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# La Voce della Dante

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Published by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington (DAS) <http://www.danteseattle.org/DAS>

October 2007

## **October English Program: Bridges of Italy**

*by Sam Ciapanna*

Wednesday, October 10th, 7:30 - 9:00 PM  
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle  
Pre-Dante pasta, 6:30 - 7:30 PM.

*A bridge is a structure spanning and providing passage over a river, chasm, road, or the like; connecting two adjacent elements, activities or conditions.*



**L**ong time Dante member and former president, Anita Bingaman, will be our speaker this evening as she presents some of the many beautiful photographs she has taken of bridges throughout Northern Italy.

The process of photographing the bridges of Northern Italy became a bridge of sorts for Anita, allowing her to finally find a way to span the gap between just being a tourist and being an active participant in an adventure and to connect to the places and the people where she traveled. It also gave her another way to see the variety that is Italy.

Her collection includes photographs of bridges from the Medieval Ages to Modern times in cities from "A" (Abenga) to "Z" (Zuccarello) which stretch from the Ligurian Sea to the Adriatic Sea across the northern part of Italy. It will be our pleasure to welcome Anita as she shares her photographs, stories, and observations with us.

## **October Italian Program: First Tango at Dante**

*by Sam Ciapanna*

Wednesday, October 24th, 7:30 - 9:00 PM  
Headquarters House, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle  
Antipasti and Social: 7:00 PM

**P**atrizia Lucinetti will be speaking to us in Italian about Argentina. Born in Buenos Aires in 1957, she moved to Italy when she was 19 years old to study at the University of Milan, where she graduated with a *Dottorato in Filosofia* in 1987. After graduation, Patrizia moved to Seattle where she earned a M.A. in Romance Languages and has taught Italian for six years at the University of Washington.

Since no discussion on Argentina would be complete without the Tango and it is impossible to simply discuss such a passionate dance, Tina Ferrari and her Argentine-born partner, Alejandro Gee, will be demonstrating the Argentine Tango. Tina recently returned to Seattle after 6 months in Umbria where she studied at the University for Foreigners in Perugia. About five years ago, Tina discovered Argentine Tango - or better yet, as often happens, the Tango discovered her. She was a devoted student of Eva Lucero and Patricio Touceda of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and recently has performed several times at the Buenos Aires Grill in Seattle.

This should be an enlightening and entertaining evening no matter what your level of Italian comprehension is - even more so if you are willing to get up and dance!

## Upcoming Events

### October English Program

**Anita Bingaman**

Wednesday, October 10th

5:30-6:30; Dinner preparation,

6:30; Dinner, 7:30; Meeting

Headquarters House

See page 1

### October Italian Program

**Patrizia Lucinetti**

Wednesday, October 24th

Antipasti and Social; 7- 7:30pm

Meeting; 7:30;

Headquarters House

See page 1

### November English Program

**Joseph W. Meeker**

Wednesday, November 14th

5:30-6:30; Dinner preparation,

6:30; Dinner, 7:30; Meeting

Headquarters House

### November Board Meeting

Monday, November 26

7-8:30

Faerland Terrace, 1421 Minor Avenue

### Festa di Natale per i Bambini

Saturday, December 1st

2:00-5:30 PM

Headquarters House

## From the President's Desk

**W**hat a fantastic beginning! At our first meeting of the year, one of the largest Dante crowds in a long time enjoyed a delicious pasta dinner and a wonderful operatic evening brought to us by the extremely talented members of Lyric Opera Northwest.

As you'll read in this *La Voce*, we have some interesting, varied and fun programs scheduled in the weeks ahead. Invite your friends! We have much to look forward to.

To insure that our positive momentum continues, the Board has already begun recruiting a nominating committee to start work on the very important succession plan. As we look into next year, we see that all but one counselor position will be open. I know you all value what Dante is and the important place Dante has in your life, so please be thinking about how you might step into one of the many leadership roles being vacated at the end of this year. We'd love to have candidates identified early enough to offer you a full slate of officers and counselors for the election and to have time for a smooth transition. If you get a call, before you say you are too busy, please think about why you belong to Dante and what you can do to help keep the club active and inviting to members old and new. You can bet this won't be the last time I mention this. We are all counting on some new faces and some new energy to lead our club in the coming years.

A Presto,

*Donna Lipstky*

## Festa di Natale per i Bambini—2007

Our Festa di Natale per i Bambini will be on Saturday, December 1st, from 2:00 PM to 5:30 PM at Headquarters House, for our children, their families and friends. Those who would like to help plan the Festa, donate items or make gift bags at our work party before the event, can join us for two committee meetings in November. Look for the dates and location in your November *La Voce* or at the October general meetings.

On the afternoon of Festa di Natale we welcome volunteers starting at 12 noon to help decorate and set up the Hall, create the *presepio* and numerous other jobs in preparation for the arrival of our guests. We also welcome help during the event, to assist the children in games, craft projects and serving the snacks. Finally, for anyone who enjoys playing a musical instrument, we would be delighted to have you join us as we sing "Tu Scendi dalle Stelle." The more, the merrier!!!

Please call Caterina at 360 638 2500 if you would like to give a little time and celebrate with our children during this sweet and traditional event.

## **Language Program News**

### **by Giuseppe Tassone**

*Italian Language Program - Director*

**T**he 2007-2008 school year will start on October 2nd, which is Tuesday.

All classes (elementary, intermediate and advanced) run continuously over 3 quarters with a class break every 10 weeks.

This year, in addition to registration by mail, students can register online using PayPal. If you'd like to give the gift of learning Italian to a friend or a loved one we also offer gift certificates. They are available at <http://www.danteseattle.org>. You can enroll next for Winter Quarter.

Arrivederci in classe!

#### **Autumn Quarter Schedule for all levels:**

October 2nd - December 11th—Tuesdays & Thursdays 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Location: Seattle University – Administration Bldg

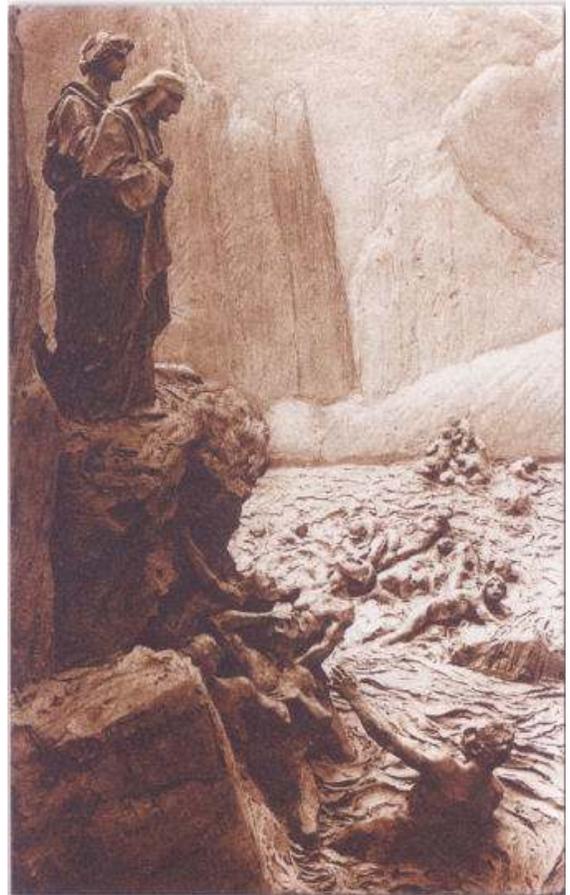
The pre-registration deadline is September 21, 2007

Complete information on the program can be found at <http://www.danteseattle.org>

To request a brochure with a registration form or for any other questions call 206-320-9159. To contact the director via email, write to: [info@danteseattle.org](mailto:info@danteseattle.org).

### **October NO Board Meeting**

**O**ur next meeting will be November 26th, from 7 until 8:30pm. Mark it on your calendar. The meeting is located at **Faerland Terrace—1421 Minor Ave**, right off Pike Street in Seattle. There is free parking.



Based on a Sculpture by Mastroianni, Editor; A. Traldi, Milano

The last time I was in Montagnana, Vz, I was introduced to Giuseppe Battaglia, a member of the Dante Society there. He had recently published a book dedicated to the hundreds of beautiful postcards that have been produced over the years with a Dante theme. For Dante's 700th birthday, they had a show with over 600 postcards exhibited. When he found out I, the member of yet another chapter of the Dante Alighieri Society, was coming to his town, he presented me with a copy of his beautiful book *Immagini Dantesche*. He also gave me permission to put the images in our La Voce. They will be appearing in subsequent issues.- editor

## September Italian Meeting - Lyric Opera Northwest

By Barbara Romano Crawford

The September 21 Meeting of Dante, opened with a bang! The performance by members of the Lyric Opera Northwest was absolutely breathtaking. The narrative by Craig H. Nim was very informative and humorous; his voice and presence are commanding. We listened to an aria sung by Nim's wife and co-founder of LONW, Pamela Casella, whose voice was powerful and yet tender. It is easy to understand why she had been a Pavarotti finalist. The voices of all the participants and the selections were breathtaking. An aria by Cio-Cio-San from *Madame Butterfly* all but brought me to tears. We were treated to over an hour of glorious melodies from several operas including *La Traviata*, which will be performed by the company this November. Those in attendance were clearly thrilled! I have already put my name on their mailing list for future productions and the performance of *La Traviata* this November. Their mailing list and information can be found here: <http://www.lonw.org>



One of many Ex Libris stamps found in Giuseppe Battaglia's book; *Immagini Dantesche*

## Vendetta, an Aurelio Zen Mystery by Michael Dibdin

Book Review by Carmen Flak

**V***endetta* is one of several novels of psychological suspense featuring a Venetian police inspector, Aurelio Zen. (Italians spell it Zeno but in the Veneto dialect the "o" is dropped.)

Mystery lovers will find Dibdin's tale "a ripping good yarn." The author is English, but his love for Italy and its environs is obvious. Half the action in *Vendetta* takes place in Rome and half in Sardinia. Aurelio Zen, a high ranking police officer, is deputized by the *Criminalpol* section of the Ministry of Interior in Rome, to clear a suspected murderer, whether or not he is guilty. Characters are referred to as the Umbrian and the Calabrian much as we would say Texan or New Yorker. When he arrives in Sardinia, he is unable to decipher a word the Sardinians speak until they reply to him in Italian. An interesting plot device: He is undone when a dialect he pretends to be fluent in unmasks him as a phony.

Dibdin is a terrific writer. Aside from a fascinating mystery, anyone who has been to Italy will enjoy his vivid descriptions of Rome and Sardinia. Unlike American fare where the cops give chase in hair-raising car chases, Zen walks along their famous streets, rides a bus or boards the *Metropolitano*. Dibdin writes as though he were preparing an enticing travelogue.

Editor's note: Michael Dibdin was a delightfully humorous speaker at Dante a few years ago while Nancy McDonald was program chair. Although Mr. Dibdin was English, he was living in Seattle when he died.

## Le Notizie



## La Voce needs you!

Tell a story, write an article, send it to [danteeditor@gmail.com](mailto:danteeditor@gmail.com). You can also mail it via regular US mail to Mimi Torchia Boothby, 8018 36th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118, USA. I expect an outpouring of talent. You know who you are; this is an opportunity!

## Pre-Dante Antipasti

We need help! Can you volunteer to bring refreshments to the next Italian meeting? Terry Hanlon would love to hear from you. It's easy; if you don't have time to cook, you can just go to QFC and buy delicious cold cuts, olives and peppers. If you do cook, there are all sorts of wonderful recipes you could make. If you need help planning, contact Gini at [giniharmon@aol.com](mailto:giniharmon@aol.com) or call 206-364-6834. If you just want to volunteer, call Terry Hanlon at 206-431-5475 or send her an email at [terryhanlon@comcast.net](mailto:terryhanlon@comcast.net). Remember, you'll get lots of help!

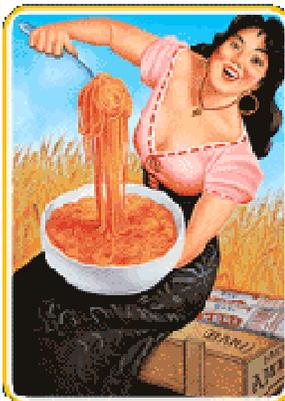
## Pre-Dante Pasta

Join us for the pre-Dante Pasta dinner preceding the English language programs. **To attend the dinner, reservations are required. The only way to make these reservations is by calling the activity line at (206) 320-9159 by the Monday before the meeting.**

*Please remember to bring your homemade Italian desserts to finish off this great meal.*

This is a communally prepared meal – the preparations start at 5:30 and the meal is served at 6:30. People who come early help with set up and cooking, those who come late help with the clean up.

Pasta dinner cost is \$8 per person, \$15 per couple, plus BYOB, if reservations are received on the activity line by 5pm on Monday before the meeting. Late reservations and walk-ins are charged \$10 per person and subject to availability. We meet at Headquarters house, 2336 15th Ave. S., Seattle. (map and directions on page 9)



## Dante Alighieri Society of Washington

*"Società per la diffusione della  
lingua e della cultura italiana  
nel mondo"*

Mailing address:  
PMB #1244  
1122 East Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98122  
(206) 320-9159

The Dante Alighieri Society of Washington is a nonprofit corporation organized to promote Italian language and culture within the state of Washington. Membership is open to anyone interested in the goals and ideals of our society regardless of ethnic origin. *La Voce della Dante* is published eight times a year by the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. All rights reserved.

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# The Motherline: Laundry, Our Lady, and Women's Lineage

by Mary Beth Moser

The blackberries are fermenting on the vine, fallen leaves blanket the outdoor picnic table, and the slice of sun on my clothesline arrives later each day. With the arrival of fall, the days of being able to hang my laundry outside are growing fewer. Lately I have been pondering my passion for this ritual of outdoor clothes drying. Is it only the sensual pleasure I crave, or something more?

One of my early childhood memories is of being outside with my mother as she hung rows and rows of clothes with wooden clothespins. Sheets created a labyrinth of imagination. Half of the back yard in our Denver home was claimed by hanging laundry on those days. Numerous cloth diapers testified to the presence of a baby in the house. They hung beside the older kids' parochial school uniforms, my father's work clothes, my mother's "house-dresses," the envied "regular" clothes of my older sisters, each item revealing something of our lives. One year, my mother organized a game for my birthday party. The goal was to successfully drop wooden clothespins into a glass milk bottle. One at a time each person knelt on a wooden chair, facing backward, their arm resting on the back of the chair. The person with the most clothespins in the bottle won. This took place in the back yard near the clothesline. Now when my mother recalls this game it is with embarrassment of not providing a more sophisticated activity. But we kids loved it. It stands out for me as a testament to my mother's inventiveness (although maybe others played this game) and marks a certain nostalgic time of growing up in the 50's and 60's.

Decades later, when my younger sister lived in Rome for three years, she took up the practice of line-drying the family's clothes. Laundry hung in long rows outside the back door of their home while the neighborhood bambini played nearby. Will her two daughters remember this ritual with such fondness? The oldest daughter, now age 13, and living back in the United States, prefers soft, machine-dried clothes, not the stiff sentinels that the clothesline offers up at the end of the day.

In Italy, rows of laundry hang publicly and "shamelessly" high above city streets and village roads. When I first visited my maternal grandmother's village in 1980, some women still gathered at a public basin to wash their clothes. What stories were told as women did laundry together? My Italian cousin, Daria, deftly hung and strung laundry outside her centuries-old apartment window with a circulating line - reeling it in and out. It was the same line that her mother probably used to hang the laundry when she was alive and lived in that home. Cycles of time passed through the circulating line.

Today in Italy as in times past, the secular and sacred are not kept separate. Our Lady is ever present, blessing seemingly every aspect of life, including the laundry. On her web site, photographer Holly Pedlosky writes about La Madonna della Biancheria outside Venice:

"On the working-class island of the Giudecca in Venice, a burly priest in a tee shirt and jeans opens up the iron grillwork which shields a wall altar. He reveals a painting of the Virgin Mary who floats over lines of laundry which connect the same apartment buildings which flank the altar. The priest is Don Paolo. Once a year at this altar he conducts a ceremony to honor the Madonna of the Laundry." (continued on page 7)





## IN LOVE WITH THE LAUNDRY

*By Maria Fama*

She had

Wind and Sun in a city yard  
 Clouds in strips against the Blue  
 A face and hands

to hang the empty dears  
 who  
 belonged in warm light  
 sighing like fresh bread rising  
 smelling of damp morning mountains  
 and seashells

She was blown among the sheets  
 in love with the laundry

She sucked on clothespins  
 savoring their hardness  
 their forest fragrance

They know the ropes

She could only guess at the intimacies of  
 the clean white jockey shorts  
 innocent and forgetful on the line

She hugged the breezy unstuffed shirts  
 their dangling arms around her neck  
 and those pants  
 how they danced.

### Biography - MARIA FAMA

Maria Fama has written three books of poetry, co-founded a video production company, recorded her poetry in CD compilations of music and poetry, and given readings across the country as well as on TV, Radio, Video, and Film. She appears in the 2007 film, "Pipes of Peace," about the late jazz bagpipe musician, Rufus Harley. Fama was awarded the 2002 and the 2005 Aniello Lauri Award for Creative Writing. The 2006 winner of the Amy Tritesch Needle Award for Poetry, she has a new book of poems, *Looking For Cover*, forthcoming from Bordighera Books.

This year I decided to honor my passion of hanging laundry outside with art. I commissioned a local artist, Theresa Henson, to sculpt a pair of clothesline "poles" in the shape of the Goddess Tanit. I had first seen the symbol for this goddess in Sicily in a mosaic of a Roman villa.

Tanit's veneration had arrived from North Africa, carried by the Phoenicians around the Mediterranean. In Sardegna, Tanit's presence was evident in the lives of the ancients in the form of a 3000 year-old "holy well," a remarkable structure of expertly-crafted stone in the triangular shape of her body. One could descend the stairs to reach the water, which were perfectly situated to receive the sun's rays on the equinox. (continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Many precious ex-voto, gifts of gratitude, were found at the well, marking it as a sacred site. Descending the steps, "entering Tanit's body," and blessing myself with her water, marked a meaningful event in my life. Now, as then, water purifies, blesses, washes away.

In sharing news and photos of my clothesline, I heard from friends across the country who had fond memories of outdoor laundry. Sicilian American poet Maria Fama shared her tribute to laundry (see adjacent poem) that is soon to be published. I learned of Roberta Cantow's 1981 documentary film "Clothesline" in which she pays homage to women, their work, and their stories. Women sent me stories about themselves or family members, starting with "I remember when..."

Hanging clothes outside for me enfolds simple pleasures and deeply held values: the smell of clothes that have been dried by the wind and sun, spending slow time in nature, conserving electric energy, and doing one small thing to reduce my carbon footprint.

From my vantage point of mid-life, the laundry line feels like a connection to my female lineage, my motherline. Not in drudgery, although this task of keeping clothes washed and dried has been formidable over the ages; but in the ritual act of hanging clothes itself, and in the stories that settle around women's lives in the care of clothes. As we retrieve our mother's stories, and those of other female relatives, we reclaim the value of women's lives in history, and restore the inner connection with the timelessness of the cycle of life.

For more on Laundry:

- Images of La Madonna Della Biancheria: Holly Pedlosky, <http://www.arts-cape.com/hollypedlosky/laundry.html>
- Exploring your mother's stories: The Motherline: Every Woman's Journey to Find her Female Roots, by Naomi Ruth Lowinsky.
- Tanit: "The Mysteries of Tanit," by Monica Sjo <http://www.goddessalive.co.uk/current/tanit.html>
- Energy conservation: Project Laundry List: <http://www.laundrylist.org/index2.htm>



## La Voce

### Submission Deadlines

Let's work as a team. If your story, article, photos or poem is submitted to me via email by the following date, it can be published in the next newsletter.

Deadline - publication date

October 22 - November 2007

November 23 - December 2007

December 26 - January 2008

January 26 - February 2008

February 25 - March 2008

March 26 - April 2008

April 25 - May 2008

### Dante on the Internet!

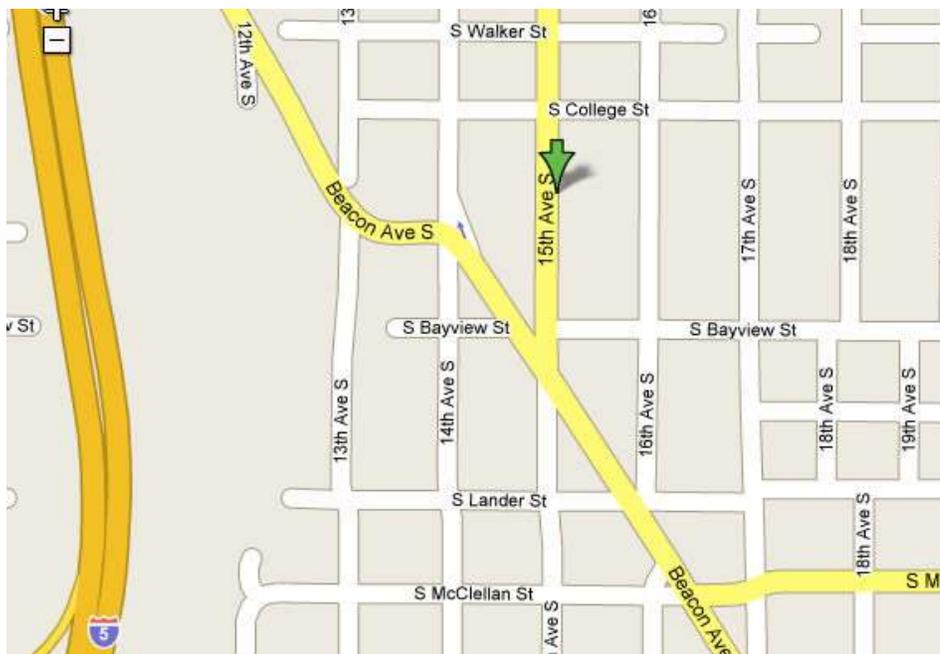
We have a website. We have all the more recent newsletters there (including this one!), as well as the latest information on speakers. Our web address is:

<http://www.danteseattle.org/DAS>

Remember that DAS must be capitalized!



Edizione A. Bottoni e C - Roma



### Directions to Headquarters House

Headquarters House is located at **2336 15th Avenue South** in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Seattle. From I-5, take the Columbian Way/Spokane Street exit, eastbound. Turn left at the first light, Spokane Street and left again at the next light, 15th Avenue S. After crossing Beacon Avenue, Headquarters House will be on the right side between Bayview and College Streets.

**Membership Application**

I (We) want to promote Italian language and culture and request membership in the Dante Alighieri Society of Washington. Enclosed is my (our) check in full payment of annual membership dues (\$30.00 for individual, \$40.00 for a family).

Mark one :  **New Membership**     **Membership Renewal**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed:  
Membership Amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contribution: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Categories (For recognition stars):  
Bronzo (bronze) - Up to \$25  
Argento (silver) - \$26 - \$50  
Oro (gold) - \$51 to \$100  
Platino (platinum) - Over \$100

Please return completed membership application with check to:

Dante Alighieri Society of Washington  
PMB #1244  
1122 East Pike Street  
Seattle, WA 98122

If you have any questions, please call (206) 320-9159 and leave a message.

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