



Pistoia Dialoghi sull'uomo

Press Release

Pistoia – Dialogues on Man **25-26-27 May 2018**

The theme of the ninth Festival is “Breaking the rules: creativity and change”

The ninth Festival of contemporary anthropology, ***Pistoia – Dialogues on Man***, supported by the **Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Pistoia e Pescia** and the **municipality of Pistoia**, created and directed by **Giulia Cogoli**, will take place from Friday 25 May until Sunday 27 May (www.dialoghisulluomo.it).

The 2018 theme - “**Breaking the rules: creativity and change**” - provides the focus for 26 encounters with Italian and international anthropologists, philosophers, historians, writers and intellectuals. They will reflect on what has made human culture evolve, what it is that constantly drives human beings to change and how important rule-breaking is in the process of renewal.

Creolitude, crossbreeding, cultural intersections and hybridisation have always been catalysts for strong creative impetus. At our current historic juncture that combines huge migratory flows with a pervasive globalisation, anthropology can offer a different perspective from which to consider the nature of creativity today and the stimuli that direct it, whether as a way to ensure survival or simply to live better.

Right from the very start the Festival has been characterized by significant cultural and civic engagement and the desire to offer a new type of cultural discussion, with unusual content and new perspectives on human societies. The ‘dialogues’ in question are those between the speakers, with the public and across various disciplines, because dialogue is essential to improving understanding, knowledge and exchange. Over the past years, the Festival has garnered considerable attention and recognition from the public – of all ages and from all over Italy – which has tripled since the first year and increased by 38% in 2017 alone.

In these nine years, the historic centre of Pistoia has hosted approximately 250 cultural appointments: conferences, performances and encounters with international and Italian speakers. Moreover, various additional cultural production and documentation projects have developed in tandem with the festival: a collection of books published by UTET; a vast archive of audiovisual recordings (the *Dialogues on Man* YouTube channel has registered over 500,000 views); an anthropology project for schools involving roughly 20,000 students and a series of exhibitions of famous photographers that every year complete the festival's programme.

Dialogues on Man International Award - awarded to personalities from the world of culture whose thinking and opus testifies the centrality of dialogue in the development of human relations – will be conferred this year to the African writer, **Wole Soyinka**, winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize for Literature. Soyinka – whose entire opus demonstrates how African vitality and spirituality could help us cope with an increasingly complex present – is the perfect guide to accompany us towards an exchange that must happen, both for the future survival of our species and to face up to the overwhelming migratory flow we see today. On Saturday 26th May, in Piazza del Duomo, there will be an evening dedicated to great

Direttrice
Giulia Cogoli
telefono +39 0287281458
direzione@dialoghisulluomo.it

Sede Direzione
Giulia Cogoli Comunicazione
via C. Goldoni, 34
20129 Milano

Sede Legale
Pistoia Eventi Culturali s.c.r.l.
via de' Rossi, 26
51100 Pistoia


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literature: **Wole Soyinka**, in conversation with the anthropologist **Marco Aime**, will illustrate how the rediscovery of certain values through reciprocal recognition, understanding and dialogue is necessary. To do so, we must abandon out-dated prejudices and stereotypes and look each other in the eye. To quote Plinio il Vecchio *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi*, there is always something new that comes out from Africa.

THE ENCOUNTERS

FRIDAY 25

As always, the Festival opens in Duomo Square, in the large tent located right in the very heart of the city. Inaugurating *Dialogues 2018* is the opening conference with writer **Alessandro Baricco**: *Seven things you need to know about the digital uprising* (free entrance).

Escape Routes is the title of the conference with anthropologist **Adriano Favole**. We are born into cultures and languages that shape us and provide us with real and symbolic tools to find our way in the world, however, we are not entirely prisoners of these cultures. Using travel stories and anthropological research experiences such as pilgrimages, migrations, dreams, literature, satire and cinema, the anthropologist explores the ways human beings break the rules in the attempt to change their lives. Favole also tackles this theme in the eponymous book being released to coincide with the Festival in the *Dialogues on Man* collection, published by UTET.

Writer **Simonetta Agnello Hornby** with psychologist and journalist **Massimo Cirri** discusses on the topic *Differently Creative*. An encounter about a most important, "different" perspective and the way in which people look at each other: the strong and the weak, the able and those less able. Knowing that we will all, at some point, become a little more fragile, but that we will all always be citizens, the owners of rights. Creative and original, all differently creative, even when merely surviving with dignity.

SATURDAY 26

The members of the Bloomsbury set – which included Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey and J.M. Keynes – demonstrated the creative value of those who discovered in community and utopia the strength to create new forms of knowledge and ways of living. They were young women and men who reinvented their lives in total intellectual and sexual freedom, disdaining the tired and stagnant social codes of Victorian times. Their vision, explains writer **Nadia Fusini**, was one of the most daring of the 1900s and today still provides inspiration for recapturing a deep sense of individual freedom.

Sociologist **Alessandro Dal Lago** talks with the video artist **Serena Giordano** about *Art, power and innovation*. The art world is always looking to other powers, in particular to politics, because there it finds material and symbolic resources. On the other hand, every kind of power also appreciates the arts as a potential source of legitimisation and consensus. However, it is only when clashing with the aesthetic and ideological limits of the time that artists can innovate. The innovation of today is probably created by those artists who position themselves outside aesthetic and social conventions, like graffiti artists and so-called Outsiders.

A path exploring creativity that combines science and literature is proposed by chemist and writer **Marco Malvaldi**, who believes that the way in which a chemist thinks is not so very different to that of a poet. Just as atoms are the letters of the language of chemistry, coming together to form words (molecules) and sentences (chemical reactions) used to explain a natural universal phenomenon, in the same way a poet is able to move deeply the reader's feelings with only two or three verses.

The female centaur: for a first vocabulary of creativity is the title of the encounter with author and

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classicist **Nicola Gardini**. Paying careful attention to the historical metamorphosis of the concept, Gardini reconstructs the stages in an ancient conversation on creativity, using examples from poetry, philosophy, rhetoric, and classical art critique, positioning today's definitions of the term *creativity* in the perspective of becoming.

Essayist and writer **Marco Belpoliti** proposes a series of reflections on *Resilience as a creative act: doing more with less*. The word "resilience" first appeared in the present debate in the mid-1900s, thanks to psychology. It means not only resisting or jumping backwards, but rather undertaking a creative act: improving on one's starting position.

Today we are even more numerous and increasingly connected to each other and, compared to previous generations, we produce more, exchange more, travel more, consume more and use more energy. Consequently, there are multiple unwanted side effects: pollution, alienation, an overheated planet. To avoid the end of the world as we know it - comments Norwegian anthropologist **Thomas Hylland Eriksen** - the human race must slow down, cool down and scale down.

Where is empathy in a society dominated by the fear of the other? This is the question asked by philosopher **Laura Boella**: in an age when entirely new forms of human socialisation have developed - online connections, social networks, the planetary circulation of money, tourists, knowledge and information - the capacity for empathy now faces new challenges and a creative effort to explore the world of "the other".

The writer and literary critic, **Emanuele Trevi**, and the critic and art curator **Davide Daninos** tell us about studios of artists and writers. For at least 700 years the studio has been a place common to the work of writers, artists and intellectuals: it is a setting for change and opportunity, private and often unknown. Observing the birth and evolution of this location is like being granted a privileged vantage point to examine the habits and changes of modern thought. The subject of the conference is also the focus of a photographic exhibition that complements the themes of the festival with visual content. "Where ideas are born. Places and faces of creativity by Magnum photographers" presents 40 prints by some of Magnum's most illustrious photographers that take us into the studios of great artists and thinkers - including Francis Bacon, Constantin Brancusi, Giorgio de Chirico, Albert Einstein, Alberto Giacometti, Ernest Hemingway, Frida Kahlo, Primo Levi, Giorgio Morandi and Pablo Picasso.

Nowadays we are seeing a reversal of values, our trust has been "disenfranchised": what counts is breaking the rules, cancelling the past, and the future too. The "people's democracy" has been replaced by a "media/immediate democracy", which uses the web to challenge and disturb any form of mediation. However, political scientist **Ilvo Diamanti** warns that, above all, a lack of trust is compromising personal relations and social mediation, fraying the fabric of society.

SUNDAY 27

Historian **Giovanni De Luna** analyses the setting that led to the 1968 'revolution' and asks why there have been no similar moments of protest since. Half a century ago, the leading elements everywhere were young people: while in the post-war period, the young became producers, consumers and voters, from 1968 they turned into militants. At that time the key of the youth protest was disobedience, challenging the rules that belonged to the past. Youth and disobedience: the parallel themes that today underpin the historical interpretation of that protest movement.

In the encounter, *The ages of creativity*, philosopher **Francesca Rigotti** demonstrates that several myths and obsessions of our time about the ages at which one can be creative (or not) require new debate, especially in the light of huge social changes.

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Psychoanalyst **Massimo Recalcati** explores the relationship between law, freedom, desire and creativity. When the burden of moral rules snuffs out life, crushes desire and inhibits creativity, psychoanalysis works to remove man from this sacrificial weight and reinstate his freedom to desire and to create, which is the expression of desire itself.

Anthropologist and palaeontologist **Giorgio Manzi** leads the public on a journey to discover the moment and the impulses that led *Homo sapiens* to dominate and spread across the planet, 200,000 years ago, becoming conscious and creative.

Eraldo Affinati, writer and teacher, sees the school as a place of interruption and change, following the teaching of Don Lorenzo Milani: a school with classes of students from different backgrounds, supporting the fight for integration. At a time characterised by fragile adults and difficult adolescents, in a fragmented world in the throes of a full cultural transformation, a school can become a place for ethical resistance where the virtuous cycle that connects family, education and social environment is re-established.

There is a rhythm in human beings, in their bodies and, in particular, in their communicative relationships - explains anthropologist **Paolo Apolito**. What happens when a stranger, a foreigner, approaches us and our shared rhythms? The foreigner is someone who “does not move in time”, yet relationships between strangers are inevitable in our species and meeting as “aliens” has been the central pillar of all human stories.

The majority of the world's population lives in cities today and the change and the challenge are both represented by the idea of the “open city”, where residents can actively display the differences between them and enable a virtuous interaction with the urban structures. To build and inhabit this city, says **Richard Sennett**, one of the world's foremost contemporary sociologists, a certain type of modesty is needed: to live as one person amidst many, in a world that does not simply reflect oneself.

Laughter is an escape route, a way to break the rules, believes actor, author and playwright **Moni Ovadia**. Certainly Jewish culture has always put this philosophy into action, the Jewish laugh has ancient Biblical roots and – perhaps – represents the only salvation for such a martyred people: a circuit created between irony and pre-established order.

THE PERFORMANCES

On Friday 25th at 9.15 pm at Teatro Manzoni, composer and musician **Nicola Piovani** stages *Music is Dangerous – Concerted*: a story in music which alternates unpublished melodies with new versions of familiar pieces, rearranged for the occasion, to illustrate his artistic path that has intersected with the work of important directors, singers and musicians in theatre, cinema and television.

On Saturday 26th, at 9.30 pm at Teatro Manzoni, actor **Fabrizio Gifuni** reads Pier Paolo Pasolini, presenting texts that demonstrate the writer's intellectual engagement and his anthropological vision of contemporary society, alongside some of his most evocative poems, highlighting how his life, work and even his death are now fused in a single poetic body where it is impossible to separate one aspect from another.

Each day of the Festival ends at the Teatro Bolognini with a film screening, a mini-festival introduced by anthropologist **Marco Aime** dedicated to 1968 and the cultural rift that period represented. The first screening is *Fists in the Pocket*, directed by Marco Bellocchio, a film that anticipated the rejection of bourgeois culture and the generational revolution of 1968 (Friday 25th, 10.30 pm); the second film is

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Hair, directed by Miloš Forman, a powerful tribute to the hippy movement (Saturday 26th, 10.30 pm), and, on the closing evening, *Cold Water*, directed by Olivier Assayas, the extraordinary portrait of a generation in the years immediately after May 1968 in France (Sunday 27th, 8.00 pm).

THE EXHIBITION

For the fifth year, the Festival includes a photographic exhibition that complements the themes of the festival with visual content: **“Where ideas are born. Places and faces of creativity by Magnum photographs”**. Curated by Giulia Cogoli and Davide Daninos, and organised with Magnum Photos and Contrasto, the exhibition presents 40 prints by some of Magnum's most illustrious photographers that take us into the studies of great artists and thinkers - including Francis Bacon, Constantin Brancusi, Giorgio de Chirico, Albert Einstein, Alberto Giacometti, Ernest Hemingway, Frida Kahlo, Primo Levi, Giorgio Morandi and Pablo Picasso - to observe the place where ideas are hatched, and how these ideas found the right tools to become tangible.

From 25th May to 1st July, Sale Affrescate, Palazzo Comunale, Piazza del Duomo, free entrance (catalogue published by Contrasto).

THE VOLUNTEERS

The contribution of secondary school pupils and university students from Pistoia and the surrounding province is essential for the Festival in 2018, as it has been every year. Their presence has increased consistently in number, and enthusiasm, over time: since 2010 to date approximately 3,000 students have worked with *Dialogues*. Adding to their ranks are the young volunteers from the Festival of Cagliari *Leggendo Metropolitano* and the Festival of Livorno *Il senso del ridicolo*, thanks to the cultural exchange project *Gulliver*. The students will be hosted by Arké cooperative of Pistoia, the volunteers by San Giorgio Library.

This year, students from the Associazione Albergo Etico di Asti Italia Onlus - a pioneering organisation in the development of projects for personal and professional independence for adults with Down's syndrome and learning disabilities - will be present to experience the festival for the first time, alongside local less-abled students who want to create similar projects fostering independence and social inclusion in Pistoia.

Tickets are on sale (€ 3.00 for encounters and screenings - € 7.00 for shows) available at La Torre, via Tomba di Catilina, 5/7, Pistoia, or on the website www.dialoghisulluomo.it.

Information and the programme available at: www.dialoghisulluomo.it

A new **Festival App**, free to download from Playstore and Appstore, provides up-to-date logistical information about encounters, speakers and tickets, allowing the user to create a list of events and offering real-time updates on any programme changes or other important Festival news.

Interact with the Festival on social media: **Facebook** @festivaldialoghisulluomo

Twitter @DialoghiPistoia/ **Instagram** pistoia_dialoghisulluomo/**Youtube** Pistoia – Dialoghi sull'uomo

The festival hashtag is **#Dialoghi2018**

For press information and photos (credits obligatory)

<http://bit.ly/2CWReyu>

Press Office: Delos - 02.8052151 - delos@delosrp.it

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