

Le Conversazioni – Writers in Conversation

The third edition in Capri from June 27 to July 6, 2008

The third edition of ***Le Conversazioni – Writers in Conversation*** will take place in Capri from June 27 to July 6, organized by **Dazzle Communication with FMR Foundation –Marilena Ferrari**, joining this year as a partner of the review.

Ideated by Antonio Monda and Davide Azzolini, the cycle of literary meetings with **English language authors**, will be hosted, as in past years, in the small Tragara square of Capri.

By continuing the work started two years ago on the concept of identity, which progressed last year into the relationship between word and image, the **2008 edition of *Le Conversazioni* is dedicated to the theme of memory.**

The writers - invited to Capri to consider and develop the evocative, spiritual and ethical value of memory through an open dialogue involving the audience - are:

- **Paul Auster - Siri Hustvedt (June 27)**
- **Junot Díaz (June 28)**
- **Patrick McGrath (June 29)**
- **AM Homes (July 4)**
- **Jonathan Lethem (July 5)**
- **Daniel Mendelsohn - Alessandro Piperno (July 6)**

The meetings will be recorded also in a **Quaderno published by FMR** featuring unpublished writings by the invited authors enriched by an iconographic section inspired by the theme of the edition.

Le Conversazioni have been organized by **Dazzle Communication** - since 2000 working in communications and the production of cultural events – and **FMR Foundation – Marilena Ferrari** - born as a "site" for the excellence of the art of the book, and for the safeguard, development and protection of its history - is also made possible with the support of the **Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Città di Capri, Gioco del Lotto-Lottomatica and La Repubblica.**

For information:

Press office

Alessandra Santerini, mob. +39 335 68 53 767

Elena Casadoro, mob. +39 334 86 02 488

e-mail: press@leconversazioni.it

www.leconversazioni.it

Biographical Notes

Paul Auster

A cult writer since the 1980s, he was recognized already in his early creative years as the “main representative of the psychological thriller,” for the labyrinthic, alienating and almost metaphysical portrait of New York in his well-known “New York Trilogy” (1985). Success arrived after ten intense years enriched by experience, enhanced by nomadic journeys through Paris, Dublin, Rome and Madrid, during which he undertook a varied number of jobs, from ghost writer for silent movies to literary critic. His novels: “Moon Palace” (1989), “The Music of Chance” (1990), “Leviathan” (1992), “The Brooklyn Follies” (2006), to mention just a few, confirmed Auster as an extraordinary poet of an inexplicable world ruled by chance. In the nineties he dedicated himself to cinema: “Smoke” and “Blue in the Face” (1995) two revelatory movies by Wayne Wang, written and adapted by Auster. He also directed: “Lulu on the Bridge” (1998), and “The Inner Life of Martin Frost” (2007). In Italy his books are published by Einaudi.

Siri Hustvedt

Poet, essayist, and novelist, many of her poems have been published in such important literary magazines as “The Paris Review” and “Fiction”. Valued as a profound and thought provoking essayist for writings such as “The Mysteries of the Rectangle” (2005), and “A Plea for Eros” (2006), she has also written three successful novels: “The Blindfold” (1992), “The Enchantment of Lily Dahl” (1996), and “What I Loved” (2003). Particularly meaningful, the latter is an intense, powerful and dramatic novel, in which she enters the lives of two families, their feelings, their friendships, their weddings, their children, their successes, and their tragedies. It is a story about how we become what we are, thanks to the experiences we have undergone. In Italy her books are published by Einaudi.

Junot Díaz

This year’s Pulitzer Price winner for fiction with his novel, “The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao,” it is said that Díaz needed eleven years to complete this narrative of Oscar and of his extravagant Dominican family that emigrated to New Jersey. The central themes of his writings pivot on immigration. Díaz himself arrived with his family in New Jersey at the age of seven from the Dominican Republic. In 1992 he graduated from Rutgers University, majoring in English, and earned his MFA at Cornell University in 1995. In 1997 he published a collection of short stories titled “Drown” which was widely recognized with extraordinary reviews. He teaches creative writing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and writes for “The Boston Review” and for “The New Yorker,” in which many of his tales have been published. In Italy his books are published by Mondadori.

Patrick McGrath

Author of five powerful and controversial novels on the themes of mental illness, homosexuality, and adulterous relationships, Patrick McGrath was born in England and spent a great part of his childhood with his father, a psychiatrist at a criminally mental hospital in Broadmoor. After moving to Canada when he was twenty to work at Oakridge Hospital, he decided he did not want to follow in his father's steps but instead would follow his passion for writing. He became famous with "Asylum" (1998), a great story of love and death that takes place inside a lunatic asylum. "Dr Haggard's Disease" (1993), "Martha Peake: A Novel of the Revolution" (2000, winner of the Flaiano Prize), "Port Mungo" (2004) and "Trauma" (2008), are his other highly acclaimed novels. He lives between London and New York with his wife, the English actress Maria Aitken. In Italy his books are published by Bompiani.

AM Homes

One of the most innovative and provocative authors of the new American Literature, in 1999 she was featured in "The New Yorker" as amongst its top twenty "new writers for the new century." She is the author of a collection of short stories, "The Safety of Objects" (1990), and of six novels. Her first, entitled "Jack" (1989) is the story of a thirteen-year-old boy who discovers his father's homosexuality. Written when she was nineteen, it has been translated into about ten languages and adopted as a narrative text at schools. "In a Country of Mothers" (1993), and "Music for Torching" (1999) followed, and finally the controversial "The End of Alice" (1996), the story of the correspondence between a convicted child molester and murderer, and a young girl. After this "scandalous" novel, she published "This Book Will Save Your Life" (2006), and the autobiographical "The Mistress's Daughter." Homes has received numerous literary prizes in the United States and her tales are regularly published in the most prestigious magazines, from "Vanity Fair" to "The New Yorker". She also writes as a critic with various literary and artistic magazines, such as "Art Forum", "Bomb", and "Blind Spot". She lives in New York where she teaches at Columbia University. In Italy her books are published by Feltrinelli.

Jonathan Lethem

Originally from Brooklyn, New York, he moved to California when he was twenty where he started writing. Fame arrived with "As She Climbed Across the Table" (1997) and with the science fiction "Girl in Landscape" (1998), after a couple of novels and a short story collection. In 2000 he wrote the inspired, and extremely successful "Motherless Brooklyn," a moving homage to his neighborhood, where he moved back in 1996. Critics and readers alike have elected him as one of the most interesting talents of the new American narrative. Not less meaningful is "The Fortress of Solitude," a novel of over 600 pages in which Lethem narrates the transformation of the American youth from the '70s of the funk and of blackploitation, to the explosion of punk and rap, up to the Reagan '80s. He is the author of many articles and tales appearing in both specialized magazines as well as prestigious mastheads. He lives between his beloved Brooklyn and Maine. In Italy his books are published by Marco Tropea Editore.

Daniel Mendelsohn

Journalist and writer, Daniel Mendelsohn teaches at Bard College in New York. One of the most refined intellectuals of today, he writes as a literary, cinema, and theater critic for "The New York Times Book Review". He is the author of "The Elusive Embrace: Desire and the Riddle of Identity" (1999), selected by "The New York Times" as the Book of the Year, and of "Gender and the City in Euripides' Political Plays" (2002). In 2006 his book on the Holocaust, "The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million," was awarded numerous prizes among which the National Book Critics Circle Award for Memoir/Autobiography, the National Jewish Book Award for Biography/Autobiography, the Salon Book Award, the Barnes and Noble "Discover" Award, and the American Library Association Sophie Brody Medal for Outstanding Achievement in Jewish Literature. In Italy his books are published by Neri Pozza.

Alessandro Piperno

A professor of French literature at the University of the Studies of Rome Tor Vergata, where he studied, after his critical essay "Proust antiebreo" (2000), he achieved fame in 2005 with the publication of his first novel, "With the Worst Intentions." Defined as "the new Proust" by Antonio D'Orrico of the Corriere della Sera, his novel was enormously successful with almost 200,000 copies sold in a few months, and won the Campiello prize for first novel. It narrates the vicissitudes of half a century of the Sonnino family, characterized by its self-irony towards the society, for a refined lexicon, as well as for its original style. Piperno was inspired by great nineteenth century and contemporary American literature. Besides his association with Proust, his style and literary approach was also compared to Philip Roth. He is also the editor of the literary magazine "Nuovi Argomenti." In Italy his books are published by Mondadori.



Dazzle Communication is an independent production company that strives to promote the art of the show. Whether with regard to documentaries or festivals, theater or cinema, its goal is to produce a work of quality.

Since 2006 Dazzle Communication has organized **Le Conversazioni – Writers in Conversation**, directed by **Antonio Monda** and **Davide Azzolini**, which is an extraordinary opportunity to meet and dialog publicly with great contemporary English language authors in one of the most suggestive settings in the gulf of Naples, the Tragara Square in Capri.

The authors who have participated so far giving the public incredible moments of literature, reflection and story are:

- Zadie Smith, Nathan Englander, Jeffrey Eugenides, Jonathan Franzen and David Foster Wallace (June 25 – July 2, 2006);
- Ethan Coen, Annie Proulx, Michael Cunningham, Martin Amis, Ian McEwan, Claire Messud, Colum McCann, and Chuck Palahniuk (June 28 – July 8, 2007).

Dazzle Communication has published a two-volume collection, not for sale, of previously unpublished works by the authors who have participated in the event, and has produced two documentaries at the conclusion of the two editions of the festival.

Davide Azzolini founded Dazzle Communication in 2000 to develop a web project (metropolitalia.com and metropoleurope.com) destined, given their complexities, to remain always an idea. In the meantime, he endeavors to take on all, or almost all, the other ideas that come to him or truly appeal to him.

Antonio Monda teaches in the Film and Television Department of New York University and collaborates on the cultural pages of La Repubblica. He has directed a number of documentaries and a feature length film entitled, "Dicembre." He has curated shows and retrospectives at the Guggenheim, MoMA and Lincoln Center in New York. His books are "La Magnifica Illusione," "The Hidden God," "Do You Believe," and a novel, "Absolution."