



## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

## "Le Conversazioni" is back

FRANCESCA GIULIANI (May 13, 2011)



Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò presented the 2011 edition of "Le Conversazioni - Scrittori a Confronto", the international literary festival curated by Antonio Monda and Davide Azzolini that has brought Anglo-American intellectuals to Capri since 2007

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Capri is one of the most charming places on Earth. The island is a gem cast in the Mediterranean sea, so small and rich in natural beauty and yet so famous and sophisticatedly chic. Hundreds of thousands of tourists choose Capri as their destination for a holiday by the sea that has no comparison, but the island has also always been very popular among artists and intellectuals from all over the world, who chose it to retreat and cherish inspiration while enjoying seafood and sunsets on the faraglioni.

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Since 2007, **Antonio Monda** and Davide Azzolini made Capri the ideal location for the Summer appointment of *Le Conversazioni*, an itinerant literary and cultural festival that takes place between New York and Capri and brings international writers, artists and intellectuals together to discuss engaging and challenging topics such as identity, the relationship between literature and cinema, memory, vice and human rights.

The 2011 edition of "**Le Conversazioni - Scrittori A Confronto**" was recently presented at **Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò**, where Monda and Azzolini introduced this year's topic for the festival: Eros. The topic of love and its nuances, from the most platonic to the most sexual and all the way to disruptive passions and the lingering presence of thanatos into love will be at the core of the conversations between Monda and Azzolini's guests at the Piazzetta Tragara. The list of participating authors is qualitatively stunning and features names such as Cathleen Schine, Mario Desiati, Jonathan Safran Foer and Nicole Krauss, just to mention a few.

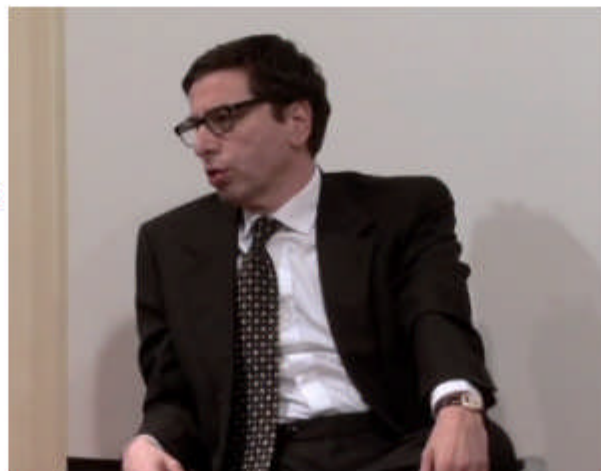


In a country where sexual scandals decide the fortune of political leaders and the discussion on gender equality is open - see the "**Se Non Ora Quando?**" (If Not Now, When?) demonstration by Italian women against the "bunga bunga" mentality last February 13 - approaching such a topic and taking the discussion about it to a higher level is certainly an admirable effort.



Piazzetta Tragara

Monda, however, candidly admitted: "The idea came to me years before the season of the sexual scandals in Italy. I wanted to approach the topic of sex at least for three years now. Initially, I wanted the conversation to revolve on the eros-thanatos dynamic, then I realized the topic of death would have spontaneously come into discussion when talking about sex."



Antonio Monda

The theme of love is very dear to Monda, who told i-Italy: "It's an attempt to reflect upon what we like, what seduces us, what we find attractive in a man or woman. It's an attempt to investigate the relationship between sex and love, desire and satisfaction, will of life and will of death. It's one of the fundamental themes of life."

While discussing how Capri has always been a cosmopolitan and ecumenical island, used to different cultural influences and a second home for many international great minds such as Neruda, Lenin, Wilde and Greene, Monda stressed the importance of intercultural dialogue between Anglo-American and Italian intellectuals that takes place during the *Conversazioni* in Piazzetta Tragara.

"It is the cornerstone of the initiative," he affirmed. And the audience, which is always international as well as Italian, responds to it "warmly and welcomingly."

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