



Press Release

'Pistoia-Dialogues on Man'

Fourth edition: 24-25-26 May 2013

The festival of contemporary anthropology, **Pistoia—Dialogues about Man** (www.dialoghisulluomo.it) is back from May 24-26, 2013. The cultural event, promoted by the 'Cassa di Risparmio di Pistoia e Pescia' Foundation and the Municipality of Pistoia, is designed and directed by **Giulia Cogoli**. The 2013 edition follows the success of last year's festival, which clocked up more than 12,000 visitors.

There will be 20 appointments programmed over three days in the old city centre of Pistoia: debates, lectures, readings, performances and a photographic exhibition, all designed to be accessible to the general public and people interested in exploring new tools and stimuli for analyzing and understanding contemporary reality.

The fourth edition of the **Dialogues** explores the theme "**Away and Abroad. Travel as encounter**". This subject forms the basis of anthropological studies while also representing a highly topical issue in this era of globalization and low cost travel, where the flows of people, images, goods and ideas move ever faster and are increasingly discernible.

"Human beings have always travelled, which is why travel continues to be a topic for discussion and reflection. Our very language is rife with metaphors of life understood as a journey", explains festival director, **Giulia Cogoli**. "Travel, movement and encounters with other people transform individuals and their perceptions, opening them up to new panoramas and different world views, grounded both in their original culture and in that of their newfound destination too".

The exhibition

Wandering Italians: A century of travelling and holidays in the Touring Club's photo archives is the title of the photo exhibition, curated by **Luciana Senna**. The exhibit will be inaugurated on Friday, May 24 at 4:30pm in the Fresco Rooms of the City Hall and will stay open until July 7.

There will be forty, black-and-white pictures portraying one hundred years of travels and holidays, beginning with the bicycle trips actually invented by the Touring Club. The photographs depict Italians enjoying lakeside vacations, mountain treks, cruises and campsites. We see travelers on their own and family groups, mass holidays and overcrowded beaches—a cross section of life illustrating how Italians' habits and way of life have profoundly changed over time.

The encounters

The 2013 festival opens with an **inaugural lecture** delivered by one of the leading Italian experts in travel literature, **Attilio Brilli**, entitled "The many facets of travel". Travel is the impulse that fuelled the global affirmation of Western culture, encompassing the world in a widely variegated embrace. Travelling can be the result of a deep-felt restlessness—Montaigne once described travel as "rubbing up one's brain against other people's"—or even the most sordid greed. But now that the whole world has been explored and there are no uncharted territories left, it is time to rethink the many facets of travel—suggests **Brilli**—in order to foster greater individual awareness and have a better understanding of different civilizations.

Franco Iseppi, president of the Italian Touring Club, and **Roberto Weber**, an expert in market research, compare ideas in the encounter "Travel: from social phenomenon to an assertion of identity". Together, they trace the history of travel in Italy, a chief destination for tourists starting with the *Grand Tour* to the tourism of today.

Francesco Guccini, a popular singer-songwriter popular for various generations, and the cultural anthropologist **Marco Aime**, discuss "Between the Via Emilia and the West. Travels and encounters in

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Pistoia Dialoghi sull'uomo

Guccini's songs". They will experiment with the "anthropology of the song", from the distant worlds evoked in *Asia* to the encounter described in *Autogrill*, from *L'isola non trovata* (a tribute to a late 19th-century Italian poet, G. Gozzano) to *L'ultima Thule*.

The Italian classicist and jurist **Eva Cantarella** talks about "The curiosity of Herodotus", the father of history, a tireless traveller, the West's first ethnographer, observer of habits and customs, from Babylon to Scotland, Colchis to Macedonia. Herodotus observed and recorded everything, writing to ensure that human endeavors, whether by the Greeks and or the barbarians, were not plunged into oblivion.

Paolo Rumiz, a traveller, journalist and writer, will give a lesson entitled "Writing with one's feet", on foot, by boat, by train or by bus, focusing on the myriad of different experiences a traveller may encounter on land or at sea. Rumiz tells stories explaining how humans need to explore "outside of themselves" rather than "within themselves" to come to a greater understanding. So travel is an effective alternative to psychoanalysis.

"Profession: globetrotter": the founder of the Lonely Planet guidebooks, **Tony Wheeler**, enters into a dialogue with the writer and journalist **Gabriele Romagnoli**. He will reveal his past as a tireless globetrotter and examine the history of his publications, which revolutionized the very notion of guidebooks, and will explain how a penniless 20-year-old with a passion for exploration became the owner of a company worth millions.

Essayist **Gabriella Caramore** introduces the audience to the theme of travel in the Scriptures. During the conference "Between the wilderness and the world. The places of Jesus of Nazareth", she will trace a map of locations where Jesus lived, places filled with symbolic meanings.

In 1954, explorer and documentary-maker **Folco Quilici** took "28 days to reach Polynesia". This is also the title of his lecture investigating how much exploration has changed, so much so that it only takes 28 hours to reach Polynesia nowadays, instead of the 28 days needed in the past.

Humans have always traveled to seek a better life elsewhere, but with the advent of technology and the resulting "modernity at large", the panorama has radically changed, creating new flows and patterns of migration. **Arjun Appadurai**, one of the world's greatest thinkers and anthropologists and a leading expert in the cultural dimensions of globalization, leads the conference "New imaginary travels and global flows". During the session he explores the dualism between the person traveling and the social imagination they can tap into to sustain their journeys.

"Travel: to go or to come back?" is the question posed by writer **Claudio Magris**, who examines if travel is escape or adventure and conquest, with inner facets too. Do people travel because of their inability to stay where they are—physically and existentially; because they hope to leave behind their unhappiness or because they are attracted to the new and unknown?

In the lecture "Far from where? Different from whom? Travel and the imaginary", **Marco Aime** explains how journeys often stem from stories that intertwine and converge to create the imaginary, myths, building a kind of sentimental atlas where every place corresponds to an inner need to define who we are and where we belong. Psychotherapist **Andrea Bocconi** and tourism historian **Claudio Visentin**, are connected by their passion for travel and writing. Here they take visitors on a walking lecture of roughly 90 minutes, a short, itinerant "travel school" entitled "Lenta-mente", or slow travel.

Lecturer in the history of geographical explorations, **Francesco Surdich** recounts the life of two of the most prominent travelers in medieval times, Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta. They both embarked on exceptional expeditions, but how did these two explorers perceive an "external" reality (China and South Asia under Mongol rule at the time) that was so different and far away from each of their own cultures? For **Allan Bay**, crops travel, food travels, taste travels, cuisine travels. In his session "Food travels", the journalist specializing in food and drink, reveals how all Italian crops derive from seeds imported from various parts of the world. Biodiversity would not exist if plants (and also animals) failed to make these "journeys".

Cultural anthropologist **Adriano Favole** will take an alternative look at the usual kinds of travel accounts. In "Travelers and anthropologists in the eyes of the natives", he talks about the first encounters between "white people" and the inhabitants of Polynesia and Melanesia, investigating how the Hawaiians reacted to



the arrival of explorer James Cook and examining why the people of the Solomon Islands welcomed the Spanish as the bearers of peace. And how do the natives view the tourists and anthropologists roaming their lands today?

Colin Thubron, one of the most popular travel writers around, talks about his fifty years of travelling in “The journey and its writer: traveling along the Silk Road”. His 7,000-mile journey took him from China to the Mediterranean, through many countries in a state of flux and change: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey. For novelist **Erri De Luca**, travelling means walking. “Six kilometers an hour” is the distance a person can cover in an hour’s walk on flat terrain, the journey on foot of a migrant, a pilgrim, a vagrant or a smuggler who crosses borders. All other forms of travel, according to De Luca, are merely a relocation in space, designed to go from A to B as fast as possible in a straight line, without focusing on all that lies between departure and arrival. Yet travel is the opposite of this, the combination of everything one encounters during the entire process.

The performances

Paolo Rumiz and the **Alfredo Lacosegliaz Patchwork Ensemble** put on the musical reading **The Quince of Istanbul**. The performance written in ballad style, is drawn from the eponymous song-novel that tells the story of Max and Masha and their love story that takes place through a journey combining ritual and discovery. Alfredo Lacosegliaz composed the music accompanying the lyrics in the styles of the different lands where the novel is set, ranging from apocryphal songs to Bosnian melodies, with echoes of popular waltzes and sounds from the Middle East.

In “**Talking of war, dreaming of peace**” **Giuseppe Battiston** reads **Ryszard Kapuściński**. “I have not specialized in anything in particular. I simply tried to observe and understand the people in the places where I worked and travelled... I tried to understand what it means to be a person from another culture”. By living among some of the poorest people on the planet, Kapuściński, a journalist and sophisticated writer and a tireless traveller with a passion for history, developed the humility of a wise man. Attention-seeking and the quest for fame never tainted his genuine attachment to the simple people whom he so effectively described in his unforgettable pages, some of which will be narrated by Giuseppe Battiston.

Vinicio Capossela, a phantasmagorical songwriter, poet, writer and performer, puts on a new concert called **Anthropotiko tefteri**. **Songs for an Odyssey around Man**. The *anthropotiko tefteri* are notes from travels around man—man’s unpaid bills—with references to Greek culture, from the Odyssey onwards.

This concert will feature a journey in stories and songs played by a small band including a piano, a sampler, a theremin and a lute, to evoke the beguiling sense of wonder and awe the sirens’ song instilled in ancient sailors, who plugged their ears to shackle themselves to the short chain of habit.

The Dialogues’ book collection

In order to provide new tools for reflection, we are launching the **collection of books *Dialogues about Man***, published and distributed in all Italian bookshops by **Utet** (12 euro). The first in the series is ***I donate therefore we are. Eight good reasons to believe in a more united society***, comprising the thoughts of eight of the most brilliant thinkers and experts in modern times about the profound nature of society and the nature of mankind. The contrast between the idea of a society based on solidarity and a utilitarian world, very similar to our own, is not purely a matter of economics, but also ethics and culture as a whole. A journey to understanding contemporary society in the company of renowned sociologist **Zygmunt Bauman**, economist **Stefano Zamagni**, anthropologists **Marco Aime** and **Marino Niola**, philosophers **Laura Boella** and **Salvatore Natoli**, psychoanalyst **Luigi Zoja** and essayist and solver of puzzles, **Stefano Bartezzaghi**.

Information and program: www.dialoghisulluomo.it

Tickets (€3,00-7,00) - Public relations office: freephone 800-012146

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