

Press Release: Sept. 9, 2014

OUT OF DOORS ***Poet Emanuel Carnevali in Italy and America***

A Symposium with Franco Buffoni, Barbara Carnevali,
Achille Varzi and Robert Viscusi
Organized by Barbara Carnevali

Friday, October 3, 2014; 2:00 pm

Columbia University
The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America
1161 Amsterdam Avenue
(South of 118th Street)
New York, NY 10027
Register at www.italianacademy.columbia.edu



1:45 pm Coffee

2:00 pm **Barbara Faedda** (Acting Director, Italian Academy): Introduction

2:15 pm **Robert Viscusi** (Brooklyn College)

Emanuel Carnevali in the context of American poetry and immigrant poetry

2:45 pm **Barbara Carnevali** (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales)

Family history and the recovery of papers in Chicago

3:00 pm **Franco Buffoni** (Università di Cassino)

On Carnevali's poetry

3:30 pm **Achille Varzi** (Columbia)

All the shadows / whisper of the sun

Immigrant poet **Emanuel Carnevali** (1897–1942) “became the first Italian writer to make a significant, if short-lived, impact on modern American poetry,” says critic Dana Gioia. In his poetry and prose, Carnevali prized immediacy of expression and vivid depictions of suffering. Born in Florence, he immigrated to the U.S. just before World War I; he held a series of menial jobs in New York City before joining literary circles whose ranks included William Carlos Williams, Kay Boyle, Lola Ridge, and Robert McAlmon. While Carnevali rose to prominence partly by criticizing older, established poets including William Carlos Williams and Ezra Pound, still Williams praised Carnevali for being “wide, Wide, WIDE open. He is out of doors. He does not look through a window.” Scholar Dennis Barone argues that “Carnevali remains an almost mythological figure. He and his work resist categorization, as he had a conflictual relationship with so many things: Modernism, America, and Italy among them.”

In 1919 Carnevali became associate editor of *Poetry*, a magazine – established in Chicago in 1912 by Harriet Monroe during the Chicago Renaissance – that published early works by T.S. Eliot, H.D., Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, Edna St. Vincent Millay and others. Carnevali held the position for only six months: while in Chicago, he became seriously ill with encephalitis lethargica, which caused him to shake uncontrollably. He was hospitalized and eventually returned to Italy, where he kept up

correspondence with Williams and Boyle until his death in 1942.

Carnevali's collections frequently include selections from his poetry, prose, and criticism. *A Hurried Man* (1925) was the only volume published during his lifetime; posthumous collections include *The Autobiography of Emanuel Carnevali* (1967; compiled and introduced by Kay Boyle), *Fireflies* (1970), and *Furnished Rooms* (2006, edited by Dennis Barone).

Speaker Bios

Franco Buffoni, born in Gallarate (Varese) in 1948, is a full-time professor of Comparative Literature at the Università di Cassino. A poet and translator, Buffoni has published several collections of poems, and from 1989 onwards he has directed the journal of theory and practice of poetic translation, *Testo a Fronte*. In 1999, he published a large collection of translations of English poetry entitled *Songs of Spring*. Buffoni has been published in several anthologies of contemporary Italian poetry, and is the recipient of various literary prizes, including the Premio Sandro Penna (1991), Premio Montale (1997), and the Premio Mondello (1999). His poems have been translated into Dutch, English, French, German, and Spanish.

Barbara Carnevali, a relative of Emanuel Carnevali, received her Ph.D. in Philosophy with Honors from the Università di Urbino in Italy, and her M.A. in Philosophy with Honors from the Scuola Normale di Pisa. She has served as faculty at Università del Piemonte Orientale, and, currently, is *Maître de conférences* at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).

Achille Varzi is Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University. A graduate of the University of Trento (Italy), he received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Toronto (Canada). His main research interests are in logic, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language. He is an editor of *The Journal of Philosophy*, a subject editor of the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and an associate or advisory editor of several philosophy journals in the USA and in Europe. He also writes for the general public and contributes regularly to several Italian newspapers. For a list of his books and other publications, please see his personal page at <http://www.columbia.edu/~av72>.

Robert Viscusi is Professor of English and executive officer of the Wolfe Institute for the Humanities at Brooklyn College. The author of seven books and many scholarly articles, Viscusi has won an American Book award for his novel *Astoria*, the Premio Giuseppe Acerbi for his book *Buried Caesars and Other Secrets of Italian American Writing*, and the Brooklyn College Faculty Creative Writing Award for his poem *Ellis Island*. Viscusi is the editor of the American edition of Francesco Durante's anthology *Italoamericana: Literature of the Great Migration, 1880-1943* (Fordham, 2014). *Ellis Island* is published in English by Bordighera Press, New York, and in a bilingual Italian/English edition by abrigliasciolta editore, Varese.

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