



Association of Italian Canadian Writers

Associazione di scrittori/scrittrici italo-canadesi

Association des Écrivain(e)s Italo-Canadien(ne)s

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

If you are on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AICWCanada), please take the time to **LIKE** our page and to post information about your new publications and events

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

We hope that all is well with you and your families during this difficult time. Covid-19 has made us all re-examine how we do things and, in a certain way, brought us all closer. We held a General Meeting of the AICW on Zoom on September 26, 2020, with 23 people in attendance. A new working Executive is already active, and committees have been formed. We are already working on many projects.

Our Open Mic on Zoom, Books and Biscotti Literary Series, gives members a great opportunity to share their writing with the general public as well as with friends and colleagues. The monthly Webinar series in collaboration with, and hosted by, the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal will go on till the end of the year. Please read all the AICW announcements send to you by email, so that you won't miss the many virtual activities taking place. Many of our virtual events are recorded and shared on social media (AICW's Facebook and Twitter) and/or YouTube. It's good for members to stay connected, especially during this period of isolation. If you have not already done so, consider joining the weekly "Shut Up and Write" or the monthly "4 chiacchiere in italiano." And if you would like any information, please write to info@aicw.ca. It is always good to hear from our members.

If you change your email address, please do let us know; or if you have more than one email address, tell us which one you want us to use. This will ensure that you receive all the messages that the AICW sends out.

I would like to thank everyone on the past Executive and all committee workers for their countless volunteer hours dedicated to this vibrant organization. Your work does not go unnoticed. A big welcome to the new Executive. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I know we can do it. Every member's contribution is appreciated, every volunteer hour counts, as we all work to improve the AICW in one way or another. And we all share common bonds, especially our roots and our artistic gifts.

I wish everyone continued good health and much inspiration for your endeavours.

Delia De Santis
Interim Co-president

NEWS

Accenti Magazine's Contests

11th Accenti Photo Contest



Capture an Italian Moment... anywhere in the world!
Grand Prize: \$1000 and publication in Accenti.
ENTER NOW

Details at <https://accenti.ca/photo-contest/rules/>



**13th
Writing
Contest**

*"If I waited for perfection,
I would never write a word."
Margaret Atwood*

ENTER NOW

**Grand Prize
\$1000 and publication
in Accenti**

Details at <https://accenti.ca/writing-contest/rules/>

EVENTS

AICW organizes an Open Mic event on Zoom

by Marisa De Franceschi

On September 11, 2020, a group of us writers got together to create our event at Books and Biscotti through a Zoom platform. It was quite a success. Each writer had five minutes to read from their work. It was my first Zoom and I found it exciting and quite interesting. Each reader used up their time allotment and we were all enchanted with what each reader read. Five minutes is not much time, but it is enough to get to the point and to share writings. (I must admit that I clicked something on my new computer and my voice and my face apparently could be heard and seen, but I was not able to see myself. A click after my five minutes brought me back into the crowd.

Now, a few months after our event, Zoom is well known and quite useful. It is a way to connect with other writers during these trying times. Zoom has come in handy for all sorts of events. This is one way to keep in touch with one another. That's the idea. Keep in touch and keep writing.

(Books and Biscotti Open Mic, on September 11 at 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time. Co-hosted by Licia Canton and Delia De Santis. Authors: Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni, Lillian Conti, Connie Guzzo McParland, Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli, Marisa De Franceschi, Silvia Falsaperla, Anna Ciardullo Villapiana, Anna Foschi Ciampolini. Editor's note.)

AICW's ZOOM



Did you know that AICW's ZOOM is available to members. For your book launch, literary reading or workshop...

AICW schedules the event; you take care of the rest.

Need a host? The AICW can help you to "hire-a-host" among its members.

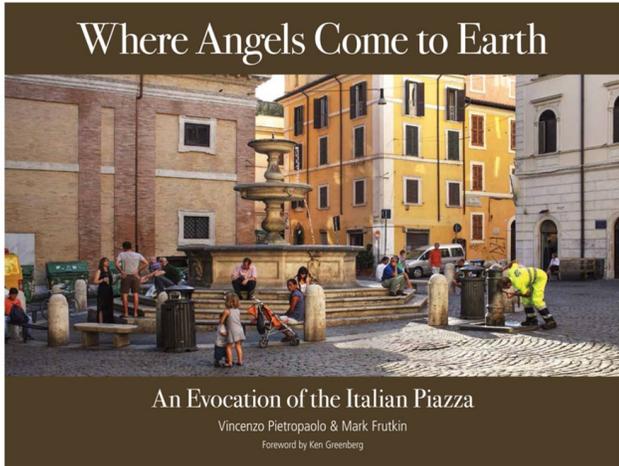
If you are unfamiliar with Zoom, do not hesitate to contact us.

Questions? Write to info@aicw.ca.

Mark Your Calendars (write to info@aicw.ca for details)

EVENTS

Virtual Reading & Photo Presentation



Readings by Mark Frutkin • Photos by Vincenzo Pietropaolo
Nov. 17, 2020, 2 p.m. (Toronto/New York/Miami Time)
Zoom and Facebook links coming soon
Funded by the Writers' Union of Canada & The Canada Council for the Arts

Workshop

Saturday, December 12 at 2 p.m. - Eufemia Fantetti (fundraiser for AICW) (*See ad*)

Shut Up and Write

Every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Hosted by Annalisa Panati and Licia Canton

4 chiacchiere in italiano

Every month - Hosted by Maria Pia Spadafora and Rosaria Moretti-Lawrie

Books and Biscotti Literary Series

Friday, November 13 at 5 p.m. - Open Mic (8 writers)

Tuesday, November 17 at 2 p.m. - Vincenzo Pietropaolo and Mark Frutkin (*See ad*)

Thursday, November 26 - Liana Cusmano

Friday, November 27 at 7 p.m. - Carmela Bruno

Sunday, December 6 at 12 p.m. - Darlene Madott

Webinar AICW and the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal

Wednesday, November 25 at 5 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE!

AN ONLINE WRITING WORKSHOP

SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 12TH
2PM



WRITING ILLNESS, WRITING WELLNESS

with Eufemia Fantetti

A generative workshop with multiple prompts.

This class is offered as a fundraiser for AICW.

Email info@aicw.ca to sign up.

EVENTS

In Co-operation

by Eloise Carbone

On the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people, the AICW, Books and Biscotti, joined Word Vancouver to present an evening of sharing.

This was not the first time Books and Biscotti partnered with Word Vancouver, but on September 23rd, 2020, it was certainly the first time on the virtual Zoom platform.

Anna Foschi, co-founder and Executive Member of the AICW, hosted the event with charm and ease. Her introductions and reflections were the thread that stitched together the readings of the four Italian Canadian writers – Eloise Carbone, Carmelo Militano, Arianna Dagnino, and Osvaldo Zappa.

Eloise Carbone read her memoir poetry exploring the themes of alienation and of belonging. Her first poem, *Disappeared*, describes her loss of identity within the context of her Canadian culture. Her second poem, *Still a Prisoner*, was dedicated to her father, who had been interned in Ontario in WWII. Her final poem, *The Land*, expresses a sense of belonging by reconnecting to her Italian heritage.

Anna: “emotionally charged”

Carmelo Militano read from his most recent work, *Catching Desire* - an exploration into the life and work of Amadeo Modigliani, the Italian modernist painter and sculptor. Carmelo read two poems – one from the point of view of an art dealer who focused on the artist’s life of poverty, and the second from the point of view of Modigliani’s mother with her hopes and dreams for her son. A third piece was from the point of view of Elvira, a model and early lover of Modigliani.

Anna: “a pleasure, interesting, enlightening”

Arianna Dagnino spent five years in South Africa with the Italian press between 1996 and 2000. Her novel and screenplay, *The Afrikaner*, was inspired by this. Set in the African wilderness, it is the story of a female scientist of Afrikaner origin, Zoe du Plessis, who, while facing her family’s dark secrets, navigates her journey of atonement and self-discovery. Arianna read the opening passage of *The Afrikaner* when Zoe, after the death of her Italian lover, drives through the desert and has her first encounter with a Bushman shaman.

Anna: “successful, thought provoking and critically acclaimed”

Osvaldo Zappa read from his third book, an epistolary novel, *Follow the River*. The novel is made up of an exchange of letters between Osvaldo and his wife over many years. Osvaldo translated these letters from French into English. He read the foreword of

EVENTS

his novel - sharing his struggle caring for someone living with Alzheimer's disease. His wife, who had tragically lost her eyesight, recently passed away burdened with dementia.

Anna: "A rare form of novel. Osvaldo has mastered this structure."

At the end of the evening, a discussion ensued concerning the underlying motivation for our choice of topics. Landscape as character, connection to the land, patriotism, and the heart center were cited as our motivations.

The presenters express their gratitude to Anna Foschi, the AICW, and Word Vancouver.

This presentation can be found on AICW Facebook – Books and Biscotti September 23, 2020

BOOKS AND OTHER PRINT

Vita e sogni di Mr. Pauli

di Annalisa Panati



La storia vera e poco nota di Wolfgang Ernst Pauli, premio Nobel per la fisica 1945, e delle sue relazioni con il celebre psicologo Carl Gustav Jung, di cui fu paziente dal 1932 al 1934, è il soggetto di questo testo teatrale. Attraverso la voce di Wolfgang, diviso tra il rigore della fisica e il fascino del mondo quasi magico di Jung, di sua moglie Franca, donna pratica con profonda avversione per la psicanalisi, e di tre personaggi contemporanei, l'opera mette in scena i dilemmi e le contraddizioni della vita di tutti noi, l'opposizione tra realtà e sogno, tra logica e irrazionalità, tra l'ordinario e il numinoso, tra la quotidianità della vita e la forza della dimensione simbolica del mondo onirico.

Prefazione di Carlo Rovelli.

<https://scienzaexpress.it/libro/vita-e-sogni-di-mr-pauli/>

Disponibile anche su [amazon.it](https://www.amazon.it) e [ibs.it](https://www.ibs.it).

Oppure scrivere a laisa80@yahoo.it

Chimica **UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TORINO**

Rassegna Teatro e Scienza Autunno 2020
Direttore Artistico Maria Rosa Mosato

Teatro e Scienza
learning experience

Giovedì 8 Ottobre ore 18.00
"IL CORTE DEI RIFORMI, IL CORTE DEI RIFORMI"
di Francesco Arduberti
Reading: Jhon e Jhonny del Gruppo Teatro Scienza, di Silvia Ruffini
in scena: Maria Rosa Mosato, Silvia Ruffini, Francesco Arduberti, Maria Mosato, Annamaria Scattolon, Riccardo Arduberti, Barbara
Regia di Francesco Arduberti

Venerdì 16 Ottobre ore 18.00
"VITA E SOGNI DI MR. PAULI"
di Annalisa Panati
Reading: Jhon e Jhonny del Gruppo Teatro Scienza, di Silvia Ruffini
in scena: Annalisa Panati, Maria Rosa Mosato, Francesco Arduberti, Riccardo Arduberti, Barbara
Regia di Maria Rosa Mosato

Giovedì 29 Ottobre ore 18.00
"LA MORTE DI ARCHEMEDE"
di Studio Teatrali
Reading: Jhon e Jhonny del Gruppo Teatro Scienza, di Silvia Ruffini
in scena: Studio Teatrali, Jhon e Jhonny
Regia di Silvia Ruffini

Gli eventi si svolgono presso la
Biblioteca Civica Centrale (Via Cittadella 5 - Torino)
INGRESSO GRATUITO (posti limitati)
Prenotazione obbligatoria: eventi@teatroscienza.it

Biblioteche Civiche Torine

BOOKS AND OTHER PRINT

La Brigantessa & Other Activities since Covid

by Rosanna Battigelli

I finished the edits for book 4 for Harlequin and was guest author at a virtual meeting for *La Brigantessa* with the Georgian Bay Book Club on **June 25th**. In August, I wrote book 5 for Harlequin. I also put together costumes for the Montreal actor (Michaela Di Cesare) who would be portraying my heroine Gabriella for a book trailer. In September, she and Montreal videographer Andrew Andreoli went to Mont-Tremblant to get the footage needed for the trailer that the company Castelane would be creating.



On **September 3rd**, my children's publisher (Pajama Press) released a second format (board book) for my book *Pumpkin Orange, Pumpkin Round* (The hardcover edition is still available.)

https://pajamapress.ca/book/pumpkin_orange_pumpkin_round/

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOPCbq7S5VA>

Free Reading Guide for Teachers and Parents (with curriculum guidelines):

https://pajamapress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PumpkinOrangePumpkinRound_TeachingGuide.pdf

On **September 10th**, I was a featured author at Word Up Barrie :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reGrUVHNfOY>

On **September 11th**, I was one of the authors reading at the First Books & Biscotti Open Mic, an AICW event (Association of Italian -Canadian Writers) : <https://youtu.be/Kmy8xq1zilY?t=15>

On **September 13th**, I was the featured author at AGM (Wordstock Sudbury Literary Festival). (I read a story from my upcoming collection *Pigeon Soup & Other Stories* (Inanna Publications, May 2021 release)

On **September 22nd**, I read an excerpt of *La Brigantessa* at the Canadian Authors Association (Toronto Branch) Open Mic.

On **October 3rd**, the two trailers for *La Brigantessa* went live :

Short trailer: (43 sec.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KCqMPAz-Zs>

Long trailer : (2 :25 min.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vmc4f0_Drsk

On **October 3rd**, I read an excerpt of *La Brigantessa* at the North Bay Conspiracy of 3 Literary Series (Open Mic).

In **November** (date to be confirmed), I will be a featured guest in the above-mentioned Series. I will be moderating a panel virtually at the Wordstock Sudbury Literary Festival in early November, and on November 25th, I will be one of four authors featured in a webinar hosted by the Italian Cultural Institute of Montreal entitled: "ONE STEP FORWARD AND TWO STEPS BACK: Writing Historical Fiction and Alternate-History Novels."

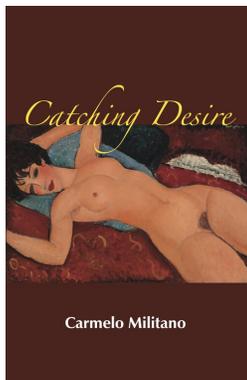


From the trailer of *La Brigantessa*,
by Rosanna Micelotta Battigelli.
Videographer: Andrew Andreoli;
Actor: Michaela Di Cesare

BOOKS AND OTHER PRINT

L'ARTISTA E IL DESIDERIO INAFFERRABILE- Note di lettura.

di Lucia Guidorizzi



Quest'anno ricorre l'anniversario della morte di Amedeo Modigliani, un artista che ha lasciato una traccia indelebile nell'arte del Novecento per la capacità di esprimere con forza e intensità la bellezza nella sua essenza più sensuale ed antica.

Carmelo Militano, poeta canadese di origini italiane che ho avuto la fortuna di conoscere a Cesena nel 2018 in occasione del Festival delle Arti Sorelle, autore di libri di poesie e di prosa, che non ha mai dimenticato le sue radici e l'amore per la sua terra d'origine, ha scritto una straordinaria biografia poetica sulla vita breve ed intensa di questo grande artista prigioniero del suo genio creativo, offrendone un'immagine inconsueta ed originale.

Carmelo Militano è un poeta e come tale ha saputo entrare medianicamente nella dimensione più profonda della vita di Modigliani, vibrando empaticamente con le sue sensazioni ed emozioni. Questo libro si potrebbe definire una sorta di psico-biografia che mette a fuoco il *milieu* culturale da cui proveniva Modi, chiamato così nell'ambiente artistico, indagandone gli aspetti più reconditi connessi alla sua genealogia familiare: l'artista apparteneva ad una ricca famiglia ebraica plurilingue che aveva subito un crack finanziario, i suoi genitori erano atei cosmopoliti e amanti della cultura. Nei primi anni del Novecento si trasferisce a Venezia, per studiare all'Accademia, ma abbandona presto gli studi, lasciandosi permeare dalla sensualità decadente e dalla luce ineguagliabile di questa città che si specchia sull'acqua.

Un poeta che scrive di un pittore è in grado di investigare liricamente la sua essenza più recondita e di comprenderne le più intime ragioni. Carmelo Militano non si limita ad una semplice ricostruzione biografica, ma indaga anche negli astri che ne influenzano il tema natale. Modigliani è nato sotto il segno della Vergine, dominato da Mercurio, per i greci Hermes, lo psicopompo. Nella Cabala, è connesso con la sephiroth Hod, che presiede la sfera delle facoltà mentali e che favorisce l'immaginazione, l'intelligenza e le capacità artistiche. In queste pagine si scopre che Amedeo Modigliani non era soltanto un pittore, ma amava la parola, la filosofia ed in particolare la poesia: era solito declamare nei caffè e nei *saloons* versi di Villon, Baudelaire e Lautremont.

Per poterlo comprendere in profondità, Carmelo Militano si mette sulle sue tracce, visitando Livorno, la sua città d'origine, di cui ci offre in queste pagine immagini intense e vivide, simili a quadri di Hopper, perdendosi nel dedalo delle sue viuzze, lasciandosi permeare da presenze epifaniche. Oltre al legame profondo e sensuale che Modi instaura con ogni città in cui vive, c'è anche quello tormentato e spesso ambivalente col femminile: i suoi amori non furono mai banali, ma spesso permeati da una valenza tragica e fatale, come quello con le poetesse Beatrice Hastings e Anna Achmatova, fino all'ultimo, vissuto con Jeanne Hébuterne, che due giorni dopo la sua morte si suicidò, non desiderando sopravvivergli. In amore, come in ambito artistico, Modigliani appare come un essere bifronte, al pari di Giano: se da una parte ha successo e riconoscimento,



Modigliani e Jeanne Hébuterne, foto di archivio

BOOKS AND OTHER PRINT

dall'altra è dominato da tendenze autodistruttive.

Eppure, questo libro riesce anche ad andare oltre il clichés romantico che associa il genio alla sregolatezza, allo stereotipo dell'artista *maudit*, perché riesce a coglierne il lato oscuro, ma anche a valorizzare quello più luminoso ed positivo dell'artista. La gentilezza e raffinatezza d'animo di Modigliani, la sua sensibilità creativa, il suo totale disinteresse per l'aspetto economico del suo lavoro lo rendono adamantino, permettendogli di andare ogni contraddizione. Egli era capace di esprimere nelle sue opere il massimo della sensualità, ma anche l'ansia e le inquietudini di un'Europa che entrava negli sconvolgimenti del Secolo Breve.

La scrittura di Carmelo Militano è avvincente, ed alternando la prosa alla poesia, racconta, con una straordinaria compenetrazione di stili e di registri narrativi lo sviluppo della poetica pittorica ed esistenziale di questo artista indimenticabile. A volte, queste pagine sono pervase anche da ironiche considerazioni come la citazione di una frase tratta dal romanzo dello scrittore inglese Martin Amis "The information": "Poets don't drive. Never trust a poet at the wheel. If he can drive, distrust the poetry." Non so se Carmelo Militano sappia guidare, ma certamente ha saputo condurre poeticamente e magistralmente questo libro, offrendo un'immagine vivida e sfaccettata della vita di Amedeo Modigliani e della sua espressione artistica.

Nota Editoriale: recensione pubblicata su "Cartesensibili", settembre 2020 ([https://cartesensibili.wordpress.com/about/.](https://cartesensibili.wordpress.com/about/))

MEMBER SHOWCASE

Hunger

by Erminio Neglia

I have been told that this year there may be hunger in the world.
They tell me that there is a drought and a locust plague somewhere
They also inform me that everything is being done.
And while I ponder this information, babies are starving
And the lines begging for food are getting longer
And skeletons go to bed empty.
After a concerted effort with my friends and much musing and rumination
We kneel down and pray: Lord, give us more to eat.

Sonnet for Venera

by Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni

How beautiful to see the world with love,
to face each day with joy and hopefulness,
the pleasure of a smile, token of
a deep, abiding spirit. Such finesse
extends consideration of the world
outwards to places that informed the core
in other generations of the bold,
young, and courageous ones who came before.
Real joy contains the wisdom to discern
the sometimes bitter aftertaste of pain,
to go beyond the suffering and turn
towards what restores the spirit once again.
So, like Sicilian lemons tart and sweet,
one life comprises all to be complete.

© 2018

MEMBER SHOWCASE

DiCiccoPoet

by Caroline Morgan Di Giovanni

Oh he was quite a sight
the leather jacket and the slouching hat
over his sharp eyes
surging into the crusty CanLit tea room
all italian rhythm and
saucy confidence.

It wasn't all illusion
not exactly
the magic act captured
an eager generation

while all the time inside
something else was going on.
Flying deeper into
the end of the century

when the soul emerged
dazed and struggling
those sharp eyes were liberated
no need for hat or collar
no need for any costume
now he was free for flight.

© 2020

MEMBER SHOWCASE

Excerpt from “The Diary of a Stupid Woman”

by Anna Panunto

Dear Diary,

I am on my honeymoon in Quebec City. We're staying only one night because it's really expensive. Our motel room is small, but the walls are nice and bright, and it looks different from my bedroom at home. Oh, my God, my bedroom at home?! What will Mama do with my room? Anyway, the furniture here looks old, but I don't mind, because it reminds me of *nonna's* furniture. It has a funny smell though...

Giovanni is my husband, and he is 25 years old. It feels funny calling him, my husband! He speaks very little English and no French at all, so I have to translate everything for him! This is going to be so hard! I hope that he's a fast learner. Giovanni came to Canada two years ago. He's a brick layer and I heard that he's a real good worker, quick-- fast, which pleases the man he works for. Mama said that I had to marry him because he comes from a good family, honest people and of course we 're *paesani*, which is very important. I don't know why though... I only speak Italian with Mama and some relatives... So, why is being *paesani's* important? Anyway, our wedding was very nice. At first, I was a little nervous, but then after a while, I began to relax. Drinking red wine helped me a lot – the last time I drank red wine was at another wedding! Anyways, it was nice drinking wine... Mama said that ladies don't drink – what does she know?! Anyway, I was really happy when people told me I looked like a princess. My wedding dress was beautiful! And I looked so good! My dress was white, with lace covering my arms, and strings of beige pearls down the back. Mama made it for me, and I'm so lucky, because she's the best seamstress in the world! The other day she told me that I should have the dress cleaned and put away for my own daughter's wedding, someday. Mama thinks I am going to have kids, just like she did, but I don't want to. Is she crazy? I am only eighteen! I want to have some fun first. Maybe, on weekends, my Giovanni will take me to some of the fancy restaurants in town. That would be so romantic! I don't really know much about him, except that he's really cute and loves to work. I love those hazel eyes though –wow! He looks like an actor. Oh, and his strong arms and tanned skin. Today, he got me a red rose... and when he gave it to me, he whispered, “Tu sei la mia bella Rosa” -- Rosa is my name, by the way. Then, he kissed me with his tongue. I love French kissing – it's fun! My sister Mary told me that my first time “doing it” would hurt and that there would be a lot of bleeding. I don't know why she told me that, because it's not true. I mean about the bleeding... She's always been a liar – that Maria. Is she really my sister?

MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

Singing from the Balconies

by Darlene Madott

I was on a train to Vancouver at the age of 26, some four decades ago, when a professor of history, learning about my Italian background, hearing me describe how I had taped my grandmother's voice so that could reproduce her voice phonetically, told me about a professor, Joseph Pivato. "The Namesake" originally published in *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, was one result, as was "Bottled Roses," which first appeared in *Aurora: New Canadian Writing 1978*, and then in *Bottled Roses* the collection of linked short stories, (Oberon, 1985). My membership in the then-nascent organization called the Association of Italian Canadian Writers (A.I.C.W.), over thirty years ago, was another little miracle to arise out of my journey.

On that train ride west, I felt isolated. I thought I was the only one, not knowing of Caterina Edwards and the many Canadian writers of Italian descent who were then working in isolation before the advent of AICW. For over three decades I have watched an explosion of publications and energy by Italian Canadian Writers.

And the conferences: for me, Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Atri Abruzzi, Halifax, Winnipeg...multiplying with wonderful proliferation every second year!

I'll never forget phoning my late father from Atri, Abruzzo, to tell him that the Conference publication that bore his artwork on its cover and inside pages was going to be distributed to the libraries of Italian Universities. Born in Canada, in 1917, he told me that he felt he'd "arrived." And it was on my way home to Canada from Atri, Abruzzo that I borrowed John Calabro's pen, and began sketching out "Invitation to Breaking Bread (The Dark Side of the Periodic Table)" eventually published in *Making Olives and Other Family Secrets (Ripasso)*, 2nd edition. At least two other stories inspired by the Atri conference became a part of *Italian Canadians At Table: A Narrative Feast in Five Courses*, edited by Loretta Gatto-White and Delia De Santis. I hope not to offend the many gifted and professional writers who fill the rosters of our organization and for whom I have an entire personal bookcase in my home, by mentioning here only a few.

With Covid, something remarkable has occurred. No longer do I have to wait for the conferences or the individual book-launches at cultural centers and restaurants, confined in their numbers to local venues. The Association has become a bee-hive of activity and initiatives that now span the globe.

For me, personally, one of the most important initiative has been Shut-Up-And-Write, which has enabled me to augur down into some deeply serious writing. In the safe embrace of my AICW visual family, I can't commit suicide. I can't burst into tears over my sterile writing desk and the devastating contents of my isolated musings. My point: I no longer feel isolated. The Association has helped me feel part of a community, which is not my family, but which is, in so many ways, my chosen and *real* family – my family of writers who, of necessity, understand what writers and artists do, what we do to survive and to foster the survival of others.

MEMBER TESTIMONIALS

Like all organizations, including “the primary family”, there are the inevitable disputes. Those who stand the tallest, to quote P.E. Trudeau, “feel the greatest winds.” Italians have accomplished something huge by being the first to weather the storms of this pandemic. Italians have stood out on their balconies.

For me, personally, AICW offers me something that no other organization, including the Writers’ Union, Collaborative Practice Toronto, the Canadian Bar Association, no organization of which I have been a member for the same three-plus decades has been able to offer: AICW offers me a safe roof under which to shelter my creativity.

For those who would complain: I say, you get out of it what you put into it. For me, the opportunity to listen to new voices, which I do now on a weekly basis, the opportunity to create, without any obligation to release, until I am damn ready and willing to release, and yet to feel nurtured at the same time – these are invaluable gifts of this association.

AICW is offering us all a wonderful opportunity.

I am laying out a challenge: let each one of us, who feel fortunate enough, blessed enough to be able to contribute, let us bring, each, a new member into the fold. To quote an old Yiddish expression: “What can’t change, die.” I think Italians and AICW have amply demonstrated our ability to do this. I intend in 2020 and going forward into 2021, to offer to sponsor at least one new membership.

ZOOM us up, Scottie! Take it away, Fabrizio! Let’s get out there and sing from our balconies! Thank you AICW, from the bottom of my *profondo* heart. Thank you for being there for me personally, and for us collectively, and to our individual organizers and volunteers, for not abandoning your posts on the balconies in this time of great need.

Grazie,

Darlene Madott

www.DarleneMadott.com



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