

Italian Culture in NYC

i-Italy Team (May 25, 2017)



Interview with the the head of the Italian Cultural Institute, Giorgio Van Straten. A wave of movies, art, music, and lectures as well as the biggest event of the season—European Art at the Time of the Treaties of Rome. The exhibit aims to show that the road to European integration wasn't paved by politicians alone, but also by men of culture.

We reached out to the head of the Italian Cultural Institute Giorgio Van Straten to get a sense of what major events IIC has planned for the spring season.

Italo Calvino's Six Memos

After kicking off 2017 with groundbreaking cultural events, the Italian Cultural Institute continues to have a packed calendar. Director Giorgio Van Straten singles out a series of lectures he organized with Giovanna Calvino to mark the release of a new English translation of Italo Calvino's Six Memos for the Next Millennium. "The first three lectures have already taken place around New York. They saw the participation of important figures like Paola Antonelli, senior curator for the Museum of Modern Art's Department of Architecture and Design, and Jonathan Lethem, writer and winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction. The next lecture will be held on June 14 at Albertine, and the last is scheduled to take place at a bookshop, though we are still finalizing a guest list and

the date.”

The month of May will continue to see a wave of movies, art, and music. At the European film festival Panorama Europe, the Italian film to be screened is “La Stoffa Dei Sogni” (The Stuff of Dreams) by director Gianfranco Cabiddu, winner of multiple David di Donatello prizes, and on May 4 the Italian Cultural Institute will host a concert by Maurizio Pollini, one of the world’s greatest pianists.

Celebrating the Treaties of Rome

“Without a doubt,” says Van Straten, “our biggest event is European Art at the Time of the Treaties of Rome: Informel, Abstraction, Zero, Around 1957 (May 9–June 12), an exhibition curated by Francesco Guzzetti that celebrates the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. The exhibit aims to show that the road to European integration wasn’t paved by politicians alone, but also by men of culture. That message will be conveyed by visual art. We will be exhibiting works from all the founding countries of the European Union and the signers of its treaties: Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. All of these works in the spirit of European integration were made between the mid 1950s and the early 1960s. Italy will be represented by paintings by Lucio Fontana and Carla Accardi, Germany by Otto Piene and Heinz Mack, France by Jean Debuffet and Yves Klein, and so forth.” High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, will attend the private opening. The show is made possible by the collaboration of each country’s cultural institute: the Consulate Generals of Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands; the Cultural Services of the French Embassy; the General Delegation of the Government of Flanders; and the European Union Delegation to the United Nations, which has co-organized the show.”

Festa della Repubblica and Beyond

“On June 2 we will once again be celebrating the Festa della Repubblica. As we do every year, we will be collaborating with the Consulate General of Italy to organize a series of events and jazz concerts. We certainly plan on being present for Open Roads: New Italian Cinema at Lincoln Center. In our effort to support contemporary young artists, the concluding events for the Premio New York 2016-2017 will take place sometime between late June and July. The two artists awarded residencies this year are Danilo Correale and Gian Maria Tosatti. Both artists will speak about their experiences and the works they made during their residencies.”

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