

BLENDING MAGAZINE

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TO
SEE,
ONCE
MORE, THE
STARS

ART | COMMUNITY | TRAVEL | FOOD & WINE | FASHION | LUOGHI DI DANTE | STUDENT VOICE | ALUMNI

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letter from the editors

In the third canto of the "Divina Commedia," Dante reads an inscription written at the entrance of hell, warning all travelers of what awaits them in the future. Out of the nine verses that compose the message, one, in particular, has entered into popular culture: **Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'intrate. Abandon all hope, ye who enter.**

This ominous declaration carries a sense of doom but can be humorous if taken literally: Does this mean that there is a sign at the exit of hell that asks travelers to pick up the hope that they left at the entrance? Dante doesn't seem to give us any indication of it, probably because he was too busy looking in front of him. Plus, being a well-read man, he would know that there's nothing to gain by looking back while in the underworld. Orpheus can tell you that is a terrible idea.

How come this particular verse has become so well known? Well, it has to do with the second word, hope. Of the numerous themes in the "Divina Commedia," hope permeates many aspects of all of them. Dante's narrative voyage is a hopeful one at its core; despite the strife and horrors he endures, in the end, he reaches heaven. And this is what has made the "Divina Commedia" a genuine classic that has touched many people from different backgrounds, cultures, and periods.

This issue of Blending Magazine is inspired by the final student exhibition, "To See, Once More, the Stars," celebrating the 700th anniversary of Dante Alighieri's death. We seek to celebrate the impact of this monumental author not just in Italy but worldwide, bringing you many different stories that capture that same sentiment of hope for the future. This semester's publication features student-written articles such as **Shining Through Hell**, the testimony of a nurse who worked during the pandemic. The piece, **Not Dante's Florence**, describes how the religious landscape has changed over the centuries. And in the article **Appropriating Hell**, we see how the fashion industry has appropriated Dante's images.

Before you start reading, we want to leave you with another quote from Dante.

It's the last verse from the Inferno, and the inspiration for this issue's title. We feel it's also a declaration of hope for what lies ahead. After his perilous journey, Dante leaves us with a few poignant words: **E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle - We emerged to see, once more, the stars.**

HAPPY READING!

The Blending Staff

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Final Student Exhibition

The theme of this issue of Blending Magazine, "To See, Once More, The Stars," is connected to the final exhibition featuring our DIVA and SAS Fine Arts students. Artists and designers representing various courses and departments offered a personal interpretation of the theme and elaborated on it through visual media. We've compiled a selection of the works that touched best on this theme for you to enjoy.





Taylor Samuels - Intermediate Digital Photography



Carly Frommer - Intermediate Digital Photography



Caleb England - Advanced Painting



Robert Thompson - Advanced Film Photography



HELL IN MOTION

BY RILEY HOUSTLER

Swarms of hornets and wasps continuously stinging people. Snakes suffocating throats. Violent winds thrashing weightless spirits.

Ceaseless sleet and freezing rain pelting cold limbs. Heavy weights bounding bodies to the floor. Stinky swamps swallowing souls.

Flames consuming confined rooms. Monsters gnawing into flesh. Damned descending into ditches. Bodies frozen under ice.

Swarms of hornets and wasps continuously stinging people. Snakes squeezing the air out of throats. Violent winds thrash weightless spirits. Ceaseless sleet and freezing rain pelting cold limbs. Immensely heavy weights bidding bodies to the floor. Stinky swamps swallowing souls. Monsters gnawing into flesh. The damned descending into ditches. Bodies frozen under the ice.

Grab your popcorn; it's time for some entertainment! Since 1320, the "Divine Comedy," Dante Alighieri's literary portrait of hell, limbo, and paradise, has enticed readers worldwide.

The horror of Dante's story inspires the film industry specifically. Perhaps that is why these graphic scenes seem all too familiar. Why is it that humans find these traumatic situations so entertaining? Is it the inner demon in humans flourishing at the gore? Do people compare their own personal hells to film adaptations? Is the hope of heaven enough for people to gain inspiration? Whether

the viewer sees themselves as the angel or the demon, there is always a personal connection. Movie-goers fill cinemas to watch stories of hell to heavenly victories, many inspired by the "Divine Comedy."

The 1935 motion picture *Dante's Inferno* and the 2007 animation *Dante's Inferno* are both direct conversions of the poem that are widely viewed seven centuries after it was written. While these are very blatant in their inspiration, many popular movies tell the story of Dante in a way that is not as obvious.

The absence of a cigarette is hell on earth for many. The first modern twist on Dante's journey doesn't need fire and monsters to demonstrate suffering; all it needs is a guy craving a cigarette. The 1972 Swedish comedy *The Man Who Quit Smoking* strips the original poem of its afterlife fantasies and applies it to the modern-day nightmare of nicotine withdrawal. The plot highlights the character (unironically named Dante Alighieri) being



The House That Jack Built, Trustnordisk ApS

offered seventeen million krona if he quits smoking in fourteen days. If he doesn't, his uncle inherits the money. In his process of attempting to stop, he goes through his own personal hell. Frantically pacing all around Paris, it seems as though someone exhales cigarette smoke in his face everywhere Dante looks. The film is divided into sections: Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso, the same divisions of the "Divine Comedy." Paradiso is either a cigarette or seventeen million krona for the film character Dante. For many, that means heaven triumphs either way.

Violence and rebellion in the modern-day world expose the sin and corruption of human nature. The 1995 motion picture *Se7en* stars Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman, who investigate seven ritual crimes. One scene shows chains buried in rolls of fat binding the ankles and wrists together of a murder victim who is found face down in a bowl with a knife in his back. Another scene flashes an emaciated still body in the bed of a neglected house, covered from head to toe in bed sores. After collecting

samples for forensics, the skeleton comes to life. As the movie progresses, viewers gather clues alongside the detectives to realize these crimes outline the seven deadly sins written by Dante. The first sin portrayed is the death of the glutton, the second, the neglecting of sloth. The gruesome portrait of the seven deadly sins in modern life horrifies viewers. Still, it proves to interest them as the film was awarded best movie at the 1996 MTV Movie Awards.

For some, a portrait of hell is bloody and haunted. For others, hell is the separation from the people they love. The dynamic approach is how the 1998 fantasy drama *What Dreams May Come* demonstrates the heaven to hell journey of the "Divine Comedy." The plot stars Robin Williams as a dad named Chris, whose family gets into two car crashes: killing his children and then killing him. From heaven, he watches over his wife Annie, who commits suicide from her misery. As Chris watches Annie get sent to hell, he decides to rescue her. Accompanied by



Seven, New Line Cinema

two other angels (that end up being his children), they descend through the layers of hell. The trio fights off a sea of alien-like hellish bodies swimming on top of each other, attempting to tip their boat into hell's river Styx. Chris tiptoes over thousands of agonizing heads, crying for help as their bodies are buried in the floor. It shows the lengths he and his children are willing to go to save Annie. Unable to save her, the family decides to spend the rest of their lives in hell because being apart is worse. This heart-wrenching film shows that hell cannot overpower love, determination, and connection, just as Dante experienced in the "Divine Comedy" with Beatrice.

On the other hand, the 2018 film *The House That Jack Built* demonstrates the power hell has on earth. Through scenes of taking sharp tools to a stranger's face, a knife through a neighbor's heart, and a freezer full of dead bodies, viewers are taken on the journey of the life of the serial killer Jack. Watching alongside the viewers is Virge, who is commenting on Jack's poor decisions his entire life. Eventually, Jack gets shot by the police, and Virge walks Jack through the nine layers of hell. Red caves flowing with lava and a loud ringing noise demonstrate that Satan is near. Wearing Dante Alighieri's robe, Jack attempts to leave the Inferno. Although he is unsuccessful, the movie depicts the unpleasantness of hell and

the punishment for cruelty on earth. *The House That Jack Built* publicly states that they used the "Divine Comedy" as a metatext when creating this story.

These five films barely touch on the number of movies that tell the tale of the "Divine Comedy." Even if the film does not outline the same plot transparently, many famous films give obvious hints to their inspiration from Dante. For example, in the popular 2003 Disney movie *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, Captain Jack Sparrow references Dante's ninth circle of hell when speaking to his enemy. Another hit film in 2009, *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*, features Buck the weasel quoting the sign above the gate of hell "Abandon all hope, Ye Who Enter Here."

The "Divine Comedy" influences genres of gore, comedy, crime, drama, thriller, and children's animation. It withstands the test of time by inspiring award-winning movies from 1935 to now. This proves the truths within this story to be universally relatable, as every viewer goes through their own layers of hell and hopes to have a love like Beatrice leading them out. The hope of heaven keeps movie-goers watching. The "Divine Comedy" will not be leaving film screens anytime soon with those themes driving the story.



What Dreams May Come, PolyGram Filmed Entertainment



Illustration by Maria Maddocks



After the Roaring

pg 16 ILLUSTRATION BY ANAIS TALAVERA

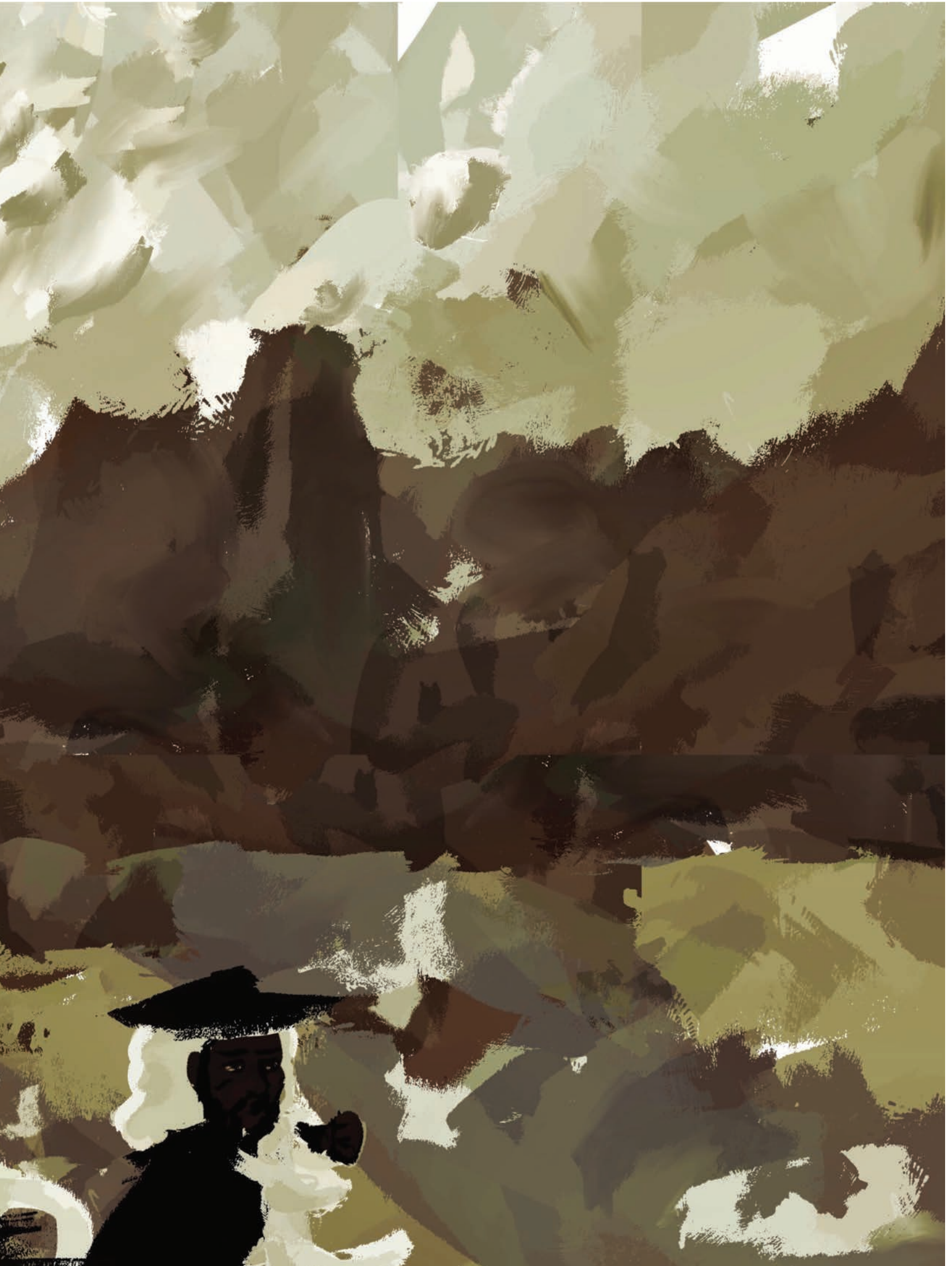
Dante Alighieri's work the "Divine Comedy" particularly his work "The Inferno" has given artists over the centuries an abundance of inspiration to create pieces of art that reflect the ironic punishments of Hell. To create this piece, I researched artists who have made art inspired by Dante's work, such as Lorenzo Mattotti and Gustave Doré. This illustration does not depict suffering and punishment; it shows escape. This sense of escape I wanted to depict I turned towards the works of Australian author and illustrator Shaun Tan, and the charcoal pencil illustrations of Chris Van Allsburg. Both capture a sense of calm and space, and in this piece I tried my best to emulate that. The tool I used was a drawing program called Procreate on my iPad. I used different filters and different brushes to create the effects seen in the illustration. I wanted the figures in the piece to represent Dante and Virgil, but at the same time not directly be Dante or Virgil. I would instead like the viewer to insert and see themselves in my work and make them ponder if they are, or were, a Virgil or Dante at one point in time.

Ascending

ILLUSTRATION BY JUAN A. CANALES *pg 18 - 19*

This painting was inspired by Goya and his pictorial representation of the events of the "Divine Comedy." This digital painting portrays the lost souls traveling to seek redemption. After leaving Hell, the travelers see Purgatory, represented by the towering mountains. In the distance above, Heaven can be viewed with the steps of clouds. This artwork creates a less horrific depiction of the journey to salvation while showing the frail nature of the souls. The artwork is made digitally using marks that resemble loose impasto brushstrokes.







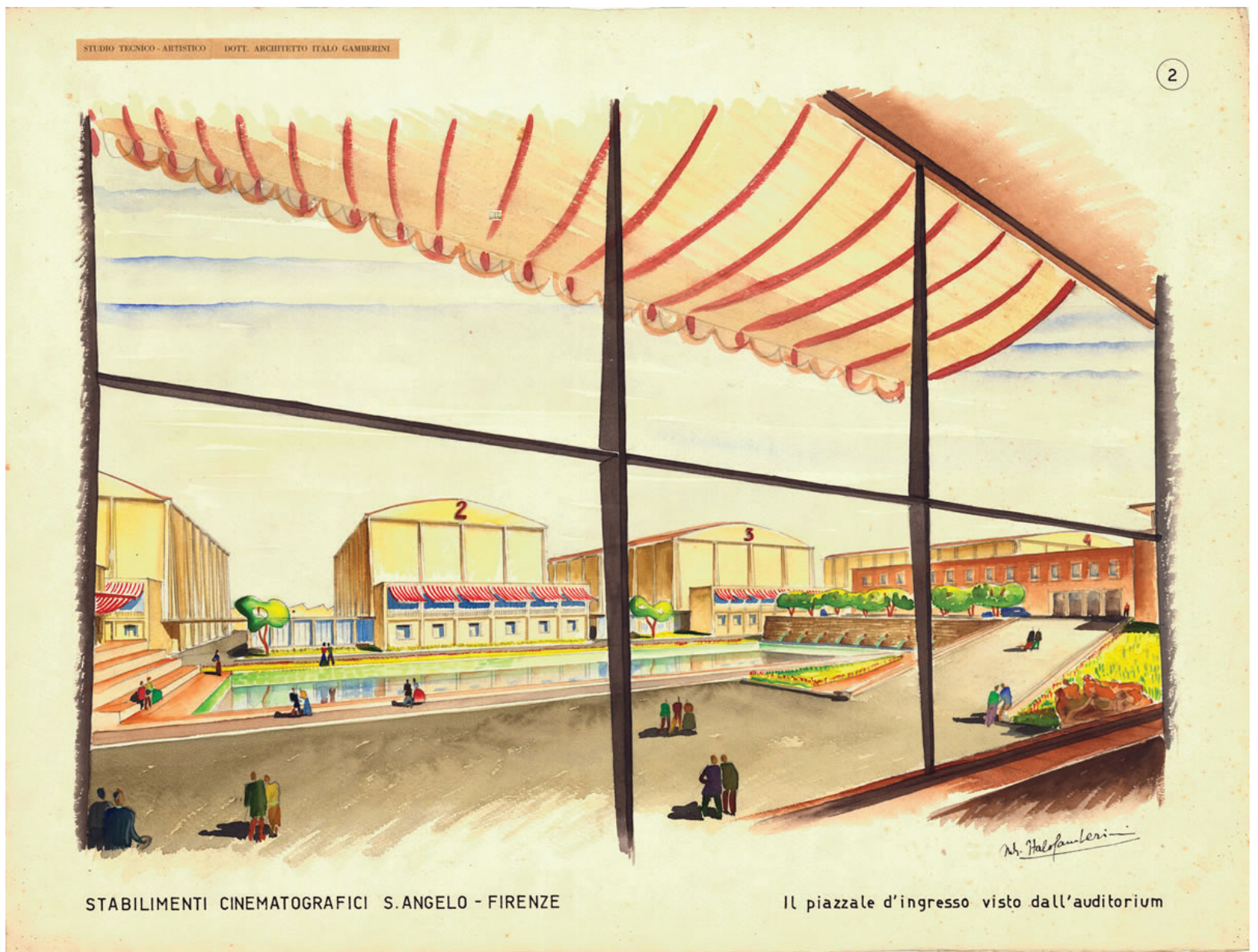
Community

BY RILEY HOUSTLER
PHOTOS AND ART PROVIDED BY
PAGLIAI FILM GROUP

Community

family films

A MULTIGENERATIONAL DREAM OF MAKING
FLORENCE A CENTER OF FILMMAKING



Seeing Florence on screen has made viewers from all over the world be able to feel the charm of this Renaissance city. Pagliai Film Group focuses on showcasing Florence in its most authentic form and using the city as a backdrop for film and marketing. Founder Otello Pagliai had a dream of making Florence the new Italian cinema capital. Following in his footsteps are his two grandsons Cosimo and Matteo Giulio Pagliai who wish to uphold their grandfather's wishes for the company. Blending Magazine had the opportunity to speak with Matteo about Pagliai Film Group's upbringing, method of production, and motivations moving forward.

Hi, can you introduce yourself to our readers?

I am Matteo Giulio Pagliai, founding partner of the Pagliai Film Group of Florence. In 2010 I graduated from the University of Florence Department of Arts, Music, and Performance (DAMS) and two years later I graduated in Directing Cinematographic at the National School of Independent Cinema (SNCI). I specialize in the art of film directing which leads me to experiment with different genres, undertaking at the same time the role of Executive Producer for various Italian sets (Rai Cinema, NBC, SKY ARTE, France 2, TV5 MONDE, Google Arts and Culture, Cartier, Red Bull, Bvlgari, Stanford University). I have directed many commercials for international brands (Riva, Ferretti Yachts), directed documentaries (El Poderoso - Siempre Adelante!; Moleria Locchi; The Portrait of Masri), and produced movies (Come la prima volta; Blackout).

Can you tell us the story of the Pagliai Film Group and Otello Pagliai Productions?

Otello Pagliai Produzioni was founded in 1939 in Florence by writer and author for theater and cinema, Otello Pagliai, born in Florence on 28 October 1909.

A lover of theater, but even more of cinema, Pagliai was predestined for the show. He emerged in the theatre environment at 15 and a half after convincing his parents to enroll him in the school film in Florence. Here he shot his first short film titled "Vizio," set in villa Favard. He dreamed of making Florence a hub for cinema. After finishing school, he took a step towards Rome, Italy's capital of Cinema at the time. His stay was very short. There, he engaged for a long time as a consultant of Venus Film and as the author of cinematographic works. In 1943 he signed the screenplay of "Sant'Elena Piccola Isola" (directed by Simoni and Scarpelli), among whose interpreters a very young Alberto Sordi stood out.

Returning to Florence at the end of the 40s, he recovered his first idea, working to create "a new city of cinema" in Florence. He planned to locate the studios in the town Campi Bisenzio, just outside the city. The project was very ambitious and involved various professionals who strongly believed in a film industry in Florence that was able to use the most qualified equipment in studios and avant-garde cinemas. The press began to spread the news and soon the dream of having new film studios in the area infected all Florentines. Pagliai's dream and love for cinema had the great merit of keeping the spotlight on Florence and its leading role in the film and audiovisual industry in Italy.





Today, Pagliai Film Group is a booming modern film and television production house based in Florence. The company was born in 2018 following the merger of Otello Pagliai Produzioni and Saints Film Group. Now, the Group works in film and television productions and advertisements. The company collaborates with leading international brands in fashion, music, luxury, boating, sport, and wellness.

What was Otello Pagliai's initial draw to Florence over Rome, which was the film capital at the time?

Talking today about a cinema establishment in Italy is very simple, as our attention almost immediately turns to Cinecittà, the only one present in our country today.

Many, however, are unaware or perhaps do not remember that many examples of this type were made in previous decades and not only in a strictly Lazio area. I refer to the inclusive period between the tens and the early fifties of 1900 where they succeeded each other on the whole Italian panorama very important factories especially in Turin with the Ambrosio Anonymous Company, L'Aquila Film and Itala Film; or in Milan which possessed the best equipped studios cinemas of the time built by the producer Luca Comerio who founded a production company with his own name later called Milano Film; or Naples again, with Partenope Film, one of the places where cinema found the best conditions for its birth and diffusion as a profitable industry at all levels.

Otello Pagliai strongly desired to set up studios in Florence in a period difficult for the Italian scene after World War II. At the time the largest film house in Italy, Cinecittà, was completely abandoned and mainly used as a place of reception for war refugees after about ten years of activity. This crisis was resolved only thanks to the political elections of 1948 which increased the recovery of the country, after the collapse caused by the war.

As the elections helped Cinecittà, they also aided Otello's project for a movie studio in Florence. He had the idea in mind as early as 1947, and would have provided an important cultural and social increase for the city of Florence and benefited the image of Italy abroad, had his plans worked out. Thus Otello Pagliai embarked on such a feat as building a movie studio from the ground up, as difficult as the project was he deemed necessary for the future of Italian cinema. The project was analyzed in every detail. The land was purchased in 1948 that would later be used for the construction of the studios. The project ended six years later after a considerable expenditure of forces and means. The same policy, in fact, called to decide whether to invest in a new and mod-

ern “cinema house,” already equipped in the project signed by Italo Gamberini of a soundstage used only for television (in Italy the TV will see the light on 3 January 1954!) or whether to renovate and recover Cinecittà. He decided on the latter. The factories, in fact, remained a beautiful dream, but never saw the light.

Where does this highly-ambitious and dreamer attitude come from? Do you think it is passed down throughout the company?

We certainly feel like bearers of the values our grandfather had. We have no ambition today to create what he had thought, but we certainly believe that Florence can become an important cinematic showcase that can attract productions Worldwide, as it is now. We therefore work in this direction, enhancing the enormous cultural heritage of this city and transforming it into high-level film productions.

Did each Pagliai brother bring something different to the company or did they share the same vision?

Our strength also lies in the fact that we are two brothers with different characteristics and talents.

I take care of the artistic and technical part, following the various stages of pre-production, production, and post-production of all the audiovisual products we produce. My brother, on the other hand, takes care of the commercial, productive, and financial part, maintaining relationships with customers and studying the best solutions to grow the company. We are therefore able to follow the entire supply chain necessary for the creation of an audiovisual product.

Do you all use Florence as a backdrop for most of your films? If so, which locations in Florence do you use most?

Florence certainly always has a fundamental role in our productions and we try to make the most of it. Surely one aspect that has been emerging a lot in recent years is to tell the city through the lesser known places. Setting a film in the Piazza del Duomo or under Palazzo Vecchio always has its charm, but being able to tell one story using the “less known” of a city, in my opinion, enriches and modernizes one production. However, the important thing is to know how to communicate and know how to do it in the most direct and original way possible no matter where you choose to shoot a film.

Do you think Otello would be proud of how the company presents itself today?

I think our grandfather can be proud of his grandchildren today. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1997, when I was only 11 years old, and I regret not spending more time with him. If today I had the opportunity to see him again I think even one month would not be enough time to answer all the questions I have in store for him. It is said that the “trade” skips a generation and it was like that for me. My father chose to be a lawyer, a completely different job from ours, but I followed in the footsteps of my grandfather and have also transmitted my passion to my brother who has decided to follow me in this world.

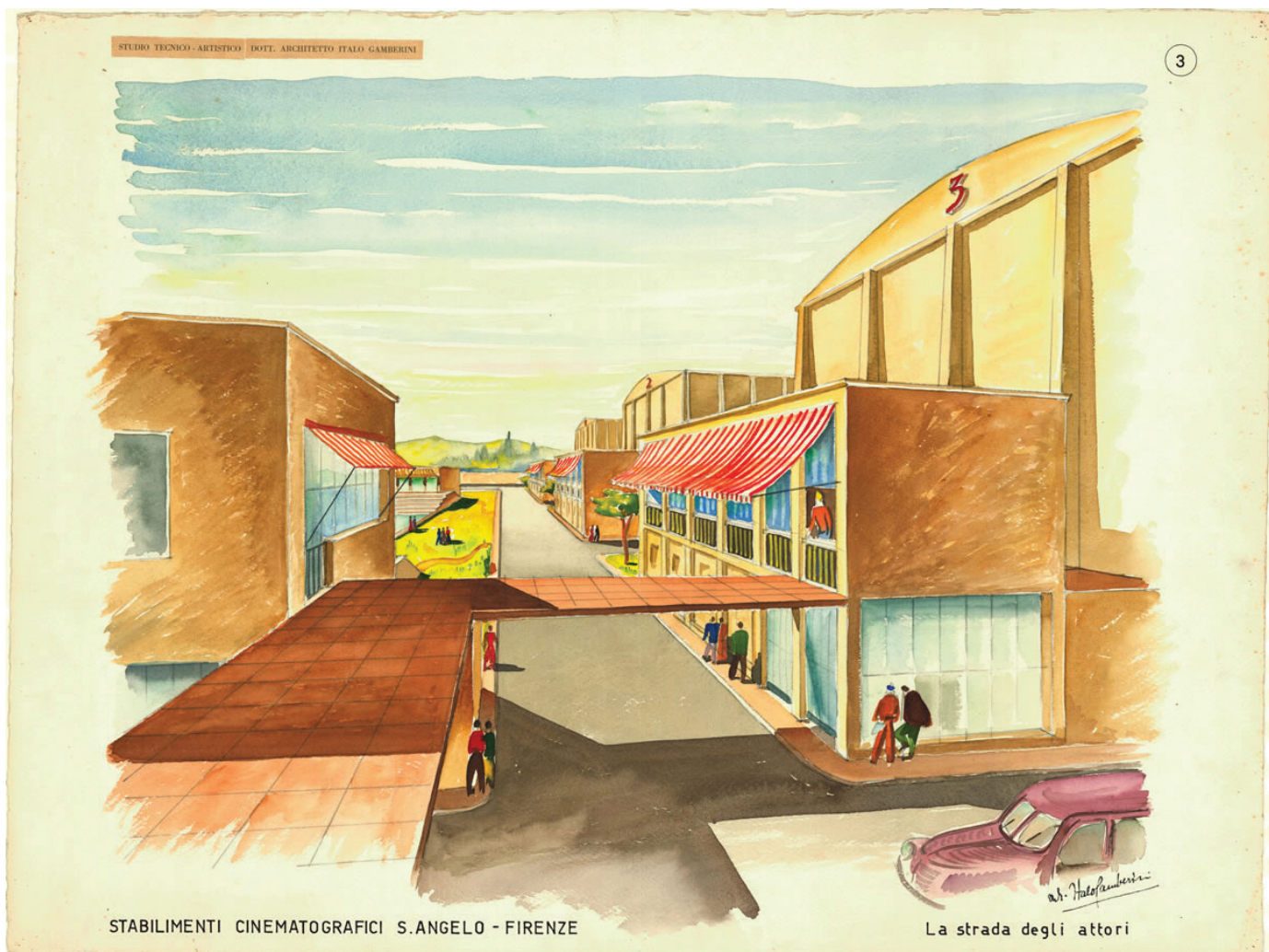
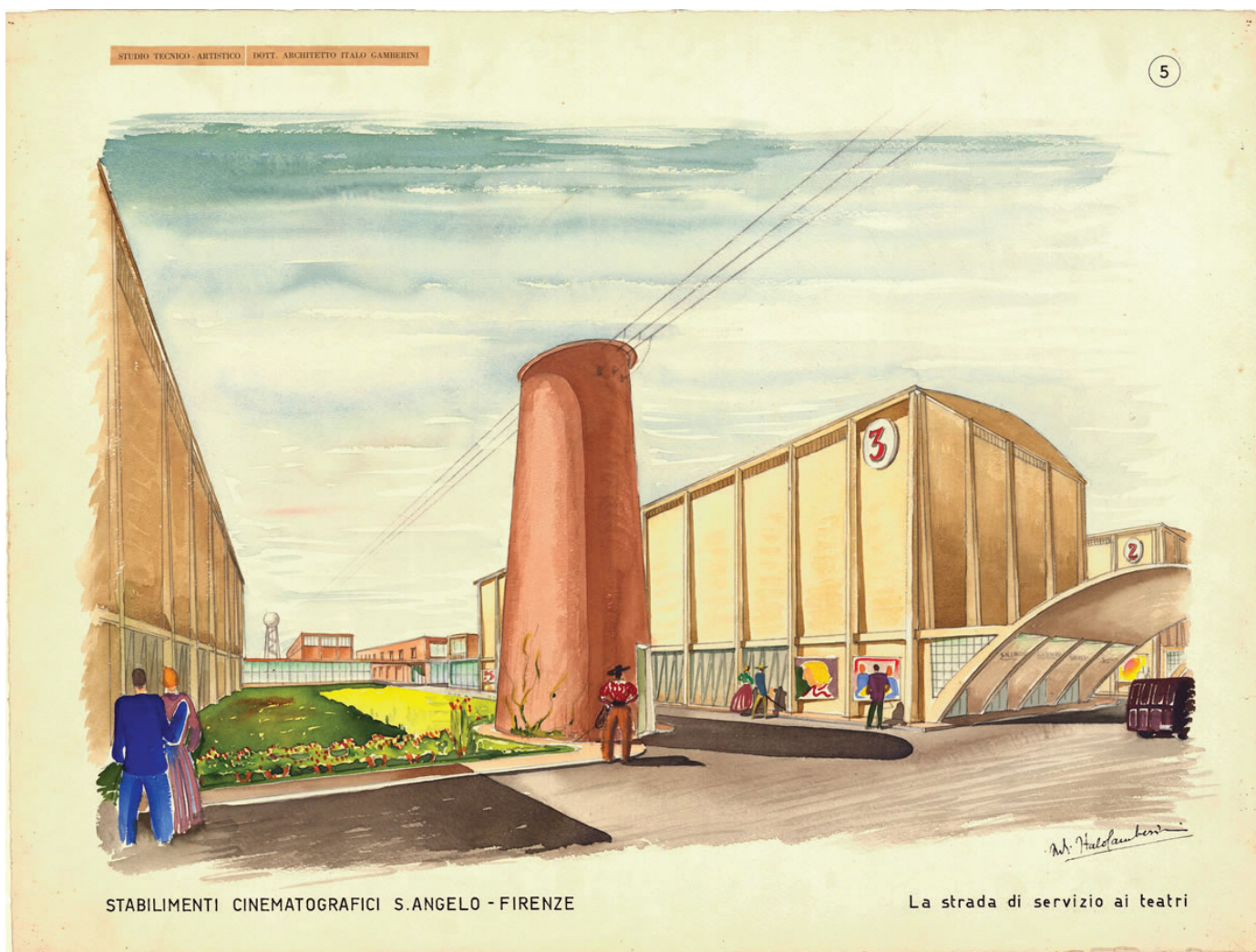
Which do you think was the most difficult obstacle you had to overcome and which are your hopes for the future?

Florence is an exceptional city, on a human scale. However, it is a city that has some critical issues, especially in reference to modernity. We Florentines, thanks to the generosity of Anna Luisa Maria dei Medici, are called as custodians of the artistic heritage left by the last Grand Duchess of Tuscany.

With her, in fact, the Medici dynasty died out. That moment posed the problem of who to leave the enormous ornamental wealth of the city. She chose to leave it to the Florentines. She ordered not to move or remove any statue, capital or other form of art. She wanted to allow us and all those who wanted to continue to admire Florence’s beauties.

This enormous gesture of love, however, triggered a strong sense of jealousy and possession in us. She always made us look with great suspicion at every change that could change the appearance of our city. This, therefore, makes it clear that even our grandfather's project was such a revolution that the city was not ready for and would not be even today. Florence must be “taken step by step.” It must be pampered and carried lovingly towards change. A change that I see in recent years, which has also allowed us to invest in our sector, is the construction and renovation of new environments that are suitable for welcoming the “huge cinema machine.”

Pagliai Film Group could be used to facilitate this change and become a source of attraction for both national and international film investments.

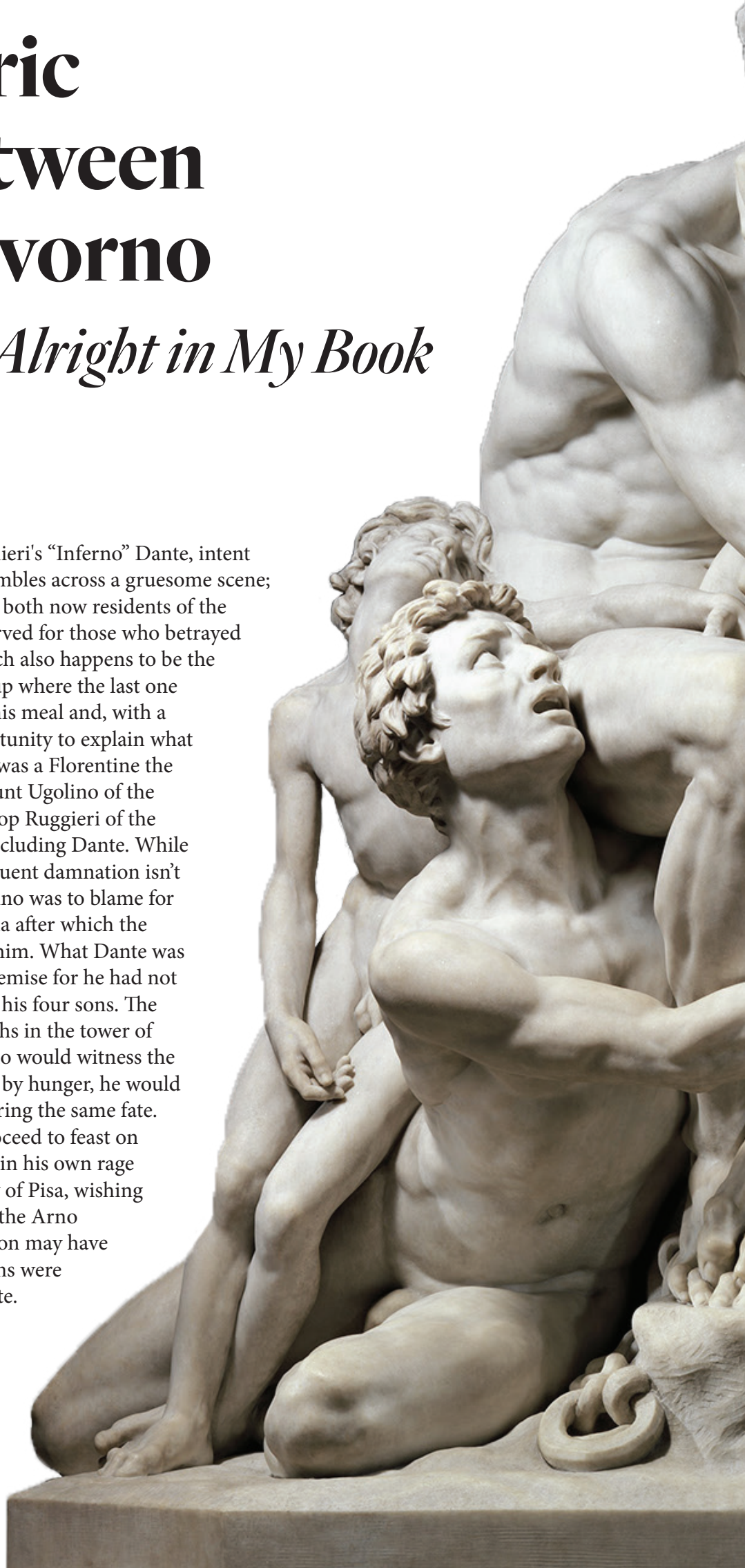


The Historic Rivalry Between Pisa and Livorno

& Why Dante is Alright in My Book

BY SEAN DONELLY

In the thirty-second Canto of Dante Alighieri's "Inferno" Dante, intent on completing his journey through hell, stumbles across a gruesome scene; a man chewing on the scalp of his neighbor, both now residents of the Anternora, a section of the ninth circle reserved for those who betrayed their homeland. The thirty-third canto, which also happens to be the penultimate and longest of the book, picks up where the last one left off, when the sinner lifts his head from his meal and, with a mouthful of skin and hair, asks for an opportunity to explain what provoke such treatment. Noting that Dante was a Florentine the man felt obliged to introduce himself as Count Ugolino of the Gherardesca and his victim as the arch-bishop Ruggieri of the Ubaldini, their story was known to many, including Dante. While the reason for his imprisonment and subsequent damnation isn't explicitly stated, many believed Count Ugolino was to blame for the Pisan fleet's defeat at the Battle of Meloria after which the arch-bishop would capture and incarcerate him. What Dante was not privy to was the cruelty of the Count's demise for he had not been imprisoned alone but accompanied by his four sons. The five of them had been left to starve for months in the tower of the Muda in Pisa, during which time Ugolino would witness the death of each of his boys and, when blinded by hunger, he would feed on their corpses before ultimately suffering the same fate. After sharing his story, the Count would proceed to feast on the flesh of his captor, the arch-bishop. Lost in his own rage Dante would exclaim his disdain for the city of Pisa, wishing for its inhabitants to drown in the waters of the Arno because while he felt that Ugolino's damnation may have been justified, Dante believed the count's sons were innocent and undeserving of such a cruel fate.





In his condemnation of the city, Dante defined Pisa as a disgrace to the populace of the whole of Italy and, having grown up in the neighbouring municipality of Livorno, that line resonates with me because the two cities have been rivals since the inception of my adoptive hometown. You wouldn't be wrong to attribute such a rivalry to a phenomenon the Italians refer to as "Campanilismo"; a term used to describe a strong, and sometimes excessive, attachment to the traditions and customs of one's city, often causing friction with the populace of a nearby municipality but, while Italy is no stranger to feuds between adjacent cities or towns, the rivalry between Pisa and Livorno is recognized as the most vehement example. During the start fourteenth century the naval republic of Pisa would witness its own downfall; the previously mentioned Battle of Meloria saw the destruction of a majority of the Pisan fleet at the hands of the Republic of Genoa, while the city would suffer subsequent attacks from both Florence and Lucca, and two years after their previous meeting Genoa returned to take Porto Pisano (Port of Pisa) filling it and spelling an end to a once great maritime power. At this time Livorno was still just a small fishing village, it was only after it fell into the hands of the Medici family more than a century later that the village would start to thrive. With the support of Cosimo de Medici Livorno would start to grow; a fortress was built along with a bigger port and fortifications for said port but it wouldn't stop there. Social and economic growth would come towards the end of the sixteenth century with the rule of Ferdinando I de Medici; not only did the Grand Duke declare Livorno a free port but more importantly he established the locally famous "Leggi Livornine" laws under which merchant activities would be protected from acts of racketeering. Those same laws offered freedom of religion and amnesty to those who sought it and soon enough the once humble fishing village would become a melting pot of different cultures, ideas, and beliefs. At the start of the seventeenth century Ferdinando I de Medici would recognize Livorno as a city, surely understanding its status as one of the most important ports in the mediterranean (a title once held by the port of Pisa). As time went on disdain grew between the neighbouring cities and, although no conflict arose from it, that contempt remains to this day most notably on the football pitch where riots breakout because of the results of a derby but also in a more friendly manner between residents of both cities poking fun at each other in a way that's reminiscent of the Italian banter that I've grown to love so while I still proudly say "meglio un morto in casa che un Pisano all'uscio" (better a death in the family than a Pisano at the door) in reality I would open that door and greet them with a friendly jibe and a smile.

Photo Credit: Ugolino and his sons
by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, The MET Collection



Not Dante's Florence:

THE RELIGIONS IN FLORENCE TODAY

 BY SARAH NELSON

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

I expected many things from Florence before I saw it with my own eyes; Tuscan hills, good food and wine, Renaissance architecture, and artistically vibrant churches. There are also many sights that I did not expect. Florence is full of religion, and Catholicism is prominent, but Islam also comprises one of the largest religious groups in Florence. There is a thriving presence of Protestantism, Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, and other religions. In addition to those churches I was prepared to see, there is a synagogue, a mosque, a Russian Orthodox church, and a cinema used as a Protestant place of worship. Each of these has had a major effect on the culture of this city, just as the religious demographic of Medieval Florence affected Dante's culture and his book the "Divina Commedia."

Dante Alighieri lived during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, during which the Medieval Church had immense power, and people who followed other religions were often treated poorly. This is reflected in the "Divina Commedia," in which Dante harshly judged heretics, corrupt Catholics, and Muslims. In his context, Islam was believed to be a division within Christianity that grew as a heretical branch, instead of as an entirely different religion. Therefore, in Canto 28 of *Inferno*, Dante places Muhammad and Ali in Hell, suffering a harsh punishment for being "disseminators of scandal and schism." In Canto 8, he dots the City of Dis in Lower Hell with mosques, another critique of Islam. Dante also criticized prominent Catholics for their practice of simony, collusion, and decision-making for the purpose of political power rather than for the good of the Church. In contrast, Dante hardly

mentions his Jewish contemporaries, except in Canto 5 of *Paradiso*. Here, Christian morality is contrasted against Jewish morality, which is arguably portrayed as inferior. The Florence that Dante experienced is reflected in his work. We see a dominating view that was not open to input, even though some, including Dante, were beginning to question Church leaders.

Today, western religions are present in Florence in so many forms. Islam, for example, is here and growing. The Moschea Masjid Al-Taqwa is a meeting place for prayer, located in the city center but tucked away from the more touristy sights. There is a small green space across from it where prayer mats are laid out and worshippers can find peace. It sits on Borgo Allegri, between Santa Croce and the synagogue. There are only a few mosques in the metropolitan city of Florence, despite the large Muslim population. The lack of Islamic meeting places might be because their places of worship are not protected by the government. The Italian government has still not officially recognized Islam, unlike Judaism and Christianity, despite its status as one of the largest religious communities.

Jewish Florentines also comprise a thriving community, though it may be small. Near the Chiesa di Sant'Ambrogio, there is an impressive synagogue full of decorative designs. Its copper dome and marble façade stick out over Florence, reflecting the Florentine churches' artistic influence that surrounds it, though it is certainly unique. Inside, there is a small museum of

Jewish ceremonial objects and a bit of history. The Room of Remembrance recounts Jewish persecution throughout the years. Stepping inside is stepping from light to dark, from noise to quiet somber voices. It struck me emotionally. Standing in that room, reading all the names on the walls, and observing pictures of real people, I hurt for those who lost their lives or their families to hate. This museum has been an important tool for bringing awareness to Jewish practice and history, and in a city so religiously diverse, awareness is invaluable.

Christianity in Florence is full of diversity. Florentine Catholics comprise a smaller percentage of the population than they did in the past, but this community is nonetheless alive. They build on the centuries of traditions of the Catholics that came before them, meeting in beautiful churches and retelling many stories of saints from Florence. Catholicism's neighbor, the Eastern Orthodox Church, is also present in Florence. There is a Russian Orthodox church on the north side of Florence, which stands out with its five onion domes and ornate gold and teal designs. The Chiesa della Natività di Cristo is a short walk from the Giardino della Fortezza.

Here, one can admire the Byzantine-influenced architecture and art common in Russia, which draws attention to Jesus and the kingship Christians view him as having.

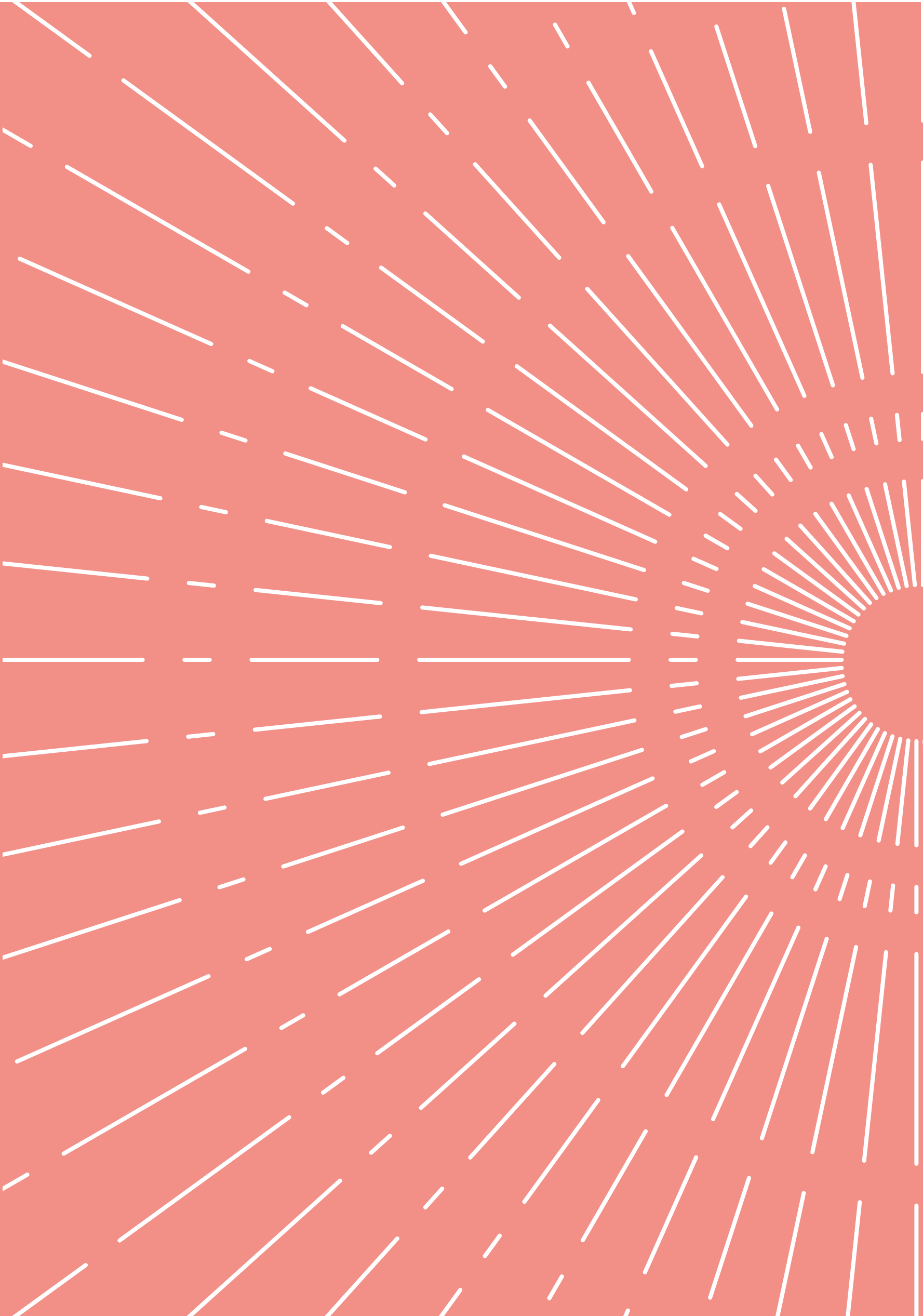
Protestantism is also flourishing in Florence. Locals have many options; Lutheran to Anglican to Methodist to Baptist to non-denominational. The Protestant community in Florence is significant, but it is composed of many different groups with many different practices.

On Sunday mornings, at the Chiesa Luterana di Firenze, Lutherans meet together and follow a liturgy. In contrast, at Mosaico Church, Christians meet for flexible worship with songs and a sermon. These different denominations vary significantly in practice, though they share some core beliefs. By looking at the Protestant community alone, it is easy to see how many different belief systems are present in Florence.

Dante's Florence was predominantly Catholic and often poorly treated the dissidents. Today, Florence is religiously diverse. It has been the home of vastly different people for years now, and many of these people, though they may disagree, have learned to respect each other. Religious tolerance is complex, and it is not about accepting every religion as true. It is about allowing every individual the freedom to choose their beliefs and recognizing that every person has equal value. Religion can be a complex topic in a largely secular society, but its historical and present impact cannot be avoided. Florentines face a challenge to notice the churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious meeting places that surround them. In this way, Florentines can better understand their neighbors, avoid stereotypes, and grow to respect each other more.









Travel Journal

Arriving at the 25hours Hotel is an experience like no other. Walking through the main space of the first floor is like walking through the Garden of Eden, setting the scene for its satirical take on the afterlife. Though, the innovative atmosphere of this hotel lies within its themes and overall story of the bedrooms. Visitors have the choice of staying in either a “Hell” or “Paradise” inspired room, based on themes portrayed in Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*. Like the hotel, this narrative poem is divided into three sections, Hell (inferno), Purgatory, and Paradise. Guided by Virgil, the embodiment of knowledge, Dante travels through the stages of the afterlife as he learns about the nature of sin and how it corrupts men away from God. With themes of immortality, the sins of humankind, and justice, it is interesting to imagine what a hotel that embodies these ideas would look like. The interior designer of the hotel, Paola Navone, designed the style to represent the tension between Dante’s “Inferno” and “Paradiso,” creating a sense of contrast. Humor is another important theme in the design. The hallways display illustrated prints from the US artist Seymour Chwast, depicting humorous interpretations of scenes from the *Divine Comedy*. Humor also lies in the decorations seen around the hotel like the “welcome to hell” phrase plastered on the mirrors in the hell rooms in a way that is supposed to imitate blood. Having a stuffed animal on



BY SARAH
PHOTOS BY



the bed in the hell room is also somewhat humorous and ironic because it is something so innocent in a room that is supposed to represent eternal suffering and the consequence of sin. The paradise room is strikingly different from the inferno room. With all white walls and white decorations, it represents the paradise that Dante encounters and a glimpse of God and holiness. With phrases like “life is good” and “fly to heaven” on the walls, it has a more subdued representation of the afterlife.

This is possibly aiming to represent the severity of being in inferno versus the bliss and serenity that comes with being in paradise. I noticed many symbols hidden in this room like the sink shaped as a shell. In spirituality, shells are connected with water as a symbol of prosperity in escaping death and as a symbol of immortality.

They could also serve as a symbol of good fortune and femininity, as seen in many works of art like Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus*, for example. Both the history and symbolism within the hotel are what adds another level of innovation and creativity.

Though, the 25hours Hotel aims to strip away from the underlying connections Dante has to Christian doctrines and focus only on the stages of the afterlife in a way that is satirical and amusing.



An Inferno of *Distraction*

BY SAMANTHE ROWLAND
PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

My feet ache as the weight of my body presses them further into the spiraling steps beneath me. “One, two, three, four...” I count in my head in an attempt to make the minutes pass by rather than remain stagnant. The beauty of the architecture around me is overshadowed by the brutality of the climb. My mind races in search of anything to distract myself from the physical sensation of climbing Brunelleschi’s Dome. My thoughts become plagued- all of my responsibilities demand my attention and prevent me from experiencing the moment I am living in. The plates and platters sitting in my kitchen sink awaiting their cleansing. The bedside lamp potentially was left illuminated. Will the rice and vegetables I prepared earlier still taste fresh if I warm them up for dinner? I wonder how many messages are waiting impatiently on my phone, begging for a response.

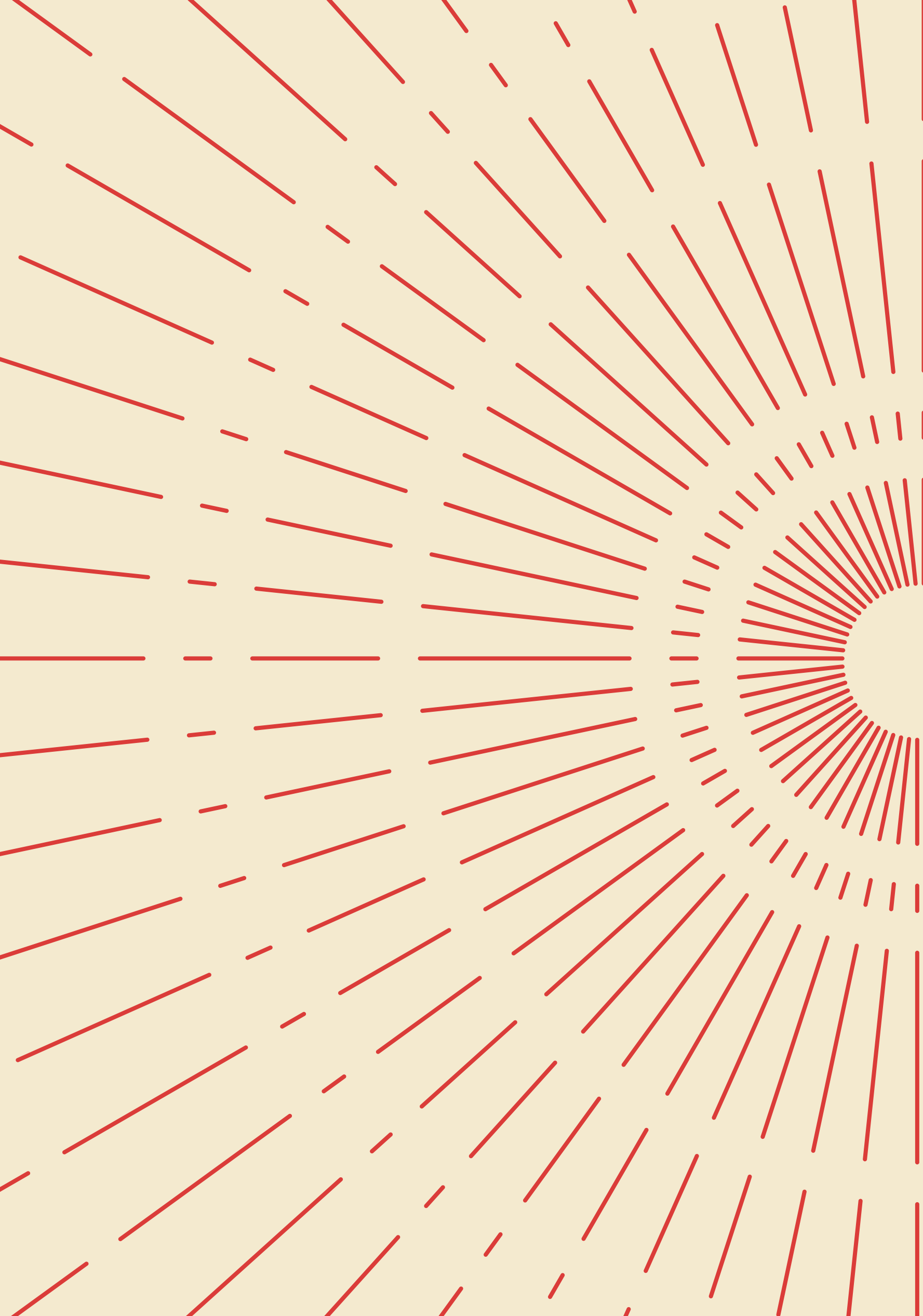
For a moment, my thoughts slow down and I reintroduce myself to reality. I arrive at an open door inviting me inside to view an entire ceiling painted with the stunning frescos of Vasari’s “Last Judgement.” How is it possible that I am already halfway through the climb? My aching quadriceps are the only testimony of my expedition. My mind has wandered far from my physical location. The paintings on the ceiling stare back at me as I try to admire them. These depictions of heaven and hell took inspiration from Dante’s portrayal in the “Divine Comedy.” At this moment, I cannot help but connect my soul’s struggle with distraction to Dante Alighieri’s journey out of hell and purgatory. My eyes wander, gazing across the painting until they focus upon one scene that grabs my attention. Demons and monsters climb throughout the underworld as two angels blow their horns, pushing the beasts further into hell. My mind exists



in this inferno- the monsters of distraction treat the neurons of my brain like a playground. Just as Beatrice led Dante through heaven, I long for a guide to my own personal paradise of tranquility.

I continue up the stairs. The bones in my knees become brittle and warn me that they will soon collapse. I ignore their request as my thoughts continue to ramble. Feelings of frustration light a fire in my mind. Why do I allow my wandering mind to detract from my experiences? Perhaps I am so dependent on being connected to the entire world that I can no longer connect to the beauty right in front of me. This beauty reaches out its arm and tries so desperately to reach me.

I look up to prepare for the next flight of stairs and realize they cease to exist. I step onto the platform of the dome and in front of me stands the entire city center of Florence. I dominate over the bell tower, all of the magnificent buildings are now only a slight piece of the city puzzle. The sky is dark and the city is illuminated. The stars in the sky grab me, each one pulling me closer to it. Every distraction that has plagued my mind through each moment of the journey suddenly seems insignificant. I stand there detached from the time ticking on the clock and nothing else exists except for me and this moment. It would be an exaggeration to claim that this moment changed my life forever or that this single experience completely altered my perspective on the world. I cannot promise that my mind will never again stray from the beautiful world in front of me. However, at this moment, standing on top of Brunelleschi's Dome overlooking the city of Florence, I am able to experience a moment of true paradise.





Food & Wine

Dante's *Train*

BY KINSEY HANSON-JERRARD | PHOTOS BY SEAN DONELLY

Il Treno di Dante, or Dante's Train in English, is a train line connecting two of the major cities in the poet's life: Florence, where he was born, and Ravenna, where he died and is resting to this day. The line is active only during summer weekends; riding upon a 100-year-old train, you'll be able to travel through the Apennine Mountains at a slow pace enjoying the views and sights. The train departs from Florence and stops in Borgo San Lorenzo, Marradi, Brisighella, Faeza, and, lastly, Ravenna, bringing you away from the typical tourist spots.

We want to bring you on a culinary journey, passing through the same places as the train line. We will explore a typical dish and celebrate the culture of each of the towns. Join us on this new way of immersing ourselves in Dante's story by tasting our way through it!



Trippa alla Fiorentina - Florence

BY NAYEON JOH

Trippa was considered a food for the poor for a long time before becoming a delicacy. But let's back up a little to understand how we got there. In Italy, Trippa belongs to the famous Quinto Quarto selection. What is that? Well in the past, the meat was traditionally selected into four parts called Quarti. The first quarto, composed of the prime cuts, was the meat for Nobles, and the second quarto was reserved for the clergy. The third quarto was for the upper class, and the fourth was for the army. And for the poorest in the town, the Italian cooks had to hone their abilities and creativity with what was considered the worst cuts of meat; tongues, oxtails, sweetbreads, and the stomach.

The latter is also called "trippa." In the end, these underestimated cuts become a fundamental part of the classic Italian cuisine and a must-to-try by any Italian foodie.

How to cook Trippa:

In Firenze, people usually cook trippa with a good tomato sauce or inside a panini.

To prepare trippa, you don't need high-quality ingredients. As long as you cook it right, it will always taste great.

This dish was looked down upon in the past and is now considered a staple of Florentine street food.



Tortelli mugellani - Borgo San Lorenzo

BY BRONWIN MORGAN

Tortelli mugellani originated from a region called Mugello (from where they take their name) which is situated just a few kilometres outside of Florence. This area is rich in art history and tradition and is also home to one of the Medici villas included in the unesco heritage list: Castello di Cafaggiolo.

The town of Borgo San Lorenzo is situated right in the middle of this valley and it's also rich both in art and history, with a church dating back to the year 900 A.C. and featuring art in it's public library by Art Nouveau artist Gallileo Chini. But if you ask most people what they're really known for are the Tortelli.

Tortelli is a common homemade pasta and is always seen on the Primo section of the restaurant menu and is always available fresh in the town of Borgo San Lorenzo. It is not a tradition but a rule that the pasta must always be

made by hand and to be delivered as a fresh product to any diner table within the region. The ingredients and method of creating such a dish have remained the same over the past centuries which results in the dish becoming a staple of Tuscan cuisine, so much so that it's first mention can be found in the early 1400, in the line of a poem composed by Il Pulce, a poet member of court of Lorenzo Il Magnifico.

Long considered to be a poor dish when filled with potatoes, on occasion chestnuts would be considered as an alternative choice, when in season, this dish is commonly enjoyed when paired with a traditional Tuscan sauce, Ragu. It is a heartwarming delicacy to be enjoyed in the dark and cold winter evenings to warm up the traditional atmosphere. It is a dish served to take pleasure in and to celebrate hundreds of years of pride and tradition within Tuscan cuisine's history.



Torta di Marroni - Marradi

BY NAYEON JOH

Surrounded by rich forests and streams of clear water sits the city of Marradi. It is famous for its "Marroni," similar to a chestnut. These nuts are a staple of the cuisine in this small town in the mountains. From making them into beer to simply cooking them over a blazing fire, the people of Marradi have found a myriad of different ways to make dishes from chestnuts. A must-try is the humble yet delicious Torta di Marroni chestnut cake.

It is a simple recipe, and all you need is flour, eggs, butter, and sugar. However, the secret ingredient that makes it unique is chestnut flour. This gives it a rich

texture and a delicate taste despite being simple to make.

While you're tasting the cake, you can learn about one of the most amusing stories about Dante and the town of Marradi. The legend goes that Dante found himself resting in the village during his exile. Unfortunately, during his stay, his horse got stolen. When he reported the theft, he was told that they were all gentlemen in that town. To that, Dante replied with a witty play on words: "Sì, marradi!" which translates to "yes, but they are rare." It also sounds like the name of the town itself.



Passatelli - Faenza

BY YONGKYU SHIN

Passatelli is one of the most classic broth soups widespread in Emilia-Romagna and the Marche. The dish is made and consumed on special occasions holidays, except for Christmas, when cappelletti in broth is served.

The original Romagna recipe, called "passadei," involves the use of bread (which over time has

become breadcrumbs), grated Parmesan cheese, eggs, and lemon zest to flavor it. Today, nutmeg is used instead of lemon zest. Although, some chefs use both.

Passatelli were initially served in broth, but thanks to the creativity of some chefs, we also find them dry and paired with a rich fish sauce.



Spoja - Brisighella

BY NAYEON JOH

The second you step foot in the town of Brisighella, your nose will be pleasantly filled with the aroma of "brodo." This enticing smell will lead you into the propped doors of many kitchens where grandmothers are preparing Spoja Lorda. Spoja Lorda is a stuffed pasta made from leftover dough and cheese. People started making them as a dish to share in good company, and some cooks simply did not have the proper tools to create cappelletti. Making Spoja Lorda begins with mixing mortadella, ricotta, and grana

padano for the filling. Next, simply roll out pasta dough and spread the filling on top as evenly as you can. Then, carefully lay another pasta sheet on top of your cheese mixture. Use a pasta cutter to crimp the sides and create small squares. Don't worry if the edges aren't perfectly crimped and sealed, as the broth that the Spoja Lorda is cooked in is meant to seep into the center filling it with more flavor.



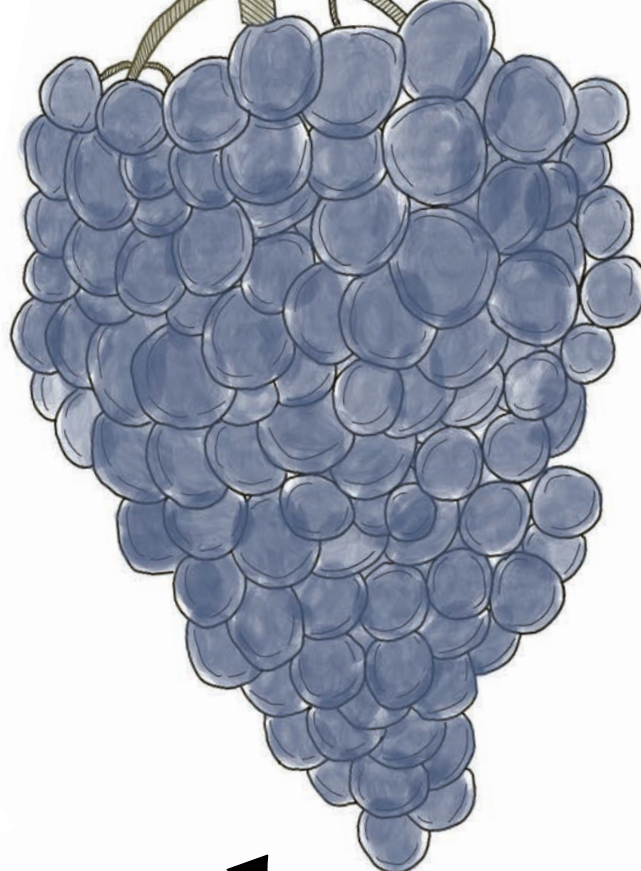
Curzul - Ravenna

BY JUAN CARABAJAL

Romagna cuisine is rich in recipes born from ancient traditions. The flavors are influenced by simple ingredients derived from shepherding and fishing. A typical peasant dish is the Curzul, a type of fresh pasta from the province of Ravenna. The name derives from a dialect term that indicates shoelaces made with square

section leather strings. The thick dough is made with eggs and flour and cut into squared strings, often served with fried shallots.

Corzul was a poor dish made with durum wheat flour, but it has become a staple in the cuisine.



THE
**Medieval
Food Menu**

AN EXPLORATION OF
MEDIEVAL ITALIAN CUISINE

BY GABRIELE ŽIUKAITU
ART BY THE AUTHOR





It is no secret that medieval Italian cuisine is vastly different from today. After all, the new World was still undiscovered, so now-commonplace ingredients like tomatoes and potatoes weren't available, and food preparation and preservation methods were limited. There was also an evident influence by neighboring populations and religion. Christianity looked down on the extravagant Roman feasts of the past and even refused meat as it was believed to provoke the consumer's ungodly desires. Feasting was discouraged not only in monasteries but villages and towns as well. It wasn't until the reign of Charlemagne in 800 that Christianity was able to accept feasting and decided to thank God for the food on the table. Later during the Crusade period, a new social class of merchants was born, and enjoying good food became a symbol of both social and economic status.

Certain food groups were available to different social classes, and the diets of poor and rich medieval Italians were drastically different. It was generally believed that food growing closer to the ground was for peasants, while food on trees or from long-legged animals and birds was meant for nobility. In general, the poor ate more foods low to the ground, such as turnips, garlic, onions, and carrots, while nobility dined on "higher" foods like artichokes, peaches, pheasant, and pears.

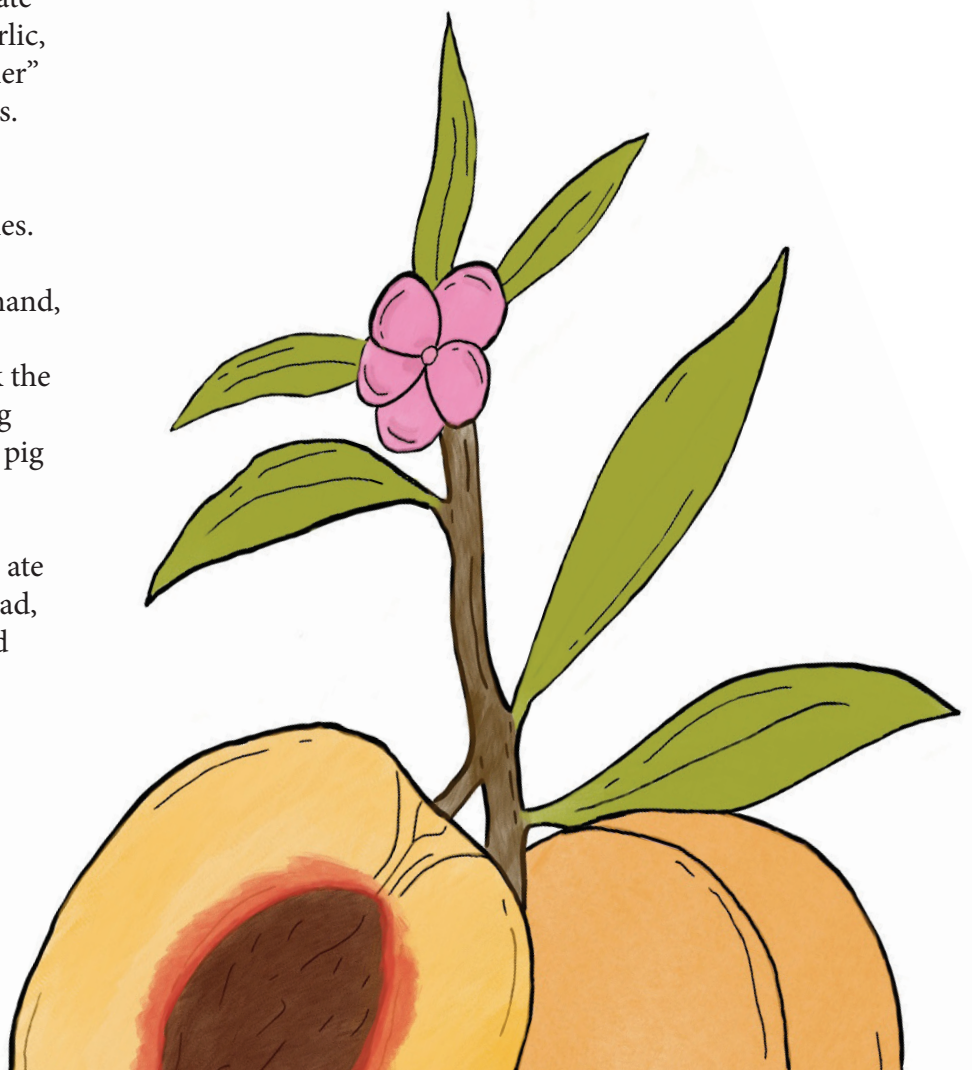
A typical peasant meal consisted of porridge-like soups, different types of bread, and many vegetables. They didn't use salt as it was too expensive, so traditional Tuscan bread is saltless. On the other hand, nobles indulged in aged cheese with fruit, a wide variety of meats, and elaborate pastries. They took the extra step of being more extravagant by garnishing their plates with feathers or serving pork with the pig head on the plate.

Dante Alighieri, who came from a wealthy family, ate wild game, pork, and sheep cooked over a pit. Bread, barley, and oats also filled the table. Dante enjoyed

other dishes that originated in his time, such as *ribollita*, *fettunta*, and *castagnaccio*.

Even though food for the rich and poor was different, they both depended on two things: bread and wine. The bread was the primary source of calories for the poor, but nobles enjoyed it. White bread was common in this period. However, the whiter the bread, the more expensive it was. Due to this, bread made from mixed grains was considered "poor" and therefore more suitable for the poorest of Italians. As for wine, grapevines flourished all over the country, and even peasants could make their own.

Food is an integral part of Italian culture that is no longer sorted into categories depending on social status. Recipes are passed down through generations. Gathering for meals is seen as necessary for the consumption of the food and as quality family time. Spending a couple of hours over food and drinks is very common, enjoying a good meal and good company.



Water ^{TO} Wine ^{TO} Wasted

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WINE RITUALS

BY VERITY PRYOR-HARDEN @VERITYEPH

PHOTO BY ROBERT THOMPSON @COZYRT

Deep ruby red, divinely fermented, and apparently fun to spray on unsuspecting crowds. In ancient times, wine was offered to deities as a holy sacrifice. Today, thousands of bottles collect dust on grocery store shelves to be picked up as a last-minute contribution to a dinner party. How did wine go from being a method of communion to an expendable commodity? Read on. Hope you're thirsty.

For nearly 10,000 years, humans have been fermenting grapes to make wine. The earliest evidence comes from China, with residue found in clay pots dating to 7000 BCE. As ancient civilizations built communities around agriculture, they sought to preserve and make the most of every harvest. Waste not, want not.

In Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, beer was widely available to all social classes, but wine wasn't relatively so easy to get. The climate wasn't optimal for growing or producing wine, so it was an expensive delicacy and status symbol. Wealthy pharaohs were entombed with wine to carry into the afterlife, and its resemblance to blood made wine a favored replacement for animal sacrifices and offerings to the gods.

Meanwhile, the climate in Ancient Greece was optimal for grape cultivation. The wine was as readily available to the Greeks as beer was to their Egyptian neighbors. Some recommended wine for good health, and poets believed it helped with creativity. Philosophers advocated for temperance.

While some religions discourage drinking enough to get even



a buzz, the Cult of Dionysus leaned into euphoria. It was believed that the intoxicating effects of wine were due to possession by the god's spirit, so it was imbibed during ceremonies.

Judeo-Christian religions viewed wine as a gift from God meant to make life more joyous. Rather than associating wine with blood or carnal pleasures, Judaism appropriated wine into its rituals. In particular, the Seder meal prepared for Passover is packed with wine symbolism. During the meal, everyone is obligated to consume four cups of wine. Participants fill each other's cups, repeat prayers, ask questions and have discussions, and drink the cups interspersed with the consumption of ritualistic foods like bitter herbs and roasted meat. In this ritual, wine is central in bringing people together. Slight intoxication might be experienced after four cups of wine, but it isn't viewed as gluttonous or harmful when enjoyed in communion with family. However, outright drunkenness is discouraged.

The Christian Bible tells of Jesus Christ's miracle turning water into wine. At the Last Supper before His crucifixion, Jesus blesses the wine and offers it to the disciples. Interestingly, Jesus then evokes the Ancient Egyptian view of wine as blood, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant, poured out for you." This Biblical meal is the foundation of the Catholic Eucharist or "Lord's Supper," in which congregants ritualistically consume bread and wine. Like the Jewish Seder, sharing a cup of wine is a way to bring believers together, but the overconsumption of alcohol is discouraged.

Fast forward to the late 17th century and hop over to the western part of the North American continent, grapevines are planted in the area that would become California by Spanish Jesuit missionaries. As the taking of the Eucharist is a crucial rite of Catholicism, the missions needed wine grapes to ferment. Around the same time in the eastern colonies, French fur-trappers established vineyards in the area known later as Kentucky. One can only imagine how difficult a trans-Atlantic journey must be with grapevines in tow, but these European settlers decided it was worth the work. Whether for the Lord's Supper in California or keeping warm in the Kentucky hills, wine was there for the development of the New World.

Interestingly, alcohol and alcohol consumption became vilified entirely in the United States during the Temperance movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The socio-cultural factors leading up to this part of wine's story could be an essay of encyclopedic proportions, so we'll stop here.

During the Prohibition era, only the production and sale of alcohol were outlawed, not the consumption of it. Therefore wine could still be consumed for religious practices. When your religion is so deeply intertwined

with wine culture, First Amendment protections keep your cup filled.

Nowadays, wine is an elevated beverage associated with class and refinement. Sommelier culture has become wine's gate-keeper, where laypeople don't understand the confounding aromas or tasting notes. People within the winemaking industry have adopted a complex vocabulary loaded with jargon, further encrypting wine.

Where modern wine culture is reserved for the high brow, astoundingly, one of the most expensive types of wine has exploded into the zeitgeist as the Champagne "spray." Beginning by accident at the 1966 Le Mans car race, winning driver Joseph Siffert showered the unsuspecting crowd with champagne after he accidentally uncorked an overheated bottle. The following year in 1967, the winning driver sprayed the Champagne on purpose, beginning a decades-long tradition of wine in sports.

In popular music, similar "popping bottles" imagery overtly illustrates innuendo-laden lyrics. Bottomless mimosas at brunch and hashtags like #roseallday indicate a new type of wine drinking culture: drinking to excess.

While Italian drinking culture mostly frowns upon drunkenness, some young people are influenced by this new party culture. Cocktail bars are appearing everywhere, discos offer cheap liquor and loud music, and piazzas can be found littered with plastic cups after a wild night. But for most of history, wine drinking in Italy has been centered around meals. Families made their own wine and kept barrels in the family cantina. You could walk into any trattoria and order a liter of perfectly decent house wine to wash down your pasta. The quality of the wine might not have been stellar, but it was drinkable. While these somewhat boring wines may have been acceptable for older generations, a new wave of craft wine is taking hold in Italy. As Italian families pass down vineyards, young winemakers are taking great care in improving what was already good. You can still get your simple house wine, but now the trattoria offers bottles from other regions and countries. Wine can be commonplace, or it can be elevated. The choice is up to you.

Curiously, a simple beverage went from being as common as drinking water to a mysterious, dark bottle on a grocery store shelf. While perceptions of wine have changed throughout history, one thing has persisted: breaking bread together and raising a glass will always be symbols of community. After all, you can't enjoy the delightful ringing sound of glasses if you don't "cheers" with a friend.

The next time you pop open a bottle, remember that you are taking part in a ten thousand-year-long tradition. As long as there are grapes and people to grow them, there will be wine. Cheers to that.



for the love of
PORK

“Del Maiale non si butta via nulla!- of a pig nothing is wasted,” or so goes the old Tuscan proverb, pork has been a staple of Tuscan food for centuries, and this saying indeed reflects that. This appreciation for pork hasn't gone unnoticed by our photography student Maeve Mugglebee who has decided to document the relationship between the people of Florence and this particular type of meat.

A PHOTO ESSAY BY MAEVE MUGGLEBEE







Fashion

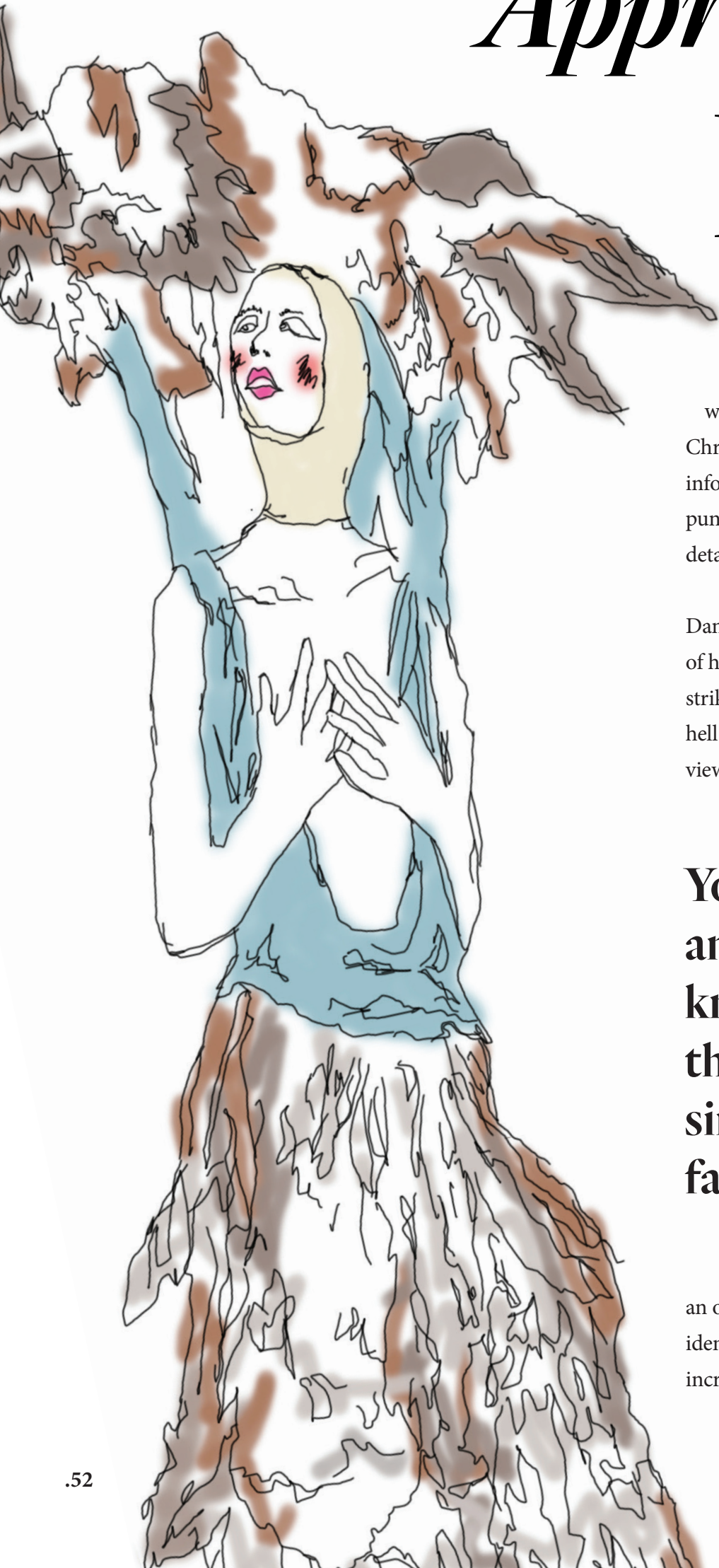
Appropriating **HELL**

A good deal of Dante's fame stems from the fact that prior to the "Divine Comedy," we had little to go off of when imagining what Christian hell might be like. The Bible itself gives little information about what the afterlife sinners will be punished to is like. Dante was the first to testify to the details of scenes of eternal torment in the afterlife.

Dante's vivid descriptions breathe life into the concept of hell, giving it a place in the imagination and striking fear in the heart. Whether you believe Dante's hell is a real place where sinners are destined to go or view the poem like an excessively long telling-off from

You don't have to be an expert in fashion to know that nowadays, the visual codes of hell, sin, and the damned are far from taboo.

an out-of-touch elder, you have to admit the visual identities that Dante assigns to the circles of hell are incredibly powerful. One can so clearly picture Paolo



and Francesca, intertwined in lust and suspended in the air, swirling and tossed by an invisible breeze, or the red face of the irate Filippo Argenti, Dante's longtime enemy, being lapped by the muddy waters of the river Styx, or even Ugolino della Gheradesca and Judas as they gnaw and are gnawed on in the deepest, darkest, coldest ice of hell.

The "Divine Comedy" is a political commentary, but also a deterrent. By naming his contemporaries and assigning punishments that revealed the extent of what he viewed as their iniquity, Dante wrote not only a moral code but also a corresponding visual code into existence. He drew inspiration from the idea of "contrapasso" meaning retaliation or suffering the opposite. He watches as those who spilled blood drown in blood, as those who ate in excess are doomed to be eaten again and again. We can debate the validity of the moral judgement being made and how best to translate the most complex Cantos from the original Italian, but Dante's overarching message is clear-- don't do what these famous people did, or you'll end up in a violent, ugly, angry, dark and dangerous place. This Dante knew to be true: there's no place less desirable or worse to look at than hell, and you don't want to go there.

Or is there? You don't have to be an expert in fashion to know that nowadays, the visual codes of hell, sin, and the damned are far from taboo. At Alexander McQueen, models have stormed the runway in masks depicting the crucifixion (Dante, Autumn/Winter 1996) and dresses that have been slashed or run over with tires, evoking a sense of criminal violence (The Birds, Spring/Summer 1995). For the Voss collection in 2001, one wore a dress adorned with actual birds that tore at her as she walked, almost exactly like birds tear at the souls of the trees in Dante's Forest of Suicides. For Fall/Winter 2009, McQueen's muses stomped around a massive pile of jet black trash the designer called The Horn of Plenty, which was sometimes lit with red lights, giving the viewer the sense they are crossing the burning wasteland of hell.

Yves Saint Laurent, Tom Ford (during his tenure at Gucci), and most recently Ekhaus Latta, have produced the whole series of near-explicit ads (some of which were banned from airing and from billboards) depicting scenes of lust that could easily have been spotted by Dante in the hurricane of the lustful in the second circle. And Rick Owens has sent models down the catwalk with black eyes, which recall, if not any description of hell in the "Divine Comedy" itself, at the very least the demonic eyes of the Dore illustrations.

The retaking of the hellish aesthetic was not a *fin de siècle* movement begun in the 1990s-- it began in the Romantic Age. *Paradise Lost* was one of the first works which did not simply treat Satan as the personification of evil but described his condition as a result of human nature and psychology. Other romantic writers like Shelley and Goethe treated the Devil as a sort of tragic hero, and the artists of the period (Courbet, Delacroix, Goya, and Dore included) were eager and willing to depict new scenes that were far from classically pretty and range from the slightly disturbed to the outright frightening.

From the Romantic Age and into the present day, artists and designers have reclaimed the aesthetics of sin and made us see beauty in ugliness, darkness, and savagery. A retrospective of McQueen's work in 2015 broke visitation records at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City-- and the exhibit was called "Savage Beauty." Only the most puritanical of cultural observers would deny themselves a chance to admire the subversive and unexpected beauty of such art and to appropriate this aesthetic to feel a sense of dark power. Collectively, we refuse to shun this interesting visual identity, despite all of Dante's efforts to associate it with the place we should never have wanted to go-- hell. In the end, we overcame our fear of these dark visions to see the beauty in them.



Jacket: IRERI Trench Yellow
Jacket: IRERI Trench Bordeaux
Bag: IRERI Chantal Solar
Bag: IRERI Evita Cream

BY CHIN-CHIN HU
PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

A MOTHER'S DREAM

Carried on by her Daughters

*Luxury grows with the atmosphere
of art and Renaissance*

Taking a walk in the roots of the Renaissance through an impressive tour in the Uffizi gallery reminds viewers of how beautiful the well-known paintings are. After passing by the famous Piazza della Signoria and arriving in front of Palazzo Vecchio, walkers find Palazzo Gondi, which was built in 1490 on the ruins of an ancient Roman Theatre. The Palazzo is nowadays occupied by luxury brands Gucci Garden and the flagship store of IRERI.

Walking into the IRERI shop, the first impression one gets is that IRERI is unlike other luxury shops, as it has an atmosphere of home. IRERI was founded in 2008 by Teresa Chen, a Taiwanese woman, who moved to Florence in 1990 driven by a passion for art. The brand's name, a palindromic word, derives from merging her twin daughters' names, Irene and Erica. In 2019, Teresa left the world but never left the love of her daughters. With a desire to grow the seed their mother planted, Irene and Erica channeled their grief to lead the brand.

Irene and Erica were born and raised in Florence. Growing up in the store surrounded them with an atmosphere of art. As they have been impacted by the Renaissance and its humanistic values, their idea of luxury goes beyond design and quality. It embraces a solid system of values: listening, transparency



Teresa and her daughters, photo provided by Irene and Erica



Jacket: IRERI Trench Yellow
Jacket: IRERI Trench Bordeaux
Bag: IRERI Chantal Solar
Bag: IRERI Evita Cream

and altruism. The sisters explain that being located in a historically significant palace means a lot to IRERI because it relates to the brand's ambition to keep artisanal heritage alive.

They do not follow the rhythms of fast fashion. Instead, they believe that artisanal processes counteract the waste and pollution often generated by a fashion world that moves at an excessive pace. IRERI encourages customers to be conscious about what they purchase. That is why they love telling customers about processes and the story behind the brand.

In having conversation with the sisters, one will understand that IRERI uses only the finest materials from Italy. The whole production takes place in Italy, both in Tuscany and in Veneto, through the hands of skillful artisans. Attention to detail is what they care about the most. IRERI's iconic pieces are handmade in the Limberti firm, led by an incredibly experienced artisan who, among others, has worked closely with Mr. Aldo Gucci on some iconic GUCCI handbags. Their great pleasure is not only seeing people appreciate IRERI, but also acknowledging all those who have taken part behind the scenes, from the first idea to the final object.





Jacket: IRERI Trench Bordeaux
Bag: IRERI Evita Cream

from *death* comes *success...*

BY CHAROLLETTE BAUER
ART BY THE AUTHOR

On March 17th, 1995, Maurizio Gucci, one of the most well-known figures in fashion, was fatally shot. This shocking tragedy triggered an extensive investigation. Many theories arose for what could've happened. The Gucci family had a long and infamous history of internal family feuds. There were suggestions that Maurizio may have become involved with figures holding extensive criminal records. This accusation led nowhere. Finally, after years of investigation, an anonymous voicemail was placed to Lead Detective Filippo Ninni. With this, they discovered that Maurizio's ex-wife, Patrizia Reggiani (also known as Lady Gucci), had hired a hitman to kill Gucci after years of a strained marriage that ended in a messy divorce. Reggiani's resentment towards her ex-husband boiled over, and a trigger was pulled.

Maurizio's murder came at a time of crisis for the Gucci brand. After Maurizio's father's death, the brand was under his control and was losing millions. He had many extravagant ideas but didn't have the revenue to execute them properly. Eighteen months prior to the shooting, Maurizio was forced to sell

"The combination of Maurizio's elite standing, the glamorous setting of the city of Milan and the execution-like nature of the crime captivated the entire country. Shockingly, the constant media attention is not what saved Gucci."





his stake in the company, officially releasing it from the original family's control. Losing control of the company is thought to be a motivating factor for Reggiani to plot the murder of Gucci. Reggiani explains, "I was angry with Maurizio about many things, but losing the family business was stupid."

The combination of Maurizio's elite standing, the glamorous setting of the city of Milan, and the execution-like nature of the crime captivated the entire country. Shockingly, the constant media attention is not what saved Gucci.

Although tragic, the death created the opportunity for Gucci to reinvent itself. Thus, saving the company. By the time Maurizio was murdered, the company's creative direction was already partially in the hands of young Tom Ford, an ascendant, and edgy designer.

The incredible reimagining of the brand under Tom Ford and new boss Domenico De Sole would not have been possible without the death of Maurizio Gucci. Under this new creative direction and leadership, Gucci could rise from the tragedy and become more successful than ever. Ford and De Sole were thought of as the perfect pair. De sole was quite knowledgeable about fashion and was able to generate revenue and maintain clients. Maurizio Gucci did not have these skills. Ford and de Sole also changed the direction of the brand. They focused more on fashion and changed their targeted clientele. The brand, focused initially on slightly conservative, older, and wealthier clients, the new pair wanted something more youthful and modern. The idea of age no longer mattered - this broadened the consumer base.

Tom Ford relaunched many of the products forgotten about by Gucci in a new urban, glamorous and exciting way. These included shoes, leather goods, and ready-to-wear collections.

Gucci continues to be one of the most well-known and glamorous fashion houses today. The brand is riding high under new creative director Alessandro Michele and continues to be an inspiration to so many hopeful designers and artists. They've been able as a whole to shed away the negative light that fell during the '90 on the name Gucci, which keeps evoking high fashion and style. But the recent release of the movie "House of Gucci" might change things. The movie directed by Ridley Scott, with Adam Driver and Lady Gaga interpreting Maurizio and Patrizia, is bringing back again after many years under the public eye this dark event in the Gucci brand and family history. Will the movie bring up old wounds? Will Gucci be able to move forward? Only time will tell.



small city;

FASHION CAPITAL

BY ANNA TEFEL

PHOTO BY DAVID WEISS

Milan is widely recognized as the Italian capital of fashion and design, as it is a modern financial hub with high-end stores and restaurants and hosts its own fashion week.

Florence, however, has much more fashion history than Milan, so why is Florence not the first city that comes to mind when thinking about fashion and luxury?

There are a few reasons.

In reality, Florence can be traced back as the birthplace of the earliest powerhouses of the fashion industry. It was the home to Salvatore Ferragamo, Emilio Pucci, Guccio Gucci, Roberto Cavalli, and other famous brands who built their empires here. Gucci's first showroom opened in Florence in 1981, setting the stage for the luxury brand's global dominance and exploiting Florence's status as a major fashion capital. The real flair of Ferragamo's design was to be seen in Florence, during the economic crisis of 1929, when the shortage of raw materials unleashed his true creative flair. Ferragamo's resourceful and innovative ability to create both stylish and practical designs led him to devise the cork heel in 1938, earning him the first fashion patent.

I want our delegates to sit in the Palazzo Vecchio, where we are honored to hold this conference, and reflect on the enduring elements of true luxury—as opposed to the fleeting world of fast fashion.

Of note is how the White Room, Sala Bianca in Italian, of Palazzo Pitti is home to a major point in the history of Italian fashion. In the period just after World War II, this stunning ballroom became the important setting for international fashion: from the first catwalk show, organized by Giovanni Battista Giorgini in 1951, and for the following thirty years, the fashion parades in the White Room have played an important role in spreading the international quality of fashion, making the 'Pitti' name world-renowned. Not only that, it allowed to re-establish the "Made in Italy" on the international scene, going hand in hand with the post war economic boom.

At this point, Florence was earning its reputation as a fashion capital, but Rome and Milan were there as well. All three Italian cities were right after Paris for fashion recognition. This became the first problem Florence saw. As there was no

established fashion city in Europe, Italy was divided into three. While Paris and London were representatives of fashion capitals in their countries within Europe, Italy lacked a pre-eminent fashion capital. Rather, it had several cities that each contributed to the industry and had their own specialism and associations. Florence had shoes and woolen clothing, while Venice was famous for luxury silk and leather goods. Sicily was known for artistic weaving, while people flocked to Rome for jewelry. With time, Milan proved to be more convenient than its neighboring cities.

It all boiled down to logistics at the end of the day. Milan is the northernmost city in Italy, making it the most accessible to fashion capitals Paris and London, which means it is the least expensive to ship to. In addition, Milan has a large international airport, Malpensa, which has direct flights from other major fashion hubs like New York City, Toronto, and Miami almost every day. Will these advantages keep Milan as the fashion capital forever?

Whilst not reaching the same heights as Milan, Florence always remained an important center for Italian and international fashion. The annual Pitti Immagine trade shows have always managed to keep the city on the map, being a major gathering for retailers and buyers in the industry. Of note, there's the Pitti Uomo event, which is an important industry event, gathering people from all over the world, as well as a cultural event that gathers the general public's interest to learn about the next trend setters in men's fashion. Despite not being a large metropolis as Milan, Florence has a cosmopolitan population and a fashion pedigree like no other city, proving that it has all it needs to be an international fashion capital.

Its fashion week was noted for its fresh and innovative designers, representing a more diverse alternative to the commercial shows in Milan. It is also clear that the concept of "style centres" is evolving. Cities that earn the right to be called a "style centre" do so by remaining relevant and encouraging innovation and new talent. Vogue Magazine hinted at this idea back in 2015 when author Daria Shapovalova said, "The Condé Nast International Luxury Conference will go to a different country each year. Florence is a great example of the past, present, and future. Never forget that these noble Renaissance buildings we look at were once the avant-garde of architecture. I want our delegates to sit in the Palazzo Vecchio, where we are honored to hold this conference and reflect on the enduring elements of true luxury—as opposed to the fleeting world of fast fashion." Something is refreshing about history, and Florence is on its way to proving that fashion always comes around, especially to the place where it was born.

The background features a dark grey field with three overlapping circles: a large yellow one in the center, a red one at the bottom left, and a light red one at the top right. The light red circle contains a white sunburst pattern with thin lines radiating from a central point.

***Italian Language
Advanced I Course:
I Luoghi di Dante***



Il Palazzo Di Beatrice

BY ANNA ESPINOZA | PHOTO BY SEAN DONNELLY

Le finestre di Palazzo Portinari Salviati sono ricoperte da pannelli di compensato.

La mia mappa mi dice che questo è il posto giusto, ma è difficile da credere. Questa sera, la notte prima di Halloween, e due notti prima di Ognissanti, è una delle serate più affollate che ho visto a Firenze. Molti studenti stranieri e italiani da fuori città si stanno affrettando a incontrare i loro amici per cena e divertimento.

Sono una di questi studenti stranieri, ma non corro davanti al palazzo con la testa china contro il vento. Sto in piedi in mezzo ad una strada trafficata, guardando in alto, con la bocca mezza aperta come quella di un pesce, perché nell'iscrizione sul lato dell'edificio silenzioso e buio si legge

“Sovra candido vel cinta d’oliva
Donna m’apparve sotto verde manto
Vestita di color di fiamma viva...
-Dante, PVR XXX 31-33”.

Sì, questo è l'edificio giusto. Sembra così normale.

Ormai, i miei compagni di cena, ansiosi, si sono voltati a rimirare quel punto della via dove io li ho lasciati. Gridano che dovrei sbrigarmi e unirmi a loro.

Le finestre ricoperte indicano che il palazzo, la casa della famosa musa di Dante, Beatrice Portinari, nonché il luogo di nascita di Cosimo I che fu sede del Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia durante il periodo del Regno d'Italia di Firenze Capitale, è in fase di restauro. Il palazzo che un tempo era proprietà del marito di

Lucrezia de Medici ora è proprietà di LDC (Luxury, Dream and Culture) Hotels & Resorts Group, e dopo di cinque anni di costruzione, riaprirà a Marzo del 2022 con tredici appartamenti, un ristorante con chefs di stelle Michelin, una cappella privata e una spa.

L'edificio è molto grande e maestoso, con una porta di legno splendidamente intagliata e pesante. Si dice che il cortile abbia una statua di Cosimo Primo. Per quanto bello, mi sento un po' triste che un posto così speciale sarà chiuso a tutti tranne che ai super ricchi.

Ma forse chiuderlo riflette meglio l'eredità di Dante e Beatrice. Dopotutto, i due erano di classi sociali diverse. Nonostante le loro case d'infanzia siano a pochi passi l'una dall'altra, Dante scrive che non ha visto Beatrice fino a quando è stato portato a palazzo per una festa del Maggio quando aveva nove anni. E per il resto della sua vita, Beatrice e il suo palazzo erano irraggiungibili, come lo sono oggi.

Quindi la maggior parte della gente non può più entrare nel palazzo, cosa importa? Possono, come ho fatto io, risalire ai passi immaginati di Beatrice fino alla porta della Chiesa di Santa Margherita dei Cerchi, alla base del Ponte di Santa Trinita e per Via del Corso. E noi possiamo credere nel potere di vivere e camminare in un luogo dove c'era un amore così famoso e forte, molto tempo fa.

E come quelli che con una paura di dimenticare, fotografano tutto quello che vedono, ho sbattuto le palpebre due volte, per imprimere nella mente la facciata del palazzo e ripresi via per la cena.



Sulle Tracce di Dante *Nella Zona di Santa Croce*

BY ISABELLA GARGANASE
PHOTO BY SEAN DONNELLY

Quest'anno si ricorda il settecentenario della morte di Dante e voglio cominciare la celebrazione del Sommo Poeta nella Zona di Santa Croce. A sinistra della facciata della basilica di Santa Croce, si può trovare una statua di Dante in cima alle scale. Questa statua è stata costruita da Enrico Pazzi per il cinquecentenario della morte di Dante e sembra guardare attraverso la piazza con uno sguardo irremovibile. La "Divina Commedia", il suo capolavoro, riposa nelle sue mani. Osserva il viavai di piazza Santa Croce, al mattino, quando le persone passano mentre vanno al lavoro. Gli adolescenti stanno ai suoi piedi, mentre altri mangiano in un ristorante vicino. I turisti si fermano e fissano la basilica con le telecamere pronte. Mi chiedo se Dante abbia mai pensato che la sua città di Firenze sarebbe stata come appare oggi. Avrebbe approvato o disapprovato tutto ciò che è accaduto nel corso degli anni a Firenze? Sapeva che il suo capolavoro, La "Divina Commedia", sarebbe diventato una delle opere più importanti mai scritte in volgare fiorentino e un classico nel mondo della letteratura di oggi? O che le parole da lui così eloquentemente scritte sarebbero diventate la lingua della gente comune e la base dell'italiano moderno?

Con queste domande in mente, seguiamo i passi di Dante ed entriamo nella basilica di Santa Croce. Questa basilica, infatti è stata definita il "tempio dell'itale glorie" dal poeta Ugo Foscolo. Ci sono qui le tombe di importanti artisti, letterati, politici, scienziati che hanno dato lustro all'Italia come Michelangelo, Galileo, Machiavelli e gli altri. Ma non Dante. Qui troviamo il cenotafio di Dante, cioè la tomba vuota, nel centro della navata di destra. Considerando il suo ruolo come una della figura più importanti di Firenze, è interessante che Dante sia escluso da Santa Croce. Il suo corpo riposa a Ravenna dove si era rifugiato dopo l'esilio da Firenze per questioni politiche. Negli anni il rapporto di amore-odio è diventato molto intrigante: nonostante la città di Firenze non abbia voluto Dante quando era in vita, ora il nome di Dante è sinonimo della città.

Quest'anno mescoliamo il vecchio con il nuovo mentre celebriamo la morte di Dante. La mostra "Dante. L'eterno poeta" è un progetto innovativo ideato dall'artista Felice Limosani, che unisce discipline umanistiche e tecnologie digitali. Si svolge nella Cappella dei Pazzi in Santa Croce e narra La "Divina Commedia" e l'attualità del suo messaggio universale. È possibile visitare la mostra fino al 10 gennaio 2022. Il layout della mostra crea un'esperienza immersiva all'interno della cappella dei Pazzi ed è un'esperienza da non perdere.

Credo che sia importante prendersi del tempo e ringraziare per tutto ciò che Dante ha fatto non solo per la città di Firenze, ma per l'Italia intera e anche per il mondo. La prossima volta che sei in piazza Santa Croce, fermati e prenditi un secondo per guardare la statua di Dante. Seguire le tracce di Dante, è conoscere la storia di Firenze.



*Student
Voice*

portrait of myself *as a vulnerable writer*

BY EMMA CONNORS | PHOTO BY MARIA ACCORDINO

On the first day, she was timid with a constantly worried look on her face walking through the streets of Florence. Her hands beamed red from clenching her bag tightly to make sure her belongings were safe while entering the crowds of people. She constantly looked at her phone and relied on Google Maps to lead her throughout the city. She was falling into the tourist traps and picked restaurants that were close and convenient to the Duomo. White sneakers, jeans, and a light coat were the fashion that she picked for the day, sometimes the black fanny pack was brought out when shopping. The words and phrases that came out of her mouth were only English.

The first week her phone was in her hand with the occasional glance at the map, and the bag rested on her shoulder. Her gaze was more upward, pointing out the different features of the streets. She was now noticing the authentic cafes and restaurants but was too intimidated to walk in. Occasionally, she answered a one-word greeting from a restaurant worker in Italian. She waved to a local leather shop owner that she passed every day on her way to class. She walked to class with a buddy, not in a larger group of people, learning how to travel with the pace of the city.

The first month she had on a leather jacket with black boots. She was sitting down in the morning with a cappuccino and croissant journaling before class. She completed small sentences with her friends or the locals in Italian. A tourist walked up to her asking how to get to the Duomo and she pointed them in the right direction. She was zig-zagging through streets and backroads finding shortcuts on her way. She walked in restaurants for dinner or sat down for aperitivo. She walked with confidence and matched the pace of other locals.

She is now a traveler, not a tourist.



SHINING *THROUGH HELL*

BY CHLOE QUINLAN | PHOTO BY NICOLETTA SALOMON

The drops feel cold compared to the heat my body and face are giving off. I am unsure if the wetness is from sweat or tears. I enter the hallway and the beeping follows me. Slowly I start to peel back the purple gloves that are now sticking to me. I rip off the gown, struggling for a second with the double knot that tries to keep me hostage. I take off my N95 and wipe it down with a bleach wipe, knowing it's only a matter of time before it suffocates me once more this shift. I sit down and stare at the assignment again. So many COVID-positive patients fill the screen as I wipe down my badge which reads: Chloe Quinlan, Nursing Assistant.

I predicted this pandemic would be over by now, but this disease is unpredictable. I couldn't have predicted that I would live through a pandemic before graduating college. I couldn't have predicted I would see so many people hurting. I came into the medical field to help people heal. I fell in love with being able to send people off better than before. All of that control I thought I had really never existed though.

As time went on, I wondered if I was in my own version of hell. Unlike Dante Alighieri who was able to punish those who wronged him during his time in hell, it was everyone around me being punished. I felt very defeated looking around wondering who is off-limits for COVID to readily attack both inside and outside of my job. When I was at work, I had to face the issue head-on, outside of work people looked at me like I was contagious. It was a more passive form of exile than the one Dante experienced as a human. Unlike mine,

Dante's exile was planned and politically motivated. Nonetheless, both of our exiles are personal. At least when he entered hell he had guidance. There was no Vergilius to help navigate this hell. There was no right or wrong thing to do, everyone just had to follow what they felt was best for them. Throughout this past year, we all have found ourselves looking around, wondering how and why this had happened.

I understand now looking back that those lessons I learned during my own hell period are why things shine a little bit brighter today. Simple tasks like grabbing a coffee or meeting with a friend are things I see now as a privilege. Walking around Florence today is something I did not even think would be possible eight months ago. Including the addition of the vaccine, there is more awareness of symptoms to look out for and protocols to implement. I find little moments that once meant nothing now carry a heavy weight. I know not everything in my day-to-day life will snap back to my old routine. However, when you look at it, Dante never longed to be back on Earth once reaching Heaven, so I am content where I am. I spend each day being thankful that I survived the harder times last year to endure the better ones today. While Dante was able to seek his revenge on those who have wronged him, living each day to the best of my ability outside of COVID's exile is the best revenge I think could be served. It may be a rough draft of our Heaven compared to what Dante walked into, but we all can be each other's Beatrice and help each other navigate the rebuild.



a sinful confection

BY MORGAN SMITH

READ FROM THE BOTTOM UP

This layer belongs to me. my sins through just one bite of frosting. The streams of sweet fresh fruits embrace my senses through a sinful confection of my own Beatrice. I have seen

The astonishment of my gaze wedded to the breast of the ninth mantle. My eyes must befriend the Virgin Mary and embrace my taste buds. My unwavering devotion charges me through the incandescence

A purveyor of incurable famishment. The tongue. Any attempt to swallow enforces a hunger that ensues in my stomach, a wave that I see the layer, but I am not allowed to indulge in its fervent palatableness. My own gluttony

The seventh layer should run for reelection on the extravagance that oozes from the pores of my skin but my hands lay bound to my lap and my heart melts avariciously. I want one more slice. I must fail to lurch me forward. A tremor in my stomach

I need relief from the detention of the present taste buds as an earl grey tea, comforting after bite, I feel less inclined to conquer the world yet a part of me feels the zeal of a reborn

The fifth layer lures me into a dark closet, I abide. It whips up All of my senses reach for the darkest corners of the room for sweetness, or tanginess from this mantle of the cake. It grows into a heat in my face. I consider it an abomination

The upper layer bewilders my mind. Unlike anything I have seen for. Enveloped by gold leaf and laced with sugar, it is the cake and I engage in a tiff for just one moment that is perched upon this layer. When I guide a finger by the lack of flavor. How could something so beautiful

It is easy to see that the third layer is crushed and shadowed by the beauty of its shell. Lathered with colorful sugars, this layer boasts with pride. Yet, it plummets to and sits at the bottom of my gut. Truly

The second layer is beyond repent and reconciliation. It appears of confectionary flavors, ruling amongst a kingdom of less esteemed I pity the chocolate's negligence in serving its proposition of

I sit eagerly and without trepidation. I am in position to clove the cake to a mouth flooded with liquid desire. To my dismay, the confection rub against my tongue but stubbornly leave no trace

Here only I can relinquish
 the softness of velvety cream cheese
 sweet puree and bounties of
 spices and admonish my climb
 upon. Inner peace embodies
 the journey. I have secured my Earthly Paradise.

As I descend with the heat blazing keenly from
 my senses are scorched with lust, but I
 embrace the heat that will cauterize
 my dedication to make it to paradise
 serenity. The spice is arduous to digest.

The eighth layer prompts a draught upon my
 tongue as a swift panic in my throat. I grieve the
 weight of nausea crawls inside my body. I can
 not indulge in its contents. I'll sit here and dream
 as Anthony has me trembling with punishment.

Upon. This mantle entices my desire for the
 next slice of this confection. I reach for one more slice,
 my feet pressed against the floor, my body
 needs one more slice. Yet—my immobile limbs
 and stomach urges me to attack the next layer.

Previous layer. The sixth layer resides on my
 tongue to a degree. It is soft and succor. Bite
 the rest of the cake. My actions are slothful
 and a pioneer. It is a bona fide contradiction.

As the door shut and pinches the flame from the candle.
 I roam and find nihilism. There is no light, no moisture, no
 life. A feeling of **wrath** boils from the tips of my toes and
 a realization that one might categorize this as a confection.

*Why I have ever seen yet everything I have ever yearned
 for are pearls. For a jiff, I am appalled by my own **envy**,
 and regret. However, without reluctance, I desire the gold
 to bite off the fork with my mouth, I am unsatiated
 and beautifully crafted exist appallingly on the inside?*

*...ing its supporting layers. However, its weight is
 with piped flowers and littered with a streusel of
 the layer sinks almost into oblivion. A single bite
 is truly a tattered book disguised by a whimsical cover.*

*...ears to be chocolate with a rich semi-sweet blanket. The king
 of teemed sweetness, proved to be **repentant** of his true nature.
 rich cacao. I propel the remains of my slice further from me.*

*...aw at this temple of sweet serenity. I vehicle my first bite of
 the first layer is unwilling to be recognized. The morsels of
 grace of satisfaction. Taste is forgotten due to lack of intention.*



*Alumni
Profile*



Sean Weber- Quigley

BY THE FUA-AUF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Introduce yourself

My name is Sean Weber-Quigley. I was born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. I started cooking at a young age at home. In high school, I worked as a part-time line cook at a local café. In January 2006, I entered the Masters Program in the School of Food and Wine Studies, Culinary Arts, FUA-AUF Florence University of the Arts - The American University of Florence.

Tell us about your profession and/or what you have been up to since you left Florence

Upon completion of the program, I worked for two years for my previous employer, Davio's Italian Steakhouse, established by renowned Boston Massachusetts chef, Steve DiFillipo. It is situated in the fashionable Rittenhouse Row area of Center City Philadelphia and is well-known for high-quality dinner service and as a staple of Philadelphia's power lunch crowd. Julia Child famously mentored DiFillipo. Today, his family has 12 restaurants throughout the U.S. In total, I was with Davio's for seven years in a number of capacities, including line cook and supervisor of expeditors. In addition, I created new menu offerings/specials and supervised catered events.

Over the past 12 years, I also served in the capacity of executive chef or executive sous chef at the following Philadelphia region restaurants: White Dog Café in Philadelphia's exclusive Main Line community; Winnie's Manayunk in Northwest Philadelphia; Conshocken Pennsylvania's Lucky Dog Saloon and Grill; and, TECA Italian Restaurant, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania.

Today, I work part-time, as co-chef of the historic Valley Green Inn, the last remaining roadhouse of the many that lined Philadelphia's Forbidden Drive in the 1800s. It is located in the City's Wissahickon Valley beside the Wissahickon Creek. The area is a component of the City's large Fairmount Park system.

In addition, over the past two years, I have established Chico Verde Philly, which is my own catering and private chef/meal preparation business that, in addition to providing traditional cuisine, promotes my love of plant-based cooking. The creation of Chico Verde has allowed me to use my skills in vegan cuisine preparation/presentation to develop creative recipes that replace meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy in daily meals. My recipes, customized to meet the needs of my clients,

often highlight vegetables as delicious protein-rich entrees.

Why did you choose to study at FUA-AUF?

I chose to study at FUA-AUF, as I was interested in Italian cuisine due to my experience cooking at Davio's Northern Italian Steakhouse. In addition, my aunt was working for a U.S./FUA-AUF partner university and spoke very highly of the program. After further review of the program, I was very excited about the FUA-AUF culinary opportunity.

Did you do any internship or experiential learning with FUA-AUF? If yes, tell us about it.

I was placed as a culinary experiential learning student at Ganzo Restaurant, located at Via dei Macchi, 85R, 50122, Firenze, Italy. I was lucky enough to serve under internationally-renowned Chef PierLuigi Campi. Ganzo is well known for its slow-food appetizers. Thus, I served on a team that developed new and unique aperitivos that merged organic fruits and vegetables with local farm cheese, poultry, and meat.

What did you do at FUA-AUF that helped you in your career and/or in your personal growth? In which way studying abroad (at FUA-AUF) - changed your life/ professional path/career?

My experience at FUA-AUF and Ganzo not only greatly expanded my Italian cooking skills but also served to launch my interest in plant-based cooking. I very much appreciated the farm-to-table and slow-foods focus that was an integral part of my FUA-AUF culinary education. My FUA-AUF education was the foundation that ultimately inspired my professional growth, developed my specific cuisine interests, and led me to set Chico Verde in motion.

Have you taken part in any Alumni events yet? If yes tell us about..

In 2010, I was chosen to serve as a Senior Team Member of the FUA-AUF Tutto Toscana Team Presentation at the James Beard Foundation in New York City, New York USA.

Are you still friends/in contact with someone you have met at FUA-AUF?

I am still in contact with a roommate I had, Sean Walkin, who lives in Alaska and is currently working at University of Alaska Fairbanks as Professor of Culinary Arts & Hospitality.

What would you say to any future students looking into FUA-AUF?

It's an enriching experience that will change your life. You'll never regret it.

Describe your FUA-AUF experience with a word.

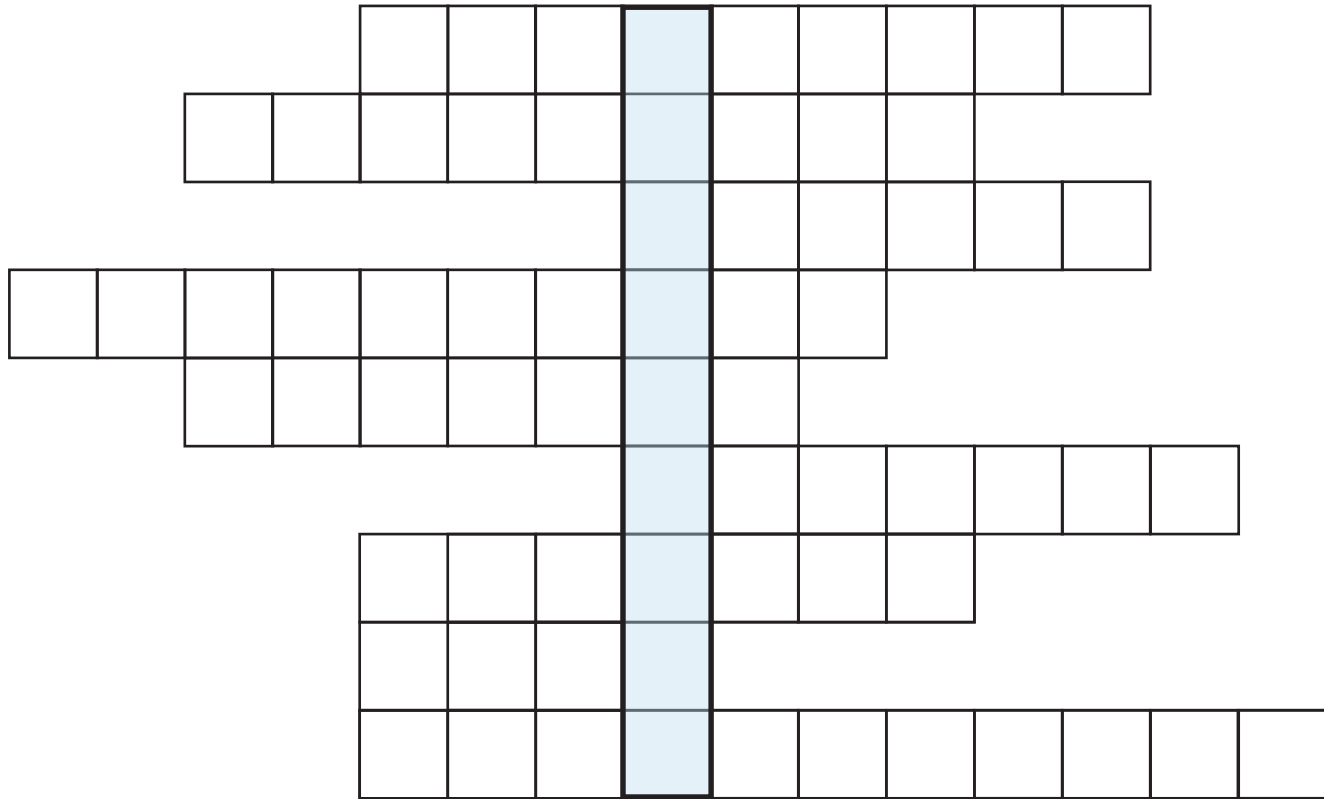
Unforgettable

What are your plans for the future?

My plans for the future are to continue growing my Vegan/Vegetarian Private Chef service and to open up a fast casual restaurant very soon.

Dantean Crossword Puzzle

BY JULIA ARTS

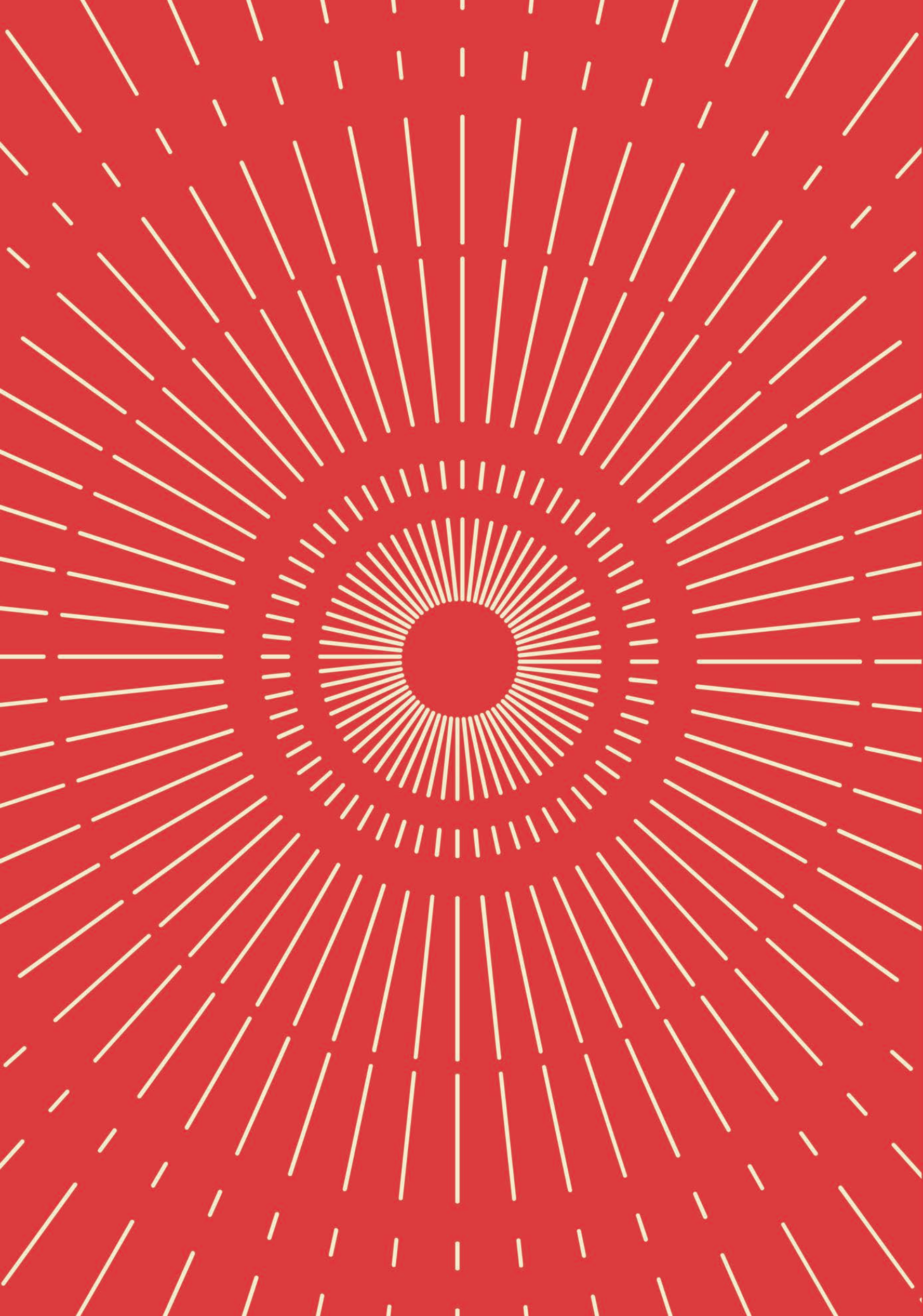


1. The woman who Dante was actually in love with, according to rumours. It is not his wife Gemma.
2. The subject of Dante's famous poem "Divina Commedia."
3. The Italian name of the first part out of the three parts of Dante's famous poem "Divina Commedia."
4. The period of European and Italian history Dante made his influence.
5. The political alliance Dante and his family supported. They fought each other in Tuscany.
6. The language Dante wrote his poems in, in contrast to most poems of that time.
7. The place where Dante died.
8. The amount of children Dante had in total.
9. Dante's most famous work (in English).

What word comes down the pike? _____

Answer Key

1. Beatrice 2. Afterlife 3. Inferno 4. Middle ages 5. Guelphs
 6. Italian 7. Ravenna 8. Four 9. Divine Comedy
 Word coming down the pike: Alighieri





B