

## WELCOME

March – Since February didn't give us much sun to break up the monotony of winter, we have high hopes that March brings us some sunny glow. We will need it to enjoy all the fun festivals in town and out. There are fairs for truffles and rice fritters, medieval markets and food galore. March 8th is the Festa della Donna, so celebrate the wonderful women in your life and as for the kids; they can drool over brightly wrapped chocolate Easter eggs that fill shop windows, until Easter hits in early April.

In this issue, we salute Spring with a recipe for Risotto agli Asparagi, and gelato with Anne and Simon, plus info on new shows and exhibits, and onstage events of every kind.

With special thanks to our readers SUZANNE, CORSO, SANDRA, LORI, ANNA PIA, KIMBERLY and MARIO send a sunny Florentine hello.

## PITCHER & FLACCOMIO REPORT

### A STREETCAR NAMED SIRIO

Mid-February Florence's new tramline went into action. You can now take a 14-stop, 23 minute trip from the Santa Maria Novella station to Scandicci. Get off at Porta al Prato and the Leopolda exhibit center for this month's TASTE show, or continue on into the Cascine park for one of the Lenten Sunday special markets. Keep going and you can explore Scandicci's Saturday morning markets or the Fiera Antiquaria antique fair held on the last Saturday and Sunday of the month. Events described below, that can be accessed via tram will be marked with a \*TTT for Take The Tram.

### THE CHIANTI SCULPTURE PARK

Just south of Castellina-in-Chianti lies the Chianti Sculpture Park, a 17-acre wood of ilex and oak trees, which after five years of work was inaugurated in 2004 as an Art Park. It was conceived and realized by Rosalba and Piero Giadrossi, both passionate about contemporary art. Since 2004 there have been a series of additions: a Labyrinth in 2007, the sculpture Falling Leaf in 2008, and in 2009 the Amphitheatre. So far the Chianti Sculpture Park is the only example of site-specific contemporary art in the province of Siena, where artists from around the world have worked to integrate art and nature using a variety of materials.

Each artist was invited to visit the wood in order to choose a location and subsequently submit a site-specific proposal. This accounts for the harmony of the sculptures with the trees, the sounds, the colors, the light, and other elements of the wood. In fact, these man-made works do not extend beyond the limits of nature; rather, they integrate with it and enhance it.

The Chianti Sculpture Park is a lovely stop not only for art lovers but for anyone who wishes to experience the delights of a walk through nature while admiring fascinating works of art. The visit is suitable for persons of every age and is made on foot along a 1 km. walking path, suitable for a stroller or a wheelchair. The visit can end with a snack at the onsite wine bar, or in the picnic areas provided in the Park for those who bring their own food.

From the Firenze-Certosa exit take the superstrada Fi-Si towards Siena for 55 km. Exit at Siena-Nord. At the roundabout go left towards Castellina for 1.5 km, then take a right turn towards Vagliagli. Drive for about 8 km and then turn right towards Pievasciata on a country road, and you will find the Park with a large parking area on your right after about 4 km. Opening hours: Daily from 10:00 am to sunset. Tel. 0577-357151 Entrance fee: Full 7.50 euro. Reduced 5.00 euro (under 16).

### NEWS FROM ST. JAMES

Serendipity Sale, Sunday 7 from 12:30 - 5:00 pm; enjoy a flea market of new and used items, crafts and baked goods. Food and beverages will also be for sale in the church undercroft.

Lenten Suppers will be held weekly during March in the St. James Undercroft. Adults €5, children free.

Thurs. 4 at 7:30 p.m. - Lenten Parish supper followed by Compline

Wed. 10, 6:30 p.m. - US Coast Guard Chorus followed by Parish supper at 7:30 p.m.

Thurs. 18 at 7:30 pm - Lenten Parish supper followed by Compline  
Thurs. 25 at 7:30 pm- Lenten Parish supper followed by Compline  
St. James, Via Rucellai 9, info@stjames.it, http://www.stjames.it,

#### MESSAGE FROM FITC

Dear Friends:

On March 8, 9 and 10 FITC will participate in VDAY, the global movement to stop violence against women. We will be offering 2 productions. THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES at 9:00 pm in English and Italian, and our LATE NIGHT show: THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN... what makes a man... a man! at 11:15pm. I hope you will consider coming. I will be performing for the first time in over a year and would really like to share my work with you. And, if you would kindly consider spreading the word about this event, the intention of it is to raise funds and awareness to local and global issues. This year we are focusing on the suffering of the women and girls of the Congo. The event is supported by the patrocinio of Quartiere 1 and the Commissione Culturale and the Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali - Consigliera Regionale di Parità della Toscana.

I hope to see you at TEATRO DI CESTELLO for one or both of these productions. It is guaranteed to be a great night in the theatre!

Bari Hochwald

Producing Artistic Director, Florence International Theatre Company

[bari@florencetheatre.com](mailto:bari@florencetheatre.com)

#### V-Day Florence 2010

"The Vagina Monologues:" FITC will again perform the Vagina Monologues, this year with a new director, Broadway performer Gina Lamparella, and a new cast of 25 Florentine residents and international students currently in Florence. This will be a bilingual performance, with corresponding subtitles in both English and Italian. Eve Ensler's Obie award-winning masterpiece gives voice to real women's deepest fantasies and fears. "Spellbinding, funny, and almost unbearably moving, it is both a work of art and an incisive piece of cultural history, a poem and a polemic, a performance and a balm and a benediction." – Variety. March 8, 9, and 10 at 9pm. Teatro di Cestello, Piazza di Cestello. Tickets, €15, with a percentage of donations going to V-Day 2010 to fight violence against women.

A fun and contemporary cultural alternative to Florence's late-night scene is provided by Rod Ben Zev and his partner Ben Silburn from Amsterdam's world of professional improv. Their show, The Seven Ages of Man: What Makes a Man.... A Man! takes the audience on an interactive voyage through the seven ages of contemporary man. If you want to learn what makes a man a man, don't miss this show. Additionally, Rod and Ben will run a workshop on basic improvisation techniques on March 10. March 9, 10 at 11:15 pm to midnight, Teatro di Cestello, Piazza di Cestello. Tickets, €10, with a percentage of donations going to V-Day 2010 to fight violence against women.

Profits from the FITC V-DAY productions and workshop will be donated to the V-DAY movement for its work in helping the women and girls of Congo and to local antiviolence center Associazione Artemisia. Tickets can be purchased at: Paperback Exchange, via delle Oche 4/R; via email at [info@florencetheatre.com](mailto:info@florencetheatre.com); or at the theatre the night of the show. For more information, call 055/213788 or see <http://www.florencetheatre.com>.

#### FOOTBAAAALLL!! by Simon Clark and Anne Brooks

Forza Viola!.....Fiorentina may be getting a visit from the International Atomic Energy Authority. The world has been worrying about Iran but we can reveal that Peru has surreptitiously developed its own nuclear deterrent; they've kept it secret by implanting it in the left leg of Juan Manuel Vargas. Watch film of his goal against Livorno and then tell us no ballistic missile was involved! Otherwise, the month didn't look that sunny.....

February Results	
<i>Coppa Italia: Inter-Fiorentina</i>	LOST 0-1
Week 23: Fiorentina-Roma	LOST 0-1
Week 24: Sampdoria-Fiorentina	LOST 0-2
<i>Champions League: Bayern-Fiorentina</i>	LOST 1-2
Week 25: Fiorentina-Livorno	WON 2-1
Week 17: Fiorentina-Milan	LOST 1-2
Week 26: Lazio-Fiorentina	DREW 1-1

Serie A. Roma. Doncha hate them? Last year in this fixture, we were brilliant and trounced Roma 4-1. This year, we were even more brilliant and lost 0-1. As one newspaper headline had it “Fiorentina attack for 82 minutes, then Vucinic scores”. Every Viola shirt played well; Marchionni and Jovetic were terrific; Montolivo, wearing the captain’s armband with aplomb, put in a towering performance. Justice is not a factor when it comes to the game of football.

Week 24 at Sampdoria and the wagon is tottering. We fielded the same players but nothing like the same team as against Roma. After a quarter of an hour, we’d seen Gamberini stretchered and Santana limping off and were a goal down – one of those “comedy of errors” goals but the joke was on us. Salt was rubbed in as both Samp goals came from ex-Viola stars – Semioli and Pazzini. To ensure the salt screamed, Montolivo was booked late on and will miss the Livorno game.

We like to skirt with disaster before the cavalry rides in. Four straight defeats in all, one point from the last 5 league games and at half-time against Livorno at the Stadio we’re losing 0-1. Both sides had struck the woodwork (Jovetic twice) but we just couldn’t seem to buy a goal, despite Jo-Jo creating havoc and Gilardino looking sharp. Cometh the hour, cometh the left leg. 25 metres out and Vargas gave it laldy [NB: a Scottish phrase meaning to apply the maximum force with extreme gusto.] It was as well the Livorno keeper couldn’t get near it; it would have gone right through him. As a bonus, Livorno lost a player, red-carded for dissent (probably protesting about illegal weaponry). Then, it was ours. On 80 minutes, Gila ended his goal drought with the classic Vargas-cross-Gila-header routine. Man of the Match? Rocket Man!

Next, the rearranged match entertaining Milan (senza Beckham!). The Good News: Gila has recovered his scoring touch, finishing off some scrappy play after 14 minutes, and we won the first 80 minutes. The Bad News: they won the last 10 minutes – a 92nd minute winner! – with more goals than us. Our form is back but as the game wore on we began to look tired and mistakes crept in. The games are coming thick and fast and the pressure is starting to tell.

Last game of the month away at Lazio, inexplicably struggling against relegation. We travel with more players in the treatment room than available to play; we are stretched - but hanging on! Even after going a goal behind after only 7 minutes; the Viola must have felt the influence of hostile gods! In the second half, Prandelli threw on the new Brazilian striker, Keirrisson, and the youth star, Babacar, and we took charge – although it was still Jovetic causing problems everywhere. It came late but it mattered; on 92 minutes, Keirrisson pounced in the goal area and there we were; we nearly won it at the death but it’s not worth going there.

Coppa Italia The semi-finals. There are two kinds of team in Italian football today; there is Inter Milan and there is everyone else. Under Mancini and then Mourinho, it has been impossible to stop them scoring. Mourinho has turned their defence into a steely fortress; they are now incredibly hard to score against (still impossible to stop scoring). But that’s what we have to do in the second leg. For the opening half an hour, we were given a lesson in how to play football, culminating in an error by poor Natali (how many thousand times did he have to watch it on TV?) which the avaricious Inter forwards converted into the only goal of the game. That roused us. We couldn’t conjure a goal but we gave as good as we got. The longer the game went on, the more we looked like the Fiorentina who dispatched Liverpool and Lyons. We aren’t dead yet!

Champions League. The Big Stage again. We venture into the Bavarian fastness - valiantly, as UEFA appeared to allow Bayern employees to act as referee and linesmen. We turned up with our Dr Jekyll side, full of style and enthusiasm for a bright first half, marred only by a run-of-the-mill penalty on the stroke of half-time. Nothing Frey could do. In the second half the Viola steamed into the German side until Kroldrup tapped in the equaliser, his first-ever Champions League goal, on 50 minutes. Still we went at one of Europe’s most powerful teams; we must have got them worried as, with 20 minutes to go, the referee found an excuse to red-card Gobbi; even the Pope would have demurred. Ten men kept them at bay until, with a minute to go, Klose “scored” from a world record offside position. Note that referee and linesmen officiated at the infamous game in which Thierry Henri punched in a goal that took France to the World Cup finals at the expense of Eire. Nothing was done about that; nothing will be done about this. We’re only one goal down, we have an away goal in the bag and we own the moral high ground!

This is not the moment to lose faith. We’re in the knock-out stages of the Champions League and the semi-finals of the Coppa Italia; we’ve only lost once in our last three games and sit a mere 6 points off the prized 4th spot!..... Forza Viola!

**BUYING TICKETS:** Ticket information – seating plan, prices, ticket outlets – is on the “biglietteria” section of the club’s website [<http://www.it.violachannel.tv>]. Basically, tickets can be purchased at official box offices and holders of TicketOne lottery franchises. Sources include:

**CHIOSCO DEGLI SPORTIVI**, via degli Anselmi (between the Piazza Repubblica post office and the Odeon cinema). Tel 055 292363.

**BAR MARISA**, viale Manfredo Fanti 41. Tel 055 572723.

**BAR STADIO**, viale Manfredo Fanti 3r. Tel 055 576169.

ACF OFFICIAL TICKET-OFFICE, via Dupre 28 (corner of via Settesanti).  
NUOVO BOX OFFICE, via Luigi Alamanni 39 (close to SMN station). Tel 055 264321  
FELTRINELLI FIRENZE, Via de' Cerretani 39/32R

#### THE FIORENTINA SCHEDULE:

Tougher and tougher! We host Bayern but that's not important. Three of our March opponents are rivals for 4th place; Udinese and Catania are wary over relegation. The blunt message is that we don't want to lose any of these!

March Fixtures		
Week 27: (Florence):	7 March	Fiorentina-Juventus
<i>Champions League</i>	<i>9 March</i>	<i>Fiorentina-Bayern</i>
Week 28:	14 March	Napoli-Fiorentina
Week 29: (Florence)	21 March	Fiorentina-Genoa
Week 30:	24 March	Catania-Fiorentina
Week 31: (Florence)	28 March	Fiorentina-Udinese

#### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

RISOTTO AGLI ASPARAGI - Serves 4-5.

Keep this one handy for when the first asparagus arrives. It is especially good made with the wild asparagus fronds found on the hills around Florence in the Spring. This recipe may also be made with zucchini or mushrooms.

4 Tbs. butter  
1 stalk celery, finely chopped  
1 onion, finely chopped  
1 bunch asparagus, sliced diagonally  
grated zest of 1 lemon  
salt and pepper  
three quarters cup white wine  
2 cups good quality arborio, vialone or originario rice  
7-8 cups hot chicken or vegetable broth  
1 Tbs. chopped parsley  
one quarter cup grated parmigiano

In a heavy bottomed sauce pot gently cook celery and onion in butter until transparent. Add asparagus, lemon zest and a little salt and pepper. Cook another 2-3 minutes over gentle heat.

At this point turn up the heat, add the rice and sauté for a few minutes, stirring constantly. Add the white wine and allow to evaporate a minute or two. Add the hot broth, one large ladle at a time, stirring constantly, until liquid is mostly absorbed and risotto is al dente (approx. 15 minutes). Stir in parsley and parmigiano, and serve immediately.

#### THUMBS UP – THUMBS DOWN “Our Readers Right”

Our “Thumbs up, Thumbs down” column is your chance to write us and share your own ideas and information, or to toot the horn of businesses, events and those Florentine situations that strike you as either wonderful or terrible. Please note: all opinions are (usually) strictly those of our readers. Lend us your thoughts!

#### GELATO: AN OCCASIONAL PROMENADE (continued.....)

Spring is in the air and a longing for gelato therefore legitimate. Florentines should be rallying to the football club – so if you are by the Stadio on Viale dei Mille, you'll be uplifted in these outlets.....

BADIANI (Viale dei Mille 20r, Campo di Marte. Tel: 055 578 682). North-eastwards out of the core of the city centre, Viale dei Mille runs from Piazza delle Cure to the Stadio. Badiani, mid-way between Cure and the Stadio, is a full-blown café justifiably famous for inventing its buontalenti (Bernardo Buontalenti, the 16th century engineer, architect and impresario, lies at the heart of the myth that gelato was invented in Florence). Its other flavours are well worth a lick; all a tad creamy – classic buontalenti, cremarancia and an amazingly tangy yoghurt. It will be busy before and after a Fiorentina game (we have no idea how busy it is during games). See <http://www.buontalenti.it>. Closed Tuesdays, otherwise open 07.00-midnight.

ALBA [Viale dei Mille 62R] The thing about Viale dei Mille is that, especially on market or match days, the gelateria at each end of the street are queued to the gutter. Alba sits in-between; its quality stands up to any scrutiny

and it really is worth passing up on some of the grander establishments in the neighbourhood. It's a small family business with gorgeous banana, sparkling lemon. Open early till 22.30 every day.

**GELATERIA CONTI** [Viale dei Mille 1/a/r (Angolo Viale Fantini)] On the corner, the property comes in two versions. It's a long shop with a broad display of enticing flavours and on match days it's a squirming mass of Viola fans, the lucky few wriggling out, the multitude pressing for entry; otherwise it's a manageable space. Whenever, an outstanding white chocolate and someone in the back is manufacturing innovative flavour-pairings – yoghurt & plumcake, ciambellone della nonna, torte di miele etc. Open 11.30-01.00 every day.

**CAVINI** [Piazza delle Cure 19r. Tel: 055 587489] The gelato monument at the western end of Viale dei Mille. Deviants will want to know that they make their own chocolates as well but it's the gelato that draws.....smooth chocolate, refreshing crema, crema & lemon....Closed on Mondays; otherwise open 07.00-midnight. Also at via Maragliano 37.

## FLORENCE NEWS

### SALONE DEL MOBILE - FURNISHINGS SHOW

For the week from Sat. 6 to Sun. 14, stop off at the Fortezza da Basso. It will be hard to shake the sensation of walking through the pages of a design magazine when browsing Florence's Salone del Mobile. You'll find furnishings that range from classic, to modern, to high tech, to way-in-the-future. As you stroll, it is impossible not to gather ideas. Ask advice from designers, architects and producers about hardwood flooring, windows and doors, garden furnishings, security systems, alternative heating and cooling systems, plus bathrooms, bedrooms, living rooms and kitchens to die for. Salone del Mobile. Monday to Saturday: 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm. Sunday: 10:30 am to 9:00 pm. Ticket: 4/5 euro. <http://www.salonedelmobile.com>. Tel. 055 571708. Fortezza da Basso.

### FESTA DELLE DONNE (AND FREE MUSEUMS MARCH 6 AND 7)

Monday March 8 is Women's Day, so celebrate the wonderful women in your life. Follow tradition and give them a sprig of yellow mimosa, or bust out and spring for something less fluffy.

Italy is offering women free entry into all state-run museums on Sat. 6 and Sun. 7. Take advantage and check off some hot spots that have been on your list: Cappelle Medicee, the Uffizi, the Accademia, Museo dell'Opificio delle Pietre Dure (Via degli Alfani, 78), Museo di San Marco (Piazza San Marco, 3), and the Museo Nazionale del Bargello. Or take a peek into some of the off-the-beaten track gems like Florence's Last Suppers: Cenacolo del Fuligno on via Faenza 40/42, the Cenacolo del Ghirlandaio on Borgo Ognissanti, 42, Cenacolo di Andrea del Sarto (Via di San Salvi 16, tel: 055 2388603), and the Cenacolo di Sant'Apollonia (Via XXVII Aprile 1, tel: 055 2388607). See Orsammichele, or cruise through the Pitti complex (Galleria Palatina e Appartamenti Monumentali, the Galleria del Costume, Museo degli Argenti, Museo delle Porcellane, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Firenze and Boboli).

### LENTEN SUNDAY MARKETS (\*TTT)

On Sundays 7, 14, 21, 28 check out the great market in the Cascine park. In the past, Florentine tradition called for Fiere delle Quaresimali markets in every neighbourhood during Lent. The modern version takes place each Sunday of the month before Easter. You will find over 300 vendors of everything from pots and pans to fur coats (used). Open from 8:00 am – 6:00 pm.

### KOREA FILM FEST - Festival of Korean Cinema in Italy

From Fri. 12 to Sat. 20, the Cinema Odeon will host the 8th annual Florence Korea Film Fest. Special event this year, a show by the popular pop-band Loveholics on the 20th and nearly 30 films. Since 2003 the Festival has been organized by the Florentine Associazione Culturale Taegukgi, advocating an exchange of Tuscan and Korean Cultures. The objective of the festival, other than cultural and institutional collaboration between Italy and Korea of course, is to promote Korea's seductive cultural universe through the lens of the big screen. From new releases to contemporary classics, the festival is one of a kind in Italy. It offers documentaries, short films, and full-length features. The final schedule of events is soon to be posted on the Film Fest website: <http://www.koreafilmfest.com>. Cinema Odeon, Piazza Strozzi. Tel: 055 576551. E-mail: [info@koreafilmfest.com](mailto:info@koreafilmfest.com)

### SANTO SPIRITO ANTIQUES FAIR

Starting at 9:00 am on Sun. 14, meander around Piazza Santo Spirito and discover something wonderful amongst the varied wares of purveyors of antiques and "other".

## TASTE No. 5 (\*TTT)

From Saturday 13 to Mon. 15 the Stazione Leopolda (and the entire city of Florence) will be the site of a culinary extravaganza, with discovering, events and fun, all dedicated to the sense of taste. The producers exhibiting at Taste offer samples ranging from cream of black truffle soup to Parmesan cheese chocolates, from tomato "passata" to alfalfa honey, from handmade dry egg pasta drawn through bronze dies to medieval oven-baked Prosciutto, aged buffalo milk cheese and more. For this edition, the section that Taste dedicates to food & kitchen design, clothing, technical and professional equipment for the table and kitchen, will be held in settings that have been recreated for the occasion by the Florentine Riccardo Barthel interior design brand. Visitors can purchase what is shown and tasted; there will be a series of talk shows and meetings with the protagonists of food culture, dedicated to the hottest and most curious food lifestyle themes; plus an area presenting magazines and publishing projects dedicated to food and wine.

Taste describes and presents the roots of Italian food and wine culture. And thanks to various events scattered throughout Florence as part of FuoriDiTaste, the entire city is taking part in the fun. Fuoriditaste is a program of off-site events featuring the city's restaurants, specialty food stores and boutiques, art galleries, theaters and museums. For example, throughout the week the Riccardo Barthel store will be holding a series of events inviting lovers of good living to its showroom at Via dei Serragli, 234/R. The Florentine company - Giusto Manetti Battiloro - with its "golden food", a line of gold and silver food products for decorating dishes, desserts and drinks, will hold a series of events around the city - at the "Il Colle Bereto", "Zoe" and "Dolce Vita" cocktail bars - and a special collaboration with the Amaru "taste boutique".

On Friday 12th March, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., at the Casa della Creatività in Florence (Vicolo di Santa Maria Maggiore, 1), an aperitif event will be held combining art and gastronomy. Leonardo di Vincenzo, the proprietor of "Birra del Borgo", will present his "Birra d'Artista" [Artist's Beer]: a traditional beer with a special label created by Roman artist Giovanni Trimani. Come and enjoy a craft beer, snacks and a live performance by artist Giovanni Trimani.

On Saturday, 13th throughout the day, the public can taste products from the Friuli-based company Zago, in the ORVM bar-restaurant of the Hotel Westin Excelsior (Piazza Ognissanti, 3). The products will include live yeast unpasteurized beer, as well as classic "feast day" cakes made with craft beers. Also on Saturday 13 from 2.00 p.m. at INO Bottega di Alimentari e Vino (Via dei Georgofili 3), a niche food and wine store in Florence, two chefs will have some fun preparing dishes using single-grain pasta from the Pastificio Felicetti, and Thun honey. Carapina, a Florentine craft ice-cream maker will also be on hand making ice cream with Thun honey.

On Monday, 15th March there will be an all-female evening at the Ristorante Villa Bardini (Costa San Giorgio, 6/A), where Beatrice Segoni (chef of the Ristorante Borgo San Jacopo), Benedetta Vitali (Zibibbo) and Giovanna Iorio (Ristorante Alle Murate) will jointly prepare a special menu using only ingredients supplied by Taste exhibitors. Taking part in the evening will be the Associazione "Donne del Vino" (Wine Women Association) and Pandolea, a cultural association of female quality oil producers (with Loriana Abbruzzetti, the association's national president). The menu will be accompanied by wines presented by Elda Felluga (Az. Livio Felluga), Elisabetta Geppetti (Fattoria Le Pupille), Beatrice Contini Bonacossi (Tenuta di Capezzana) and Cristina Nonino (Nonino Distillatori). The evening's proceeds will be donated to the Fondazione dell'Ospedale Meyer (Meyer Children's Hospital Foundation).

Stazione Leopolda, V.le Fratelli Rosselli, 5. Hours: 10.30 a.m. - 8.00 p.m. (Monday 9.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.). Admission: 10 euro. For general information visit: <http://www.fuoriditaste.com>. <http://www.tastefirenze.it>

## IRLANDA IN FESTA

Wednesday 17 (St. Patrick's Day) and Thursday 18, hit Saschall for some good Irish fun. This year the Celtic fair will feature the music of WHISKY TRAIL, ANTONI O'BRESKEY and LUNASA. Irish culture in general is served up, along with atmosphere and Ireland travel information. The fun starts each evening at 7:30. Info: <http://www.saschall.it>. Tel. 055 6503068. Saschall, Lungarno Moro. Admission: 12 to 15 euro.

## EXHIBITS AROUND FLORENCE

### PRECIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL: CAMEOS AND INTAGLIOS OF THE MEDICI

Starting March 25 and running to June 27, the Museo degli Argenti at the Pitti Palace hosts an exhibition illustrating the Medici family passion for gem collecting, a fascinating aspect of the rediscovery of antiquity which characterized the Renaissance. The complex history of this collection, starting from its formation by Cosimo, Piero and, especially, Lorenzo de' Medici, was celebrated and admired by a host of men of letters and artists.

Beginning in the first half of the XV century, cameos and intaglios were much sought after by popes, princes and cardinals, on several occasions giving rise to disputes between collectors ready to spend large sums to secure themselves a desired piece. The art of carving gems required the use of rare and costly materials, as well as master artisans with extraordinary technical capabilities, considering that the slightest error could nullify months or even

years of hard work. Secondly, special magical and mysterious virtues were attributed to cameos and intaglios depending on the type of material utilized and on the subject. Moreover, their small dimensions and ease of transport made them ideal gifts for illustrious personages and an excellent form of investment; capital to draw on in moments of difficulty. It is no wonder that in the XV century the Medici developed a fixation for carvings on precious and semiprecious stones, which they sought out, forming one of the most important collections in history, a source of great prestige for the family.

Alongside the gems in the show, are a variety of illuminated codices, medals, drawings, paintings and sculptures, which show the great fortune enjoyed by the specimens that belonged to the Medici. Lorenzo Ghiberti, Donatello and Sandro Botticelli are just a few of the artists who found inspiration in the depictions found on the Medici gems. In many cases, these are faithful translations of the models, but there are also works in which the elements drawn from the carved stones are enriched with totally new aspects, as we can find in several drawings by Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo Buonarroti who in the Medici gems not only found a repertory of forms but also an instrument for the recovery of the sense of balance and the measure of proportions characteristic of classical art. Museo degli Argenti - Pitti Palace. Hours: 8:15 am – 5:30 pm (March), 8.15 – 6:30 pm (April, May, June). Closed 1st and last Monday of each month. Tickets: 7 euro. <http://www.unannoadarte.it>

#### METAMORFOSI DI PRIMAVERA

From March 24 until April 27, Palazzo Medici Riccardi hosts a free exhibit showcasing one artist's take on two of history's most beautiful women; both blond, both beloved, both representing the "ideal" beauty of their day, both icons. One lived 50 years ago and the other 500; Simonetta Vespucci, Botticelli's model for the "Primavera" and Marilyn Monroe. Artist Omar Ronda, born in Portula (Biella) in 1947, has been active as an artist since 1967. He worked in New York in contact with the likes of Warhol, Rauschenberg, Lichtenstein, Basquiat and Haring. This show includes seventy, not-to-be-missed works. La Galleria di Palazzo Medici Riccardi. Via Cavour 1. Hours: 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. Info. 055 2760340. Ticket: free.

#### DE CHIRICO, MAX ERNST, MAGRITTE, BALTHUS: A look into the Invisible

Until July 18, Palazzo Strozzi will host another fascinating exhibit. This time we get to explore the early years of the career of De Chirico and the influence of his first works on movements such as Surrealism and the Neue Sachlichkeit. De Chirico was born in 1888 in Greece and partly raised there, where his engineer father designed and built railway lines. Having studied in Munich, at the age of twenty-one and fascinated by the work of the Symbolist painter Arnold Böcklin, he began painting a series of strange and unusual cityscapes. Displayed in Paris after 1911 they were enthusiastically greeted by painters and poets from Picasso to Paul Éluard, and very soon De Chirico became one of the heroes of Surrealism. This phase of his work – the so-called metaphysical painting – lasted up to around 1918. Subsequently De Chirico changed direction. He had a prolific artistic career, and lived to 90, almost as long as Picasso. He died in 1978. Hours: Daily 9 a.m-8 p.m, Thursday 9 a.m-11 p.m. Reservations: [prenotazioni@cscsigma.it](mailto:prenotazioni@cscsigma.it).

#### ANIMANI: Homage from Florence to Mario Mariotti

Until April 11, the Istituto degli Innocenti on Piazza SS. Annunziata celebrates artist Mario Mariotti with a show of his colorful works of "body painting" dating to the 80's and 90's. The works are presented through photos, video and various media. Kids and other visitors will have the chance to experiment with Mariotti's creative techniques thanks to Francesca Mariotti, the artist's daughter who has created a "Giotto Make-up Animani" kit. The Animani works were the result of Mariotti's ability to play with art, through creative experiments that often involved children. With color and the human hand he playfully found a way to show us a giraffe, an elephant, dogs, zebras and people as well. Mario Mariotti (born in Montespertoli, 1936, died in Florence in 1997) worked as a graphic designer, illustrator, performer and communicator from his "bottega" in Florence's Oltrarno neighborhood. Animani. Istituto degli Innocenti, piazza Santissima Annunziata 12. Monday to Friday: 3:00 to 7:00 pm. Sat. and Sunday: 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. Ticket: 6 euro. For info including hours and costs for children's workshops: tel. 055 2478386, [animani@istitutodeglinnocenti.it](mailto:animani@istitutodeglinnocenti.it). <http://www.mariottiafirenze.it>

#### PARIGI CAPITALE DELLA FOTOGRAFIA 1920 – 1940

Until April 11 the Alinari Museum of Photography in collaboration with the Jeu de Paume museum of Paris, hosts an exhibit of photos taken during the 1920's and 1930's, when Paris, thanks to a burgeoning political and religious freedom, was the center of an artistic avant-garde movement. In the early 20's Paris blossomed as the world capital of the artistic avant-garde, including photography. Cosmopolitan and open-minded, Paris soon became the chosen city for photographers from Europe, Russia and America, a stimulating center for all sorts of exchanges. French photographers like Florence Henri, Roger Schall, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Pierre Boucher, were joined by Americans Man Ray and Berenice Abbott, plus Europeans Erwin Blumenfeld, Marianne Breslauer

and Ilse Bing, and the list goes on. More than 100 vintage prints taken by 40 photographers are displayed, along with magazines and books from the same period. Alinari National Photography Museum, Piazza Santa Maria Novella. Open 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. Closed Wednesday. Ticket: 9 euro. <http://www.alinari.it>. Info: Tel. 055.216310, fax 055.2646990, [mnaf@alinari.it](mailto:mnaf@alinari.it).

#### BETTY WOODMAN: The Cheerful Vitality of the Porcelain

Until April 11, the Porcelain Museum at Palazzo Pitti is stage to the refined and imaginative creations of Betty Woodman. With their unpredictable shapes and the intensity and brilliance of the colors, the unusual Sèvres porcelain pieces created by Woodman revolutionize the traditional concept of prized tableware, while preserving a classy elegance. A potter who has already made her name in New York, Betty Woodman periodically lives and works in her house in Antella, just outside of Florence, where she has had the chance to delve into the stratifications of Italian culture. Her expressive freedom enables her to renew the design of traditional forms, drawing on diverse historical and geographical sources to bring forth a new, playful language of matter, unburdened by the labor and study that nevertheless lies behind each individual piece. As she herself puts it "I seek to make art that nods its appreciation towards the history of ceramics without attempting to imitate it". Palazzo Pitti Porcelain museum. Piazza Pitti. Hours: 8:15 am – 5:30 pm (March), 8.15 – 6:30 pm (April). Tickets: 7 euro. Closed 1st and last Monday of each month.

#### L'ARMA PER L'ARTE - Aspects of the Sacred Rediscovered

Until April 6, the Pitti Palace Palatine Gallery, hosts a very special exhibit. Forty years ago, in May 1969, the special squad of the Carabinieri assigned to the protection of the cultural heritage was set up, which in 1975 became answerable to the newly-established Ministry for the Cultural Heritage. The offices of this special squad were installed just a few steps from the Collegio Romano, in Piazza Sant' Ignazio, underscoring the relationship of collaboration between the two institutions, protecting the cultural heritage of the nation. Over the span of these forty years there have been reforms and changes in both the Public Sector and society as a whole, fine-tuning the weapons and tools of those engaged in protecting the cultural heritage, and of those who in various ways attempt to destroy or violate it.

This show celebrates the birthday of the special squad, the Comando Tutela Patrimonio Artistico, while also offering the perfect occasion for appraising how much has been achieved and how much still remains to be done. It is devoted in particular to sacred art, and hence to paintings and objects stolen from churches and convents, and sometimes museums, bringing to light how sites of worship tend to be exposed to the risk of theft and damage, and how over time the Carabinieri squad specialized in this sector has set its resources and competence at the service of the Church and its enormous artistic heritage.

As well as being arranged in chronological order, the works are also divided up into panels, canvases, sculptures and works of applied art, illustrating how the thefts have indiscriminately affected different genres. Special emphasis is also placed on the relationship that links the public to the works of the churches and the sites of worship, the relationship between museums and territory, and the progress which – also thanks to the activity of the special squad of the Carabinieri – has been made in making safe the individual works and the sites that house them. Ticket: euro 10.00. The ticket grants admission to the exhibition, the Palatine Gallery and the Gallery of Modern Art. Hours: Tuesday to Sunday: 8.15-18.50. Closed Mondays.

#### LECTURES IN ENGLISH

The British Institute Weekly Cultural Programme. Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm, the Sala Ferragamo in the Institute's Harold Acton Library hosts a free lecture, concert or other event, followed by an informal drinks reception. British Institute Library, Lungarno Guicciardini 9. <http://www.britishinstitute.it/en/index.asp>

Wednesday 3 - **Michael Kwakkelstein: The reception of the Antique in Netherlandish painting and drawing of the 16th and 17th centuries.** From the early sixteenth century an increasing number of artists from the Low Countries travelled to Italy, especially Rome, to study the much praised antiquities as well as the latest developments in Italian Renaissance art. The aim of this lecture is to provide an overview of the most important Netherlandish artists and their different and changing responses to the antique. Dr Kwakkelstein is Director of the Dutch University Institute for Art History in Florence.

Wednesday 10 - **Robin Butler: How the British manage changes of government.** In Britain a change of government happens within twenty-four hours of a General Election; in the United States the process takes more than two months. Lord Butler, who was Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service in 1997 when the last such change took place in Britain, describes what happens behind the scenes and compares the strengths and weaknesses of the UK and US systems. Lord Butler served as Private Secretary to five successive Prime Ministers, chaired the enquiry into the use of intelligence in the lead-up to the Iraq war, and was Master of University College Oxford following his retirement from the Civil Service.

Wednesday 17 - **Martino Traxler: Is repatriation of art always the moral choice?** Repatriation is widely regarded as the correct moral answer in dealing with ancient objects, particularly those of undocumented provenance, such as the celebrated Euphronios Krater. Recently, however, international objections have been advanced to repatriation. Martino Traxler reviews this debate, considers the value of art objects from our cultural and historical perspective and looks at the nineteenth-century Italian discussion on these matters (starting with Canova's efforts to effect the return of paintings and sculptures taken by Napoleon for the Louvre). Martino Traxler has a B.A. and a Ph.D. in philosophy, and teaches for several junior-year abroad programmes in Florence.

Wednesday 24 - **Michael March: The Dog of Hearts: poetry in the heart of Europe.** Poet Michael March says: 'Without poetry - there would be chaos. "Art knows nothing of History, but helps itself to its terror." The oedipal complex - versus the military-industrial complex- sucking on the milk-tooth of appearance - which apparently does violence to the truth. Fortunately, poets are the bloodhounds of the spirit- unfolding truth- from the lunatics who appear as the elected masters of words.' Michael March is President of the Prague Writers Festival and professor of poetry at New York University in Prague.

Wednesday 31 - A concert of chamber music. For details: <http://www.britishinstitute.it/en/index.asp>.

## ORIGINAL LANGUAGE FILMS

Odeon Theatre, Piazza Strozzi 2. Phone: 055 214 068. <http://www.cinehall.it>

Monday 8 - ALICE IN WONDERLAND by T. Burton: M. Wasikowska, J. Depp. 3.00 – 5.30 – 8.00 – 10.30 p.m.

Tuesday 9 - ALICE IN WONDERLAND - 3.00 p.m.

Thursday 11 - ALICE IN WONDERLAND - 3.00 – 5.30 p.m.

Thursday 11 - Première Nationale LA PREMIERE ETOILE version française avec sous-titre en italien. un film de Lucien Jean-Baptiste avec Firmine Richard, Lucien Jean-Baptiste. Spectacle Unique à 20.30.

From 12th to 20th - KOREAN FILM FESTIVAL

Monday 22 IT'S COMPLICATED by Nancy Meyers with M. Streep, S. Martin - 3.45 – 6.00 – 8.15 – 10.30 p.m.

Tuesday 23 IT'S COMPLICATED - 3.45 – 6.00 – 8.15 – 10.30 p.m.

Wednesday 24 VALENTINE'S DAY by G. Marshall with J. Alba, K. Bates - 3.30 – 5.50 – 8.10 – 10.30 p.m.

From 25th to 28th - HONG KONG FILM FESTIVAL

Monday 29 SHUTTER ISLAND (Italian subtitles) by Martin Scorsese with Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo - 3.00 – 5.30 – 8.00 – 10.30 p.m.

Tuesday 30 SHUTTER ISLAND (Italian subtitles) - 3.00 – 5.30 – 8.00 – 10.30 p.m.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND stars Johnny Depp as the Mad Hatter, and Anne Hathaway as the White Queen. Director and subject matter make for a perfect marriage in Tim Burton's version of the Lewis Carroll classic.

In IT'S COMPLICATED Meryl Streep plays Jane, the mother of three grown kids, who owns a thriving Santa Barbara bakery/restaurant and has--after a decade of divorce--an amicable relationship with her ex-husband, attorney Jake. But when Jane and Jake find themselves out of town for their son's college graduation, things start to get complicated. An innocent meal together turns into the unimaginable--an affair. With Jake remarried to the much younger Agness (Lake Bell), Jane is now, the other woman. Should Jane and Jake move on with their lives, or is love truly lovelier the second time around? It's...complicated.

VALENTINE'S DAY follows the intertwining storylines of a diverse group of Los Angelenos as they navigate through romance and heartbreak over the course of one Valentine's Day. Couples and singles experience the pinnacles and pitfalls of finding, keeping or ending relationships in a day in the life of love.

From director Martin Scorsese, SHUTTER ISLAND is the story of two U.S. marshals, Teddy Daniels (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Chuck Aule (Mark Ruffalo), who are summoned to a remote and barren island off the coast of Massachusetts to investigate the mysterious disappearance of a murderess from the island's hospital for the criminally insane.

## ONSTAGE SELECTION

Theatre info: Teatro Comunale, Via Solferino 15. Tel. 055 27791. Teatro della Pergola, Via della Pergola 12/32, Tel. 055 2479651. Teatro Verdi, Via Ghibellina 99, tel. 055 212320. Teatro Saschall, Lungarno Moro 3, tel. 055 6504112. Teatro Goldoni, Via Santa Maria 15. Tel. 055 229651. Teatro Romano, Fiesole, Tel. 055/59187. Mandela Forum, Viale Paoli 3, tel. 055 678841. Stazione Leopolda. Viale Fratelli Rosselli 5. St. Mark's Church. Via Maggio 16. Tel. 055 294764. Church of Orsanmichele, Via dei Calzaiuoli. Tel. 055-210305. Teatro Puccini, via delle Cascine 41, tel 055 362067. Chiesa S. Stefano al Ponte Vecchio, piazza S. Stefano 5. Viper Theatre, Via Lombardia 1.055/318056, <http://www.viperclub.eu>. Auditorium FLOG, Via M. Mercati, 24/b, 055/210804, <http://www.flog.it> Sala Vanni, Piazza del Carmine 14. Teatro Everest, Via Volterrana 4/b, tel. 055. 23 21 754. [info@teatroeverest.it](mailto:info@teatroeverest.it), <http://www.teatroeverest.it>. Teatro Politeama Pratese, Via G. Garibaldi, 33 – Prato. Tel: 0574/603758, <http://www.politeamapratense.com>. Purchase tickets for theatre, concerts and other events at the

following ticket agencies: BOX OFFICE: Via Alamanni, 39 (alongside the train station). Open Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, from Tuesday to Saturday 10:00-7:30 pm. Tel. 055/210804. ARGONAUTA VIAGGI, Lungarno Torrigiani 33/B, Tel.055/2342777. Many tickets can be pre-purchased via <http://www.ticketone.it>, <http://www.boxol.it>, <http://www.classictic.com/en> or <http://www.festivalopera.it>.

Saturday 6

BACH COLLEGIUM STUTTGART – Angela Hewitt (piano), music of Bach. Teatro della Pergola. 4:00 pm.  
DON QUIXOTE - Conducted by Giuseppe Mega, Choreographer: Vladimir Derevianko, Music by: Ludwig Minkus. Teatro Comunale.

Sunday 7

DON QUIXOTE - Conducted by Giuseppe Mega, Choreographer: Vladimir Derevianko, Music by: Ludwig Minkus. Teatro Comunale.

Monday 8

MATTHIAS GOERNE (baritone), WOLFRAM RIEGER (piano), music of Schubert in the very intimate Saloncino. Teatro della Pergola. 9:00 pm.

Tuesday 9

DON QUIXOTE - Conducted by Giuseppe Mega, Choreographer: Vladimir Derevianko, Music by: Ludwig Minkus. Teatro Comunale.

Wednesday 10

DON QUIXOTE - Conducted by Giuseppe Mega, Choreographer: Vladimir Derevianko, Music by: Ludwig Minkus. Teatro Comunale.

Saturday 13

STABAT MATER - DANIEL OREN conducts. Teatro Comunale.  
LEONARDO ROMANELLI in HOW TO BECOME A SOMMELIER IN 50 MINUTES. Florentine food critic and author gives a tongue-in-cheek monolog in Italian, on the present-day food and wine “situation”. He will speak of the extravagances of the world of wine, and the solemn and often ridiculous exercise of taking a glass in hand today. Teatro Puccini. 9:00 pm.  
PIETRO DE MARIA (piano), music of Scarlatti, Schubert. Teatro della Pergola. 4:00 pm.

Sunday 14

ANDRÁS SCHIFF - (piano), MIKLOS PERENYI (cello), music of Beethoven, held in the very intimate Saloncino. Teatro della Pergola, 9:00 pm.  
STABAT MATER - DANIEL OREN conducts. Teatro Comunale

Monday 15

ANDRÁS SCHIFF - (piano), MIKLOS PERENYI (cello), music of Beethoven, held in the very intimate Saloncino. Teatro della Pergola, 9:00 pm.  
RENZO ARBORE - Master showman and king of the Canzone Napoletana Classica, Arbore returns to Florence with a 15-piece orchestra to reintroduce Neapolitan style music in Italy and beyond.  
ENRICO RUGGERI - After 4 years, Ruggeri returns to Florence. This eclectic pop Italian artist will present his greatest hits plus works from his latest album (including the song from Sanremo) Saschall. 9:00 pm.

Tuesday 16

PAT METHENY – Always at the avant-garde of new technology, Metheny (winner of 17 Grammy awards) revolutionizes the solo concert using his latest creation: Orchestrion. Orchestrion is a contraption that allows Metheny to play “solo”, while piloting a series of machines and robotic music makers. Saschall. 9:00 pm.

Friday 19

MIKHAIL PLETNEV conducts. Tamaki Kawakubo (violin). Teatro Comunale.

Saturday 20

SUNRISE JAZZ ORCHESTRA with special guest saxophonist Dario Cecchini. Pinocchio Live Jazz. 10:00 pm. Viale Giannotti 13. <http://www.pinocchiojazz.it>.

RIAS KAMMERCHOR, HANS-CRISTOPH RADEMANN (conductor), PHILIP MAYERS (piano). Music of Schumann. Teatro della Pergola. 4:00 pm.

Sunday 21

MIKHAIL PLETNEV conducts. Tamaki Kawakubo (violin). Teatro Comunale.

CHRIS PROCTOR - Perhaps one of the world's best finger-style guitarists. His very personal style ranges from pop to classical, pulling in a wide range of fans. Circolo ARCI SMS Serpiolle, via delle Masse 38. 9:30 pm. <http://www.sixbarsjail.it>.

Monday 22

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL- The world's most famous theatre/circus returns with the show Saltimbanco. Teatro Comunale. 8:00 pm

PAOLO CONTE playing his greatest hits. Teatro Comunale. 9:30 pm.

Tuesday 23

PAOLO CONTE playing his greatest hits. Teatro Comunale. 9:30 pm.

Thursday 25

CRISTIANO DE ANDRE' in concerto. Cristiano, son of Fabrizio, plays everything from the guitar to the bouzouki, from the violin to the piano and keyboard. Mandela Forum. 9:00 pm.

Saturday 27

UTO UGHI (violin), ALESSANDRO SPECCHI (piano). Music of Handel, Beethoven, Wieniawski, Saint-Saens. Teatro della Pergola. 4:00 pm.

Sunday 28

QUARTETTO PACIFICA – music of Haydn, Prokofiev, Schubert in the very intimate Saloncino setting. Teatro della Pergola. 9:00 pm.

Monday 29

QUARTETTO PACIFICA – music of Haydn, Prokofiev, Schubert in the very intimate Saloncino setting. Teatro della Pergola. 9:00 pm.

WOODY ALLEN AND HIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND AT MONTECATINI TERME – This is the first stop of Allen's European tour, bringing American classic jazz from the 30's and 40's to Italy. Nuovo Teatro Verdi. 9:30 pm. Viale Verdi 45, 51016. Montecatini Terme (PT) Tel 0572.78903, [info@teatroverdimontecatini.it](mailto:info@teatroverdimontecatini.it), <http://www.teatroverdimontecatini.it>

## TUSCANY NEWS

### FESTA DELLE DONNE AND FREE MUSEUMS

On Sat. 6 and Sun 7 (since March 8 is Women's Day), Italy is offering women free entry into all state-run museums. Visit the Giardino della Villa di Castello (Via di Castello 44, Sesto Fiorentino), Villa Medicea "Cerreto Guidi" (Via Ponti Medicei, 7 Cerreto Guidi, tel: 0571 55707), and Villa Medicea della Petraia (Via della Petraia 40, Sesto Fiorentino, tel: 055 452691). See the Eremo di San Leonardo al Lago (Strada Pian del Lago 53100, Monteriggioni, SI, tel: 0577 317021), the Museo Archeologico di Siena (Piazza Duomo-Spedale di S. Maria della Scala, tel: 0577 49153), Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena (Via S. Pietro 29, tel: 0577 281161), the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Chiusi (Via Porsenna 9, Chiusi, SI, tel: 0578 20177) and the Tomba della Scimmia (Località Poggio Renzo 53043, Chiusi, SI, tel: 0578 21177). For further info: <http://www.archeotoscana.beniculturali.it>

### MERCATINO DI APRILANTE – Artisan wares market

Sun. 7 (morning to afternoon) visit Panzano-in-Chianti. The first Sunday of each month the weekly town market held in Panzano is expanded with artisan booths of all sorts. You'll find honey and pecorino (sheep's milk) cheese makers, hand-embroidered linen makers, boutique wineries and antique dealers and much more. To visit Panzano by car from Florence or Siena, take Route 222, the "Chiantigiana" highway passing through the Chianti wine area. From the west, there is a road connecting with the highway at Tavarnelle or S. Donato. This pretty road passes the

monastery at Badia a Passignano. It is also possible to reach Panzano by SITA bus from Florence. The trip takes about one hour.

#### **FIESOLE ANTIQUE MARKET**

On Sun. 7, as on every first Sunday of the month, from 8 am to sunset, you can enjoy a visit to Fiesole with the added fun of perusing the stands filled with bric-brac and antiques. Piazza Mino. For info phone 0555978373.

#### **MEDIEVAL MARKET IN SIENA**

Sat. 13 Siena's shell-shaped Piazza del Campo will be enlivened with a medieval-style market, as the city celebrates the 700th anniversary of its "Costituto". The 'Costituto' is contained in two manuscripts kept in the State Archives of Siena. At the beginning of the 14th century, Siena lived one of the highest and most important moments of its civilization. It was run by the Government of the Nine, the magistracy which ruled the city with enterprising and far-sighted policies from 1287 to 1355. Under the Nine Lords, this fundamental document, written in vernacular, safeguarded the weaker citizens (who did not know Latin). Also under the Nine Lords vast areas of land were bought, and Siena's most important monuments were built; Palazzo Pubblico, Piazza del Campo, and the cathedral. It was the period of great frescos and paintings on wood by the major interpreters of Siennese art such as Duccio di Buoninsegna, Simone Martini, Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti.

On Saturday, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, producers of the best traditional foods and goods of the area will create the same atmosphere as the ancient market that took place weekly in the Piazza del Campo. The stands will be set up and divided into categories; foods on one side, and dry goods on the other. Craftsmen will be at work. And just as in the past, the shops around the piazza will set up shop outdoors, offering food and drink. There will be games for kids, and guided visits through the historical center of Siena to visit the places that were fashionable 700 years ago. Because, as the Siennese website poetically claims "in Siena, the Middle Ages were never Dark but shone with a splendor which still shines today all over the city". For info: tel. 0577-29240. <http://lacittadelsi.comune.siena.it>

#### **FESTIVAL OF MARZUOLO TRUFFLES**

From Fri. 19 to Sun. 21 and Fri. 26 to Sun. 28, Certaldo, one of Tuscany's loveliest hill towns hosts their 16th annual fair celebrating the delicious and rare Marzuolo truffle. This spring tuber is less renowned than the white truffle, so come join the fun and find out for yourself which you prefer. There will be traditional truffle specialties to purchase and dine on directly including crostini al tartufo, crostini di polenta al tartufo, tagliolini and ravioli al tartufo, omelette al tartufo..... Dining options start evenings at 8:00 pm., and Sundays at noon. For info and reservations phone 0571 668974 or 338 7415160. [asstartufaivaldelsa@libero.it](mailto:asstartufaivaldelsa@libero.it), <http://www.asstartufaivaldelsa.org>.

#### **FESTA DELLE FRITTELLE**

Sat. 20 and Sun. 21 visit the medieval hilltop jewel of Montefioralle (right above Greve-in-Chianti) for the best, hot frittelle you'll ever taste. Usually the few tiny lanes of this town are quiet, but for 2 days each year the town bursts with people, fun and FRITTELLE (made by frying blobs of a sweet dough of cooked rice, flour, eggs and sugar). Watch a skilled team of townfolk work in unison around a 7-foot diameter frying pan of boiling oil, to turn out a continuous stream of frittelle di riso. SITA buses will get you to Greve, then you'll have a pretty, but pretty steep trudge uphill to Montefioralle. Here is a link to the SITA schedule. <http://www.acvbus.it/orari/365.pdf>. Montefioralle, Saturday and Sunday from 12:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Tel. 055 8545227. <http://www.montefioralle.info>

#### **IL PAGLIAIO - Organic products market**

Sun 28, the lovely main piazza of Greve-in-Chianti will fill with vendors of all things organic. From 10:00 am to 7:00 pm you can fill browse the booths selling vegetables, honey, cheese, fabrics, wine, baskets and more. Info: 055 8545271. <http://www.comune.greve-in-chianti.fi.it>

#### **ARTISANS IN PIAZZA MINO**

Sun. 28, the prettily restored Piazza Mino in Fiesole will host a craft market. Many of the artisans attending this monthly fair bring their wares as well as their craft, often working on the spot. Hours: 10:00 am to 7:30 pm. For info phone: 055 598720.

#### **EXHIBITS AROUND TUSCANY**

##### **SLOW: LIFE IN A TUSCAN TOWN**

Until April 18, Pistoia's Palazzo Comunale hosts a magical and utterly unique portrayal of rural Italian life. This photo exhibit by American artist Douglas Gayeton is a tribute to the region's kaleidoscope of charming local characters whose livelihoods and culture center around the everyday pleasures of growing, preparing, and eating food. The imaginative and interactive portraits are layered with Gayeton's handwritten notes, anecdotes, recipes,

quotes, and historical facts that cleverly bring context and color to the subject of each sepia-toned image, and draw us deeper into this romantic, rewarding, and progressively rare way of life. You will fall in love with the intimate images of an entire Tuscan zone, where lives are profoundly bound to the rhythms of nature and inherently exemplify the principles dedicated to preserving local food traditions and honoring local farmers and producers. Until April 18, photo exhibit in Palazzo Comunale, Piazza del Duomo, Pistoia. Open Tuesday, Thurs, Fri, Sat. from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, on Wed. 3:00 to 6:00 pm and Sun 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Info 05733711.

#### GENIUS & PASSION, THE RESTORATION OF LIPPI'S FRESCOES IN PRATO.

Over five centuries ago, Filippo Lippi ascended three stories of scaffolding in the dark recesses of Prato's cathedral. Today, the three-tiered frescoes, which cover the walls and vaults of the main chapel with stories of St. John the Baptist and St. Stephen, are visible in renewed splendor after seven years of restoration. Small, guided tours of the fresco cycle now allow the public to come face to face with Lippi. The restoration began in the upper reaches of the chapel ceiling. Four monumental images of the evangelists are incised within the arches of the groin vault. Below them flow the scenes from the lives of two saints: Stephen, Prato's patron saint on the left, and John the Baptist, protector of nearby Florence on the right. From his birth in the top register to his death on the lower register, each saint's life is a theatrical spectacle played out with vivid imagery.

Fra Filippo Lippi was quite an intriguing character; his behavior wasn't exactly exemplary of the Carmelite order, (Fra indicates his religious title). The Carmelites ordained him and trained him as an artist, and by the time he reached Prato in 1452 he was among the most highly regarded and frequently commissioned painters of the early Renaissance. His trysts with various women had already gained him a somewhat sensational reputation, but it is the long-running romance with nun Lucrezia Buti, 25 years his junior, that has been most noted by history. Lucrezia modeled for many of the Lippi's Madonnas, and is said to have been the inspiration for the enchanting Salomé, who dances through the final scene of John the Baptist's fresco cycle, The Feast of Herod. The three-part banquet scene contains larger-than-life figures that feast and make merry around the dancing girl, whom many compare to the female figures in the later works of Lippi's young apprentice Botticelli.

Prato Cathedral. Open Mon. to Sat. 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission: 4 euro with audio guide. Small, guided tours available by calling 0574/24112. <http://www.restaurofilippolippi.it>

#### CLOTHES AND ACCESSORIES ACCORDING TO THE DOCUMENTS OF FRANCESCO DATINI

Until April 5, Palazzo Datini in Prato, the original home of the Merchant of Prato Francesco Datini, hosts an exhibit presenting the history of clothing between the end of the 1300's and the first half of the 1400's. The show is based on the study and interpretation of papers and writings by the Pratese cloth merchant. The museum itself, is located in the home of Datini, built in the latter half of the 1300's and left to the Casa Pia dei Ceppi Foundation. A permanent exhibit there illustrates the life and work of Datini. Explained in English and Italian, it displays many of his original letters, the works of art he collected, the rooms as they were lived. Palazzo Datini, Via Mazzei 33, Prato, tel. 0574.21391 [casapiadeiceppi@alice.it](mailto:casapiadeiceppi@alice.it). Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 am-12:30pm/3:00 pm-6:00 pm, Sat. 9:00 am-12:30pm. Ticket: free.

All our best,  
The Staff of Pitcher and Flaccomio

Newsletter compiled by Kim Wicks

Pitcher & Flaccomio Newsletter: Direttore responsabile Mario Spezi - Pubblicazione con iscrizione n. 5697 del 23/01/09 presso il Tribunale di Firenze.

**CLASSIFIED – SALES**



**SALE– Fiesole – Monteloro - 15 km from Florence**

Portion of farm house, hill top position, refurbished 180 Sq. meters, 3 Bed, 3 bath plus 5000 Sq. meters of garden and swimming pool.

Asking Price 780,000 Euro



**SALE – San Frediano — Historical Center**

Ground and first floor modern apartment, 200 Sq. meters, spacious living, dining-kitchen room 3 bed\3bath, and out door space and terrace. Refurbished, autonomous heating, air.con.

Asking price 1,250,000 Euro.



**SALE – Historical Center – Santa Croce**

Refurbished loft, on the ground floor, 160 Sq. meters, plus 80 Sq. meters of court and patio, and garage. 2 Bed, 2 Bath. Open space style.

Modern Refurbishment

Asking price 980,000 Euro



**SALE – Santa Croce – Historical Center**

Third and top floor with elevator, refurbished apartment on two level plus ancient tower of 170 Sq. meters plus two terraces. 3 Bedrooms, two bathrooms. Sunny, views and quiet.

Asking Price 1,050,000 Euro



**SALE– Galluzzo Farm House – 3 Km South of Florence**

On hill top position, free standing refurbished farm house plus detached barn, total of 550 Sq. meters plus 3 hectares of garden and land. 7 Bed, 7 Bath.

Asking Price 5,000,000 Euro



**SALE – Grassina – 10 min South of Florence**

Modern town house, two levels total of 200 Sq. meters plus garage and 500 sq. meters of garden. 3 bed, 3 bath. Autonomous heating.

Asking Price 920.000 Euro