

SAFE WORDS

22 APRIL 2023

The Coronet Theatre
Notting Hill, London

The Festival of Italian Literature in London is back!

After a gap of two years, the Festival of Italian Literature is back at the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill on Saturday 22nd of April.

Aptly titled 'Safe words', the new edition remains faithful to its vocation as an observatory on the big issues of our time, but comes with some novelties. To celebrate the rebirth from a period of suspension, the festival will take place in the springtime and the programme has been compressed to a single day full of events, opening with a workshop and closing with a DJ set.

The festival will cover some of the signature themes – literature and politics, migration, feminism, environmental humanities, sport as a cultural phenomenon – but will also offer a creative writing workshop with the renowned Italian writer Rossana Campo and an original tribute to the poet Patrizia Cavalli.

Each event is titled using a 'safe word'. We have chosen words that resonate in different ways in our life and that can have different meanings in different contexts or that can be ambivalent, bearing both a positive and a negative meaning according to personal experiences. It also highlights the intrinsic value of "words" as a value to hold-on to, a lifeboat that can help you navigate stormy weather.

The Programme

The festival will kick off with 'The Game', a conversation between writer **David Winner** and journalist **Emanuele Atturo** on Italian football as entertainment, passion and as a cultural phenomenon.

And it will close with 'The end', a panel where Italian Strega prize winner **Paolo Giordano** and British Goldsmith prize winner writer **Luke Williams** will discuss what it means to imagine the end of times and what it means to write about it.

In between, the audience will have access to conversations on 'Distance' like the one between Albanian writer and scholar **Lea Ypi** and fellow Albanian writer and artist **Ornela Vorpsi** who will share their thoughts on growing up in Albania as well as the intertwining roles of literature, politics and migration in shaping who they have become as intellectuals and artists today. Or 'Roots' as in the one event with British-Italian **Thea Lenarduzzi** and British-Portuguese **Yara Rodrigues Fowler** who will reflect on ancestry, familial relationships and the ways in which politics and migration can shape the history of an individual, in an effort to re-establish their own personal archive.

As in previous editions, attention will be given to less comfortable themes, like 'Violence' with Italian writers **Andrea Tarabbia** and **Fabio Bacà** who have written about the lurking presence of violence in contemporary society and will talk about novels as the best tools to unearth the invisible and render it to us in a different perspective

The importance of landscape and 'Place' and what it means to write about it will be explored by thinker and writer **Marco Belpoliti** and British writer **Philip Hoare** who have both written gender-defying books merging nature writing and cultural history.

Finally, space to poetry, women and parental 'Ties'. Writer and poet **Maria Grazia Calandrone** and **Hannah Lowe** will talk about how parental love can be found and told in the wake of trauma and absence.

In an original FILL production, scholar Alberica Bazzoni and actor Amelia Donkor will guide the audience on a journey through the life and work of **Patrizia Cavalli**, Italy's most loved contemporary poet who passed away in 2022.

The festival will also offer an opportunity to engage in writing and self-discovery with a **writing workshop with Rossana Campo** focused on bodies and life experience.

In collaboration with SIAL.school, la scuola bilingue italiano/inglese a Londra and the Italian Cultural Institute, FILL 2023 will also include an Extra-FILL event on 24th April dedicated to primary school children, which will take place at SIAL in Holland Park. The Laboratory "**Draw a Story by Gianni Rodari**" takes the inspiration from the reading of two stories from *Il libro dei perché* by the Italian author, led by childrens' books illustrator Giuditta Gaviraghi a.k.a. **Judi Abbott**. Guided by Abbott's expertise, the children will have the chance to illustrate the cover of their chosen story and bring it home with them. The event is targeted to children aged 4-11 years old and is completely free, but requires registration.

Info

The team and the partners. FILL was born in 2017 on the grassroots initiative of a group of Italians living in London, and has evolved into a project with a strong focus on intercultural debate.

In the last two years, FILL has also branched into cultural productions by creating a narrative podcast "[The Fifth Siren](#)", about Venice as a metaphor of the contemporary world; and a podcast series "[The Italian Files](#)", which brings to an English speaking audience less known aspects of Italian culture and history.

Partner and support

The festival is supported by the Italian Cultural Institute in London, Banor Capital and the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

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