



Association of Italian Canadian Writers

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WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Our Association has been very busy these past few months and our conference committee - Domenic Beneventi, Licia Canton, Venera Fazio, Joseph Pivato, Maria Cristina Seccia and I are currently working on putting the final touches on our biennial conference, Italian-Canadian Literature: Departures, Journeys, Destinations taking place in Italy, in the beautiful town of Padula, **August 11-14**. We hope to have the program finalized soon. In the meantime, you can view the preliminary one by visiting our website:

<http://www.aicw.ca/includes/templates/images/files/2016%20AICW%20Preliminary%20Conference%20Program.pdf>.

On Sunday, April 17 our Association participated in the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival with two events. The first was a panel on translation entitled Translating Worlds where three of our members, Licia Canton, Giulia De Gasperi and Elisabeth Tutschek, spoke about the translation process.

The second event featured the launch of *Exploring Voice* by long time members and supporters, Venera Fazio and Delia De Santis. The anthology is a collection of works by women writers and is an important contribution to Canadian literature at large. On this occasion both Venera and Delia were officially thanked for their contribution to our Association and to the Canadian literary community. To read more about the events go to page 6:

Our AGM took place in Montreal on Sunday, April 17, 2016. Minutes of the meeting were sent out to the membership. If you haven't received them, please let me know and I will share the document.

The editorial committee for our 30th anniversary anthology – Delia De Santis, Venera Fazio, Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni and I – have reached the bottom of our submission lists and have read and evaluated every contribution. We will begin working individually with each contributor in the next upcoming weeks. I would like to thank everyone for being patient and for understanding the difficult circumstances that have stalled this project. It will be a beautiful volume.

AICW on Facebook and Twitter

Follow the AICW on Twitter [@AICWCanada](https://twitter.com/AICWCanada)

If you are on [Facebook](#), please take the time to **LIKE** our page and to post information about your new publications and events



Thank you to those who renewed their membership. If you haven't done so, please take five minutes **today** and visit our membership page: <http://www.aicw.ca/become-a-member>. You can renew online or fill out the form at the end of this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support of our Association.

Wishing you a relaxing and creative summer.

Giulia De Gasperi, Ph.D.

Vice-President, AICW

Caterina Edwards Inducted into Edmonton's Salute to Excellence Cultural Hall of Fame

By Caterina Edwards

The evening of June 13, 2016, I had one of those special evenings that come along once, maybe twice, in a lifetime.

I was honored for my writing and leadership in the cultural community by being inducted into the City of Edmonton's Salute to Excellence Cultural Hall of Fame. The ceremony took place at the Winspear Concert Hall, which was packed. The inductees entered the auditorium in a procession, piped in by Members of the Pipes and Drums of the Edmonton Police Service. The ceremony included music and dance. I was asked to choose a piece of music that was meaningful to me for the orchestra to play as my introduction. I considered Dalla's *Attenti Al Lupo*, but settled for the more generally familiar *Blackbird* by McCartney. My introduction, as well as the video, made note of my Italian heritage. Edmonton's mayor, Don Iveson, presented me with the gold medallion of the Salute to Excellence.



Caterina Edwards is inducted into Edmonton's Salute to Excellence Cultural Hall of Fame. Pictured left to right, Edmonton Councillor Andrew Knack, Mayor Don Iveson, Caterina Edwards, and Melinda Pinfold, head of the Salute to Excellence council. *Photo courtesy Kim Griffiths*

The induction was both preceded and followed by bounteous receptions. A particularly thoughtful touch was the leather-bound album which included congratulations from the Lieutenant-Governor, the Deputy Premier, and each of the city councilors. This album was placed on a table with my picture during the receptions, and many of the attendees wrote me personal notes. (I have more fans than I would ever guess. I will try and remember that the next time I am tempted to give up.)

My portrait will hang permanently in the Hall of Fame.



Screen shot of a short video of Caterina's career produced by Larry Haas, which can be viewed on www.caterinaedwards.com *Photo courtesy of Allan Shute*

Canadian Writing, Wine and Other Potent Potables



NEWS



Call for Submissions

Food makes regular appearances in Canadian writing. It's how characters get fed, else they'd starve. But what do they drink? What of those potent potables that precede, accompany and follow the meal, or in some cases serve as meals?

Co-editors Alexia Moyer, Giulia De Gasperi and Licia Canton are accepting submissions for a volume that speaks to the function of drink, be it physical or figurative, in a Canadian setting or from a Canadian-centered perspective.

Submissions should adhere to the theme of the anthology and should not exceed 2500 words.

Submissions can be fiction (flash fiction, short stories, excerpts of novels or novellas) nonfiction (memoir, travel essays, personal essays), creative nonfiction and poetry as well as critical essays on Canadian writing.

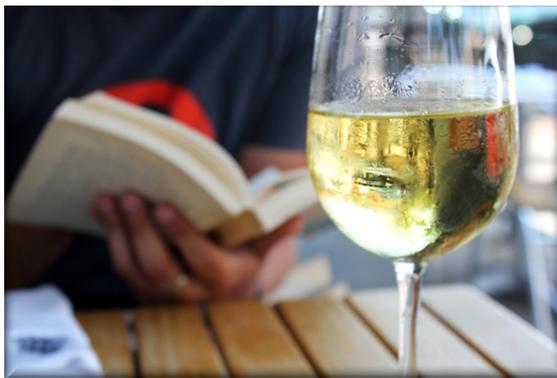
We are currently seeking original, unpublished texts in English as well as unpublished translations of previously published work.

If you are interested in contributing, please send the information requested below (as an attachment) to wineanthology2016@gmail.com and julia.freedom@gmail.com by **October 31, 2016** with **subject heading: *Drink Anthology***.

1. Full name and contact information
2. The title of your text and genre
3. A 300-word proposal or excerpt
4. A 60-word biography

We will confirm receipt of all submissions. If you do not hear back from us within 2 working days, please resend your submission.

Cheers!



Appel à soumissions

La nourriture apparaît régulièrement dans la littérature canadienne. Si les personnages ne mangeaient pas, ils mourraient de faim. Mais que se passerait-il s'ils ne buvaient pas? Qu'en estil de ces puissants breuvages qui précèdent, accompagnent et suivent le repas, ou, dans certains cas, qui servent de repas lui-même?

Les coéditrices Alexia Moyer, Giulia De Gasperi et Licia Canton acceptent des soumissions pour une anthologie visant à explorer, définir et questionner la fonction de la boisson, que ce soit physique ou figurative, dans un contexte canadien ou une perspective canadienne.

Les soumissions devraient adhérer au thème de l'anthologie et ne devraient pas excéder 2,500 mots.

Les soumissions peuvent être des travaux de fiction (nouvelles, extraits de romans), des mémoires, des essais de voyage, des essais personnels, de la poésie ainsi que des essais critiques.

Nous sollicitons des textes originaux **en anglais** non publié auparavant ainsi que des traductions **anglaises** de textes publiés dans d'autres langues.

Si vous souhaitez contribuer à l'anthologie, faites parvenir les renseignements suivants en attaché à wineanthology2016@gmail.com et à julia.freedom@gmail.com avant le **31 octobre 2016**. **L'objet de votre courriel doit être : Drink Anthology.**

1. Votre nom, prénom et coordonnées complètes;
2. Le titre de votre texte et son genre littéraire;
3. Une proposition de 300 mots ou un extrait;
4. Une biographie de 60 mots.

Nous allons confirmer la réception de toutes les soumissions. Si vous ne recevez pas de réponse dans un délai de deux jours ouvrables, renvoyez-nous votre soumission.

À votre santé!



***Sussurri dall'acqua*: the Italian Debut of Trillium Award-winning Poet Maureen Scott Harris**

Vancouver's Italian Centre hosted an exquisite evening of poetry March 30 to celebrate the launch of *Sussurri dall'acqua*, the Italian edition of Maureen Scott Harris's award-winning *Drowning Lessons* (Pedlar Press, 2004).



Poet Maureen Harris, Alessandra Bordini and Anna Ciampolini Foschi. *Photo courtesy of Sophie Pouyanne*

To mark the book's release, Il Centro, in collaboration with CanADiana club and the AICW, hosted a reading with the Toronto-based Scott Harris and her Sardinian-born translator Alessandra Bordini who also edited the volume.

The lovingly translated bilingual edition of the collection, which won the Trillium Book award for poetry in 2005, features English and Italian on facing pages and was published by Ladolfi editore in January.

Gianluca Biscardi, cultural attaché at the Consulate General of Italy, began the evening with a short welcoming speech, after which Scott Harris and Bordini read selected poems from *Sussurri dall'acqua* in English and Italian, respectively.

AICW founding member Anna Ciampolini Foschi emceed the reading, throughout which lively discussion between author and translator gave the audience the opportunity to learn more about the collection from the author's perspective. "*Drowning Lessons* is a collection of lyric poems that in large part

explores the underwater world of barely recognized grief," Scott Harris said. "They are carried by sound and by recurrent images and preoccupations, among them: water, weather, landscape, absence, loss, things forgotten or missing, the experience of insubstantiality. Many of the poems are embedded in nature."



Alessandra Bordini. *Photo courtesy of Sophie Pouyanne*

During the last part of the evening devoted to questions and comments from the audience, Bordini discussed the joys and challenges of translating *Drowning Lessons* into Italian, emphasizing the collaborative nature of the project that culminated in the book. "*Sussurri dall'acqua* is the result of a slowly unfolding process, consisting of innumerable interactions, iterations, and inevitable interruptions, tied together by the thread of collaboration," Bordini said. "This collaboration proved key to the success of the project, bringing an extraordinary added value to the experience."

In anticipation of the launch, the bilingual newspaper *The Source, Forum of Diversity | La Source, Forum de la Diversité* published an interview with the author and the translator, available at thelastsource.com/en/2016/03/21/taking-the-time-to-drown/.

About a week before the event, Ariadne Sawyer and Neal Ryon, hosts of the popular radio show World Poetry Café, interviewed Scott Harris on the upcoming launch. The full interview can be found on the Vancouver Co-op Radio website at: coopradio.org/station/archives/1707 (Mar 17, min. 15).



Poet Maureen Harris. *Photo courtesy of Sophie Pouyanne*



AICW at the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival, April 17, 2016



From left to right: Domenic Cusmano, Licia Canton, Giulia Verticchio, Lianne Moyes, Connie Guzzo-McParland, Delia De Santis, Giulia De Gasperi, Michael Mirolla and Domenico Beneventi *Photo courtesy of Agata De Santis*

This year our Association participated in the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival in Montreal on Sunday, April 17 with two events. *Translating Worlds* discussed the art of translation and self-translation from the perspectives of literary translators, writers and professors. Papers were read by Licia Canton, Giulia De Gasperi, Rainier Grutman, and Elisabeth Tutschek.

This event was followed by *Women and the AICW: 30 Years of Writing*, during which co-editors Venera Fazio and Delia De Santis presented the volume *Exploring Voice* and discussed women's contribution to Italian Canadian literature. Licia Canton, Delia De Santis, Mary Di Michele, Giulia De Gasperi, Venera Fazio, Connie Guzzo-McParland, Maria Luisa Ierfino read from their contributions.



Back: Lianne Moyes, Licia Canton, Maria Luisa Ierfino, Mary di Michele, Domenico Beneventi; **Front:** Marianna Simeone, Delia De Santis, Venera Fazio, Connie Guzzo-McParland, Giulia De Gasperi, Domenic Cusmano *Photo courtesy of Agata De Santis*



Translation panel: Marianna Simeone, Licia Canton, Rainier Grutman, Giulia De Gasperi and Elisabeth Tutschek *Photo courtesy of Agata De Santis*

This event was possible thanks to the Frank Iacobucci Centre for Italian Canadian Studies and the Italian Cultural Institute (Montreal).

The launch of *Exploring Voice* gave the Association the opportunity to pay tribute to Delia and Venera and honour them with a plaque and life membership for their contributions and support of our association, its members and our literary productions.

The events were hosted by Marianna Simeone.

Sarnia Books and Biscotti Event Exceeds Expectations

The Books and Biscotti event May 29 in Sarnia went very well, report Delia De Santis and Venera Fazio, organizers of the event.

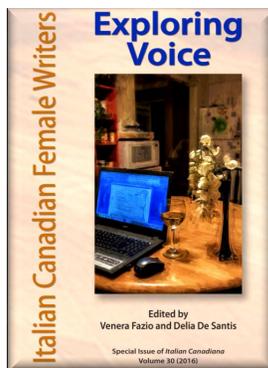
Two AICW members from Windsor, Marisa De Franceschi and Carlina D'Alimonti, participated in the event. There were local writers as well, including 92-year-old Carmen Laurenza Ziolkowski who has been a member of the association for almost 30 years.

Venera launched her book of poetry *The Fabric of My Soul*. The poems in the book were inspired by five generations of her family in Sicily and Canada and demonstrate her love for family and birthplace.



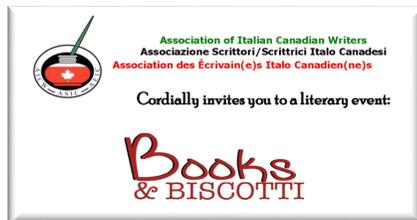
Delia introduced *Exploring Voice*, an anthology edited by Venera and Delia, which features 26 Italian Canadian women writers – in a way, a follow up to the wonderful and popular *Pillars of Lace* edited by Marisa De Franceschi some years ago.

The difference between *Pillars of Lace* and *Exploring Voice* is that each creative contribution in the latter is followed with an essay/interview either written by each author or about the author. The essays/interviews offer readers an honest and thoughtful insight into the lives of these talented women and their inner journeys that led each writer to self-discovery and success in their field.



“We usually have a good turnout at our events in Sarnia,” said Delia. “But this time we had almost one hundred people. Our copies of *Exploring Voice* sold out. It helps that Venera and I lead the cultural committee at our local club and we are much involved in the

community.”



A Warm Reception for Books and Biscotti at Vancouver's Italian Centre

June 8, 2016

By Anna Ciampolini Foschi

Five authors from British Columbia read from their works at Vancouver's edition of Books and Biscotti on June 8. As usual, the Italian Centre co-sponsored and hosted this event, which was also graced by the presence of Dr. Gianluca Biscardi, Head of the Cultural

Office of the Consulate General of Italy, who gave a short welcoming speech to the audience and the writers.

Diego Bastianutti read from his latest collection of poetry that focussed on the tragic lives of the residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. His book, which also features a series of photographs by Jon Guido Bertelli, will be launched at the Centre in the coming months.

Another reader was Vittorino Dal Cengio, author of the biography/memoir *On The Devil's Tail: In Combat with the Waffen SS in 1945 and with The French in Indochina 1951-54*, about the extraordinary life of Paul Martelli, a child soldier with Hitler's SS and later a fighter for the French Army and the Foreign Legion.

From Rossland, a beautiful ski resort in the West Kootenays, Joseph Ranallo brought a very fascinating account of mid-twentieth century life and folk tales in small-town Molise.

The last part of the evening was dedicated to the Vancouver launching of the new anthology *Exploring Voice: Italian Canadian Female Writers*, edited by Delia De Santis and Venera Fazio, as a special edition of Italian Canadiana, University of Toronto Press. Genni Gunn and I, two B.C. authors, were featured in the anthology. It was a great pleasure to welcome Genni to our readings, since she was one of the organizers of the First National Conference of Italian Canadian Writers back in 1986 and is such a powerful literary presence. As MC of the event, I jokingly said that it was very daring of me to read from my short story after Genni's performance, but the audience comforted me with a warm applause.

At the conclusion, several people approached the writers for a chat while sipping refreshments provided by the Italian Centre. Many others browsed the table where some books were displayed for sale and some as complimentary copies. With great excitement, I found that someone had left a donation for our Association in the “Donations Gratefully Accepted” collection box that I had strategically placed on the table.

The bilingual magazine *The Source Forum of Diversity/La Source Forum de la diversité* published an article and an interview by Clémence Ribouet about B&B in its French edition. Her lively article, by the title Prêt pour “una festa letteraria?” can be read at:

<http://thelastsource.com/fr/categorie/culture/litterature/>



After the event, I also published an article in the local Italian newspaper *Il Marcopolo* about our very enjoyable experience with our public and our supporters.

Sudbury Books and Biscotti: “Spirited and varied readings”

By Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli and Nic Battigelli

Fresh coffee and homemade biscotti were ready for the 45 guests who attended Sudbury’s first Books and Biscotti event at Tony V’s Pizza and Restaurant on Saturday, June 11, 2016.



Nic and Rosanna Battigelli at the Books and Biscotti event, June 11, in Sudbury. Photo courtesy Rosanna Battigelli

Tony V’s opened their doors early for the event. At 10:30 a.m., guests started to arrive. They helped themselves to a variety of biscotti (chocolate, cranberry pistachio, and plain with a chocolate drizzle made by Sharron Celestine and Maria Santoro) and a steaming cup of coffee.

At 10:45 a.m., the readings began.

Diana Iuele Colilli and Paul Colilli, both Professors of Italian Studies at Laurentian University, have been leaders in promoting the Italian culture for many years at Laurentian and in Sudbury. Diana has published in the area of Italian pedagogy, linguistics and Italian Canadian Studies. She received a PhD in Italian Linguistics at the University of Toronto. Paul, who has a PhD in Italian Studies from the University of Toronto, has over 100 publications in the area of Italian literature. His most recent book is *Agamben and the Signature of Astrology* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2015).

Diana and Paul read excerpts from some of their plays, *Il Tempo Vola*, *Vita di tutti i giorni*, and *Nozze all’arrabbiata*. Some were co-written with Christine Sansalone, Assistant Professor at Laurentian, who couldn’t attend, as she was attending a conference in

Italy. Christine received her PhD in Italian at U of T, specializing in Contemporary Italian Theatre. Diana and Paul also read an excerpt from *Divorzio all canadese*, which is in the process of being published. Every year,



Participants, from left to right, Emily DeAngelis, Paul Colilli, Diane Iuele-Colilli, Nic and Rosanna Battigelli Photo courtesy of Lee Prevost

their productions featuring their Italian students are a highlight for the Italian-Canadian community.

Emily DeAngelis read her story *Fine Bone China*, which won First Prize in the Marion Seabrook Memorial Writing Contest in the summer of 2015. Emily is a writer and teacher from Sudbury. She has been an active member of the literary community locally, provincially and nationally as a member and/or executive of various writing organizations, as conference participant and organizer, as a student of the Humber School for Writers, and as a storyteller and author/reader. Emily’s writing, both poetry and prose, is often inspired by the physical environment that surrounds her, especially the geography of Northern Ontario. She is currently revising a young adult novel, a ghost story set in Meldrum Bay and along the shores of the Mississagi Strait. Emily also has a story published in *Creepy Capreol, Jr: Frightening Fiction For—and From!—Young Minds* (MadCap Publishing, Capreol, 2016)

Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli was born in Italy and immigrated to Canada with her family when she was three. She majored in Italian and French language and literature at Laurentian University. She has taught Kindergarten to Grade 8 with the Sudbury Catholic District School Board, and was awarded four Best Practice Awards from the Ontario English Catholic Teacher’s Association. Rosanna has been published in a dozen Canadian anthologies, and has received mentoring at the Humber School for Writers. While writing her historical novel, *La Brigantessa*, she received an Ontario Arts Council Writers’ Works in Progress Grant. She has read chapters of her manuscript in an international conference in New York City, and she will be reading again at the AICW’s 16th Biennial Conference in Padula, Italy in August 2016. For this Books and Biscotti event, she read an excerpt of her short story *Black As Tar*, published in the *Along the 46th* Anthology (Latitude 46th Publishing, 2015), as well as a chapter of *La Brigantessa*.



The series of readings ended with a humorous short story by Nic Battigelli called *Make Room For Jesus*. Nic is a retired teacher with over 30 years of experience in the elementary and secondary divisions of the Sudbury Catholic District School Board. He has been recognized by the provincial and federal government for his mediation initiatives in the area of conflict resolution. He also writes poetry, creative non-fiction and non-fiction. He has presented some of the stories in *Tales of a West End Italian Boy* in high schools of the Sudbury Catholic District School Board, at academic conferences at Laurentian University in Sudbury, in an international conference called *Italians in the Americas* in New York City, and at the University of Udine, Italy.

Nic's presentations at the Laurentian University conferences were subsequently published in *Harvest of a New Life* and *After the Age of Immigration*, both edited by Diana Luele-Colilli. One of the international students in the Italian Program at Laurentian received a Masters at the University of Udine, Italy, from his study of Nic's stories in *Tales of a West End Italian Boy* and a collection of Nic's poems. *Make Room For Jesus* is one of the dozen stories in *Tales*. . .

Our first Books and Biscotti event was very successful. The spirited and varied readings delighted the audience. Books were available for sale, and at noon, when we had concluded the readings, Tony V's opened their doors to the public. Many of our guests remained and ordered a wonderful lunch from the popular restaurant.

We look forward to hosting this event on an annual basis.

Maria Lisella on the Air

Activist Chris Butters interviewed Maria Lisella and recorded a short reading of hers that emphasizes immigration, commonality, women's lives and families.

The reading was broadcast on Thursday, June 16, between 2 and 3 p.m. on WBAI-FM's (99.5) Arts Express but has now been archived. Maria says that if

you do not want to listen to the entire show, click on around 40 minutes and she "will pop in" with a sample of her work.

The show can also be streamed live through wbai.org and is available for a number of months at wbai.org/archives

A Sunny Italian Market Day in Vancouver

By Anna Ciampolini Foschi



Anna Ciampolini Foschi at the AICW/Italian Centre's Library display table. Photo by Luca Conte

On June 26 I spent a day at the annual Italian Market Day at the Italian Centre. It is a well-liked family event, with entertainment provided by local Italian regional associations and a variety of great

regional food expertly and lovingly cooked by the ladies of the Club Femminile Italiano.

Our Association shared a display table with the Centre's Library. I was therefore able to promote free copies of the anthology *Writing Our Way Home*, edited by Licia Canton and Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni, and published by Guernica Editions. Despite the sunny skies and the warm temperature, this year the turnout was not as good as expected. However, I had fun hawking the books and accepting a few small donations by well-intentioned passersby. It may sound incredible, but quite a few people did not pick up their free copy claiming that they had no space to store the books, or no time to read.

Luca Conte, the Centre's Librarian, kept me company at the table and several friends stopped by for a chat, making the whole experience really enjoyable. I am grateful to the Italian Centre that has once again shown cooperation and friendliness towards our Association.

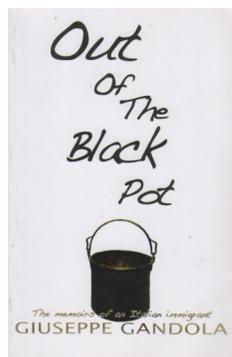


Anna Ciampolini Foschi at the AICW/Italian Centre's Library display table. Photo by Luca Conte



DA POVERO CHE ERA...

di Anna M. Zampieri Pan



Per decenni sono andata alla ricerca di storie semplici di italiani da raccontare. Dal Brasile al Guatemala, dal Messico alla California, dai paesi affacciati sul Pacifico al punto di partenza, Vancouver e British Columbia. Quante lezioni di umanità nei personaggi intervistati! Recente invece la scoperta di una persona speciale nello stesso villaggio di pescatori e agricoltori dove ho casa. "Ma quando come e perché è arrivato a Ladner?" chiedo a Beppe Gandola, benestante pensionato, già gestore e proprietario del noto ex ristorante La Strada, chiuso qualche anno fa. "È scritto in questo libro" risponde, facendomi omaggio del suo *Out of the Black Pot, The memoirs of an Italian immigrant* (*), oltre trecento pagine in chiaro e discorsivo inglese, a memoria di una vita combattuta con determinazione per riscattarsi da condizioni di estrema povertà.

"La mia storia ha inizio a Begola, a sei chilometri da Bellagio sul lago di Como, è là che son nato, sestogenito dei sette figli di papà Giovanin e mamma Gina", mi dice. Lombardo di nascita quindi, con un cognome di antica origine veneziana (storpiatura di *gondola*, alla cui fabbricazione si dedicavano i suoi antenati). A metà anni quaranta, ancora sanguinanti le ferite del secondo conflitto mondiale, il lavoro scarseggiava e molte famiglie, specialmente quelle numerose, soffrivano la fame. Spesso anche il freddo e l'isolamento. I nove Gandola abitavano nella montagna prospiciente il lago, in una casetta di sassi, due stanze e un bugigattolo per asino e capra. Tutto intorno il bosco, provvidenziale fonte di legna per il focolare, ma anche preziosa riserva di animaletti in libertà, di castagne, erbe selvatiche e funghi da cucinare nell'affumicata pignatta appesa sopra il fuoco.

Papà Giovanin riparava ombrelli, andava in paese a vendere erbe, catturava quando possibile qualche bestiola abbandonata da destinare alla *Black Pot*.

Mamma Gina, dopo la nascita dell'ultimogenito Teo e la tragica morte del primogenito Stefano, non resse al dolore e fu ricoverata per malattia mentale. Completata la quinta elementare, Beppe fu mandato a lavorare in una trattoria a trenta chilometri da casa. Puliva pavimenti e riempiva bicchieri di vino: quattordici ore al giorno, per quattro anni. Un sottoscala per dormitorio: "il mio rifugio e un posto per piangere". Ma da quella durissima prova nacque il riscatto. E fu una persistente salita, specializzandosi nei settori dell'ospitalità e della ristorazione: dal Due Torri di Lecco all'Hotel du Lac di Bellagio (dove il 30 giugno 1963 fu ospitato il presidente Kennedy. "Mi sorrise e mi strinse la mano... è stato meraviglioso... avrei voluto dirgli qualcosa, ma la lingua inglese mi era ancora sconosciuta").



Giuseppe (Beppe) Gandola

Beppe, diventato poliglotta dopo anni di lavoro in Germania, Belgio e Inghilterra, a metà anni Settanta, sposato da poco con l'australiana Sandra, scelse l'avventura del Canada. Portava all'elegante Panorama Roof dell'Hotel Vancouver l'esperienza maturata al Savoy Hotel di Londra, dove aveva servito personaggi celebri del cinema e membri della casa reale. Comprò casa a Ladner, i figli John e Claire crebbero qui. Oggi Beppe e Sandra, dopo una vita di sacrifici e duro lavoro, scorazzano felici per il Nordamerica in motorhome, la loro casa viaggiante.

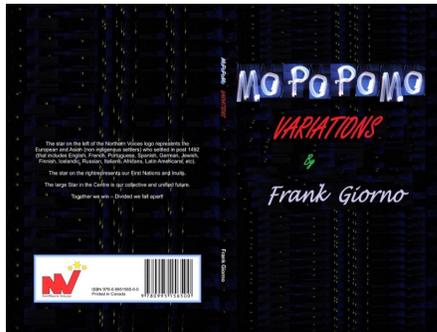
"Every winter just before Christmas we went into the snow covered woods to harvest prickly juniper branches to take door to door in the village and offered them to families for burning in their fireplace on Christmas Eve. The juniper oils in the branches crackled and the sparks flew out of the chimney, which was a signal for Babbo Natale. We did not ask for anything in return but people always gave us something in the form of nuts, candies, tangerines, oranges, dried figs or coins. Papà took the coins and locked the rest of the loot up; then on Christmas day he brought it out in a basket and spread it onto the table. Those were all our gifts from Santa."

(*) Giuseppe Gandola: *Out of the Black Pot, The memoirs of an Italian immigrant*, First Choice Books 2013, ISBN 978-1-77084-089-8



Book Review: Frank Giorno Takes Readers on a Journey of “Fun and Profound Poetry”

By Honey Novick*



MoPoPoMo Variations

Frank Giorno

Northern Voices Publications, 2016, 69 pp

ISBN: 978-0-9951565-0-0

The title, *MoPoPoMo Variations*, immediately caught my eye. What could it mean? Intrigued, I picked up a copy of the beautifully-bound and type-set book and embarked on a journey of fun and profound poetry. From the opening tribute to Italian-American poetic icon Lawrence Ferlinghetti to the detailed acknowledgements to the actual poetry, I knew I was in for a treat. The poetry regaled, educated and introduced me to the man inside the poet.

“...O Nosso Talho” ...takes us on a guided tour of Toronto's Bloor Street West from the Portuguese butcher to the Korean convenience store to the Somali grocery store to the Halal meat shop and then Hurricane's Bar where the desire to have a beer affords Giorno time for reflection. Evoking hurricane's wrath and destruction in human and Nature's form to boxer Rubin “Hurricane” Carter's innocence to observing two women kissing in the shadow of Zoinck's Bookstore, Giorno's clear and unadulterated writing makes this tour in both geography and meditation present. We are there.

Giorno's opinions are straight-ahead, no toro crappo and we can agree or disagree, “Shoot Shoot”... In America / you buys your guns / you buys your

bullets / you takes your chances / and you shoot shoot ...

In America the shooter calls the tune....”

Each and every poem was a pleasure to read, like Foucault Focaccia, a play on words and sounds and ideas, or the boxed design of *Boxed Up* or the poignant *When You Lose Your Voice... You Might Lose Your Mind*. These poems revealed the man, as in *Blue Fire*, an intimate love song, or *Driving Home, Not Knowing Where Home Is*. Eventually we are allowed to share his courage, using the transformative power of poetry where he tells us that he is *Trying To Rewind My Way Home*, *Breathing* and then finding the most beautiful garden of *Acacias*, *Mi Mariposa*, *Magnolia*, and others.

I love this book for its imagination, music, humanity, generosity, fun, commitment and profound intelligence. To order your copy, send \$23 (\$20 + \$3 p & h) payable to Frank Giorno, Apt. C – 273 Balsam St. South, Timmins, Ont. P4N 2E5.

*Review by Honey Novick for *Verse Afire*, the magazine of the Ontario Poetry Society.

First Annual Celebration of Christie Pits Culture Launches *MoPoPoMo* and Celebrates Gianna Patriarca and Gerry Ronan

By Frank Giorno

The First Annual Celebration of Christie Pits Culture at Toronto's Dooney's Café, 866 Bloor St. West and Carling Avenue, was a total success.

Everyone and everything from the location to the service of Dooney's staff to the reading of the three featured poets made the event a success. Frank Giorno was launching *MoPoPoMo*; Gianna Patriarca was launching her first prose collection *All My Fallen Angelas*; and Gerry Ronan was presenting *The Outstretched Hand*.



Gianna Patriarca. Photo courtesy Sophie Giorno

and restaurant owner Graziano Marchese who first opened the business in the mid-1980s further east on Bloor Street West at Borden in Toronto's Annex District. In 2008 or thereabouts, Graziano closed the original place.

Graziano opened Annex Live in the old Poor Alex Theatre on Brunswick just south of Bloor Street West, south of the Future Bakery and across the street from the Legendary Ye Old Brunswick House Tavern.

After Marchese sold Annex Live he was absent for a while from the cafe/restaurant scene, but re-opened the new Dooney at the original Longo's Grocery store which, for Giorno, was sort of a trip down memory lane. Longo's at Bloor and Carling was one of the grocery stores that Emma, Frank's mother, used to shop at shortly after they immigrated to the area in 1959 from Cosenza, Calabria. The family lived on Delaware Avenue three blocks to the west of Carling Street. They often shopped at Longo's as well as the Calabrese Grocery Store, Nicastro's, Garden City, Marcellaria Venezia, Gasparro and Carito.

Giorno, who recently opened his own publication house NVP (Northern Voices Publications), has four other books of poetry completed and will release one book per year over the next four years.



Frank Giorno. Photo courtesy Sophie Giorno

The audience of 45 people was just the right size for the intimate settings of Dooney's Cafe. Dooney's is the brain child of

long-time cafe

and restaurant owner Graziano Marchese who first opened the business in the mid-1980s further east on Bloor Street West at Borden in Toronto's Annex District. In 2008 or thereabouts, Graziano closed the original place.

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In 2017, for the Second Annual Celebration of Christie Pits Culture, Giorno will release *My Nation is a*

Train....Wreck, based on his five years working as a porter on the Canadian Pacific Railway's The Canadian.

The celebration will take place at Dooney's which is a couple of blocks to the west of Christie Pits,

the largest park in the area and a cultural/recreational significance to the Giorno family and other immigrants in the area in 1959 and now 57 years later.

St. Raymond's is the school that Giorno attended for grades 5-8 in 1965 to 1969 and was where he was first praised for his poetry and literary talents by Miss Trace in grade six, Mr. Norm Forma in Grade 7 as well as Vice Principal John Trachuk.

Gianna Patriarca taught there from the late 1970s onward until her retirement.

Frank made an audio recording of the reading and in time he will produce a video with still photos which will be available at www.youtube.com/giornalisti

If you are interested in finding out more about Frank's writing or opportunities to be published by Northern Voices Publications please email him at frankgiorno1@gmail.com

NVP will start humbly and publish 4 books per year. There are no assurances that your books will be selected but it is worth a try, and Frank will personally provide feedback for your efforts.

Book Review: *The Fabric of My Soul*

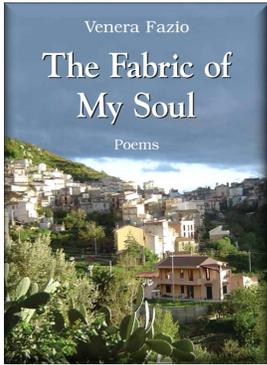
Venera Fazio
Longbridge Books, 2015, 64 pp
ISBN 978-1-928065-05-0

By John Di Leonardo

A cover photograph by Dwayne O'Neill of the lush Sicilian hilltop village of Bafia, is an apt image to set the stage for



Gerry Ronan. Photo courtesy Sophie Giorno



Venera Fazio's new collection of poems *The Fabric of My Soul*. Her words weave a tender tapestry of family history and the Italian immigrant experience.

Venera's poems are laid out between a prologue My Biography According to the

Number Three and the epilogue I've Got a Secret both great sections as introduction and conclusion to her poetry. These two segments in the book resonate deeply for anyone new to Canada, the millions of post-war southern Europeans like myself and the author who journeyed by ship from Naples to Pier 21 in Halifax, then onward by train to the various destinations to a better life, where many immigrants as Fazio states "nourished the body/while neglecting the spirit." The lines and stanzas in these clear-eyed and intimate poems rise and fall with a lyrical flow to express a wide range of emotions associated with memory, hardships and death.

From the very first poem Broken we are guided through secret feelings of loss, as a "shimmering Sicilian sun/stretches/across your tombstone./...we locked your name/in our family closet/sealed it shut with silence," to family tragedies, "I am ashamed./I never visited you/in the psychiatric ward./...you loved your dead son/more than a living daughter." The hardships are juxtaposed with flavours of new Canadians, "fingers inflamed from pickle factory brine/...At noon she served penne/the colour of family blood." Glimpses of self-discovery appear in "Each day of my vacation/in the village of my birth/I drew elixir from the well"/ Finally in the last poem, The Unexpected a new vision of hope emerges, "My hope is/with time, my friends/will be granted the same resilience". In the epilogue Ms. Fazio writes, "For years, I felt I had two identities, a Canadian one and an Italian one." This identity crisis is aptly resolved by the inclusion of Italian passages and full (traduzione) translations by Elettra Bedon, for poems such as; Nonna Maria, Lasciar andare, Tributo, and Le mani di mia madre. Reading these poems in the original thoroughly satisfies the ear for many Italian-Canadian hearts.

To order your copy, send \$ 23 (\$20 + \$3 p & h) to Venera Fazio, 2377 Schafer Ct., Bright's Grove, Ont. N0N 1C0.
-- The Ontario Poetry Society, Verse Afire, John Di Leonardo Ed, May to Aug, 2016

New Publishing Opportunities

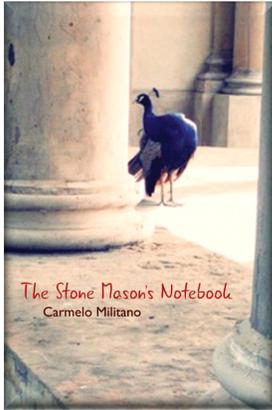
Publisher Antonio Tombolini Editore is currently accepting submissions of original works in English and Italian for its two most recent additions to its book series: *Roads*, dedicated to travel writing and *Pièces* to plays.

Editor of these two series is Giulia De Gasperi. To learn more write to Giulia at giulia.degasperi@antoniotombolini.com

Book Review: Militano's Poetry Finds "Points on the Spirit's Compass"

Stone Mason's Notebook is both a continuation and an expansion of Carmelo Militano's poetic awareness and voice. It is a restless voice that seeks to reveal, celebrate, and capture a complex consciousness rooted in personal history, Winnipeg, Calabria, classical myth and the flux and power of art, "its inarticulate purity." He is a poet who finds points on the spirit's compass whether it be the erotic, loss, irreverence, or the quotidian; it is all here.

Carmelo Militano's poems are like the "village fountain in the piazza" in one of the pieces in *The Stone Mason's Notebook*, each an "eternal hour-glass / measuring time." Lyrical, passionate, reflective, ironic, and wise, Militano is a "mason" of the intersections of time and eternity, where the bricks of experience are always falling in "inarticulate purity." For him, "Truth," as he imagines Modigliani might have put it, "is just another mask, flesh and light [his] true addictions"; romantic relationships are "unfinished temples." We read *The Stone Mason's Notebook* and witness a marvellously unique individual poetic awareness with origins in Calabria and a history in Winnipeg as it is framed and intensified by an engagement with classical



myth, the intricacies of art, and a fully lived life. The collection is a memorable one, a triumph.

- Russell Thornton, author of *The One Hundred Lives*, short-listed Griffin Prize, 2015

Militano's poems are marvellous letters to the reader, wide-ranging, intimate, and written inside myths, Calabrian fairy-tales, the snowy streets and stockyards of Winnipeg.

- Mary Di Michele, author of *The Montreal Book of the Dead*

Carmelo Militano is a Winnipeg poet and novelist. He was born in the village of Cosoleto, Province Reggio di Calabria and immigrated to Canada with his parents at an early age. He is the winner of the 2004 F.G. Bressani award for poetry for *Ariadne's Thread*. His novel *Sebastiano's Vine* was short-listed for the Margaret Laurence fiction prize, 2014. Militano hosts the weekly The P.I. New Poetry Show where he interviews poets from across Canada.

The Stone Mason's Notebook can be ordered direct through paypal on our website www.ekstasiseditions.com.

Contact Ekstasis for details or to arrange appearances, events or media opportunities. For further information: Richard Olafson or Carol Sokoloff (250) 385-3378 (Phone & Fax) www.ekstasiseditions.com e-mail: ekstasis@islandnet.com

Honorary Doctorat for Antonio D'Alfonso



In the photo from left to right: Joseph Pivato, Antonio D'Alfonso and Emma Pivato.
Photo courtesy of Emma Pivato

On June 9, 2016, Antonio D'Alfonso was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters by Athabasca University at its annual Convocation. Below is the introduction that Joseph Pivato delivered at the convocation ceremony.

Madam Chair, Mr. President, Distinguished Guests,
It is my great pleasure and honour to introduce Dr. Antonio D'Alfonso who is today being awarded the Honorary Doctor of Letters by Athabasca University.

Antonio was born in Montreal and grew up speaking Italian, French and English. Inspired by this polyglot background and the growing awareness of the English-French language divide he founded Guernica Editions in 1978 as a bilingual press. The dual purpose he envisioned for his press was to promote both French and English Canadian literature, and to create a home for ethnic-minority writers whose work did not fit neatly into the plans of the big publishing houses.

Over a long career he edited and published several hundred Canadian writers. He translated Quebec authors into English to promote understanding across diverse cultural groups. His own creative writing in English and in French has been the focus of study in both M.A. and Ph.D. theses in North America and Europe.



Many Guernica books have been used in our Athabasca University literature courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

The professors from across Canada who supported his nomination for this honour all pointed to his significant contributions to Canadian literature and to Canadian studies generally to make them more inclusive of ethnic diversity. Dr. D'Alfonso quietly helped to change our perceptions about our Canadian culture.

To me Antonio D'Alfonso is an outstanding example of the mission of Athabasca University: the mission of life-long learning and helping the disadvantaged student. After a long career in publishing and translation Antonio went back to school and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Toronto at age 59.

Over his long career Antonio D'Alfonso has mentored many young writers to develop their skills in creative work. He has helped people who were disadvantaged by their minority backgrounds to advance in the competitive field of publishing. I am proud to present to you Dr. D'Alfonso.

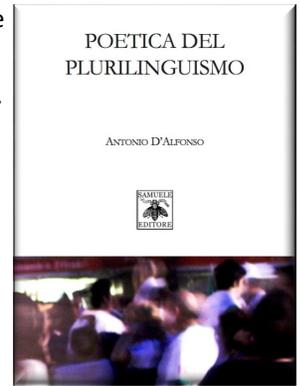
In related news ... Domenico Capilongo, writing in Panoram Italia, describes D'Alfonso as one of Canada's most prolific writers and artists. "He has written over forty books of poetry, novels and books of essays, done numerous translations from several different languages, made international award-winning films and founded a thriving national publishing house" (Guernica Editions).

Capilongo also notes that both Guernica and the AICW, of which D'Alfonso is a co-founder, have "helped publish some of Canada's most important writers such as Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, Mary Di Michele, Len Gasparini and Gianna Patriarca." Commenting on his contribution to Canadian culture, Patriarca praised him for giving "us the opportunity to have our work printed and validated." ([Click here for the link for the complete story at Panoram Italia](#))

Meantime, D'Alfonso was in Udine in the Friuli Region of Italy in May to participate in a series of events. He was a guest at the Centro di Cultura Canadese May 3-9.

He participated in a conference May 4 on "Plurilinguismo e pluriculturalismo" at the University of Udine, and took part in a conference May 5 on problems of translation. On May 7, he attended the Festival Vicino/lontano where he presented his latest work, *Poetica del Plurilinguismo* (Samuele Editore, 2015) translated by Giulia De Gasperi and Nicola Gasparo. The book had a series of successful readings.

In a story April 28, 2015, under the headline D'Alfonso e l'orgoglio "italico," the Italian newspaper Messaggero Veneto described D'Alfonso as "uno degli scrittori piú significativi del filone migrante in ambito canadese . . ." It goes on to say that "D'Alfonso ha coniato il termine "italico" per definire il creatore di origine italiana che opera al di fuori dei confini del Bel Paese, anche senza utilizzare l'italiano." ([Click here for the link for the full report](#))





Showcasing the Work of Silvia

Falsaperla

Silvia Falsaperla graduated from the University of Toronto and teaches English to international students. She lived in Florence, Italy for many years where she worked as an English teacher, travel journalist, translator and assistant to a literary agent. She read the following poems at the Books and Biscotti event June 12 at the Black Swan in Toronto.

Country

After, lovers might talk
 about how old the hills are,
 this old house, the oldest I have
 ever known, austere with peasant lives;
 the wild boars that come out at night,
 and eat fallen fruit;
 our battles, devoid of love, begging for
 absolution in words
 or laughter that say
 this is you
 this is me
 uncovered.
 Instead I feel like a spy
 fallen again to the same obscene revelations
 of flopped business deals, a one-legged
 man who rules the world in a blue Ferrari;
 money, taxes, etc.,
 or you might, as men do—
 and I don't mind—
 fall asleep
 and leave me the
 silence
 of the hills, the house, the wild boars
 that come out at night.

Boxer Shorts

They hang on the clothesline
 waiting to be taken in
 and spread onto the ironing board
 the steam iron

pressing them into life again

They wait for my love
 I once smoothed over their pattern and colour
 with the tip of the hot iron
 seeing words, a touch, a scene
 when they were thrown on the side of the sofa or the bed
 or fell on the floor with surrender

It's a week now
 they've hung on the line
 the sun fading the colours
 the rain getting them wet over and over
 deceitful shorts
 that have pressed themselves
 against the thighs of another woman

They wait to be taken in
 they wait for my love
 or my mercy
 as they hang limp on the line
 waving to me in the breeze

Bonsai

You recognized your reflection
 And bought this tree in a vase
 That will never grow to be a ten-foot ficus.

Fit for a coffee table, a curiosity,
 Its wire-tightened roots struggling out of the soil,
 Its trunk the size of a branch
 With a handful of leaves instead of a crown of leaves—

A generosity,
 Each leaf an aspect of you that unfolds for me,
 A notion of love or fear
 An idea or an explanation of something
 The glint of a man's eye that would fascinate or
 Placate me

O tree-stunted man
 Squat in your tailored clothes
 Your gnarled nail-bitten hands are the branches
 That emit few leaves



Joanne Birtz

Joanne Birtz, B.Ed., M.F.A., CCIM, left her business practice last year to work full time on the biography of Pancrace Balangero, 1887-1974. Pancrace Balangero was a talented and prolific award winning Montréal ornamental wrought iron artist who worked in Montréal first as a garage owner, mechanic and car sales from 1914 to 1930 and then as an ornamental blacksmith from 1930 to 1957. His distinctive style impacted the aesthetics and fabric of Canadian Architecture.

Angela Buono

Angela Buono est spécialiste des littératures francophones. Ses intérêts de recherche portent notamment sur la littérature franco-canadienne et québécoise, les écritures migrantes et les littératures amérindiennes. Elle a publié de nombreux articles et prononcé plusieurs communications sur l'œuvre de Hédi Bouraoui, Marie-Claire Blais, Marco Micone, Robert Lalonde. Elle fait partie du Conseil de Direction de l'Association Italienne d'Études Canadiennes (AISC) et est membre actif du Centre d'Études Canadiennes «Sociétés et Territoires», institué auprès de l'Université de Naples «L'Orientale» (Italie).

Maria Catalbiano

Dr. Frances Garofalo

Dr. Frances Garofalo is an accomplished senior administrator, researcher and community advocate with sound experience leading and implementing change in support of improved student achievement. She is an experienced superintendent, principal and curriculum specialist focussing on literacy, numeracy and second language acquisition. She conducted research on the role of senior administrators in supporting student learning, virtual professional learning communities and Aboriginal education. Most recently, she has focussed on the role of immigrant women in post-war Italian immigration to Canada.

Frank Giorno

Frank Giorno was born in Montalto Uffugo, Calabria, Italy in 1955 and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1959. He grew up and lived most of his life in Toronto. In 2010 he moved to Timmins, Ontario to work with Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre.

Frank is a graduate of York University (Honors B.A Political Science) and Ryerson School of Journalism (B.A. Journalism). He worked as a city hall reporter for the Brandon Sun; freelanced for the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star. He is the past editor of www.mininglifeonline.com and the newsletter of the Association of Italian Canadian Writers. Frank worked as Research Director for the Canadian Environmental Law Association; Senior Communications Advisor on Water Quality Issues for the Ministry of the Environment; Public Affairs Associate for Region of Peel Public Works; and Media Relations Officer for Toronto Public Health. In Timmins he served as the Communications Manager for Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre/Five Nations Energy Project on Energy Conservation and was the first male store greeter at Walmart in Timmins, before transferring to Sports and Hardware. Frank also has worked for the Ontario Waste Management Corporation, the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation; The Ministry of Children and Youth Services, The Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities and the Ministry of Education.

He has written two books of poetry: *Elvis in America and Arrivederci! Plastic Covered Couch*, published by Lyrical Myrical Press. He also is the co-author of *Internee 328: Camp Petawawa* with James McCreath on the internment of James Franceschini in 1940, published in *Beyond Barbed Wire* (Guernica Editions); *Horses For Mussolini*, also published in *Behind Barbed Wire*. Frank has contributed stories to *Accenti Magazine*, Montreal. He is the songwriter behind the Timmins song *Timmins Will Always Be My Home* and the *Beer Nazi Song*. He is the organizer and founder of *Timmins Voices Literary Reading Series* (2011-2015), *Timmins Beat on the Street Festival*, *The Sweet Tooth Reading Series* (Toronto, 2010), *Toronto Voices* (April, 2010 - Toronto). He has also published six issues of *Northern Voices Journal*, a literary magazine featuring poets and writers from Northeastern Ontario.

MoPoPoMo is the first book published by Northern Voices Publications. He has an online blog



www.anorthernblog.wordpress.com that focuses on living in Northern Ontario. Frank was the producer of East Link TV's Voices series in 2013 which featured 12 local writers and singers. He has a YouTube site www.youtube.com/giornalisti featuring videos on diverse subjects from mining to music including videos from Timmins Voices, Giancarlo Giorno's heavy metal screamo band Maletesta, Frank's own singing and saxophone playing and his poetry reading. Recently Frank has added videos about Timmins local food culture. Above all, he is the proud father of two magnificent children Sophie, 28 and Giancarlo 26.

Dennis Maione

Christina Angela Sforza

Born and raised in Montreal, Christina's heritage stems from the Apulia region in the province of Bari. She is interested in cultural issues, humanitarian causes, topics in psychology, and uncovering truths. Christina currently writes for a series of blogs, and is also developing her own collection of creating writing. She aims to resonate with the experiences of young female Italian Canadians by creating a voice for this generation through her writing.

Giulia Verticchio

Giulia comes from Rome, but currently lives in Montreal. She holds a Bachelor in History and Geography and a Master's Degree in Economic and Social History from Università di Roma Tre. With an European academic scholarship she studied for a while at Université d'Angers, in France, and then she moved for a period to Bristol, in United Kingdom. She has published "Roma Per Tutti" for the Rome Tourism Department. She's currently student of Urban Studies at UQAM and freelance journalist for "Cittadino Canadese" and CFMB 1280 AM Radio.

If you would like your biography included in a future newsletter, please send in the information at the next call for submissions.

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