

# VILLAROSSA VOICE

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY IN FLORENCE NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF

## Celebrating Horne's *Botticelli*

Stephanie Kaplan  
FIA Graduate

Arcadia. Immortalized by Virgil as an earthly paradise, it was known even to the Renaissance as a pleasant, idyllic locale. But why was Arcadia one of the many powerful images present in a conference dedicated to new research on Sandro Botticelli? No, Botticelli never painted an image evoking this classical, tranquil setting, although antique influences on Botticelli were a foremost factor in several of the papers. Nor is it from a passage in Herbert Horne's notable monograph on Botticelli. It was Louis Waldman, professor of art history at the University of Texas at Austin and Assistant Director for Programs at Harvard's Villa I Tatti, who planted the

image of Arcadia into the minds of his audience when the well-known scholar opened his paper with words of thanks and affection for the Villa Rossa, and described coming to SUF as giving him "A feeling that this [the Villa Rossa] is a special kind of Arcadia." The three day conference, entitled *Herbert Horne's Botticelli: The Scholar and the Painter* was a remarkably successful endeavor organized by Harvard University's Villa I Tatti, the Fondazione Herbert P. Horne, and Syracuse University in Florence to commemorate the centennial of Horne's revered monograph on the artist Sandro Botticelli. The conference began at I Tatti Thursday evening with Caroline Elam's enlightening talk placing Herbert Horne within the context of the Edwardian art world, before moving to the Villa Rossa for a day of captivating papers presenting new research on Botticelli. The conference concluded on Saturday with an illuminating series of lectures on Horne and his time held at the Fondazione Herbert P. Horne.

Chaired by Alessandro Nova, director of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, the morning session featured papers by three Syracuse University in Florence professors. First was Jonathan Nelson, renowned for his work on both Botticelli and Filippino Lippi, whose aptly titled paper addressed "What is a 'Botticelli' or a 'Filippino'? Problems of Authorship in Renaissance Art." Nelson's discussion of particular works by Botticelli and Filippino Lippi raised the important question of authorship—namely, does a work commissioned to Botticelli, and designed by Botticelli, but executed by

See Botticelli, page 2



Herbert Horne's  
*Botticelli*  
The Scholar and the Painter

A Conference to Celebrate  
the 100th Anniversary  
of a Landmark Monograph

October 9-11, 2008

The Harvard University Center  
for Italian Renaissance Studies 'Villa I Tatti'  
Syracuse University in Florence  
Fondazione Herbert P. Horne

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Filippino belong in a monograph on Botticelli? Jonathan Nelson encouraged his audience not only to consider modern views of authorship, but presented Renaissance views as well, addressing issues of originality and workshop practices. Moreover, Nelson argued convincingly for a greater acceptance of images such as tapestries that were designed by Botticelli, suggesting they too belong in discussions of Botticelli's work.

Next to speak was distinguished SUF professor Rab Hatfield. A procession of renowned, respected art historians have examined and addressed Botticelli's celebrated *Primavera*, and each has identified the three dancing girls as the Three Graces. But Hatfield, in his paper entitled "Some Misidentified Figures in Botticelli's Works" proposed that those key figures had been misidentified for centuries and were actually the Hours. Combining his visuals with Renaissance writers and his own powerful prose, Hatfield's paper addressed additional—and often misidentified—figures before concluding that it was an image not about love, but about Spring, as its title has always suggested. Of his groundbreaking proposal, Hatfield explained that it was like swinging for the fences—you either hit a home run, or strike out. It was clear from the applause following his paper that Hatfield had achieved the former.

The final paper of the morning session was delivered by SUF's Director—and current I Tatti fellow—Barbara Deimling, whose eloquent paper "Who Tames the Centaur? The Identification of Botticelli's Heroine" was so well received that Alessandro Nova observed "It's very difficult to ask questions when you agree with everything." Deimling's precise examination of the female figure and her attributes in Botticelli's *Camilla and the Centaur* would seem to demonstrate that the female figure is indeed Camilla and not Minerva, as previous scholars had argued. Deimling further used this conclusive identification to suggest that it was commissioned as a wedding present for the bride of Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco de Medici, with Camilla representing a model for the bride, as she was a figure in mythology who exemplified virtuous, chaste behavior.

The enthusiastic response that was expressed by the audience during each question-and-answer session revealed the magnitude of the subject matter addressed by the presenters. After each of the day's speakers, the questions of the listeners clearly illustrated that the presentations made them ponder, as each paper brought forth new and exciting information. The appeal of the subject was evidenced in the diverse audience, as the SUF community of students, professors, and

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Photography: Francesco Guazzelli

This page: Top to bottom, Jonathan Nelson, Rab Hatfield, and Barbara Deimling present their papers at the conference; Right, Antonella Francini, Louis Wadman, Barbara Deimling, and Rab Hatfield confer during the lunch break

Opposite page: Top to bottom, Antonella Francini and Cristina Acidini; Conference attendees listened intently throughout the presentations

People often ask, 'is there still anything new to say about Botticelli?' The papers presented at SUF showed that in a wide range of topics, there are new questions and new answers.



staff sat side by side with members of the general public, drawn in perhaps by the beauty of Botticelli's art, as well as greatly respected scholars, no doubt intrigued to hear of the new discoveries made by the speakers. As Jonathan Nelson observed, "People often ask, 'is there still anything new to say about Botticelli?'" The papers presented at SUF showed that in a wide range of topics, there are new questions and new answers. These help create a new image of Botticelli." Cristina Acidini, the Superintendent of the Polo Museale Fiorentino and chair of the afternoon session, opened with a similar observation, noting that Botticelli's major works continue to excite scholars. The first speaker of the afternoon, Louis Waldman, followed his delightful ode to SUF with his paper, "Botticelli's Unknown Patrons: New Discoveries from the Florentine Archives." Waldman looked especially at Botticelli's *Pentecost* and used both the artwork and the words that remain to us—those of the 1505 contract for the piece—the only known contract for a Botticelli work, which Waldman himself discovered. His presentation was a powerful reminder that Botticelli's later workshop should not be ignored, as the most expressionistic works to come out of it, even if not painted wholly by the master's own hand, present a new, vigorous aspect of Botticelli rarely seen. The final lecture of the day was given by SUF professor Antonella Francini. Her exquisite paper, entitled "Horne and an English 'fable' for Botticelli" combined art and literature, as she explored Horne's unpublished but highly significant poem "A Fable for a Portrait by Botticelli." Although Horne published one collection of poetry and wrote dozens of poems, this particular piece, discovered by Francini, is the only known poem the scholar wrote about Botticelli. After introducing the prevailing romantic view of Botticelli in the late nineteenth century, Francini presented Horne's work as a poem about a model in search of his portrait and a portrait in search of his model. Reminding her audience of the cultural acceptance of and Botticelli's predilection for jests, Francini went on to propose that the single poem was not just about a portrait by Botticelli, but also a portrait of the artist, making it into a "poetical jest." Francini took her analysis further, suggesting that there was a final portrait to be found among Herbert Horne's words: namely, a self-portrait. While the Villa Rossa called to mind an image of Arcadia—one of a haven of joy and tranquility for which Barbara Deimling and Jonathan Nelson, the two SUF organizers of the conference, must be commended—the presentations of new research on Botticelli resulted in an audience who left not only with feelings of delight at the quality of the papers, but also with excitement, due to the innovative and captivating nature of the studies. If Arcadia was a place of simple, rustic pleasures, the Villa Rossa has surpassed it with this landmark conference, which engaged such an expansive audience while creating an atmosphere that was simultaneously idyllic and erudite.

## Ready, Set...SWAP

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Walking into a Milky Way galaxy filled with cartoony imagery and anthropomorphic animals gave art enthusiasts and spectators alike a small taste of the artistic exchange that has been in the works for ten years between Syracuse University in Florence (SUF) and Gettysburg College.

Sebastian Di Natale  
Gettysburg College

The *Selected Works by Art Professors*, or *SWAP* exhibit, which opened October 9, was received with great enthusiasm and intrigue. The SUF Art Gallery was packed with students, faculty, Italian and American artists, and fellow Florentine art supporters.

Barbara Deimling, Director of SUF, opened the Artist's Lecture as she welcomed SUF art and non-art majors alike: "This is a moment of celebrating the relationship with Gettysburg by bringing artists with different points of view and amazing works of art to Florence. It's really a contribution not only to the school, but also to Florence."

Mary Ellen Countryman, the Consul General, in her congratulations for the exhibit, stated, "SUF is a model program which enriches the whole person, both academically and culturally." The exhibit showcases the works from Gettysburg College faculty members: Jim Agard, Brent Blair, Peter Morgan, Alan Paulson, Mark Warwick, and John Winship—all successful artists in their own right. "The motivation is a celebration of SUF's ten year partnership with Gettysburg College, through which 200 students have attended the SUF program," said Exhibit Coordinator Devorah Block.

The related Artist's Lecture prior to the opening featured Agard and Warwick. Agard quipped, "What's great about doing this exhibit is that you have a captive audience, listening to you talk about your own work. That's kinda fun."

"It's interesting to see what other professors are doing," Warwick said, "It's also great to see students that had no idea about the pieces I do." Added Agard, "I'm really excited about seeing my students from Gettysburg here, as I'm sure they are excited to see me here in Florence."

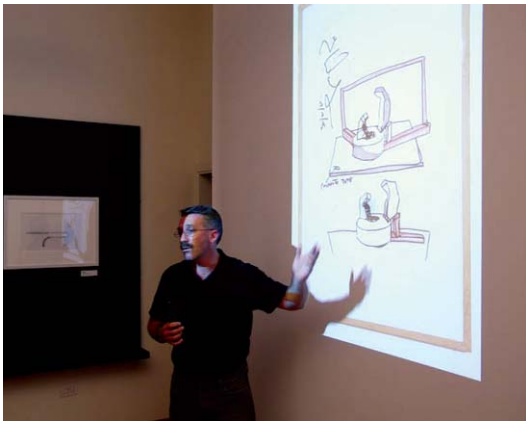
When asked how exhibiting in Florence affected him, Warwick stated, "It affects me in so many ways. It's interesting, because most of what I am doing comes from Florence. The proportion-work, the methods—all were created here. In a way, I'm coming back to where my art form began. It's very empowering."

More specific goals of the exchange include not just exposing students to their professor's art, but also giving them an alternative to the ever-present Florentine style of artwork.

Explained Warwick, "I chose most of my pieces to show based on their significance to Florence and Italy, in order to contrast the Renaissance fashion which defines the Florentine art." "The exhibit offers an invaluable experience for students. The Gallery has offered a myriad of art in a more intimate environment to serve as a different medium compared to the Renaissance-art-surrounded Florence," said Block.

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Gettysburg College had already showcased the works of SUF studio arts faculty Marco Fallani, Francesco Guazzelli, Kathy Knippel, Nick Kraczyna, Kirsten Stromberg, and Stefania Talini in March of this year.

Many SUF students in attendance couldn't help but marvel at what the exhibit had to offer. Said Liz Vernal, "This exhibit epitomizes why I am an art major—it can inspire anyone to create something beautiful out of just an idea."

"I don't consider myself an 'art person,'" Gettysburg College Senior Geoffrey Norris said, "but after hearing that these were professors from Gettysburg, I thought I would take a look. All I can say is that I'm a little disappointed that I'm graduating this year, because I would have loved to take a course with one of these professors. The whole exhibit is really awesome; I especially enjoyed the Milky Way piece!"

Upon seeing the several sculptures of Warwick and Agard, painting major Alexandra Palomino, Fordham University, asked, "Is it too late to switch to a sculpture major?"

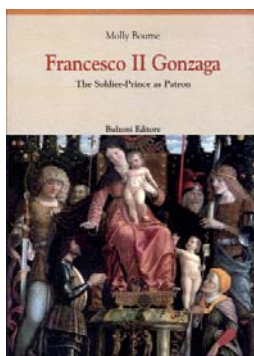
# Faculty Watch

## Antonella Battaglia and Loredana Tarini



In the Summer of 2008 Antonella Battaglia and Loredana Tarini published two Italian language books. *Praticamente dimmi* (a workbook of exercise and activities) and *Dimmi* (a manuale for communication), both geared toward elementary level students. While the former is an activity book with grammar charts, *Dimmi* is a textbook that offers students the opportunity to apply language skills acquired in the classroom to real life situations through a communicative approach. Activities foster interaction among the students where they assume an active role in their language development. The two books stemmed from the unconditional dedication and cooperation of students and the authors. Students in fact posed as characters in the book, providing the authors with their photographs and their input. The authors wish to thank all those who helped them with this project.

## Molly Bourne



Molly Bourne's book, *Francesco II Gonzaga: The Soldier-Prince as Patron* was recently published by Bulzoni Editore (2008). In this text, Molly provides the first comprehensive study of the artistic patronage of Francesco II Gonzaga, Fourth Marquis of Mantua from 1484 to 1519. Although it was during his reign that the Gonzaga court confirmed its position as one of the great cultural centers of Renaissance Italy, Francesco's celebrated consort, Isabella d'Este, has received virtually full credit for this achievement. Obscured by the long cultural shadow cast by his wife, Mantua's fourth marquis has traditionally been portrayed as a professional soldier and avid breeder of horses who was uninterested in the arts. Bourne challenges this profile, using archival evidence to reconstruct Francesco's numerous commissions for sacred and secular works of art, few of which survive today, but that included religious and residential architecture, paintings, sculpture, and the decorative arts, demonstrating that artistic patronage in Renaissance Mantua was, in fact, an enterprise shared between both rulers.

## Barbara Deimling



SUF Director Barbara Deimling is on research leave this semester, having been awarded the prestigious Craig Hugh Smyth Research Fellowship at the Villa I Tatti, the Harvard Center for Renaissance Studies in Florence, Italy. The Craig Hugh Smyth Research Fellowship is designed for scholars in any field of Italian Renaissance studies whose full-time occupations do not allow them the research time that is normally enjoyed by university academics. Fellows are selected on the basis of a record of distinction and an application to carry out a project of advanced research in Renaissance art history, literature, history, or musicology. Deimling's research will have as its focus Mary Magdalene as represented in a fourteenth-century fresco cycle in a small, rural church near Bolzano, Italy.

# Faculty Watch

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## Marco Fallani

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This past June Marco Fallani showed his work, *Le Gioconde*, in the exhibit “Re-Thinking Mona Lisa” held at the Stazione Leopolda in Florence. The exhibit focused on the *Mona Lisa* for the Gherardini handbag company, inspired by a theory that *Mona Lisa* was a member of the Gherardini family. Proceeds from the exhibit and sales from the works of art will go towards restoration of artwork at the Uffizi.

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## Antonella Francini

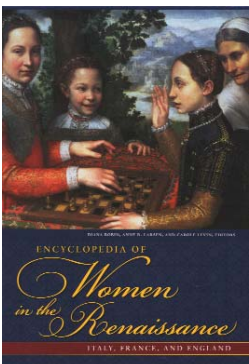
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Antonella Francini was a fellow in residence for six weeks at the John F. Kennedy Institute at the Freie Universitat of Berlin last summer as a recipient of one of their research grants. There, she developed a project on the relationship between text and image and the role of collective memory in the formation of cultural patterns. Prior to this, in May she gave a lecture on translation entitled “Tradurre traduzioni. Dall’originale all’italiano” at the Università Statale in Milan.

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## Sara Matthews Grieco

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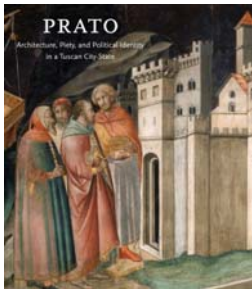


In the second of a three year appointment on the Awards Committee of the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women (SSEMW), Sara Matthews-Grieco acted on the committee for collaborative books. The award for the best collaborative project published in 2007 has been given to the *Encyclopedia of Women in the Renaissance: Italy, France and England* edited by Diana Robin, Anne R. Larsen and Carole Levin [Santa Barbara (CA), Denver (CO), Oxford (UK): ABC-CLIO, 2007], while an honorable mention has been awarded to the volume *Teaching Other Voices: Women and Religion in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil Jr. [Chicago (IL): University of Chicago Press, 2007].

The Society for the Study of Early Modern Women is a network of scholars who meet annually, sponsor sessions at conferences, maintain a listserv and website, and give awards for outstanding scholarship. SSEMW welcomes scholars and teachers from any discipline who study women and their contributions to the cultural, political, economic, or social spheres of the early modern period, or whose work on this era includes attention to gender and representations of women.

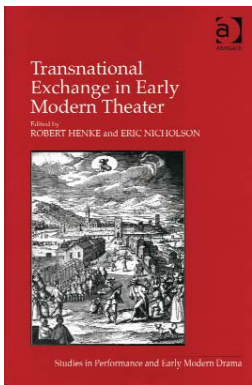
# Faculty Watch

## Alick McLean



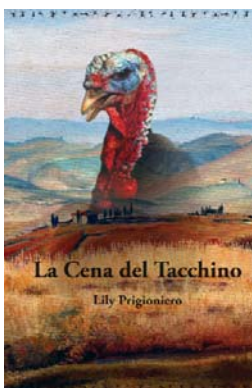
Alick McLean's book on Prato, *Architecture, Piety, and Political Identity in a Tuscan City-State*, has been recently published by Yale University Press and will be available in December. The book recounts the historical developments of the Italian commune of Prato during the period between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. In telling the story of Prato's origins, Alick McLean considers the planning, art, architecture, politics, faith, and daily life of Prato and its citizens, showing how major historical events and trends in the Italian middle ages were experienced within the architecture and streetscapes of this particular place. Along with the text, the book contains 32 color and 102 black-and-white photographs and illustrations, many of which were shot or drawn by the author.

## Eric Nicholson



In collaboration with composer Elizabeth Luttinger and the creative team of the opera production, Eric Nicholson is currently making final revisions to the libretto of *The Enchanted Dragon*. This children's opera-ballet will have its world premiere this coming April, at the Teatro della Pergola Salonicino, as part of the fiftieth anniversary celebration of Syracuse University in Florence. Aided by SUF colleagues Barbara Deimling and Vittoria Tettamanti, Eric is also completing a children's book version of the opera, which will be illustrated by Syracuse VPA professor (and director of *The Enchanted Dragon*) Alex Koziara. This past June, Ashgate Press released *Transnational Exchange in Early Modern Theater*. The volume, that includes Eric's chapter on Italian actresses and Shakespeare's Ophelia, was co-edited by Nicholson with Robert Henke. In the same month, Eric attended an international conference on "Theatre Between East and West" in Telç, Czech Republic, where he gave a paper on pastoral comedy entitled "Et in Arcadia the Dirty Brides." With this semester's SUF acting company *i Giullari di Syracuse*, Eric is starting rehearsals and production work on *The Mandragola*, the classic Renaissance comedy by Niccolò Machiavelli. The play will be performed on 11 December, as part of the SUF Student Day events.

## Lily Prigioniero



*La Cena del Tacchino*, a novel by Lily Prigioniero, was awarded publication by the *Università degli Studi di Siena's* department of Letters and Philosophy for their post-graduate program "L'Arte di Scrivere" (Manni Editori, 2007). The story's protagonist, an artist from the U.S. raising a family in Italy, crosses the modern histories of two continents by glancing into the anthropological transformation of the old world into the new. The three connecting time-lines interact with irony and touch upon cultural differences, immigration, xenophobia, the effects of war, the Chernobyl disaster and the importance of viewing life's simplicity while walking in mortality's path.

The novel is written directly in the author's second language as a linguistic experiment combining American narrative with a unique Italian voice. It was a finalist for the literary award *Penna d'Autore* (Torino), and has won the *Premio Selezione* for fiction of the "Premio Letterario Internazionale Archè" in Rome.

## Debora Spini



September was a busy month for Debora Spini. On September 2, in Trento, Debora gave a lecture to a mixed audience of students coming from all over Europe in the framework of the IX International Jean Monnet Summer School 2008. The lecture was a brief summary of her research on the topic of post national civil society.

September 17-19 Spini participated in the annual conference of Garnet in Bordeaux, France. Garnet is a “Network of Excellence” promoted by the seventh framework program of the European Union. The objective of such networks is to provide European scholars with a forum to meet and profit from each others’ research and work. Spini presented a paper in a panel organized by the Jointly Research Group on non-state actors in global governance, entitled “Global Civil Society: Power and Legitimacy.”

The volume *Il sogno e la politica: da Roosevelt a Obama* edited by Spini and Margherita Fontanella has just come out as of October 7. This book features a selection of speeches of democrat leaders in the post bellum period, with two introductory essays by the editors.

Debora’s *Parole per un mondo globale*, edited with Andrea Giuntini and Piero Meucci, was released in June of this year.

## Kirsten Stromberg



Kirsten Stromberg recently facilitated a graduate workshop for the “Visible Memories Conference” in Syracuse, NY. The conference, interdisciplinary in nature, brought together artists, public memories scholars, historians, architects, philosophers and social scientists to explore the intersections between visual, culture and memory studies with particular focus on the ways in which memories are manifested and experienced in visible, material, or spatial form. For more information: <http://publicmemories.syr.edu/>

## Vittoria Tettamanti

This past September the Florentine *Circolo Didattico XV* invited Vittoria Tettamanti to facilitate a seminar for local elementary school English language teachers. During the seminar, entitled “Storytelling: metodologia e sue applicazioni pratiche,” Vittoria presented models and techniques she developed to train SUF volunteers who visit the Florentine elementary school English classes. This opportunity was important for Vittoria, in that it allowed her to share with other Italian colleagues her methods and research on storytelling and its use in language courses for children.

### SUF Faculty Leave Program Approved

Syracuse University Vice Chancellor Eric Spina has approved a faculty leave program to provide full-time SUF faculty members the opportunity to pursue academic projects that will enhance their teaching at SUF. The length of the leave will be one semester, with one faculty member on leave in any specific semester.

The proposal, in the works for some time, had been approved by the Academic Council, was then forwarded to the Faculty Affairs Committee for its consideration, and was then approved by Vice Chancellor and Provost Eric Spina.

Says SUF Director Barbara Deimling, “Enabling full time SUF faculty to take a leave to pursue academic projects that will enhance their teaching at SUF contributes to the University’s Scholarship in Action in the areas of Faculty Excellence and Scholarly Distinction, as well as Engagement with the World.”

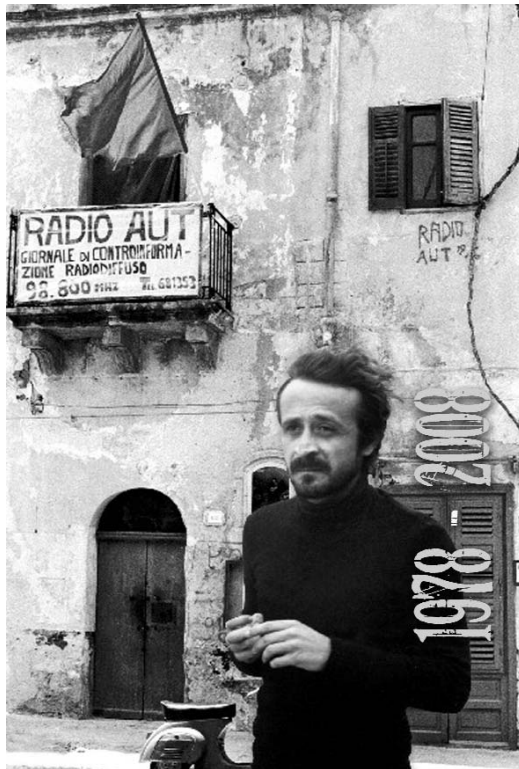
Deimling continues, “I wish to thank Jon Booth and Don Saleh for all their efforts in making this a reality. This is an important step in acknowledging the crucial role that SUF faculty plays in delivering a program of the highest academic level within an international setting, and it shows the dedication of SU towards its colleagues abroad.”

## Will the Real Senator Please Stand up?

On October 6, professors and students alike crowded into the lecture hall of SUF's Villa Rossa. This night's event was a lecture by Prof. Tom Behan from the University of Kent on Peppino Impastato, entitled, *Defiance: The Story of One Man Who Stood Up to the Sicilian Mafia*.

Kathleen Dahill  
Mount Holyoke  
University

Behan began his talk with a story about the two most powerful men in Sicily going into a back-room at a ladies clothing store to decide what the charge for health care would be for the regional Sicilian health clinic. He used this example of two men making a decision that would affect thousands of people to springboard into the many different ways the Mafia work in Italy and why he and others have chosen the story of Peppino Impastato as a figurehead of anti-Mafia action. Behan has written multiple books about Impastato and was particularly inspired



by the movie *I cento passi* (*One Hundred Steps*), a film about Impastato's life and struggle against the Mafia in his Sicilian hometown of Cinisi. My peers found one of the most interesting points of the lecture to be that the only way Impastato failed in defying the Mafia was his lack of success in regionalizing and nationalizing his mode of anti-Mafioso fighting.

Behan went on to point out however, that Peppino Impastato used a few unique and important tactics that separated him from everyone else in the world who has gone against an organized crime group. Impastato brought people together, explaining to them the idea of strength in numbers—a tactic which created a unified threat to the Mafia that couldn't be dealt with in a back alley. He also used the radio as a political rallying point in this part of the world that still used the radio as their main mode of communication. And finally, Impastato understood that he had to sever familial bonds in order to fight the Mafia; a thing unheard of in Italy to this day.

Interestingly, Behan revealed that Impastato's family described him as being a very isolated person and difficult to get along with. These are unfortunate characteristics for a hero, but a necessity, according to Behan, stemming from his chosen path of work.

Tom Behan left our audience with a rather extreme outlook, perhaps to spur us into impassioned action like Peppino Impastato. He assured us that the Mafia is still as strong as ever and in control of many public companies and projects. The Mafia even makes up a great portion of the Italian Senate. Behan also proved to us that other countries are just as corrupt, citing that a large percentage of British politicians have been arrested at one point or other for the very laws they work to uphold. He brought the story of Impastato to the English-speaking world for a reason: this world will arguably always be a corrupt one but as long as people like Peppino Impastato have the courage to fight, so should we. I for one was inspired to get up and do something, or at least to write and reflect about someone who did.

## Palladio and the Design of Battle

On the 500 year anniversary of Palladio's birth, Guido Beltramini, Director of the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio, delivered the SUF Fall 2008 Inaugural Lecture, "Palladio and the Design of Battle," a convincing investigation into Palladio's fascination with the military tactics of antiquity, and the architectural or intellectual implications of that fascination. In 1575 Andrea Palladio, one of the most influential architects in architecture's long history, published a rather unexpected historical account: *The Wars of Julius Caesar*. To, with, and from this text, Palladio constructed 42 plates of complex and engaging military formations set in the landscape of ancient history. Of the 42 plates, 38 would not have been considered "architectural" at the time. What was Palladio's interest in battle tactics and their depiction?

James Utterback  
Syracuse University

Photography: Caroline Elio



Palladio set in place a framework for keying image and text together for a complementary and interactive experience, citing image alongside the text and citing text within the image.

Four of Palladio's plates illustrate Julius Caesar's victory at the Siege of Alesia: Roman legions, organized in two rigid rows of dark rectangles slowly advance and overtake the Gallic hill in what is immediately understood as a geometric solution to an organizational problem. The massing of different legions in an organization that anticipates time and movement across a field is evocative of present day architectural theory, yet Palladio's own interest in undertaking such a scene is elusive beyond an evident pleasure in the abstraction of geometries and their possible appropriation into the discipline of architecture. Beltramini demonstrated Palladio's playful but ultimately problematic transdisciplinary transposition of a battle formation from Battista Valle's, *Vallo* (1524) into a villa featured in Palladio's second book written in 1570. The plan of Palladio's unbuilt villa and that of the military formation in *Vallo* are identical in their axis of symmetry, geometry, and spatial relationships. The form in both instances is composed of two half-circles facing outwards from opposite sides of a square. The similarities are remarkable but the architecture, Beltramini agrees, is functionally less than convincing. Nonetheless, the impression military diagrams have had on Palladio's organizational thinking is clear.

Beltramini also keenly used *The Wars of Julius Caesar* as an opportunity to delve deeper into the cultural, social, and intellectual background of Palladio and to suggest an ulterior interest in his execution of these depictions. Beltramini highlighted Palladio's intellectual relationship to authors from Vitruvius to Machiavelli, as well as made the case for a delightful connection between Palladio and printmaker Albrecht Durer woodcuts were didactic in both their birds-eye perspective (used by Palladio in several battle etchings), and in their method which emphasized mass-production and the opportunity for publication.

Beltramini argued that this collection of influence enabled Palladio to produce plates for Vitruvius's seminal 1st C BCE publication *The Ten Books on Architecture*, Polybius' 2nd C BCE *Tactics*, and *The Wars of Julius Caesar* in innovative and revolutionary ways. Palladio might have realized an opportunity to assert the importance of visual depictions can play in association with written description to convey complex information systems. And indeed, Palladio's work illuminates the written word. Palladio develops his plates not only with historical (text-based) accuracy but with implied time and motion, enabling an immediate comprehension that the written word cannot provide.

Furthermore, as in his architecture, the organizational strategies for combining text and image is rationally and intuitively conceived to great effect. Palladio set in place a framework for keying image and text together for a complementary and interactive experience, citing image alongside the text and citing text within the image. The result was a dialogue which brought both written word and graphic information forward together.

Beltramini's lecture incited a hum of activity among students and professors, a testament to its profound implications on our understanding of Palladio's work. Perhaps, most impressively, it reminds us of the continued importance Palladio continues to play today as architectural theory investigates trans-disciplinarity and continues to engage the problem of visualizing complex information systems.



From left to right: Option II students Diana Compito, Robert DeSimone, Sebastian DiNatale, Emily Herakovich, Alexandra Mikros, Jocelyn Nelson, Alexandra Pagano, Lauren Tilger, Sarah March

## Option II Program Offers Students Italian and International Enrichment

As well as teaching students about Italian culture, one of the central goals of SUF is to offer an exceptional Italian language program. Option II, a ten-week intensive language program for students who are majoring in Italian or have studied at least four semesters of Italian, provides students with a full-immersion experience in the study of the Italian language, enhancing both speaking and writing skills by enrolling stu-

dents in the *Centro per Stranieri* at the University of Florence. Current Option II student Bobby DeSimone commented, “The *Centro* offers an all-encompassing way to learning Italian that American-based schooling simply cannot provide. Totally immersing yourself in an atypical environment where the only commonality amongst peoples is the Italian language necessitates becoming more than just familiar with the language.” Not only does the *Centro* give students an Italian-only mentality, but it also provides a diverse learning environment that places SUF students among peers throughout the world, representing over 10 different countries. Another Option II student, Diana Compito, currently enrolled in the *superiore* level, said, “The teacher bases the conversations in class on the notion that almost everyone is from a different country, which ensures soliciting questions highlighting the differences and similarities between the myriad of countries represented, ranging from topics such as school systems to types of governments.”



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

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Discovery Florence First-year students vogue it up in the campus garden. From left to right: Luis Torrens (Freshman peer advisor), Isabel Becerra, Tyra Jeffries, Darren Cole, Alex Fay, Amy Kleine (First Year Forum professor). Front row: Mercedes Garcia, Madriqueka Brooks, Kelly Baug, Jonathan Nwosu.