



Association of Italian Canadian Writers

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

The AICW has been working on a number of projects in the last few months. First of all, we are pleased to announce the 7th edition of the Books & Biscotti Literary Series: literary events will be held in different cities across Canada to celebrate Italian Heritage Month. Please visit the events section on the AICW website for more details: www.aicw.ca/aicw-events

In collaboration with the Italian Department at the University of Winnipeg, AICW is organizing the conference Roots, Routes and Recognition: Italian Canadians in Literature and the Arts, our 17th biennial conference which will be held at the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Please note that it has been postponed to 27–29 September. For an updated version of the Call for Papers see [page 4](#).

To mark Canada's 150 years, we are working on the 31st Anniversary Conference, Italians in Canada: 150+ Years, co-organised with the Department of Italian Studies at Laurentian University, which will take place 15-16 September 2017 at Laurentian University. The program will be posted at aicw.ca as soon as it becomes available.

Our activities in April included AICW's participation at Montreal's Blue Metropolis Literary Festival in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal. April was Poetry Month and May was Short Story Month at the AICW: we celebrated by featuring our talented members' poems and short stories on social media.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Juliet Goulet and Cristina Revilla who have worked on some of the projects mentioned above and who have now completed their internships at the AICW. We thank them for their hard work and wish them all the best in their studies.

If you have any queries, please contact us at info@aicw.ca.

Best wishes for a restful and inspiring summer,

Dr Maria Cristina Seccia

AICW President

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



Antonino Mazza

January 10, 1949 – June 6, 2017

Antonino Mazza passed away peacefully at the Ottawa Civic Hospital on the 6th of June, 2017, at the age of 68. Loving husband of Franceline Quintal-Mazza, and adoring father of Domenico "Mico," pre-deceased by his sister Giovannina. He is survived by his siblings Aldo (Jolan), and Giovanna (Mario) and his aunts and uncles, Maria (late Domenico Mazzeo), Giuseppina (late Giuseppe Zito), Matteo Busceti, late Rocco Busceti (Giuseppina) and Francesca (Vittorio Melone); his nieces and nephews Angelina, Massimo, Gianluca, Nadia, Antonio, and Alessandro. Son of the late Domenico and Angela Mazza, Antonino was an acclaimed poet and author, esteemed professor of language, and accomplished translator.

Those who wish to make a donation in Antonino's memory may do so to the Canadian MPN Group (Myeloproliferative neoplasms), a charity that promotes the research, treatment, and improved patient care for those living with a variety of rare stem cell disorders.

Messages of condolence may be left at <https://beechwood.permavita.com/site/AntoninoMazza.html?s=40>

A Conversation with Antonino Mazza

By Anna Ciampolini Foschi

When I received the sad news of Antonino's passing, for a moment I felt lost. Another powerful literary voice had been silenced by death, another friend was lost forever. Then, I remembered that a writer or an artist leaves a legacy behind. Antonino's works will be read and will continue to inspire.

Many years ago, I asked Antonino if we could meet after dinner for an interview over a cup of coffee. I knew that he was going to be very busy during his short stay in Vancouver, so I assured him that we could wrap it up in about one hour. It was well past 2:00 a.m. when, tired and sleepy, we reluctantly

decided to end the conversation and I switched off my tape recorder. He had a marvelous, intriguing dulcet voice. He was relaxed and casual, but he was extremely well-read and his discourse was lucid, visionary and passionate.

The following are excerpts from: Anna Ciampolini Foschi's *An Interview with Antonino Mazza on Pierpaolo Pasolini, Pillars of Lace* (M. De Franceschi, Ed., Guernica Editions, Toronto 1998.)

In the winter of 1989, during one of his short visits to Vancouver, what had started as a relaxed conversation between two old friends got transformed into a riveting journey, a quest about the poetic and human essence of Pierpaolo Pasolini. Pasolini has been one of the most controversial figures in Italian literature, an author who, according to what Alberto Moravia once said, "simply, he was the best poet we ever had during the second half of our century."

Antonino Mazza

I went through his work to determine what his time really was. Pasolini had a problem: he did not like histories. He had to negate the present history, the move towards the capitalistic society. Against that history, he had to pose another history. His time was prehistoric. He felt a member of the outside history. He was outside his history and in time with pre-history. What do you do in prehistoric times? They did not rely on memories. They rely on oracles. Pasolini was projecting a pre-historic frame and inside that frame, the only thing that counted was not knowledge that came from the past, like we do now. People then had to rely on sources of information that came from the future: the prophecy. He no longer relies on the past for enlightenment for hope to go forward. He was probably not conscious; he became conscious. Tapping into intuition. He was totally preoccupied with the kind of knowledge, Cartesian knowledge we rely on: we rely on the past. Let's consider, for instance, the rise of psychology, a science that relies on the past, in our times. The metaphors he spoke, the sources he used were consistent with another



cosmology, another ontology. This aspect of his, which is the most important, has not been looked upon seriously. He antagonizes the entire society, he threatens us all, he is totally radical. His speech has the oracular power. That is why he was hated. Even Moravia talks about his private life, his homosexuality. But these were minor transgressions; his major transgression was the subversion of time.

Joe Pivato Remembers Antonino Mazza

I first encountered Antonino in 1978 when his poems were included in *Roman Candles*, the famous first anthology edited by Pier Giorgio DiCicco. At that time he was in Toronto and was publishing some poetry in literary magazines: *Anthos*, *Vice Versa*, *Gamut International* and *Canadian Literature* and translating major Italian authors into English: Pier Paolo Pasolini, *The First Paradise*, *Odetta* (1985), Eugenio Montale, *The Bones of Cuttlefish* (1983), and P. P. Pasolini, *Poetry* (1991). To me his most significant translation was Mario Duliani, *The City Without Women* (1994) in which he used both the Italian and French versions of the chronicle from 1945. He won awards for some of his translations.

Antonino's own creative works include: *Structure of Chaos* (1978) and *The Way I Remember It* (1992) which was published in Italian as *La Nostra Casa e in un Orecchio Cosmico* (1998). He made spoken word recordings of some his poems and translations. His last book projects were *Immigrant Songs: the poems, fiction and letters of Saro D'Agostino*, which Antonino edited in 2012, and *The Other Passenger* (fiction, 2013).

In 1986 Antonino Mazza was one of the writers who was present at the founding conference of the Association of Italian Canadian Writers in Vancouver. Unlike other participants he did not become a regular member of AICW but would make surprise appearances at some AICW conferences such as that in 1988 at York University, 1990 at Carleton University, and 2014 in Montreal. He read his poems in many

venues across Canada.

He taught Italian on contract at Queen's University, University of Ottawa and later Carleton. I remember writing many letters of reference for his translation projects in order to secure funding from the Secretary of State in Ottawa. And I included one of his poems in *The Anthology of Italian Canadian Writing* which I edited in 1998. In October 2004, at the University of Wollongong in Australia, I read a paper on Antonino Mazza's poetry and other Calabrian Canadian writers.

My sincere condolences go to his family in Ottawa.

Poems and Short Stories Featured on Social Media

To mark National Poetry Month (in April) and Short Story Month (in May), AICW featured its members' writings on Facebook and Twitter.

The writers included Anna Citrullo Villapiana, Bruna Di Giuseppe-Bertoni, Isabella Colalillo Katz, Aldo Colangelo, Erminio Neglia, Antonio Maggio, Terri Favro, Josie Di Sciascio-Andrews, Darlene Madott, Licia Canton, Delia De Santis, Keith Henderson, Loretta Gatto-White, Giovanna Riccio, Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni, Gianna Patriarca.

You can read the poems and short stories on Twitter [@AICWCanada](#) and on [Facebook](#) (Association of Italian Canadian Writers).



Call for Papers/Proposals



Roots, Routes and Recognition: Italian Canadians in Literature and the Arts

17th Biennial Conference of the Association of Italian Canadian Writers (AICW)

WINNIPEG, SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2018

The Association of Italian Canadian Writers (AICW), in collaboration with Italian Studies in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Winnipeg, is accepting proposals for its 17th Biennial Conference to be held at the University of Winnipeg, Manitoba, **September 27-29, 2018**. The conference invites academic papers, literary readings (poetry, prose or plays) and artistic works in Italian-Canadian literature and culture that engage with themes of heritage, passages and appreciation.

Writers and artists, academics and researchers from all disciplines are encouraged to submit proposals to present new (or posthumous) creative or critical works in Italian, English or French. Graduate students and emerging writers are encouraged to participate. Possible topics include the following:

- Engaging with tradition in contemporary texts
- Writing and transmitting cultural memory
- Representations of place, space, and (dis)location
- Italian diaspora and globalization
- Cinema and the visual arts
- Culinary culture and literature
- Science and technology
- Translation and self-translation
- Representations of queerness

Other topics not mentioned above will also be taken into consideration.

For academic papers (20 minutes), please send 200-word abstract and biographical information (60 words). For panels of two or three papers (20 minutes each), send 200-word abstract for each paper as well as bio (60 words) for each presenter and contact information for all panelists.

For literary readings of 15 minutes, please send a 200-word excerpt of the text to be read (prose or play) or four poems (max. 40 lines) along with biographical information (60 words). Preference will be given to readings and performances of new works.

The deadline for all proposals is March 31, 2018. Please note that once a proposal has been accepted, a conference registration fee (\$100.00) will be requested for presenters who are not full members of the AICW in good standing. Please send all submissions and queries to:

**Sante Viselli (s.viselli@uwinnipeg.ca) / (204) 786-9987 and
Rosaria Moretti-Lawrie (r.moretti-lawrie@uwinnipeg.ca)**

Visit <http://aicw.ca/> to find out more about the Association of Italian Canadian Writers (AICW).



Rosanna Battigelli's Eventful Spring

Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli has received a 2017 Ontario Arts Council Writers' Reserve Grant for her short story collection: *Pigeon Soup & Other Stories*.

Her story titled Learning My Lesson appears in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inspiration for Teachers*, released April 18, 2017. Books were sold at the Sudbury Public Library South End Branch on April 22 with all profits going to Sudbury's Blue Door Soup Kitchen. Books will also be sold at other branches in the future. Rosanna's event was featured in the Sudbury Star: www.thesudburystar.com/2017/.../student-taught-author-lesson

In other news, Rosanna moderated three AICW panels and read at two of the sessions at Montreal's Blue Met Literary Festival on April 29-30, 2017. bluemetropolis.org Her readings were from *La Brigantessa*, which is scheduled to be released by Inanna Publications in 2018. inanna.ca

She also participated in The Spirits of Reading event on May 3 during Sudbury Reading Town 2017. www.nationalreadingcampaign.ca

Rosanna and her husband Nic hosted a Books & Biscotti event in Sudbury on June 10, featuring local authors and special guest Maria Coletta McLean. mariacolettamclean.com

Rosanna and Nic will also be participating in Italians in Canada: 150+ Years, the 31st Anniversary Conference of the AICW in collaboration with the Italian Studies Program at Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario, September 15-16, 2017.

2017 Books and Biscotti Series

Seven Books and Biscotti events are scheduled across Canada in June to celebrate Italian Heritage Month.

The dates and places for the 7th edition of the series are as follows: Montreal on June 8, Sudbury and Woodbridge on June 10, Ottawa on June 11, Toronto on June 24, Woodbridge on June 25 and Vancouver on June 27. For details visit <http://www.aicw.ca/aicw-events>

The AICW is pleased to reach new audiences during the Books and Biscotti events and, therefore, welcomes collaboration from other groups and organizations whether they be of Italian heritage or not.

The Association of Italian Canadian Writers features the work of its members. We invite all members to list their events under the Books and Biscotti banner anytime during the year. Such events must include at least one member of the AICW, and the AICW logo must appear on the promotional flyer. For instance, a solo book launch can be included in the Books and Biscotti Literary Series as long as the AICW logo appears on the flyer.

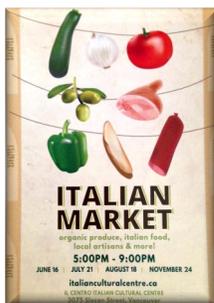
Books and Biscotti events are publicized in the AICW newsletter, website and via social media (Facebook and Twitter). Please note that AICW aims to have a uniform look to the flyers. To request a sample flyer, please write to info@aicw.ca

Founded in 1986, the Association of Italian Canadian Writers brings together a community of writers, critics, academics, and other artists and promotes Italian Canadian literature and culture within an ethnoculturally diverse society. The AICW is a nonprofit organization. For more information about the AICW, please visit www.aicw.ca

Rosanna Micoletta Battigelli, Chair
2017 Books and Biscotti Literary Series



Italian Market Vancouver Italian Cultural Centre



Cristina Pepe participated in the outdoor Italian Market on June 16th at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver from 5-9 pm.

Her 'bancarella' sold handmade cards and hand-pulled etchings and monotypes.

Presenza AICW alla Festa della Repubblica

2 giugno, 2017. Festa della Repubblica al Centro Italiano di Vancouver. Ray Culos e Anna Ciampolini Foschi hanno partecipato al ricevimento annuale offerto dal Console Generale d' Italia Massimiliano Iacchini per le Associazioni e i membri della comunità italiana che si distinguono per la loro attività nei vari campi.



Ray Culos e Anna Ciampolini Foschi in rappresentanza della AICW, John Barbieri, membro del Direttivo della Confratellanza. *Photo by Francesca Foschi Mitchell*

Scrittori italiani alla Casa Del Zotto

Nino Famà

Il dieci marzo scorso, invitato da Licia Canton, mi sono recato a Casa del Zotto a Toronto per leggere alcuni brani del mio romanzo, *L'oceano nel pozzo*, a un gruppo di donne anziane, residenti del posto. Al mio arrivo stavano tutte ballando una tarantella. Non volendole disturbare, mi sedetti ed aspettai senza che nessuno si accorgesse di me. Alla fine del ballo, qualcuno notò la mia presenza e venne ad investigare. Quando spiegai chi ero e perché mi trovavo lì, fece sedere tutti ordinatamente ed io incominciai con una breve introduzione prima di iniziare la lettura. Non passò molto tempo, prima che incominciassero a sollevare la mano e fare delle domande sui miei romanzi, sul ruolo delle donne, sul mio rapporto con l'Italia, eccetera, eccetera. Molte di loro furono ben felici di raccontare le loro esperienze in Canada, il loro arrivo, gli inizi difficili e tutto il resto. Queste anziane hanno dimostrato di essere vivaci, sveglie e intellettualmente abili di coinvolgersi nel discorso. E' stata una bella esperienza per me e credo anche per loro perché mi hanno chiesto di ritornare.

We thank the volunteers who shared their Italian-language writings with the women at Casa del Zotto this past winter: Bruna Di Giuseppe Bertoni, Gianna Patriarca, Piero Piccolo, Nino Famà and Aldo Colangelo. Thanks to Maithily Uthayasangar and Licia Canton for co-ordinating the events. This project was a joint collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association (Toronto).

AICW Members at Blue Met

In April the Association of Italian Canadian Writers (AICW), in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal, organized three events at Montreal's Blue Metropolis Festival.



AICW Blue Met participants. Front row, L to R: Domenico Capilongo, Silvia Falsaperla, Francesco D'Arelli (Director of Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal), Connie Guzzo-McParland, Nino Famà, David Bellusci. Back row, L to R, Licia Canton, Domenic Cusmano, Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli.

Authors included
Rosanna Micelotta



Battigelli, David Bellusci, Licia Canton, Domenico Capilongo, Domenic Cusmano, Silvia Falsaperla, Nino Famà, Connie Guzzo-McParland Michael Mirolla.

The events were hosted by Sudbury author Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli.

Licia Canton's Literary Activities

Last April, at Blue Met Festival, Licia Canton gave the workshop "YES YOU CAN: Tips for Promoting Your Writing." She was a speaker at the Quebec Writers' Federation workshop "Improving the Odds," featuring tips on getting published.

Public Readings

Licia Canton will be celebrating Italian Heritage Month in Hull and London, United Kingdom. [For more info click here](#)

New Titles

Read Licia Canton's nonfiction texts "From My Mother's Kitchen," "Easter Tidings" and "Maple Syrup for Sweet Occasions" at canadianliteraryfare.org

Self-Translation as Creation Event

Joseph Pivato organized a panel on Self-Translation at the May meeting of the Association of Canadian and Quebec Literatures (ACQL) and the Canadian Comparative Literature Association (CCLA) at Ryerson University in Toronto.

The panel speakers were: Eva Karpinski (York U.) who spoke about Nancy Houston and bilingual minds; Tiziana Nannavecchia (Toronto) discussed Antonio D'Alfonso;

Elena Anna Spanguolo (Manchester U.) examined Michelut, Canton and Patriarca; Trish Van Boldern (Ottawa U.) analysed the work of Nancy Houston.

Joe Pivato chaired the heated discussion, evidence that self-translation is becoming a controversial practice among Canadian writers.

At the end of the panel session Joe introduced the new book, *Robert Kroetsch: Essays on His Works*, edited by Nicole Markotic of the University of Windsor. This volume is number 46 in the Guernica Editions Writers Series. This book was also on display at the large book fair at Ryerson.

For details about the three-day conference as part of the Humanities and Social Science Congress go to the websites of the Association of Canadian and Quebec Literatures and the Canadian Comparative Literature Association.



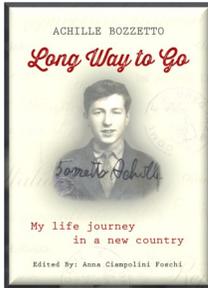
Life in Rugged and Remote British Columbia

Long Way to Go: My life journey in a new country

Achille Bozzetto

Vancouver Grandview Printing 2017

Edited by Anna Ciampolini Foschi



Achille Bozzetto lives in Kelowna with his family. In 1957, he came to Canada as a teenager to work with his father in the Canadian Pacific Railway camps in Northern British Columbia. In 1965, he decided to settle in B.C. with his wife and children. Achille worked at a variety of jobs, started his own delivery business and opened a general store. In his retirement years, he started to write his memoirs, a valuable account of pioneer life in rugged and remote areas of British Columbia.

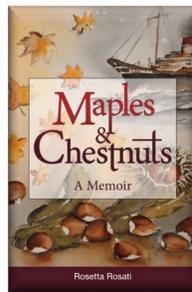
The Guthrie Road è un ponte tra generazioni. L'autrice intesse un racconto che è insieme una storia di famiglia e una ricerca di se stessa. Il volume è stato tradotto in italiano da Laura Forconi Ferri, studiosa che da anni si dedica con successo a scambi culturali fra Italia e Canada. Ferri è membro fondatore e direttrice della ricerca e relazioni pubbliche al Centro Siena-Toronto dell'Università di Siena e co-fondatrice di CanaDiana, associazione culturale di studi italo-canadesi.

The Memoirs of Rosetta Rosati

Maples and Chestnuts

Rosetta Rosati

Longbridge Books 2017



In *Maples and Chestnuts*, Rosetta Rosati recounts her family history spanning three generations in Italy and Canada. It all begins when the family patriarch, Giacomo Talarico, leaves his hometown of Cicala, Calabria, in the first half of the twentieth century.

Rosemary Sullivan

The Guthrie Road/Una storia irlandese

Traduzione di Laura Ferri

Prefazione di Dacia Maraini

2016 Equinozi, Rosia (Siena)



Rosemary Sullivan, biografa e poetessa, è professore emerito dell'Università di Toronto. La sua ultima opera, *Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva* è uscita in diciannove paesi ed è stata accolta con grande favore di pubblico e di critica.

Rosetta immigrated to Canada from Calabria, Italy, in the late 1950s at the age of eleven. She attended Marymount High School in Montreal and later studied finance. In the late 1970s she returned to Italy with her husband and pursued a career in banking in Milan. As head of strategic partnerships she has travelled around the world. She is co-founder and president of Università della Terza Età (UNITRE) in Sizzano, Pavia, where she also teaches an English conversation course. She lives in Pavia. She has one daughter and two grandchildren.



Rosetta Rosati



Frank Giorno's Book Celebrates Canada - its greatness, warts and all

***My Nation is a Train...Wreck!*
Northern Voices Publications**

The Poetry of Canada's 150th Anniversary – If not for the transcontinental railroad there would be no Canada.

My Nation is a Train...Wreck! is a book of poetry that explores Canada and what it means to be a Canadian. It honours Canada's character, strengths and weaknesses, as we celebrate our 150th anniversary in 2017.

Canada was built on the promise of a transcontinental railroad – a ribbon of steel binding a new nation from Atlantic to Pacific.

Frank Giorno's *My Nation is a Train...Wreck!* is a collection of poems that is mostly based on his experience as a student sleeping car and coach porter on the Canadian Pacific Railway's "The Canadian" – the transcontinental train that moved people across the vast expanse of Canada from the 1880s to 1979, when it was melded into VIA Rail along with the Canadian National Rails transcontinental passenger train.

"Here's to all of us," said Giorno. "We are all passengers on this train ride called Canada."

My Nation is a Train...Wreck! was first read at the Spring Pulse Poetry Festival, on April 21, 2017 at the Temiskaming Shores Public Library – Haileybury Branch. The Spring Pulse Poetry Festival is a delightful spring event now celebrating its 10th year.

Giorno, who is originally from Toronto, but now residing in Timmins, Ontario also held a hometown reading on June 13, 2017 at the Timmins Public Library, on Second Avenue.

He is planning a Toronto launch on Thursday, July 6 at 7 p.m. at Dooney's Café, 866 Bloor St. W., in the neighbourhood Giorno and his family first settled on arrival from Italy in 1959. This has still to be confirmed.

Giorno also is looking forward to possible readings in Ottawa and Montreal...so invite him already!

My Nation is a Train...Wreck!, the title poem focuses on this notion called Canada that consists of many boxcars of diverse cultures that together venture into the future. This concept is further explored in a poem titled "This Notion of Canada".

In the 19th century, Canada was freedom for escaping slaves who travelled the underground railway and settled in what was to become Southern Ontario in places like North Buxton and Elgin County, two areas that Giorno first learned about from the great grandsons and grandsons of the original settlers, whom he met working as a porter between 1974-1979.

My Nation is about the comings and goings of Canadians as they arrive, depart and return to their far-flung home towns along the CPR rail line.

It's about the beauty of Canada, especially the area of Superior Country in Northern Ontario and the area of Northwestern Ontario from Thunder Bay, into Kenora and finally – Winnipeg, Manitoba.

It's about the descendants of our founding people, the descendants of people escaping slavery, of immigrants building a new life in a new country and decent Canadians, like the Gordon family, who through public service and commitment to the arts are the glue that holds this country together.

The book is dedicated to the Black Canadian men who worked with dignity and determination to take care of their family. Giorno shared work, meals, accommodations and experiences that provide him a lasting respect for their achievements.



“The Railway is My Father” and “North Buxton” gives expression to the profound experience Giorno felt working as railway porter and being a member of the Canadian Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

It is also dedicated to Jane Gordon Glassco and the Gordon-Glassco family. Jane’s father Walter Gordon served as Finance Minister and President of the Treasury Board and helped to introduce the Canada Health Act and the Canada Pension Plan.

“Angel Jane” is a poem about Jane Glassco, who died in 2010 due to complications from ALS.

Jane and her husband Bill Glassco, founded the Tarragon Theatre which helped to grow Canadian Theatre and made it accessible to all through their pay what you can Sundays. Tarragon continues to this day to provide a centre for Canadian playwrights.

Several poems honour his northern home, Timmins, and the rugged Canadian shield geography that shaped its future as a gold mining centre (“Land of the 100 Year Gold Rush”, “The Timmins Song”.)

But, along the way the Canadian Train, wobbles and weaves, teeters and tilts “like a drunk heading into the future and we never know when it is going to crash.”

Civil rights are sometimes trampled as retold in “Railway Custer” and “Elgin, Manitoba”.

Free speech and Charter Rights are not always respected, as told in the slapstick, “Don Cherry Beer Nazi Song” ; based on a true story of the author being banned for life from a sports bar because he said Don Cherry should be fired – a statement that the bar manager vehemently disagreed with.

The problems of the past, and Giorno points to several, are the challenges we face over the present and the next 150 years.

Copies may be purchased from the author. Price is

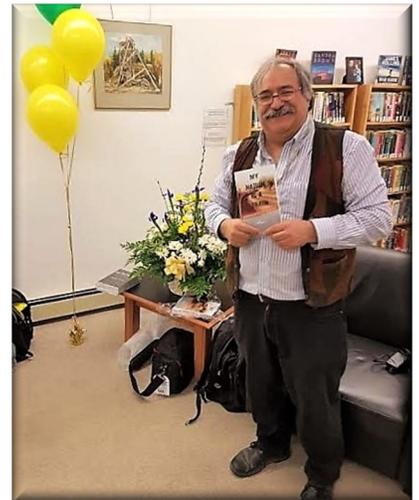
\$20.00, includes HST and postage.

Giorno is planning to open an account with Amazon in the near future.

For more information:

Frank Giorno
705-288-2090

frank.giorno@frankcommunicationsnorth.com



Frank Giorno launched his new book of poetry, *My Nation is a Train . . . Wreck*, at the Spring Pulse Poetry Festival, April 21, at the Temiskaming Shores Public Library branch in Haileybury, Ontario.



Showcasing the Work of Silvia

Falsaperla

A Lesser Flower

Ubiquitous
growing through the slats of fences,
in bunches in the far corner of the lawn,
unsung,
unlike the peony, rose or tulip,
that are offered an altar or a table
after their stems are cut and set in water.

Nameless and unadorned,
but with a long stem, a string of purple bells,
and spiky leaves. Wildflower.
Not for this self-effacing for its want of beauty
but lending itself to the alleyways of children
where it grew against garage walls and sides of roads
with dandelions and other weeds.

The back world of explorations
where I crept like a cat into other households,
large kitchens, backyard pools,
toast and butter,
the sleep-overs in the attics of my friends--
girls, quiet and wild.
I spoke a new language with them.
They knew I spoke another language with my mother.
I was a tall girl,
skinny legs and boney knees,
large feet in orange or lime-green running shoes,
the toe protruding from the hole in the cloth.

The back world of my own back fence,
towering sunflowers planted from seed,
twelve rose bushes for the twelve apostles,
zinnias of vibrant colours that too came from seed
from the Mediterranean,
the shooting pine once a sapling.
The safety of home, my mother at her sewing machine
by the window watching her garden grow.
The purple wildflower creeping in from the next yard,

unnoticed but welcome.

The back world of my own secrecy.
I hid with my first love four doors down.
My mother came in through the front door,
looking for me, but she didn't find me,
as I washed my older man's square head
in the upstairs bathroom sink.

The Holly Bush

Once adorning the side railing of a ramshackle house,
I didn't see it anymore and I looked for it as one looks for a
lost pet.
A concrete pavement, not a bed of earth, from which grew a
florid bush,
it was a presence, even in the summertime, spiny leaves
laden with berries, red pearls.

This morning I found it in two paper bags of garden waste,
the truncated stems, the leaves still sturdy and green,
mixed with cut grass, plant roots and crumpled leaves,
on the edge of the curb waiting for the garbage truck;
an indignity to a beloved plant that heralded the birth of my
son,
the winter solstice plant ready to bloom--a violation, like
violating
the noble and wise laurel, the laurel of Dante, fragrant and
sublime.

I pulled two branches out of one bag with three little
berries.
They pinched and scratched my hands.
I looked closely at the concrete pavement from which it had
grown
and found the ruptured base and I tugged.
The roots run deep inside the cracks of cement,
a network of entangled roots.
You will grow, O holly, you will grow again.



**BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!
DEVENEZ MEMBRE AUJOURD'HUI!
DIVENTA SOCIO OGGI!**

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First Name/Prénom/Nome:		Middle Name/ Deuxième prénom/ Secondo nome	
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