovanniozzola.com/>.

"Giovanni Ozzola is a young, but renowned, Italian artist who works in the media of photography and video. Ozzola compresses space and time in his search for a partial, alienating shot and a precise time span. He uses editing to break down his experience of reality and recompose it in an image that has a duration and form of its own. The experience of time thus passes first through the artist's experience and later through that of composition.

What unites the two forms of time is light – the recognizable sign of the passing of time. It is sunlight, the physical phenomenon that marks out our days, but it is also artificial light, and a scenic instrument that guides the eye and defines objects. It is a radiation that illuminates the screen and exposes the film. Light is a wave that enables us to perceive matter, but it is also a means for impressing an image and bringing it to life. It is the threshold of representation, and it marks the shift from consciousness to perception, making the image become reality. Light, its occurrence and provenance, and the place of its arrival have always been a matter for investigation by the artist, just as the photographic medium – the photosensitive material on which the time of vision is impressed and becomes form and substance – is the language that Ozzola has always preferred. With *Superficiale - Under My Skin*, Ozzola takes up video, with the image moving in a space-time dimension. He abandons the infinite time of contemplation for the pre-set time of experience. While photographic time is an interval, that of the moving image is continuity. While the fixity of the shot presupposes some imaginary before and after, the moving image confines experience to the projection. So the choice is not dictated by narrative needs, but rather by the need to represent a continuous and repeatable unfolding of action. The artist invites the observer to embark on a cognitive experience that he has had himself, and he does so by reconstructing a new level of time. The focus is thus not on an observation of time, but rather on representing its movement by means of the image."



Selfportait



View of camera rossa, 2003

*Light has a body.... It shows and reveals, but it also changes reality and makes it disappear.*



Omnia munda mundis, 2008



# a day with... George Saunders

photos: Francesco Guazzelli



## at SU Florence

**George Saunders**, best-selling author and ETS professor of creative writing at Syracuse University, NY, visited the SU Florence campus on Monday, September 27.

Saunders' day at SUF began with an informal meeting with students from the ETS Travel Writing course taught by Antonella Francini. The students had the opportunity to spend over an hour in conversation with Mr. Saunders asking questions relating to the craft of writing, the upbringing of an author, and the role of the media today. He shared some personal do's and don'ts for aspiring writers and offered a reading list of books that he recommends to American college students.

In the afternoon Saunders was the guest of honor at a reception in the Villa Rossa garden attended by members of the SU Florence staff and faculty and by special guests from local political, academic and cultural institutions including: Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi and Councilwoman Cristina Giachi of the *Comune di Firenze*, Vice Chancellor Michele Papa (*Università di Firenze*), Program Director Giovanni Cipriani (*Centro di Cultura per Stranieri, Università di Firenze*), Professoressa Adele Dei (Department Chair, *Italianistica, Università di Firenze*), Consul General MaryEllen Countryman (US Consulate in Florence), and Cultural Affairs Assistant Maria Paola Pierini (US Embassy in Rome).

At the end of the day Mr. Saunders entertained students, faculty and staff with his talk on *Craft and Culture*, sharing humorous stories from his personal life and talking candidly about his career as a writer. The lecture was followed by a reception and informal book-signing.

## Meeting George Saunders

by Ericka Kirk (Loyola University, Maryland) – ETS - Literary Travels

Before coming abroad to Florence, I had the mindset that I would be experiencing an entirely new culture and lifestyle from what I was used to in the United States. I anticipated a new language, new food, and a different form of academic curriculum. A lot of people say that the academic aspect of studying abroad is often very different from how



Saunders talking with SUF students after his lecture

we are taught in the States, because while abroad there is greater emphasis on independent exploration, an immersion into the culture, and more hands-on experiences. Through my Literary Travels class here at SUF, I have realized that the combination of all of these elements is what has educated me the most. Interestingly enough, one of the greatest influences that class and my educational experience overall at SUF have had on me so far has not stemmed from anything relating to the Italian culture, but rather from the bestselling American writer and creative writing

professor at the

Syracuse home campus, George Saunders.

In his collection of essays, *The Braindead Megaphone*, we find travel stories that tell of his experiences abroad complete with satires and funny moments for his audience. What is so special about Saunders is that, even though he stays in seven-star hotels in Dubai and goes to amazing places that most people would only dream of, he is still always on the same level as his audience. In his stories, he makes himself vulnerable, but somehow this works for him, and a bond is formed between the reader and the author, something I think is hard to find.

We spent a few classes at the beginning of the semester reading some of his travel stories, which I thoroughly enjoyed, feeling like I knew him. So we were all very excited to learn that we would have the opportunity to have a one-on-one meeting with him before he gave his lecture at SUF. After seeing him on numerous TV shows and learning about how successful he has been, we couldn't wait to meet a celebrity. At the meeting he was open to our questions, and answered them all with his personal input, but never putting himself on a higher level than us. He has more than just talent, but rather a tangible passion that he is able to show in his work and communicate to others. He seems to be someone who gains his inspiration for writing from a

wide variety of things, while keeping a writing style that stays true to who he is. He said that he revises his work over and over again, never stopping until he can read all the way through a piece and honestly say that he enjoyed every part and knew it was what he wanted. When someone asked how he knows when a piece is perfect, he said that he knows it when he is captivated the whole time and never bored. This shows that he wants his pieces to be perfect not only for himself, but also for his readers.



Saunders visiting SUF Printmaking studio

*"He has more than just talent, but rather a tangible passion that he is able to show in his work, and communicate to others."*





Meeting George Saunders in person was very refreshing. He is a humorous person as his writing and his appearances on popular talk shows testify. However, when he talked to us about his travels with Bill Clinton, working with children with AIDS and about his time spent at a shelter for the poor in California, I could not believe all of the beautiful and diverse things he has accomplished in his life, especially if we think that he did not start writing professionally until relatively late in his career. Writers like Saunders can truly be role models: he has an astonishing career that he never seems to take for granted, and he also stays grounded with his family whom he lovingly mentioned more than once. He seems honest and true to himself – qualities that I feel separate excellent writing from just good writing. He told me that he writes about what he likes and what he thinks is funny, and hopes that his audience will feel the same way (which we clearly do!). I got some great insight from him and even have a quote from the end of one of his travel pieces, “The New Mecca,” taped to my desk now:

*Don't be afraid to be confused. Try to remain permanently confused. Anything is possible. Stay open, forever, so open it hurts, and then open up some more, until the day you die, world without end, amen.*

Saunders talks about not being afraid to be confused, advice that perfectly suits my time here abroad. One can be an inspiration to anyone, anywhere.



SUF Director Michael Calo, Councilwoman Cristina Giachi, Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi



SUF Director Michael Calo, Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi, George Saunders



Florence Mayor Matteo Renzi, George Saunders



Visiting the SUF library



Reception in the Villa Rossa garden



Saunders signs a copy of his book for Mary Ellen Countryman, American Consul General in Florence



From left to right : Prof. Giovanni Cipriani, Director Centro di Cultura per Stranieri (University of Florence), Dr. MariaPaola Pierini, US Embassy in Rome, SUF Prof. Antonella Francini



SUF Director Michael Calo



George Saunders during his lecture



Students at George Saunders's lecture



Saunders signs a copy of his book for SUF student Emily Matras



# The COLORS are



Photos: Leora Dolphin Shuchter

## BRIGHT

The Experience is  
Generous

By Calvin Main,  
Brown University

*Paint whatever you are told  
to in whatever fashion  
instructed...*

This was the only instruction given to me and four other interns from the Syracuse University in Florence program prior to assembling in front of the entrance to the Pecci Center of Contemporary Art in Prato, Italy, on a brisk Friday morning. The job was understood and seemingly simple: to aid in the arrangement and setup of an art exhibit for the internationally renowned artist

Michael Lin in the two weeks before the scheduled opening date. However, when Mr. Lin himself warmly greeted our group at the door the reality of the project began to dawn on us. This awareness fully bloomed when he toured us through the large exhibit space and iterated his plans.

Our chief task: to paint a warehouse wall spanning the length of three grand-sized rooms stenciled with intricate floral patterns. Italian students from the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence were already busy at work and instructions were being thrown around by French and Chinese assistants in a flurry of languages. Another room with a floor-sized painting, another wall waiting, still to be stenciled. It was at this point we realized that we were a part of something big both in stature and artistic consequence.

It had hardly been five days prior when the Pecci first contacted the Syracuse campus in desperate need of painters. A team was quickly assembled from the painting classes of professor Kirsten Stromberg, members being mid-seasoned painters and some, like myself, having not picked up a brush prior to the semester. Dedication was the key requirement.

*Our chief task: to paint a warehouse wall  
spanning the length of three grand-sized  
rooms stenciled with intricate floral pat-  
terns. Italian students from the Academy  
of Fine Arts in Florence were already  
busy at work and instructions were being  
thrown around by French and Chinese  
assistants in a flurry of languages.*

*War, peace, and economic digest are themes among his artwork and majestic floral patterns, which adorn shopping malls, tennis courts, skate parks, and even house interiors. With the coming of this exhibit SUF interns were now becoming instruments in this message of community.*



Michael Lin

Over the course of two weeks, Syracuse and Florentine students worked diligently in the garden of Lin, cultivating fruitful relationships and forming a warm community unto itself, one that will hopefully endure into future years and future Pecci collaborations. This was one of the few opportunities in which I was able to work side by side with Italian students, exchanging my lingual fragments for slang and information on the pop culture. Our workgroup, we found, was incredibly diverse ranging from native French and Chinese, to Italian, Columbian, and even Bulgarian. Some were finishing high school others wrapping up graduate school, some spoke English, others not so much. Despite the lingual and cultural differences it was meeting together in a common space with a common goal that gave rise to experiences that transcended barriers in working together, eating together, waiting for buses, encouraging one another, and sharing the differences we have to offer.

The experience of working with Michael Lin and his assistants was invaluable; each individual's contribution was necessary as the images grew with each brush stroke of orange, green, violet, and pink. When the exhibit opened proudly on October 16, 2010 there were no small emotions walking through the space in its full splendor and being able to spot the contributions of my peers and myself. The space was transformed from paint cans and scaffolding into carpets and chairs, we had actually witnessed the seed of an idea about community blossom into a luscious and awe-inspiring exhibit. The magnificent feelings of self-accomplishment and communal artistic spirit were the products and the ingredients of a successful gallery with a successful message that was both stunningly beautiful and oh-so generous.



### SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY PECCI TEAM

Chelsea Firor  
Regan Horacek  
Amelia Lockwood  
Katherine Van Brunt  
Calvin Main

*"The unique opportunity to work at Museo Pecci is a huge and rare honor for Syracuse students, a chance to look at how artists work and all that is involved in installing large scale exhibitions"*

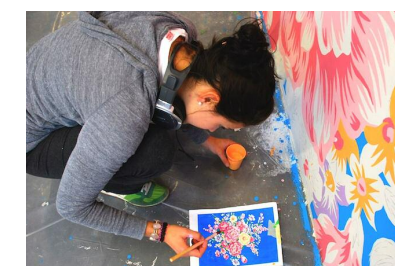
Kirsten Stromberg, SUF Painting Professor

*"When I first saw the space I didn't know how he was going to get everything done in two weeks, everything was white except the back wall, that was covered in giant intricate flowers..."*

Chelsey Firor, Syracuse University

*"This girl offered me chocolate, my hands were covered in paint and I had no idea what to say. She then literally fed me the chocolate and we were laughing and had such a good time and I remember thinking this is what art should be about..."*

Regan Horacek, Syracuse University





# SUPERHEROES

by Jenece Claribel Reyes (Syracuse University - Freshman)

*Remember the days when you sat in front of the TV watching cartoons or you read comic books cheering on your favourite superhero? Those days are history for me, yet this weekend I achieved a childhood dream of spending time with some real-life superheroes.*

My name is Jenece Reyes and I am a student at Syracuse University in Florence. As part of the SUF Volunteer program, I joined Zia Caterina on her mission of spreading smiles, happiness, and love to people in need. Well, I should explain who 'Zia Caterina' (or Aunt Cat) is? She is an angel dressed like a fairy who drives Taxi Milano 25 accompanying cancer patients, especially children, to their therapy appointments, and above all bringing joy to their lives.

Zia Cat and I visited cancer patients at the Careggi hospital in Florence on a Saturday. I spent most of the afternoon with a Sicilian man named Giuseppe. He is currently at Careggi fighting cancer for the second time. All of his family and friends are in Sicily, so he was excited to have visitors. Although we were in a hospital, Giuseppe found the strength to focus his energy on teaching me about the importance of theater in his hometown and about the things he enjoyed doing when he was home. It didn't take long for me to realize I had made yet another friend in Florence.



Jenece Reyes and Giuseppe

The next day, when I got into Caterina's super fabulous taxi, we talked about an opportunity for Giuseppe to share his story in the local newspaper. After some "pushing" he agreed. I was moved by Giuseppe's words. He talked about how drastically cancer had changed his life. His adoration of Caterina was evident when he spoke about how she brightened up the life that he was beginning to see as an endlessly dark path. Within a few hours, we successfully put Giuseppe's story on paper as an article which was then published in the Florentine daily newspaper *La Nazione*.

We were then ready for the next part of Caterina's mission, visiting the Ospedale Meyer, a children's hospital where I met several young people. One in particular amazed me--an eleven-year-old girl named Asia whose mother died a few years ago from cancer. Asia also had cancer and went through chemotherapy. She was able to go home after about a year of treatment. Unfortunately, however, soon afterwards the doctors discovered that she had another form of cancer. Asia is currently in the hospital receiving treatment again. When I met her she was suffering pain from the disease. Nonetheless she still found the strength to greet Caterina and me with a smile. There are so many of us who come into a workplace or classroom and instantly tell people that we are 'having a bad day'. Personally, I've had days when I justified my bad attitude towards a co-worker with such an excuse. I find it amazing that this eleven-year-old girl was able to put aside her pain and maintain a good attitude.

These people's fight against such a ferocious beast has made me more conscious of the preciousness of life. Giuseppe and Asia have the same characteristics I saw in superheroes when I was a child. They have inspired me to recognize every day as a gift and not to waste my time dwelling on the negatives of life. Visiting with Zia Caterina reminded me that the world is so much bigger than I am. Her philosophy on life amazes me. Her superpowers are not the ordinary superpowers we know from watching cartoons. They're better. Caterina doesn't save lives by fighting crime with physical strength. Instead, she changes lives with love and emotion.

# SEND - A - SMILE

(and Reach for the Stars!) Gets to Florence

by Lauren Maldonado (University of Southern California)

Nearly five years ago my best friend in high-school and I started up Send-A-Smile, an organization that sends homemade cards to pediatric hospitals and care facilities around the world. Community service has long-since been an integral part of my life, and I was determined to continue my activity in Florence this semester abroad, if only I could find the right channels! After all, I feel that community service is one of the best ways to get to know the city you're living in, its people, and, why not, to better understand yourself.

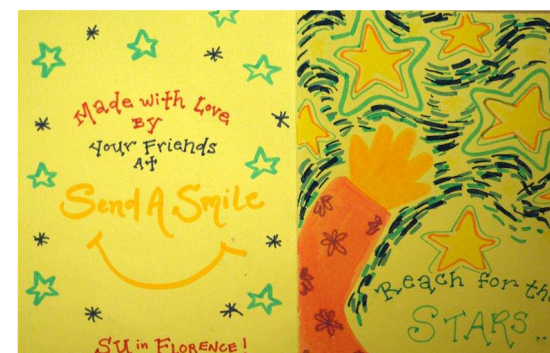
Vittoria Tettamanti, Coordinator of the SUF Volunteer Program helped me to connect *Send-A-Smile* with Florence, and get that 'something more' I wanted out of my experience in Italy.

Just a few weeks ago, six other students and I spent an unforgettable afternoon at the *Cooperativa Barberi*, a day-care center for people who have physical or mental handicaps. The visit was organized by Maibritt Handberg and Vittoria Tettamanti (in cooperation with Zia Caterina). Decked out in Minnie Mouse Ears with fresh gelato in hand, the seven of us set forth, unaware of what we were about to experience. That afternoon still stands as one of the most memorable experiences I have had here – and believe me, incredible days, weekends, and events are bountiful in Florence. The people we met that afternoon were inspiring. Our presence and care spread optimism among them, and we all shared happiness. I saw that it's really possible to make someone's day and even change a person's life for the better. When Vittoria graciously helped me to connect our Send-A-Smile project also with Florence's Meyer Pediatric Hospital, I was thrilled



*Stars can be reached everywhere with small gestures!*

and honoured. Send-A-Smile has humbly provided me with the opportunity to give back to the people and city that have given to us and that continue to reward us with so much. Through our small contribution as a community at Syracuse University in Florence, we can make a big difference. I was touched, amazed, and inspired by how enthusiastic my friends, classmates, and faculty were to help with my project. When I return to the United States, I will take with me many new perspectives, bonds, close friendships, profoundly moving experiences, and a fresh outlook on the world. Send-A-Smile has crossed another border, as has my experience in Florence: my wish is that I leave a small footprint on the city that I have been so fortunate to call 'home' for the past four months. Stars can be reached everywhere with small gestures!





# Volunteer Program

## A Photo Album



On Sunday November 14, the Florentine newspaper *La Nazione* published Jenece Reyes's interview with Giuseppe under the title "Nello sguardo di Luca". The following day Jenece read her piece in front of a large audience of Americans and Italians attending the conference *Learning Through Experience* held inside the Salone de' 500 in Palazzo Vecchio. The conference, sponsored by AACUPI (Association of American College and University Programs in Italy), was part of the city-wide, week-long Florentine cultural event *Florens 2010*.



Gli Angeli del Bello

On November 23 at 9:20 pm our very own Rachel Ahart and Briana Rinaldo were invited to the local talk show *Il Caso* on channel TELE 37 to talk about their volunteer experience as *Angeli Del Bello* (Angels of Beauty), an association created and promoted by the Comune di Firenze. Along with many other Florentine and international students, Rachel and Briana dedicated a day of their time and hard work to making Florence a cleaner place and giving it a brighter face.



A Friendly visit to Casa Barbieri



At the Casa Barbieri



Send-A-Smile in action



# Tasting Culture - One Sip at a Time

by Angela Laurello (Syracuse University)



Wine in Italy possesses a more important meaning than in America. Although its cultural significance has decreased since ancient times, wine remains an essential part of Italian life and culture. It can be found in all aspects of Italian life--social, artistic, historic.

In early November SU Florence Option II and III students had the opportunity to experience a wine-tasting with Diletta Frescobaldi of the prominent Florentine family. The Frescobaldis have been involved in Tuscany's political, sociological and economic history since the Middle Ages. They began producing Tuscan wine in 1308 and soon developed a notable client base.

While briefly explaining the history of wine and the Frescobaldi legacy, Ms. Frescobaldi taught students the correct way to taste, smell and observe wine. First of all, you should observe the color of the wine, preferably using a white piece of paper. Secondly, in order to sense the different flavors and characteristics of the wine, take a deep whiff twice and notice the olfactory sensations (acidic, sweet, fruity or strong, for example). Finally, to taste the wine take a small sip and hold it between your teeth. Then swallow slowly to truly appreciate the taste of the wine and not simply drink it.

During the tasting, three wines were presented. Pomino Bianco, Tenuta di Castiglioni Riserva and Castello di Nipozzano Riserva. Pomino Bianco is a Chardonnay with a light citrus taste. Ms. Frescobaldi described this wine as a before-dinner wine, or a wine to start a meal because of its light taste. The second wine, Tenuta di Castiglioni Riserva, is a three-year reserve, 90% Sangiovese with a strong bite and intense taste. The third and final wine, Castello di Nipozzano Riserva, is made of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Sangiovese. This wine, while aggressive in taste, was accompanied by a fruity taste and fragrance.

This tasting, while informational and entertaining, also emphasized the importance of wine in Italian culture. The consumption of wine in general after the second world war evolved from a simple daily beverage to now a source of pleasure. All too often people get caught up in the rigid, hectic schedules of the day. In Italian culture, wine and the evening meal serve as a routine way to stop and appreciate the things in life that otherwise get over-looked--one sip at a time.





## Studying at the Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia of the University of Florence in the Option III Program

*How different is studying at the University of Florence from studying at home? Very!*

... says **Jessika Caruthers** (University of Southern California) who is enrolled in a Linguistics course

at the *Facoltà di Lettere*. "For the past month, I have been attending classes at the *Università di Firenze*. Surprisingly, I have discovered that there are far greater differences between UniFi and my university in the States than just the language of instruction. For example, one thing that truly shocks me is that the Italian professors are extremely detached from the textbooks and their syllabi, whereas at home, syllabi are (typically) followed strictly, and textbook material is repeated and elaborated upon in class. Here, the concept of class lessons and textbooks are two separate things. What the professor says is additional material to what we find in our textbooks; therefore, it is absolutely essential to be present at every class.

Unlike at home, the concept of a written exam does not exist; in fact, Italian students shudder at the mere mention of anything written. Italian exams are oral: the professor asks you questions about anything that you are expected to have heard in class or read in the textbook during the semester. Even the class schedules are different in an Italian university: every 'hour' of instruction includes a mandatory 15-minute academic pause, called *il quarto d'ora accademico*, otherwise known as a smoking break for professor and students alike.

From all this you might think that I'm not enjoying my Linguistics course at UniFi. On the contrary, I love it simply because I feel like I'm learning so incredibly much. Italian students are expected to know a lot. For example, in my class most students speak at least three languages, and their knowledge of those languages are referred to in the lessons. Contrary to American classes, where students are walked through the entirety of the course, I enjoy how Italian students are expected to take the initiative in order to learn and are given the freedom to decide how best to study and learn the material."

**Michael Boncaldo** (Tufts University) and **Stephanie DiPrima** (Syracuse University) have chosen a course in Modern and Contemporary Italian Literature. Mike still recalls his first day at the *Università*:

"I will never forget the first day I went to the University of Florence to sit in on a class that I was deciding whether or not to take. After climbing three flights of stairs I arrived outside *Aula 4b*, following the instructions. I peaked in quickly to see the professor talking to what seemed to be a class full of 'on-time' students. Five minutes passed and I found myself in the exact spot I was in when I first peaked into the classroom. *Nervous* could not describe how I felt: it was more like *terrified*. For one thing I did not want to walk into the class late and have the teacher make an example of me, and, secondly, amidst my nerves I was beginning to sweat as if I had been running in place for five minutes. After calling a friend and collecting myself I knew I had to finally enter.

The whole class passed pretty quickly it seemed, because I was too busy looking at other students and watching how an Italian class would ensue. The students dress a lot more formally than do

*I will never forget the first day I went to the University of Florence... Nervous could not describe how I felt: it was more like terrified.*

Americans and they don't sport our typical backpack marked by brands such as Northface or L.L. Bean. Also, it was a hot, late afternoon in September and I was the only person in shorts! (Talk about sticking out!). After class I looked to the student I was sitting next to and, mustering up my best Italian, asked him what the teacher had asked us to do at the end of the class. Whatever he said could have been in German for all I knew, because I did not understand a word. The student listened to my question and then politely said, 'I have no idea what this professor is talking about either.' Who would have guessed I was sitting next to an American! From that point on I began to feel a lot more comfortable.

I did not choose that class in the end, but the one I enrolled in is just like it, but much larger. I have met some French students, another American, and an Albanian that are also enrolled in the class.

## Studying at the Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia of the University of Florence in the Option III Program

Stephanie and I are not the only *stranieri* as Italians would call us. We have adjusted, but differences between the typical American college and an Italian university continue to attract our attention. For example, at the *Facoltà di Lettere* there is a huge cloister where many students smoke cigarettes before and after class: hanging

*The students dress a lot more formal than do Americans and they don't really support our typical backpack marked by brands such as Northface or L.L. Bean.*

around there is more socially valuable than in America, I suspect! Students treat professors with a lot more respect than we do at home. For example, they wait until the teacher asks if anyone has questions before

asking for clarifications or raising issues, and very rarely do they leave during class to go to the bathroom. As an SUF Option III student, I have a tutor to aid me in preparing for the final oral exam. At first I didn't like the idea of having two instructors teaching me the same thing. It turns out, however that, my tutor is very helpful in clarifying exactly what it is that I write down in my notes and who exactly are the major poets of Italy. I would liken him to a 'Sparknotes' of my class at Tufts University, but much more engaging. In all, it has been a wonderful learning experience. Everyday I realize or learn something new, and I don't just mean a new Italian word."

Like Mike and Jessika, **Stephanie** also stresses the differences between the Italian and the American academic systems: "I would say that my experience in Florence is very different from all the other students at SUF. I also take one class in the Option II Program at the *Centro di Cultura per Stranieri*, Monday through Friday. It is a class of students from all different countries and the one thing we have in common is Italian, our second language. We work on grammar, conversation, writing and other things that really help me improve my language skills. The other class I take, *Letteratura moderna e contemporanea*, is at the *Facoltà di Lettere*, and is a huge challenge. The teacher lectures the whole time on novels and poetry: we must follow and take notes because we get only one grade, and that grade is our final exam, which is oral. We must speak in front of our two teachers for at least 30 minutes about everything we have learned, that the professor taught, and that we read through the semester. Italian students in class are extremely serious, taking pages and pages of notes and not talking amongst themselves. In America, instead, we see students on their phones, on their computers using Facebook, talking with their friends or even sleeping. This would never happen in an Italian classroom. Students here are more disciplined and take their studies much more seriously than do we Americans. I feel that here a lot more is expected of students and therefore they must work hard to meet those expectations.

*Italian students in class are extremely serious, taking pages and pages of notes and not talking amongst each other.*



Fall 2010 Option II students during their visit to the Accademia della Crusca in the Medici Villa di Castello. Here they are in the 16th-century garden of the building. From left to right: (back) Francesca DeBiao, Kelsey Lucca, Ned Dutton, Michael Boncaldo, Dylan De Angelis, Jessika Caruthers; (front) Angela Laurello, Prof. Lucia De Anna, and Stephanie DiPrima.

Preparing for their upcoming studies at the Centro di Cultura per Stranieri of the University of Florence through intense advanced Italian language classes, a site visit to the Accademia della Crusca is mandatory at the beginning of the Fall semester. It provides students, says Antonella Francini, Coordinator of the Option II Program, "with a historical perspective on the language they have studied at home and which they have come to perfect in Florence." The Accademia della Crusca is the leading research institution on the Italian language. Its origins can be traced back to the late 1500s; there the first modern dictionary of Italian was compiled. Currently located in the magnificent Medici Villa di Castello, once home to Botticelli's *Primavera* and *Birth of Venus*, this place and its historic garden are the perfect haven for students of Italian language. Upon arrival, linguist Lucia De Anna introduced the Option II group to the history of Italian, from its Indo-European roots to the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Students saw an original copy of the *Vocabolario* (dictionary) of the Italian language, printed in Venice in 1612. The Accademia della Crusca had prepared it to preserve the beauty of the Florentine tongue as it had been used by such illustrious authors as Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Lorenzo il Magnifico, and Machiavelli.



## Discovery Florence Program

by Amy Kleine (Assistant Director for Student Health and Wellness)

The Discovery Florence (DF) Freshmen Program is going strong in its third year since inception. What began as a small group of eight courageous and bright first-year students has blossomed into a class of twenty-two equally intelligent and adventuresome freshmen. These students have chosen to embark on their college career in a foreign country, living with host families and learning a foreign language, rather than starting with the more traditional model of dorm and campus life in the U.S.



“Going from an initial group of eight (and ten last fall) to more than double that number has been exciting, challenging, and all in all, great fun!” says Freshmen Forum instructor Amy Kleine. “The increase in numbers has meant more input in class discussions, more involvement by these students in our program activities and internships, and in general more of a presence as a group among the other students.”

The DF students follow a curriculum tailored to them including Italian language, First Year Writing, Political Science and Art History. Some of the students are also enrolled in upper-level courses, including a sociology class (Family and Gender in Contemporary Italy) and in a literature/drama class (Comedy in Italy). First-year writing Professor Lily Prigioniero is enthusiastic about the DF students this semester and their class performance: “I find that this year's freshmen in the DF program are incredibly mature. Our class discussions, encompassing topics such as teenage intoxication, the homeless in Florence, cultural differences and gay rights, have been extremely open, profound and often exhilarating! I have to say, I love this age group and truly enjoy this class!”

Learning the Italian language is a core element of their curriculum, as well as a fundamental experience in Italy in general. Italian department coordinator and Professor Loredana Tarini is pleased with the DF students participation in language learning. “Since the freshman program began at SUF, the Italian department has always found it a pleasure to have the freshman students in our classes. They are enthusiast, curious, inquisitive and very interested in learning our language. DF students have shown consistently a strong motivation in understanding the Italian language and culture from up close.”

Twenty-two students can have a significant impact on the general atmosphere of the SUF campus, and in the case of the DF students, their influence is undoubtedly positive. Art History Professor Richard Ingersoll observes, “The presence of first year students has really enlivened the scene at SUF campus. Their capacity to mingle, ask questions, make a little trouble (nothing serious), and live up to the freshness of their status has been wonderful for the atmosphere.”

SUF and the DF professors are undoubtedly enthusiastic and positive about these students, however most importantly, it is what the DF students get out of this experience that makes this program so fantastic. As DF student Cylicia Elianor, describes, “The experiences I am having here are priceless. I cannot duplicate or correctly express to anyone how much fun I am having and how much I am learning, both in terms of another culture and myself. I say “myself” because I have never been on my own for so long. I am becoming much more independent by being here and taking care of myself.”

## My First Week in Florence

by Elizabeth Webster (Syracuse University)

I've just finished my first week living here in Italy. With all the many things that have happened over the course of seven days, one image sticks out in my mind: Matilde. Matilde, the sweet, cherub-faced baby with a head full of jet black hair and the biggest drooling smile I've ever seen come from a three month old. The first sign of her existence was the orange car seat sitting on the front seat of the car we were picked up in on move-in day. After our arrival at Via Francesco Puccinotti, 72, I was able to put a face to this so called Matilde. My imagination never could have conjured up a more beautiful, Italian infant. Little did I know on that first day how prevalent her presence would become. Her shrilling cry ringing down the hall and out the windows has become a daily occurrence, often times during the moments when I just wish for silence. Sitting at the desk trying to read, I hear her begin to scream and I say out loud to myself, “Matilde, calm down!” wishing from the depths of my heart that she could actually hear and understand me. However, despite her routine interruptions into my quiet times, she still remains the one Italian I feel the most comfortable with right now. I don't have to worry about the language barrier with little Matilde. I don't have to wonder if the conversation going on in Italian at the dinner table is about me. I don't have to be acutely aware of the perception of my mannerisms around Matilde. I know that a simple smile from me is sufficient and will almost always be returned with that cheek-to-cheek, toothless smile of her own. Amidst the chaos of this past week, it is the image of that smile that will remain printed in the memory of my first week living in Italy.

September 21, 2010





## In Famiglia - Staying with Italian Hosts: A Retrospective Look

by Jim Kauffman (Assistant Director for Student Life)

A student recently came to me and asked "What's the deal with the towels? My Italian host mother brought me into the bathroom and explained that this set of towels was to be used only for my feet, these for my body and the final set only for my face and hands." I said I wasn't sure, but that it'd be best to abide by her rules and there was probably a good reason for this seeming peculiarity. The same is true in the case of the host mother who stops you from going outside with wet hair. She's afraid you might catch your death of cold, and from my experience, take her warning seriously. Wet hair and cold, damp mornings are a bad mix. All cultures evolve and develop traits of behavior for one reason or another. It is almost always tied to some cause and effect reality. Behavior is dictated by need. Keep in mind that your Italian hosts may also often wonder why you do the things you do. For instance, they probably admire your independence and autonomy, as not many of their 20- and 21-year-olds leave home for an extended period of time to experience the world. However, they no doubt worry if you sit and drink alone in your room or may wonder how you can stand to live in such a messy room. In fact, many students have expressed concern that their host mother goes in and cleans up or rearranges "their" room. But in her mind, this is the job of the *casalinga* (housewife); it's not so much an invasion of your privacy (a word that doesn't even exist in Italian), as merely her job to tidy up (*mettere a posto*) her home.

You may have also noticed that Italians tend to live a more prescribed lifestyle than Americans do: i.e. dinner usually at the same time each evening, laundry done only on certain days of the week, etc. This contrasts greatly with our lifestyle where family members are often on their own for dinner (ready-made food or leftovers warmed up in the microwave) and eat any time they feel hungry (or bored). But, in the end, the important thing

*What's the deal with the towels? My Italian host mother brought me into the bathroom and explained that this set of towels was to be used only for my feet, these for my body and the final set only for my face and hands.*

is reciprocal respect and common courtesy when living in a shared, often small, space. Peculiar habits, on the other hand, are opportunities to learn something more about the other culture. So, when you find yourself thinking, "That's stupid" or "That's

weird" catch yourself and simply say, "That's different." It's always better to ask the question behind the action: "I wonder why they do that?" or "Why is that???" And every time you ask yourself this, you've brought yourself that much closer to understanding "the other."



### Student Comments on Home Stays

"By the end of the semester, I felt as close to my host family as to my own family...well almost! They were wonderful and made my stay here a most significant aspect of the program."

"When I first got here and my Italian was horrible, my host family never made me feel stupid and always listened when I spoke, despite my awkwardness. They even tried to involve me in family discussions. .... They are possibly the coolest people in the world."

"My host parents are open-minded, well-cultured, and very intelligent. The atmosphere is always welcoming and accommodating. They like to hear about how my day has gone and are so personal I feel like one of the family."

"When I got sick my host parents waited on me hand and foot. I became the most important thing in their lives and, even though they are both in their 70's, they carried breakfast, lunch and dinner upstairs to me every day."

## Tandem Exchange in Fall 2010

Exchanging English for Italian with peers from the local high schools

As is common at SU Florence every semester, Fall 2010 Italian language classes had the opportunity to exchange English for Italian with peers from local high schools. "We have been organizing Tandem meetings for many years now," says Loredana Tarini, Coordinator of the Italian Department, "and have involved hundreds of students in the project. It is always pleasantly surprising to see both Italians and Americans somewhat intimidated at first, worried about interacting spontaneously and in Italian with strangers, but they soon become engaged in deep conversation, asking questions and talking up a storm. They forget that, just shortly before, they were total strangers."



### Meeting Italian students from *Liceo Scientifico Enriques*, classe VB, of Livorno, Italy by Matt Gornstein (George Washington University)

As American students entered the Villa Rossa new faces greeted them. Italian high school students were visiting from Livorno to take part in a quasi-exchange for the day. The Italian students visited several classes to converse with American students. There were no strict rules guiding the conversation; the exercise was aimed at encouraging thoughts and ideas to be exchanged in a casual setting. The Italians from Livorno allowed for a practical use of language learning. All grammar, tenses, articles, and nouns that we had learned on the white board and practiced in class through role play could now be used for real with people close to our age and for purposes of communication. Our conversation topics ranged from academic interests to family, movies and sports. There was a natural flow that resembled a "typical," sincere conversation among students. Everyone had a different story to tell and a unique experience to share. Fears of encountering a language barrier were quickly dispersed as American and Italian students helped each other translate vocabulary and rephrase sentences. The candid setting removed the fear of making a mistake while speaking a new language and a visible sense of comfort escalated over time. Meeting and speaking with Italians is sometimes a difficult task when studying abroad. This exchange enabled American and Italian students to connect with each other and develop conversational skills that are essential to learning a language.



## A Visit To Pietrasanta: Traveling with a Pen & a Brush

by Elizabeth Lewis

This is Elizabeth Lewis' visual account of her visit to Pietrasanta and around Italy this semester. Liz who is an English and Art major at Syracuse University in Florence has continued to cultivate her passions studying Travel Writing and working in SUF's Studio Arts program. Here she adds a verse commentary to her painting.



*Do I know you? I swear we've met before—  
No, I don't think so—the woman continues to walk  
And I am destined to stay, only for a little while  
a pale figure in the background.*

*My boots echo down the cobblestone streets,  
My feet buckling against the uneven surfaces  
Touch the building—what is this one exactly?  
Its faded yellow color and heavy shutters;  
I wonder who has lived here for the past  
500 years—small children running through  
The halls, a woman sighing as she hangs  
The laundry to dry, the distant smells  
Of Tuscan cooking oiled in the walls.*



*The abandoned side streets I fall in love with,  
Things that will outlive me,  
A woman with her purple umbrella,  
I fade out, a phantom with an itinerary,  
a ghost in a café.*



**December 9, 5:30-7:30**  
**Studio Arts, Piazzale Donatello 21**

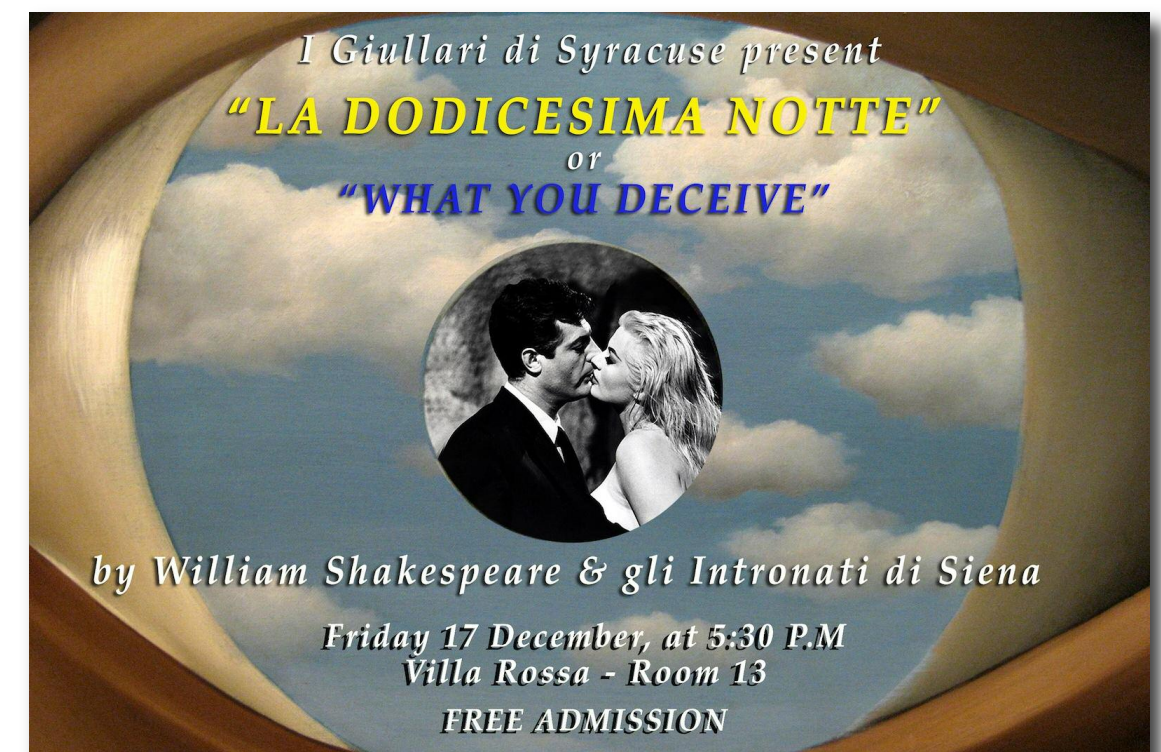
## I Giullari di Syracuse Performance

by Eric Nicholson (Professor of Drama and Theater)

SONG and DANCE, FOOD and DRINK, LOVE and DESIRE, and MUCH MORE will all be served in this semester's theatrical production, staged by the student-faculty group "I Giullari di Syracuse" and entitled LA DODICESIMA NOTTE, or WHAT YOU DECEIVE.

This original show will be performed in both English and Italian, and will take Shakespeare's classic comedy Twelfth Night, or What You Will back to its roots in Renaissance Tuscany, via the style and atmosphere of such modern film favorites as *She's the Man* and *La Dolce Vita*. These are well-known titles, but less famous is the play that Shakespeare himself adapted, by the Intronati di Siena: *gl'Ingannati* (*The Deceived*). "Baciala," shouts a character in this play, providing the model for "You go right ahead and kiss her!," and other memorable lines. You'll hear these and many others, and see lyrical scenes of longing and passion, as well as comical ones of cross-dressing, mistaken identity, late-night partying, and downright folly. Mixing the two comedies together, and setting them in 1960s Italy, the production aims to bring you all their fun and fantasia in innovative and "amorous-glamorous" ways. Once again, though as you've never seen before, girl meets boy, girl loses boy, and girl gets boy. Will they live happily ever after?! "The rain it raineth every day," but with dynamic young women determined to get what they WILL---quello che VOGLIONO---the sun may also shine, very brightly. In short, viva la diva, e viva l'amore!

**"LA DODICESIMA NOTTE, or WHAT YOU DECEIVE"**  
**Friday 17 December, at 5:30 P.M.,**  
**Villa Rossa Room 13**





## SUF Students Art Exhibition



photos: Francesco Guazzelli

On Thursday Dec 9th, the SUF Studio Arts Department celebrated the end of the semester with the Student Art Show, the latest installment of the bi-annual exhibition and juried competition of student work. This year's show included over one hundred pieces in printmaking, photography, sculpture, painting, drawing, Renaissance painting, batik, silkscreening, and metalsmithing, highlighting the breadth and depth of creative work by SUF students. The SUF Studio Arts Department holds a student exhibition at the end of every semester. It is a unique opportunity for students to not only learn the important process of installing and exhibiting their works, but also a chance for them to share, celebrate and communicate their thoughts and creative reflections with the greater Italian community. Awards for outstanding projects in each medium as well as a 'Best in Show Cash Prize' are juried during every exhibition by a distinguished group of artists, curators and critics active in the Florentine and international communities. This year's Jury consisted of Marco Cianchi and Bianca Pinzi. Marco Cianchi teaches Art History at the *Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze* and California State University. His research focuses on the parallels between Renaissance and Modern/Contemporary art. Bianca Pinzi is a curator and educator with a degree in contemporary art from the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy at the University of Florence. She collaborates with the Center of Contemporary Art at the *Villa Medicea La Magia*.

By Kirsten Stromberg (SUF Professor of Painting)



## SUF Students Art Exhibition

### Studio Arts Competition Fall 2010

This year's winners are:

**Best In Show Prize:**

Sophy Min for her oil painting *The Lady and the Ladder*

**Honorable Mention to:**

Introductory Painting: Calvin Main

Sculpture: Amelia Lockwood

Drawing: Jenna Fugate

Sketchbook: Alexandra Berch

Printmaking: Elizabeth Stace

Digital Photography: Genevieve Geiger

Renaissance Painting: Claire Stankus

Metalsmithing: Ashley Ross

Batik: Francesca Debiasio

Silkscreen: Anna Pitz



Sophy Min - *The Lady and the Ladder*, oil on canvas



Marco Cianchi and Bianca Pinzi, competition jurors



Metalsmithing display



Sophy Min



SUF Studio Arts Coordinator Nick Kraczyna with Jenna Fugate, winner of the Honorable Mention for Drawing



## Breaking up with Hollywood

by Morgan Schutte (Wake Forest University)

I must admit that four months ago my taste in film was a bit childish. I love movies, but what I didn't realize was that I only really loved American movies. However, this all changed when I signed up for Carlotta Kliemann's Contemporary Cinema class. We were required to watch one film every Wednesday and on the following Tuesday afternoon we would meet for a three-hour group discussion. The course topics ranged from the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall to the ceaseless Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and almost all the films were produced outside of the United States.

Towards the end of the semester we focused on two films which commented on the current war in Iraq. One of the films called *Redacted*, directed by Brian De Palma, told a true story about American soldiers who raped and killed an innocent Iraqi girl. It would be an understatement to say that this film struck close to home; it was like nothing I had ever seen before, and the classroom debate the following Tuesday was anything but tame.

This is not to say that *Redacted* was the only film that pushed me to reevaluate my stance on certain political issues, but it was definitely a film I felt personally connected to. It had been easy to discuss films which dealt with issues foreign to me, but suddenly I was forced to analyze my own country and culture. This is exactly what a college course should do.

Although the entire semester was an adventure, the high point was the class trip to Torino for the 2010 Torino Film Festival. While there I was able to see eight films in two days – a personal record – and the best part was that each film was produced in a different country. On the afternoon of Friday, December 3 when we arrived in Turin we saw *The Bang Bang Club*, a South African film by Steven Silver; *Henry*, an Italian film directed by Alessandro Piva; and *Burlesque*, an American film directed by Steve Antin. All the films had been released this year.

Saturday morning we were all up early in order to get to the 10 a.m. screening of *The Four Lions*, a British work directed by Chris Morris. Throughout the day I saw four more films: *Parked* (Irish, directed by Darragh Byrne); *Super* (American, directed by James Gunn); *Bus Palladium* (French, directed by Christopher Thompson); and finally *Neds: Non Educated Delinquents* (Scottish, directed by Peter Mullan).

I feel compelled to list all of the movies and their directors because I want to encourage the reader to go out and rent them. Each one is truly unique and none of them, with the exception of *Burlesque*, has the infamous 'fairytale' ending. I was especially fond of *The Four Lions*, a dark comedy about four suicide bombers whose plans go horribly awry. The festival made me see that I have been missing out on a lot of fantastic films. I would even go so far as to say I feel as if I have been liberated from a constricting Hollywood box.

On Sunday some of us visited the Torino GAM (*Galleria di Arte Contemporanea*). There I discovered the work of Martha Rosler, a socially engaged American photographer from New York City. Her work is centered on social issues, the media and war. Therefore my political mindset was most certainly augmented in a museum at the foot of the Alps, as I was confronting the compelling exhibit of this American artist.

I can now say that this semester I have acquired a more mature taste in film. Usually, when I go to the movie theater, I have a choice between 8-12 American films and, on the off chance there is a foreign film, it will be overshadowed by more recognizable titles. However, I am confident that when I return to the States I will no longer be seduced by the pulchritude of Hollywood. I can only hope that you too will venture outside of the box in order to see some of these pertinent and wildly entertaining foreign films.

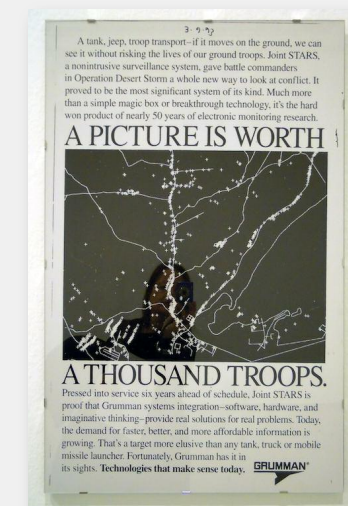
## SUF Students at the 28th Torino Film Festival



From December 3 to 5, students in Professor Carlotta Kliemann's cinema course attended the 28th Film Festival in Turin. Here they are, under the gigantic poster set up for this year's event before their two-day immersion in watching international films.



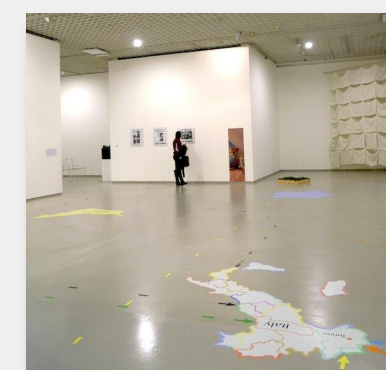
On their way to the cinema district in the heart of the city center, posing in front of café Mulassano, one of the many historical cafés in Torino.



*A Picture is Worth a Thousand Troops*, by Martha Rosler.



...and at the Al Bicerin, the celebrated chocolate stop in Turin (photo by Morgan Schutte)



On Sunday, a jaunt to the GAM, Turin's celebrated Gallery of Modern Art. Student Morgan Schutte visits AS IF, and discovers Martha Rosler's thought-provoking exhibit - the first exhibit dedicated to this American artist in an Italian museum.



## Outstanding Students Awards Ceremony



On Tuesday, December 7, Director Michael Calo and SUF program coordinators awarded those students who have excelled this term in their commitment to academic study and engagement with the SUF and Florentine communities.  
Above: Fall 2010 award recipients.

### Coluccio Salutati Essayists

Kelly Mannes - George Washington University  
Caress Reeves - Pomona College  
Nicole Balin - Oberlin College  
Anthony Cuneo - Boston College

### Outstanding Option II/III Student

Stephanie DiPrima - Syracuse University

### Outstanding Interns

Jenece Reyes-Syracuse University  
Mari Rohena-Cruz -Syracuse University  
Meghan Schneider-Syracuse University  
"Terry" Victoria Muiru-Syracuse University  
Elizabeth Congdon-Syracuse University  
Devorah Weinstein - Syracuse University  
Jessica Cimino - Syracuse University

### Outstanding Volunteers

Briana Rinaldo - Syracuse University  
Jenece Reyes - Syracuse University

### Lettori per un Giorno Winners

Vizza, Jeri - Santa Clara University  
Hylton, Caitlin - Santa Clara University  
Frias, Stephanie -Syracuse University

## Syracuse University Graduate Program in Renaissance Art



**Fall 2010 FIA graduate students and faculty.**  
From left to right: Jonathan Nelson, Lorinda Dickson, Molly Bourne, Rab Hatfield, Sarah Dziamba, Bryan Keene, Caitlin Sweeney, Melanie Honour, Margaret Contompasis, Townsend Zeigler.

### The Florence Symposium

At the end of their course of study, FIA graduate students present twenty minute-long scholarly papers relating to a common topic selected earlier in the year.

Since 1987, the symposium has attracted members of the international scholarly community in Florence, as well as interested students, faculty, and guests.

This year's topic was entitled:  
*Rooted in the Renaissance: Italian Gardens and Their Legacy*

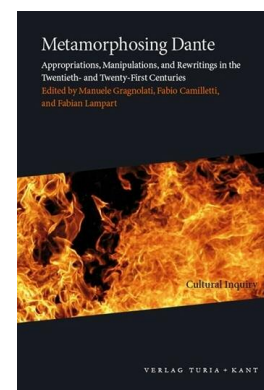
## Faculty Watch

### Matteo Duni



Matteo Duni participated in the international conference on "Heresy, Magic and Natural Philosophy" organized by the Centre for Medieval Studies of the University of Southern Denmark in Odense. His paper focused on a little-studied sixteenth century jurist, Gianfrancesco Ponzinibio, the first Italian author who devoted an entire book, *De lamiis* (*On witches*, first published 1511), to disprove the reality of witchcraft. His radical ideas drew violent criticism from inquisitors, some of which called for the burning of the book and of its author. Luckily for him - and for us! - both were spared that fate, so that we are still able to appreciate this humanist's contribution to the intellectual debate of his age. The conference drew together eighteen scholars from Scandinavian countries as well as from the US, the UK, Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Australia, and of course Italy, for a three-day intensive discussion on such fascinating topics as alchemy, magic, the witch-hunt and the repression of heresy in late medieval and early modern Europe.

### Antonella Francini



An essay by Antonella Francini - "Transferring Dante: Robert Rauschenberg's Thirty-Four Illustrations for the *Inferno*" - has just appeared in a collective volume: *Metamorphosing Dante: Appropriations, Manipulations, and Rewritings in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, edited by Manuele Gragnolati, Fabio Camilletti and Fabian Lampart (Berlin: Verlag Tura + Kant, 2010, pp. 324-374). This essay is a result of Francini's current studies on Dante's presence in contemporary American culture. Here, she examines Rauschenberg's deep and very personal transformation of the *Inferno* in his 34 transfer-drawings, a transformation all the more striking because it takes place in the realm of the urban American avant-garde of the late 1950s.

### Sara Matthews-Grieco



Sara Matthews-Grieco has edited a volume, *Erotic Cultures in Renaissance Italy*, published by Ashgate Press (May 2010). Concentrating largely on the 'middle ranks' of society in Renaissance Italy – artisans, merchants, and professionals such as bankers and lawyers – this book focuses on new social subjects, new documents and unusual objects. Using innovative methods of inquiry and interdisciplinary analytical tools, contributors explore a little-known but pervasive erotic culture in which sexually explicit artefacts, games and gestures were considered essential to a number of rituals and social occasions. At the same time, they demonstrate how a burgeoning market for erotica, along with a cultural tradition of allusion and innuendo, played an increasingly important role in the Italian peninsula between the fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

### Carlotta Fonzi Kliemann

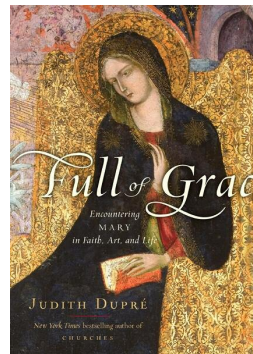


On November 13, Carlotta Fonzi Kliemann presented a paper at the conference Italian Cultural Integration, Facts and Fiction organized by CCIS-sQuola and SUNY at Stony Brook entitled "Permeable Identities: The Representations of Immigrants in Recent Italian Cinema." During the Torino Film Festival 2010, which Kliemann attended on December 3-5 with students of her Contemporary Cinema course, the Association Chicca Richelmy, of which she is co-founder and Vice-President, awarded a prize for short films within the *Spazio Torino* Short Film Competition.



## Faculty Watch

### Lily Prigioniero



The poem, "Restoration of an Icon" by Lily Prigioniero appears in the "Mary in Art" essay in Judith Dupré's book *Full of Grace: Encountering Mary in Faith, Art, and Life* (New York, Random House 2010). Lily's poem is one of the midrashim, or marginal commentaries, that was inspired by the format of the Torah and that appears throughout the book.

These insights on the Virgin Mary, and on womanhood in general, by theologians, historians, contemporary writers, and poets, add up to a kind of chorus celebrating Mary. The book offers a new twist on the life of the Virgin Mary, taking the reader inside her world in ancient Palestine and showing, equally, how thoroughly she inhabits our own 21st-century experiences.

#### Restoration of an Icon

I may fill the lacuna with the exact color  
between child and crown there on her throne  
and think to be part of that eternal art,

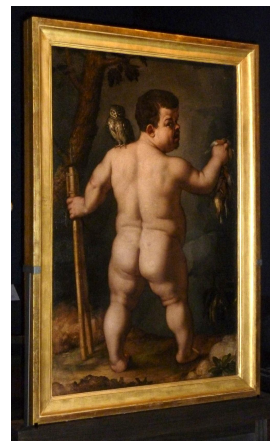
I may write a poem because of her stare  
Alone in the musty solvent smells of work  
Leaving me to ponder what it's worth,

Her glance may juggle time with eternity  
Making light the intricacies of death  
Because she survived the centuries,

But the lacuna between her eyes and mine  
Cannot be filled with words or song  
Or painted dabs of the master's hand

For perhaps it is in that missing space  
Where humanity's eternal struggle with art  
Can never depict the lacuna of life.

### Diane Kunzelman & Ezio Buzzegoli



Profs. Diane Kunzelman and Ezio Buzzegoli have recently brought to conclusion two very important conservation projects which involved in-depth and far-reaching research and restoration efforts. The first of these is Agnolo Bronzino's *Nano Morgante*, carried out with the collaboration of other restorers, scientists and art historians in the Opificio delle Pietre Dure at the Fortezza da Basso (Florence's prestigious restoration laboratory which SUF undergraduate and graduate students have the opportunity to visit under their guidance each semester). The *Nano Morgante* is one of Kunzelman and Buzzegoli's most significant conservation endeavors in recent years. This double-sided canvas described by Vasari in his *Lives of the Artists* was painted by Bronzino towards the end of the 1540s. The renowned court dwarf of Duke Cosimo I is portrayed as a bird hunter on both the front and back panels, as can be seen after painstaking removal of overpaint which had transformed the figure in the mid 18th century into a Bacchus, covering his nudity with grape leaves. The painting is one of the most captivating works of Bronzino now on exhibit at Palazzo Strozzi. Its restoration has also been the subject of a documentary film by Richard Blanchard presented for the first time at the *Festival dei Popoli* in Florence and soon to be aired on international television. The film *Restoring Genius Bronzino* will be shown at SUF in Spring 2011.



The second of these efforts involved yet another double-sided painting, this time by the poet and film director Pier Paolo Pasolini, dating from the 1940s. Although stylistically different from the Bronzino piece, Pasolini's front and back paintings presented as great a challenge in terms of preservation efforts as the *Nano Morgante*. The two works, extraordinary documents of Pasolini's early efforts as a visual artist, will be exhibited together with the author's original manuscripts, documents, photographs and drawings, at the *Gabinetto Vieusseux/Archivio Contemporaneo Bonsanti* in Via Maggio n. 42, from Nov. 18 to Jan. 21, 2011.

## News from SU, Syracuse, NY

### 2010 Remembrance Week



Twenty-two years ago 35 Syracuse University students studying abroad boarded a plane home from London. Their flight, Pan Am 103, exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all 259 passengers and crew onboard and 11 people on the ground in Lockerbie. They were aspiring artists, politicians, writers, journalists and educators. They left behind parents, friends, siblings and a world that would have benefitted greatly from their gifts and talents.

Every year, 35 Remembrance Scholarships are awarded to outstanding undergraduate students chosen in their junior year through a rigorous and competitive process on the basis of distinguished academic achievement, citizenship, and service to community. The scholars' mission is to educate the campus community about the tragedy, remember the students whose lives were taken and spark conversation about terrorism today. They look to explore ways of using advocacy and understanding to overpower and extinguish intimidation and the use of terror.

This year's weeklong series of events honoring the 270 victims took place on SU campus from October 14 to October 21, and it included a panel discussion on terrorism, a candlelight vigil, a concert, and archival displays. On Friday October 22, the Remembrance and Lockerbie Scholars laid roses at the Wall of Remembrance during the annual Rose Laying Ceremony in honor of and to pay tribute to the 35 SU students and the 11 victims from Lockerbie, Scotland.

Emily Allen, who studied in Florence in Fall 2009, is one of the 2010-11 Remembrance Scholars. We publish here her personal statement about receiving such a special and prestigious award.

Jennifer Monti, who studied in Florence in Spring 2008, is also very proud to have received this scholarship. Says Jennifer, "Syracuse University gave me the chance to study abroad in Florence and Madrid and gain a larger understanding of the world around me. I was able to learn so much about life during the four months I spent abroad. Hopefully, through the Remembrance Scholarship, my fellow scholars and I will be able to fully represent those students who lost their lives on Pan Am flight 103 and keep their memories alive."



## News from SU, Syracuse, NY

### 2010 Remembrance Week

Emily Allen (Syracuse University; SUF Fall 2009)

Studying abroad is an experience that each student cannot wait to get home and share with family, friends, and anyone he/she knows. It is a life-changing experience that becomes a part of everything you do from that point on. In December of 1988, Pan Am Flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland. There were 35 Syracuse University study abroad students aboard that flight from SU's home campus and other colleges around the country. They were athletes, musicians, artists, students, and all roughly around 20 years old.

The Wall of Remembrance sits at the front entrance to Syracuse University. It is an ever-present reminder of how we, although in central New York, are a part of a world much larger than our campus. For many, the Wall is simply a nice decorative touch on the lawn in front of the Hall of Languages. When one stops to examine the Wall closer, it becomes apparent that the names of the victims line the Wall. As a student who has walked by that memorial almost every day that I have attended SU, I felt that it was important to educate myself as to the real reasons behind the Wall and how Pan Am 103 affects us all.

Becoming a Remembrance Scholar is a high honor. It is an experience that humbles you. It makes you take a step back and recognize that no matter who you are, what you will do in the future, or from where you come, you are connected with peers that came before you to a world beyond the campus. It is a realization that you cannot ignore global issues because you are in fact a part of those global issues.

Moreover, being a Remembrance Scholar is about honoring the life of someone who was lost on that flight. I remember Sarah S.B. Philipps. When I was looking over the personal archives of each of the victims, Sarah and I connected. Like me, she was an English major and our high schools played soccer against each other. She went to the University of Colorado at Boulder which many of my study abroad friends attended. She loved the wintertime because of her passion for skiing and I for my love of hockey. Yes, these connections are meaningful and establish a life behind a name and a personal connection to Sarah. But I found the most important bond between Sarah and me in a testimonial written by Sarah's mother. Sarah's mother wrote about the last phone conversation she had with Sarah before she boarded Pan Am 103. It was almost identical to the one I had had with my mom just about one year ago. It sent chills down my spine.

I can't completely explain all of the reasons why, but this brought me to a new point of passion and understanding about what it means to be a Remembrance Scholar. Along with my fellow Scholars, I have sought to spread the awareness and memory of those aboard Pan Am 103. As a Syracuse community, we are one. We are connected through those who came before us and we cannot be active members of this community without paying tribute to their lives.

To be a Lockerbie scholar at Syracuse University is something special. It's difficult to describe what it means in one simple statement because it means a multitude of things. It means you are an ambassador for your school, your community and your country. It means that you achieved an honour that is not simply academic but also reflects citizenship and your ability to represent your home in the right way. It means you are someone your family can truly be proud of. But most importantly it means that you are the physical embodiment of hope, when two communities are thrust together by disaster. You are the living link between two places struck by tragedy, the epitome of hope like a poppy on The field of Flanders. It is hard to convey what it means to be a Lockerbie Scholar. All I know is that I am honoured and humbled to be one for Remembrance Week 2010.

**Duncan McNab, 2010-11 Lockerbie Scholar, from Lockerbie, Scotland.**

(Each year, two students from Lockerbie, Scotland, come to Syracuse for a year of study through the Syracuse-Lockerbie Scholarships, jointly funded by Syracuse and the Lockerbie Trust.)



The VILLA ROSSA VOICE is the newsletter for the Syracuse University in Florence community. We welcome your questions, comments, articles and/or artwork.

#### **Editorial staff**

**Director**  
Michael Calo

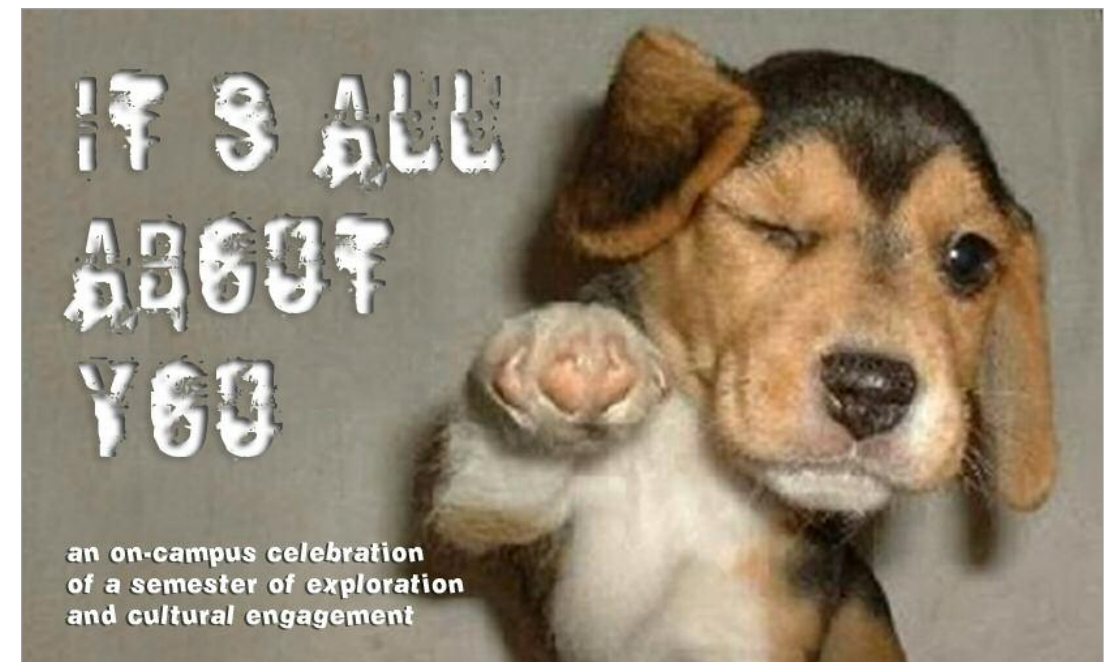
**Fall 2010 Editor**  
Antonella Francini  
afranci@syr.fi.it

**Copy Editor**  
Sylvia Hetzel  
syhetzel@syr.edu

**Graphics and Layout**  
Francesco Guazzelli  
ffguazze@syr.fi.it

Tribunale di Firenze  
Registro Stampa  
Periodico No. 5854  
All material © Syracuse  
University in Florence

[www.syr.fi.it](http://www.syr.fi.it)



**TUESDAY DECEMBER 7 - FRIDAY DECEMBER 17, 2010**

### **December 7: Outstanding Students Award Ceremony**

6:15 - 7:15pm | Villa Rossa, Room 13

In recognition of outstanding students in the following categories:

- Volunteer Program
- Lettore per un giorno
- Option II / III Program
- Internship Program
- Coluccio Salutati

Reception to follow at 7:30

### **December 9: Student Art Show**

5:30 - 7:30pm | Studio Arts, Piazzale Donatello 21

Light refreshments served

*Host families invited*

### **December 17: I Giullari di Syracuse present**

**"La DODICESIMA NOTTE or WHAT YOU DECEIVE"**

5:30 - 6:30pm | Villa Rossa, Room 13

Followed By **"LA CENA FINALE"**

At: 7:30 - Palazzo Budini Gattai. Via dei Servi, 51 (near Piazza SS. Annunziata)