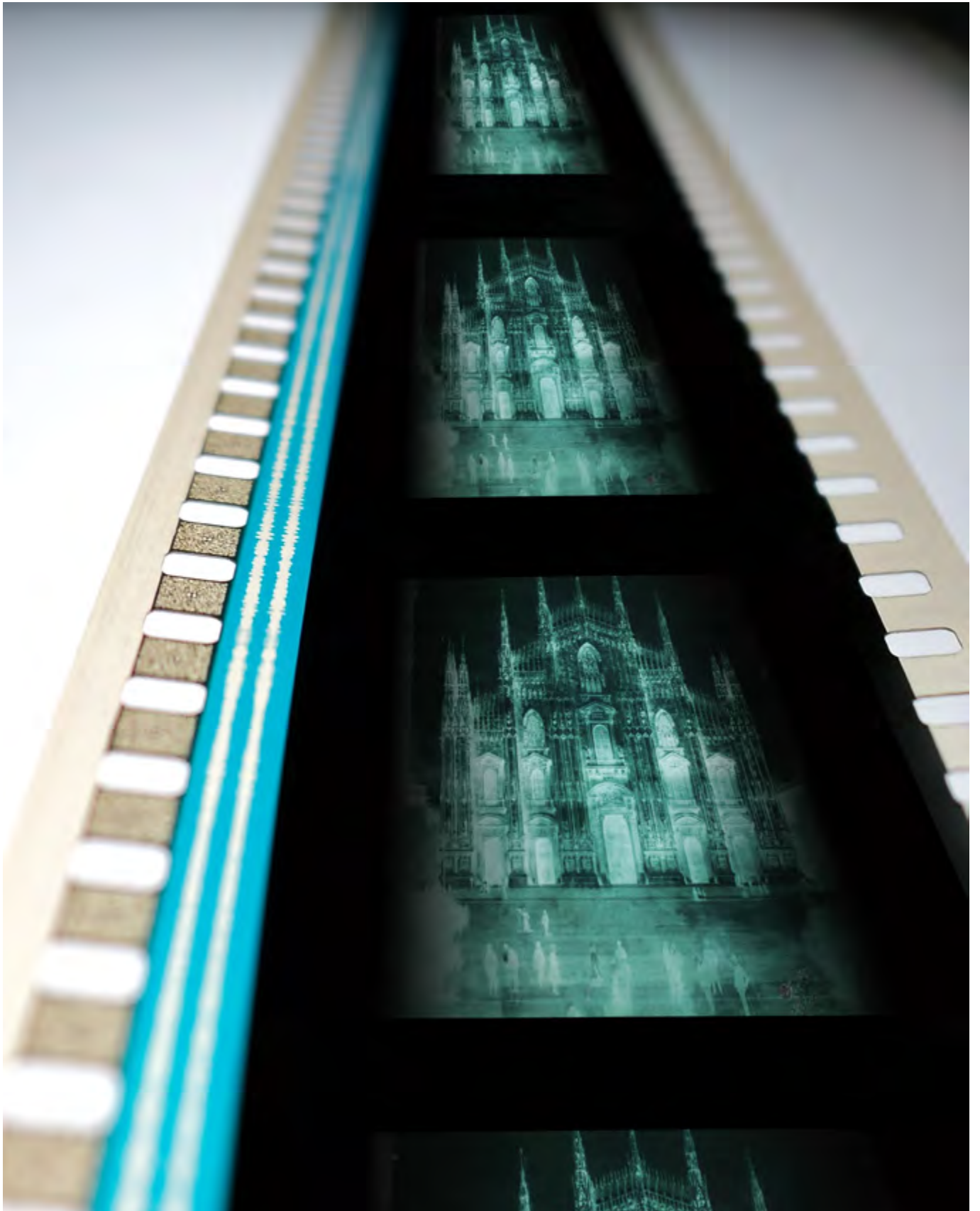


# Benvenuto

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR ENGLISH SPEAKING WOMEN OF MILAN — March, 2016



# BENVENUTO

The Benvenuto Club of Milan welcomes English speaking women from all over the world. The Club helps newcomers settle in Milan and fosters international fellowship through its various activities. Benvenuto is non-profit, non-denominational and apolitical.

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## THE MAGAZINE TEAM

EDITOR	<b>Sule Bolgi</b> , benvenutoeditor@hotmail.com
EDITORIAL TEAM EXECUTIVE	<b>Mirella Dicancro</b> , framivan@yahoo.co.uk
LAYOUT ARTISTS	<b>Adrienne McCartney</b> and <b>Jean Di Sabatino</b>
LAYOUT CONCEPT DESIGN	<b>Joanne Clerk</b>
DISTRIBUTION MANAGER	<b>Annamaria Major</b> , annamariamajor27@hotmail.com
ADVERTISING MANAGER	<b>Isabel Margulies</b> , benvenutomessages@yahoo.com

Contributors:

Fiona Betournay, Marti Biles, Joanne Clerk, Jean Di Sabatino, Mirella Dicancro, Nawal Felippone, Laurie Fink, Gudrun Herzog, Louise Hopkins, Loredana Mandelli, Isabel Margulies, Marilyn Tambling, Judith Vinkesteyn  
cover photos: Martina Parenti & Massimo d'Anolfi and  
Manuel Menéndez (mannyisdead.deviantart.com - creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)  
cover photomontage: Adrienne McCartney

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WEB MASTER **Anne Marie Ellis**, benvenutoweb@yahoo.com  
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Please include your full name in the cause/description section.

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# President's message



Dear members,

Thank you to **Sig. Paolo Spinelli, former Ambassador for Italy to Senegal and Hungary**, who joined us at the February Main Coffee to share his insights about diplomacy and how it can be applied in the current international climate. Let his eloquent words deepen our understanding of world events, and think about how we can imbue all of our interactions with grace and tact.

For those of you who were not able to attend the Main Coffee, the **new 2015-2016 membership directory** will continue to be available for pick up at the check-in table at our upcoming Main Coffees. Be sure to get your copy and many thanks to both our past and current Membership Directors, Anna Perotti and Vicki Schroeder, for their hard work compiling it.

Despite the sometimes dreary, rainy weather that descends upon Milan this time of year, there continue to be a wide variety of Benvenuto activities being offered that let us learn more about our city and other areas of interest. Remember that all of our activities are member-organized, and thank you to our many active organizers this year! If there is an activity you would like to organize for the Club, please do not hesitate to contact me at [presidentbenvenuto@gmail.com](mailto:presidentbenvenuto@gmail.com).

**March is the final month to propose charities for the Benvenuto Club to support for our next "year" beginning in July.** Charity applications have been distributed via e-mail, hard copies will be available at the Main Coffee, or you can **contact Fiona Betournay at [fbetournay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fbetournay@yahoo.co.uk)** for an application or with any questions. Be sure to review the criteria before submitting an application, and remember that applications are **due no later than March 31st**. The charities selected for next year will be announced at the May Main Coffee.

Approaching quickly as well is the annual Benvenuto Club fashion show, which will take place next month at the April Main Coffee. Fashion Park atelier has graciously agreed to provide this year's selections, and models are still needed. Please contact our **Public Relations Director for Recruitment and Events, Marti Biles, at [mlbiles@msn.com](mailto:mlbiles@msn.com)** if you would like to model in the show. And see her article later in this issue for more information.

Our next Main Coffee will be on Tuesday, March 8th and is this year's **Spring Fair: Food, Flowers, & Fun**. Flowers and various Easter and spring treats will be available, with proceeds benefitting this year's charity, Kolbe Association. It will also be an opportunity for you as members to share some traditional Easter treats from your home country – sweet or savory – that can be sold as part of the Spring Fair. Please bring any food by 10:00am that morning so the table can be set up, and contact **Abby Kashyap at [newcomersbenvenuto@gmail.com](mailto:newcomersbenvenuto@gmail.com) with any questions**. If you are interested in volunteering on the day, please e-mail Abby as well.

March 8th is also International Women's Day – we look forward to having the special opportunity for us all to celebrate together.

Best,  
**Lana**

## Save the Date!

Tuesday, March 8th – Main Coffee  
**Spring Fair: Food, Flowers, & Fun**

Tuesday, April 12th – Main Coffee  
**Fashion Show**

Tuesday, May 10th – Main Coffee  
**Annual General Business Meeting (AGBM)**

# BENVENUTO'S GOLDEN SPONSORS

The logo for AIMC (American International Medical Center) features the letters "AIMC" in a bold, blue, serif font.

## AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

We are deeply grateful to **The American International Medical Center (AIMC)**, our generous sponsor for the Benvenuto Club website, and wish to thank Dr. William S. Freilich, director of the center, one of Benvenuto's long time friends, for the continuous support he has given to our club. The AIMC has been serving the Milan expatriate community for many years and is held in the highest esteem by the Benvenuto members. For a full description of the services they offer, please see their website:  
**[www.aimclinic.it](http://www.aimclinic.it)**

The logo for Bolliger International Movers features the word "Bolliger" in a large, green, serif font. Below it, "International Movers" is written in a smaller, green, sans-serif font, and "Since 1909" is written in an even smaller, green, sans-serif font.

A CERTAINTY FOR YOUR REMOVALS FOR OVER 100 YEARS

We are deeply grateful to **Bolliger International Movers** for their continuous support of the magazine production and for the support, together with Core Cocchini Relocation (CORE), of the directory covers and internal pages. Bolliger and Core also provide the newcomer's bags.  
**[www.bolligerspa.com](http://www.bolligerspa.com)**

The logo for CORE Cocchini Relocation features a green four-leaf clover above the word "CORE" in a large, blue, serif font. Below "CORE", "COCCHINI RELOCATION s.r.l." is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

We are deeply appreciative of **Core Cocchini Relocation's (CORE)** loyal and generous support. For years, CORE has co-sponsored the newcomer's bags and the club's yearly directory. In addition, CORE has been the sole sponsor for the financing and production of various publications. We thank CORE.  
**[www.cocchinirelocation.com](http://www.cocchinirelocation.com)**

Benvenuto Magazine is published 10 times per year.  
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To advertise, contact our Advertising Manager, Isabel Margulies:  
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# Note from the Editor



How many of you have willingly sang along Bob Marley's cheerful chant "No, Woman, No Cry".

I'm a child of the seventies, that's from when everything was possible, even peace. And don't cry says Bob, because you know, woman, you know you got it all to make it better!

Half of the world's population is women and today half of the world is involved in warfare. I can't reconcile with the thought we are doing enough to avoid it.

Please read our article about domestic violence, don't leave things that matter most unsaid. Let the early days of spring grow hopes and determination in our hearts to make this world a better place. And where is a better place to start from:

*Ask yourself: what difference can you make today! Call someone, meet up with someone, make a friend!*

In peace,  
**Sule**

*Do you want to explore your inner feelings and thoughts?*

*Do you want to know more about communication and how you can improve to send the right message?*

We are offering a course in psychology and personal development in English starting **April the 7th**. We'll meet in a smaller group (max 10 people) in the center of Milan (Zone Corso Italia) once a week for 10 weeks from 9:30 AM until 12:30 PM.

The themes that we will talk about are ex-Inner Child, basic feelings, the model of communication, Triggers and Patterns plus other useful theories.

We are also offering individual sessions and workshops. You can read more about that and the course on our website:

**[www.mindcirclemilan.com](http://www.mindcirclemilan.com)**



Here you can also read more about us, prices and find all our contact informations. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Please keep sending us your photos and articles, your contribution is not limited to writing recipes or places you have travelled. **Also share with us what really moves you.** We all have a story to tell - **become a part and make us whole.**

Here are some **submission guidelines** to help us get the **best** from your articles and photos when we publish:

- Provide written text in a Word document. Send photos as separate JPEG attachments; *please do not* embed photos in your text document or email message.
- Do not send photos with a resolution lower than 1000 pixels, or 300 dpi. We will not get a clear printed image with anything less.
- When you send in a picture that you have not taken yourself, please contact the source and ask for permission.
- Send all the elements of your submission (text and photos) together in one email to [Benvenutoeditor@hotmail.com](mailto:Benvenutoeditor@hotmail.com) by the submission deadline, usually the Friday after the Main Coffee. *We need all the time we can get to pull it all together!*

# Regular Meetings

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**8 TUESDAY  
MAIN COFFEE**

photograph © Andrew Dunn; <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

## Main Coffee and Spring Fair

**date:** Tuesday, March 8

**time:** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

**where:** Circolo A. Volta, via Giuseppe Giusti 16

This month's **Main Coffee** is also our annual **Spring Fair**. Flowers, Easter and spring treats will be available for sale, with proceeds benefitting this year's charity, **the Kolbe Association**. It will also be an opportunity for you to share some traditional Easter treats from your home country – sweet or savory – that can be sold as part of the Spring Fair. Please bring any food **by 10:00 am that morning** so the table can be set up. If you are interested in volunteering on the day or have questions, please contact: **Abby Kashyap, newcomersbenvenuto@gmail.com**

### **DROP-IN COFFEE**

Have a cappuccino with us at the stylish Martini Bar at Dolce & Gabbana. We meet **every** Wednesday morning and all are welcome.

**time:** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

**where:** Corso Venezia 15

**when:** This month's meetings will be on Wednesday:

March 2

March 9

March 16

March 23

March 30

### **NEIGHBOR to NEIGHBOR**

**Once-a-month** gatherings of Benvenuto members living within the same neighborhood zone. Sometimes these meetings are held in someone's home, sometimes they are hosted at a local eatery. *See the calendar listing in this month's issue on page 30.*

### **ALL-SORTS**

Various groups meet for shared hobbies and interests. There is something for everyone! *See the list of groups and specific information in this month's issue, on page 31.*

# New Activities for March

## 1 TUESDAY

### **FLOWER ARRANGING CLASS**

Lovely little florist shop will instruct us in how to make a centerpiece and a bouquet. We will also be taught how to properly cut flower stems and prolong the life of cut flowers.

**time:** 10:00 am-12:00

**where:** CORAL, viale Pasubio 8

**cost:** €25 for the lesson and we get to take home our masterpieces!

**organizer:** Anna Rowsell;

annarowsell@hotmail.com

## 3 THURSDAY

### **COUPLES & BUBBLES**

#### **APERITIVO**

**time:** 7:00 pm

**where:** Grand Hotel et De Milan, Lobby Bar, via Manzoni 29, next to MM3 Montenapoleone metro stn.

**cost:** €44, inc drinks, starters,

1 plate pasta or rice

sign-up closed on Feb 29

**organizers:** Noelia Damata:

noeliadamata@hotmail.com

and Adriana Tilve:

adriana.vivian.tilve@gmail.com

## 6 SUNDAY

Visit to the Natural Science Museum and Public Gardens, with Kolbe Charity

**meeting time:** 3.30 pm in front of the museum

Corso Venezia 55 (MM 1 Palestro)

*For more information, see Charity News, page 27*

Please call me if interested as the event is prior to the Main Coffee (349 0590 286).

Nawal Felippone

Benvenuto Club/Kolbe Charity coordinator

Nawal\_felippone@hotmail.com

## 10 THURSDAY

### **"GREEN WALKS IN MILAN"**

OA and Garden Group activity

It will be a slow walk across two parks and some hidden green areas of Milan. I have planned some GREEN Walking itineraries which would include crossing green parks, hidden and less hidden places of Milan. We'll be visiting the Park of the Ancient Roman amphitheater and an old and refined Vivaio Riva (plant nursery/green house) on via Arena 7.

Of course, most of our members surely know their zones quite well or have already a member friend with whom they share similar walks. We are open to suggestions to rediscover interesting places for future adventures together. Please do not feel shy to come forward with your proposals.

So, let's start our walks on Thursday afternoon, March 10th. and discover how Green our lovely city could be.

**time:** 3-6:00 pm

**cost:** FREE + a desire to discover interesting places around you, with a good pair of legs and walking shoes to support a two hour walk (at leisure)

**meeting point:** Largo Carrobbio/corner via Torino

**organizer:** maria.tieghi@gmail.com or call 348 7439654



## 14 MONDAY

### **Guided Tour:**

#### **"Central Station, Monumental Gateway to Milan"**

We will tour the Central Station with an English speaking official tour guide from Naiade Cultural Tours, who will point out to us the painted mosaics, the particularity of the materials used and the strong symbolism of the decorative elements.

Discover the hidden points of interest on this tour and be charmed just like Frank Lloyd Wright, the renowned architect who described Milan's Central Station as "the most beautiful train station in the world".

*For more information, see article on page 23*

**time:** 2:10pm, tour starts at 2:30pm

**how to get there:** MM2/MM3, Stazione Centrale stop

**meeting point:** Main Entrance on Piazza Duca d'Aosta square, under the winged horse (on the right, going towards the station). *Please when you get off at the Central station by subway, come outside of the station as we will meet at the Main Entrance overlooking the square, not inside the station.*

**cost:** 9 Euro for Benvenuto members, 12 Euro for guests

**sign-up:** at Main Coffee or for info please e-mail me ASAP at framivan@yahoo.co.uk or write an SMS to cellphone 348 854607 to organizer, Mirella Dicandro.

# New Activities for March

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## 14 MONDAY

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### COOKING CLASS:

“Seafood menu”

Vegetable nests with prawns  
Potato gnocchi with clams  
Biscuit rolled up in chocolate, filled with fruit.  
Sign-up at Main Coffee.

**time:** 9:45 am -1:00 pm

**where:** Atelier dei Sapori, via P. da Vimercate 6

**cost:** € 30

**organizer:** Anna Rowsell, annarowsell@hotmail.com



## 17 THURSDAY

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### OA MONTHLY MEETING

Guest Speaker, Alessandra Mariano:

“Iran – A Country To Discover”

For more detailed information, see *Oriental Abroad News*, page 29.

Please confirm attendance at Main Coffee.

**time:** 10 am - 12.30 pm

**where:** Palazzo Cusani, Circolo degli Ufficiali, via del Carmine 8; Please remember to bring your ID card.

**cost:** € 3

**lunch:** Sapori della Persia Restaurant, Via Gaetana Agnesi 2 /crossing viale Sabotino (Porta Romana zone)

**cost:** € 20 (plus €1 tip). Event is open to all BV members, husbands/partners are most welcome.

## 16 WEDNESDAY

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### PAINTING CANADA

**location:** Straf Hotel Conference Room, Via San Raffaele, Metro Duomo

**time:** Welcome coffee served at 15.30 in the Reception area.

Lecture starts at 16.00! Please book your seat by March 11th at [info@artandthecity.it](mailto:info@artandthecity.it) /

**cost:** 22 euro / Benvenuto Discount 20 euro

Benvenuto Art Lecture series “Around the world in 7 Days”  
Day 5: Painting Canada

We travel to the great Canadian forests and lakes in the footsteps of the European settlers in search of a new life. “Old World” canons of beauty are reappraised and a distinctly Canadian art is born. “Painting Canada” is an introduction to the art and culture of a people whose diverse genetic heritage is complimentary to the complex amalgam of ethnicities that it successfully hosts today.

## 20 SUNDAY

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### Celebrating EASTER with Kolbe Charity

**meeting place:** the church square, viale Corsica 68 reachable by bus 73 (San Babila square)

**time:** 12,45 pm-3.00 pm (approx.) Lunch is in the Oratory hall, across the garden.

For more information, see *Charity News*, page 27.

Nawal Felippone

Benvenuto Club/Kolbe Charity coordinator

[Nawal\\_felippone@hotmail.com](mailto:Nawal_felippone@hotmail.com)

## 23 THURSDAY

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### PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT:

‘Don’t forget Nepal’ by Enrico de Santis

Exhibit to remind visitors of the devastating earthquake last April 2015 which had caused a lot of destruction in the country; until the end of March.

**time:** 3:00 pm in front of museum

**where:** National Museum of Science and Technology Leonardo da Vinci, via san Vittore 21

**cost:** For groups of 10 or more: €7.50 (guide cost to be added if required) Please confirm your presence to [maria.tiegghi@gmail.com](mailto:maria.tiegghi@gmail.com) or [nawal\\_felippone@hotmail.com](mailto:nawal_felippone@hotmail.com)

## 22 TUESDAY

“**OLD MILAN FOOD TOUR**”, by Judith Vinkesteijn

It may be really hard to imagine your city without a single supermarket. In the **OLD MILANO FOOD TOUR** we travel back in time to explore the history of the city from the perspective of food and food culture.

In a city like Milan, where changes are never-ending, it is difficult to read the historic layers that have played an indispensable role in the development of its centre. Therefore “**Food in the Streets**” did historic research on Milan to unveil the relation between urban development and food in general, and its related history, culture and logistic systems in particular.

Since spring 2015, “**FARMING THE CITY**” in collaboration with “Food in the Streets”, organizes the OLD MILANO FOOD TOUR. Walking through the old city center, an enthusiastic guide brings history back to life with stories, images, delicious smells and tasting experiences. By viewing the city through the lens of food, you will also discover political, economic and social changes of the urban environment. It is an opportunity to bring to the attention the constant changes in our contemporary city and raise awareness for food related systems that you probably are not even



photos provided by Old Milan Tours

aware of.

To do so, we selected five food-related entrepreneurs for their special relationship with the local food tradition and sustainable approaches to their daily activities. Together with these local businesses, we developed a unique experience for everyone. Join me at the “Old Milano Food tour” for Benvenuto members, with an English speaking tour guide.

Email organizer or sign-up at Main Coffee.

**time:** 10am - 12noon.

**cost:** € 35 per person

**organizer:** Judith Vinkesteijn;

judith.vinkesteijn@gmail.com

Max. number of participants: 12

Tour can be repeated in April upon request.

## 24 THURSDAY

### FROM RENAISSANCE CUPOLAS TO GLASS TOWERS

**time:** 10.30

**cost:** 8 euro for Benvenuto

Members (10 euro for guests)

Min. of 12 participants –maximum

of 16. Please confirm your

participation by March 18th at

info@artandthecity.it

Discovering Milan Season 2

From Renaissance Cupolas to Glass Towers

A new season of architectural walks around the city awaits us and we begin with the highly influential church of Santa Maria delle Grazie built by Bramante during Milan’s Renaissance. During the great surge of 19th cent urban development the area west of the Last Supper will be characterized by “Neo Bramantesque” echoes to be spotted on the facades of elegant bourgeois residences.

# New Activities for March

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## 29 TUESDAY

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### Free tour:

#### **Grassi Vetrate Artistiche**

Visit the artisan workshop of the Grassi family, master craftsmens of antique stained glass windows since the 1800's. *For more background, read the article on Grassi Vetrate Artistiche on page 23.*

Sign-up at Main Coffee or email Mirella Dicranco

**time:** 10:30 -11:55 am

**where:** via Piranesi 39

**organizer:** Mirella Dicranco, framivan@yahoo.co.uk



## 31 THURSDAY

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### Benvenuto Film Night:

*"The Infinite Factory"*

The story about the building of the Duomo, the Cathedral of Milan, by Italian filmmakers Martina Parenti and Massimo d'Anolfi. *Read film review by Sule Bolgi on page 14.*

**time:** 7:00pm - 9:00pm

**where:** TBA

## *plan for these upcoming April activities ...*

## 3 SUNDAY

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### **CHARITY RUN:** *Looking for Team Benvenuto!*

Every year in Milan there are a few major sporting events, one of them is the Milan Marathon. Over the years my friend, Fabrizio Cosi, got involved with the organizers and helped develop the relay team side which raises money for charities. It has grown year on year and now a lot of charities rely on the Relay teams to help support their activities financially.

In October my friend died suddenly and unexpectedly and so I would like to run in a relay team to help carry on with his work. Fabrizio was the Captain, founder, of the Podisti da Marte which is a non-profit which aims to run missions in the centre of Milan several times a year to raise awareness of a charity and help fund a project for that charity - we aim to give a minimum of Euros 1000 each time. The Podisti da Marte also help out in many other sporting events in Milan as long as there is a charitable aspect to it or a social purpose to it, such as promoting integrating handicapped people into mainstream sport or events.

I would love to get a Benvenuto team together, although the relays team has to cover the distance of a marathon, each individual runner won't have to do more than 12km, the distances are between 8 and 12km. This year it will take place on Sunday 3rd April and really is a great event. Get your family to support and cheer you from the side but do come and take part.

If you are interested then contact

**Anna Rowsell, annarowsell@hotmail.com**

## 12 TUESDAY

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### **MAIN COFFEE and FASHION SHOW** - *Models needed!*

Read about it in the Fashion article on page 26.

**organizer:** Marti Biles; mlbiles@msn.com





photo:  
Archivio Villa  
foto Ranzani

## magnificent magnolias grace Santa Maria delle Grazie

**Jean Di Sabatino**

**A**s I am writing this, it is another somber February afternoon with the sound of rain falling outside. Knowing that March is around the corner, I am hoping that actual spring is not far behind. We live near the church of **Santa Maria delle Grazie** and on a recent walk, my husband said there was something inside that he wanted to show me. The basilica and convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie is most famous for Leonardo da Vinci's depiction of the **Last Supper** or **il cenacolo**, painted on a wall of the convent's refectory. Less well known is the sacristy and small cloister behind the basilica, where my husband led me to show me four small trees growing in the garden at its center. The bare multi-trunked trees were dotted with familiar fuzz-covered buds, and I soon recognized the early signs of spring.

The architecture of the 15th c. sacristy and cloister, or **Sagrestia** and **Chiostro Bramantesco**, is attributed

to the work of Renaissance architect **Donato Bramante**, in collaboration with other architects and sculptors. Bramante is known, amongst other things, for his design of the St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

The use of the cloister as a typology in building and site design is significant and not uncommon. In the history of garden design, the origins of the "walled garden" can be traced back to ancient Persian gardens, where the walled garden in the desert climate metaphorically represented "paradise" on earth. The quadripartite layout of the Islamic garden, or *chahar bagh*, was defined by a center, usually with a pavilion or fountain, from which four water channels flowed, representing the principal compass directions and symbolically, the four rivers as described in paradise in the Quran and the garden of Eden in the Bible.

In the west, the cloister is a carry-over from the peristyle garden of the Roman villa. With the fall of the Roman civilization and the rise of Christianity through the medieval ages, walled gardens evolved into monastic cloisters. Although, often used for

utilitarian purposes, they still represented “earthly paradise” and shelter from the external world. In medieval and renaissance art and poetry, the “*hortus conclusus*,” Latin for closed garden, symbolically represented the purity of the Virgin Mary and her Immaculate Conception.

The cloister of Santa Maria delle Grazie was built, when work was begun for **Ludovico Sforza** to extend the apse of the basilica for the family mausoleum. A large room, later named the **Sagrestia Bramante**, was added behind the church and the space for the cloister formed between the two. The cloister is a perfect square with vaulted arcades on each side, supported by five stone columns. It is flanked on one side by the Bramante Sacristy and on the other, by a more recently renovated room, the **Piccolo Sagrestia**.

The garden in the cloister was created over a hundred years ago when the property was returned to the Dominican monks after foreign military occupation. The foursquare garden is divided into lawns by paths of cobbled paving or *rizzata*, intersected in the center with a fountain. The cloister is nicknamed *chiostro delle rane*, for the four frogs (possibly a symbol for the Resurrection) sitting on the fountains’s ledge, made by the artist Marcello Minoto in the 1970’s.

The edges of the lawns are outlined with small boxwood hedges and in the center of each quadrant, grows a **Magnolia stellata**, or Star Magnolia. At this moment, the small trees are bare, except for the fuzz-covered flower buds that dot the branches. Precocious bloomers, by early spring, these buds will open into pure white blooms, covering the trees in a spectacular show of star-like flowers, almost the size of a hand.

Magnolia is a prehistoric genus of plant, with over 200 species, most originally from Asia or the American continent. In China, white magnolias, specifically the *Magnolia denudata*, symbolize purity. *Magnolia stellata* is a small, compact tree or large shrub that comes from Japan, where it grows along streams and moist areas.



photo: Archivio Villa foto Ranzani

In the garden, it is adaptable to other kinds of soil and will work well in woodland conditions or as specimen plants. Here in the cloister, they seem to be a perfect fit in pure simplicity, proportion and grace.

As I sit here inside from the rain, tracing the history and symbolism embodied in the small cloister, I am amazed that so much worldly complexity and cultural mystery can come together as compactly as they do in these flower buds and in this walled garden ... *and symbolize for me, something as old and universal as the anticipation of spring.*

references:

- Rogers, Elizabeth Barlow. Landscape Design, A Cultural and Architectural History. New York, 2001
- Magnolia stellata, <http://www.floridata.com/Plants/Magnoliaceae/Magnolia%20stellata/207>
- Dr. Paola Villa, interview, 24 February 2016

*professional profile:*

**Dr. Paola Villa**, an expert in restoration, has worked in the Santa Maria delle Grazie complex for many years. A specialist in 12th to 19th c. painting, Dr. Villa has restored many works of art around Milan, including 17th c. Baroque wall paintings in the opulent **Palazzo Clerici** and has recovered badly faded 15th c. mural paintings in the Women’s Chapel or “Capella delle donne” at **Abbazia di Chiaravalle**.

Her expertise has brought her opportunities to work in interesting areas of art and architecture. She works in a range of scales from restoration of exterior building finishes to interior wall paintings. Working with all manner of techniques and materials, such as rabbit-skin glue (used as a Renaissance technique to stretch canvas) and gold leaf, she also restores smaller art objects like the painting and old crucifix that she showed me in her studio. *Grafitto* is a technique of



photo: J. Di Sabatino

etching decorative patterns into exterior wall plaster, made popular during the Italian Renaissance. On a three-story villa not far from Santa Maria delle Grazie, Dr. Villa has reconstructed the *grafitto* on almost the entire surface of the façade. She often does the hand-work herself.

At Santa Maria delle Grazie, she has worked on interior paintings and the exterior decorations of the apse of the basilica, the **Piccolo sagrestia**, and the Bramante cloister. Recently she was kind enough to speak with me about the historic and architectural details of the cloister, as well as about her role in its restoration.

The twenty columns lining the arcades of the cloister are carved from *pietra di Saltrio*, a historically used limestone from Lombardy. The colors of the bases and capitals alternate with the colors of the column shafts, white and pale gray. The arch keystones, column capitals and vault supports embedded in the walls, are carved



photo: J. Di Sabatino

with heraldic symbols of the Sforza family.

Dr. Villa's work in the cloister involved cleaning, repairing and restoration of decorated plaster surfaces, stone and terra cotta elements and painted surfaces. She has restored and patched the *grafitto* finishes on the walls over

the columns, facing the garden.

In 2005, an interesting find was made while working in the *Piccola sagrestia*, or Small Sacristy. Located between the basilica choir and the Bramante cloister, the small room had been added after the extension of the Bramante apse and was used as a storage room for many centuries. Through her work, discovery was made of a pale fresco, reminiscent of the "Virgin of the Rocks" by Leonardo da Vinci, thus dating the small room to the 1500's; and with other furniture found in the room, identifying it as a room used for the sacristy of the basilica. This little sacristy, which faces the larger Bramante Sacristy across the garden, now shares some prominence in the Bramante cloister.

Sometime later this year, the Bramante cloister will be closed as she begins another phase of restoration work. With the blooming Star Magnolias, *another reason to visit the cloister soon.*

## Hypatia/Ipazia of Alexandria

**Gudrun Herzog**



**Hypatia, 1885**  
**Charles William Mitchell**

When I recently was invited to see the theater play *Ipazia*, I vaguely remembered my grandmother mentioning her to me.

Who was **Hypatia or Ipazia**? She was born c. 350/370 AD and died 415 AD. Hypatia was the daughter of the mathematician Theon Alexandricus, she was educated in Athens but later in Alexandria, she taught the knowledge of

Plato and Aristotle to Pagans, Jews and Christians. In other words, she was a Greek philosopher, mathematician and astronomer in Egypt, then a part of the Eastern Roman Empire. She was honored with

the position of the head of the famous Neoplatonic School of Alexandria where she taught philosophy and astronomy. Remember, Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, which then developed into the "New York" of the Mediterranean, with many nationalities and religions living there.

Hypatia was admired for her intellect, dignity and virtue until she fell victim to political and religious jealousy. The Roman governor of Alexandria Orestes was known to seek her advice and a rumor spread among the Christian community blaming her for Orestes' unwillingness to reconcile with Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, later known as Saint Cyril. A mob of Christians kidnapped Hypatia, completely stripped her, murdered her with oyster shells and burned her remains.

Some writers have theorized that the origin of the story of Saint Catherine was based on Hypatia.

If you would like to know more about Hypatia/Ipazia you can watch the film "Agora" by Alejandro Amenábar or read "Ipazia" by Silvia Ronkey.



## “*L’infinita fabbrica del Duomo*”

FILM REVIEW BY SULE BOLGI

**I**taly’s oldest tree alive is said to have been planted in 1386. Beneath the roots of this magnificent elm, the first block of marble, destined to become one of the world’s largest cathedrals, was extracted from the Candoglia quarries.

This is the beginning of the story that Italian filmmaker couple Martina Parenti and Massimo d’Anolfi tell us about the building of the Duomo, the Cathedral of Milan.

“L’infinita fabbrica del Duomo” is part of a series of films (I Promessi Sposi, Il Castello, Materia Oscura, to name a few) which the filmmaker couple made over the last ten years. Each film represents one of the four elements in the Greek tradition, wind, water, fire and earth. The latter can be assigned to the present film, but the powerful narrative can easily stand on its own. The film had its international debut at the 68.th Locarno Film Festival in 2015 and will soon be showing in cinemas

across Italy starting in March 2016.

Can you imagine a spiral, and how it is growing in front of your eyes? Isn’t the seashell the perfect mathematical representation of nature evolving?

What happens when over thousands of years, seashells sediment into rose colored stones?

Well, grand things!

But not without passing through a myriad of painstakingly meticulous human hands-

The hands of stone masons, carpenters, woodworkers, restorers, goldsmiths, but also cleaners, security guards, lawyers and archivists, all trying to maintain what has been carefully preserved for more than 600 years. The film is like an elegy to human perseverance, an outcry against ephemerality, and about life yearning for immortality.

Everywhere the camera captures the human imprint, such as that left by a man sitting too long on his chair, studying documents of the



**Filmmakers  
Martina  
Parenti  
and  
Massimo  
d’Anolfi**

thousands of pious contributors, none of whom have ever witnessed the completion of this immense symbol of faith which they helped erect by sacrificing a part of their daily bread and some even their own flesh.

There is no speaker, no voice is needed. Explanatory passages in Italian, with English subtitles merely guide the viewer in this animated picturebook of sorts. So do not forget your glasses.

And your ears will be tended to as well. Hear the “chaos” of tons of rocks crashing, machines, cranes, saws and hammers and listen to how “cosmos” emerges, a world is put into form and order. The soundtrack written by the couple’s confidante, Massimo Mariani artfully parallels the interplay of the elements.

There are no actors, no acting is needed. Saints and sinners, politicians and the bourgeoisie, the who is who of the Christian doctrine cast in stone, stay firmly put, until the real elements- rain, wind, micropsheric pollution, slate and snow- have eaten up their splendour.

There is a place where all dead statues are taken to.

### See the trailer:

<http://vimeo.com/134302926>

### Further references:

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<http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/EMT668/EMAT6680.F99/Erbas/>

[KURSATgeometrypro/golden%20spiral/logspiral-history.html](http://KURSATgeometrypro/golden%20spiral/logspiral-history.html)

I asked Martina Parenti about the significance of the cemetery of sorts.

“They are either descending into the vault, or waiting for their return to rise again. That place of total abandonment is purgatory”.

The camera follows St. Eulalia, the child martyr, on her last trip where she finally joins her restful place next to St. Clement.

“Archimedes, Leonardo, Newton-all very practical men, but with something more: a sense of wonder, perhaps..Very mysterious, very exciting. That is the thing – excitement! You get it by ...constructing, and by watching God, by observing things as they are.” says the mathematician John Lyton Synge, whose understanding of Einstein’s theory of relativity

and pioneering work on the core of the Schwarzschild radius, aka “black hole” has been seminal in our latest victory in grasping the fourth dimension: .....!

Now you should be able to fill in the blank space above.

Join us on March 31st, for the showing of the most beautiful film ever made about the neverending opus of the Duomo and meet the filmmakers afterwards.

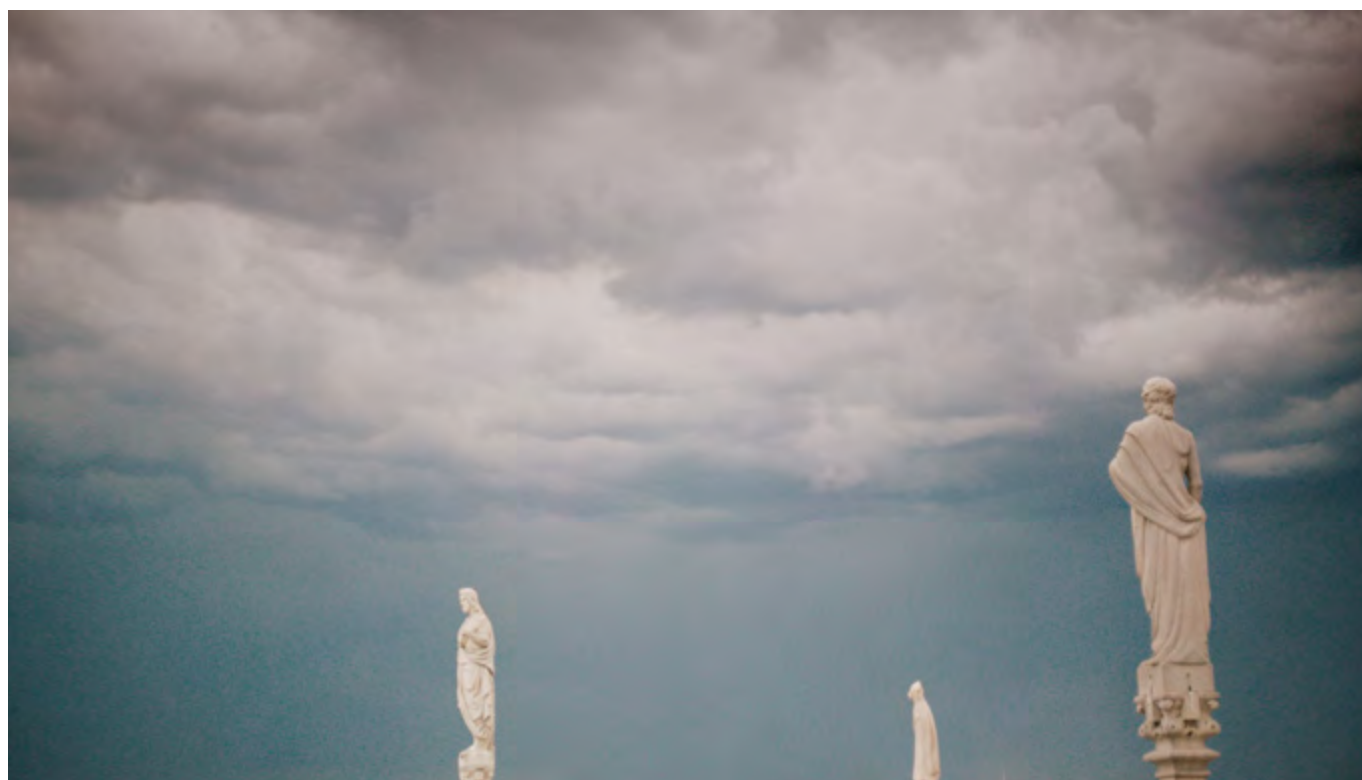
*edited by Marilyn Tambling*

### **Film showing March 31, location to be announced.**

FILM CREDITS

**Directors:** Martina Parenti, Massimo D’Anolfi

**Music:** Massimo Mariano  
Produced by Montmorency Film  
[montmorencyfilm@yahoo.it](mailto:montmorencyfilm@yahoo.it)



# Supporting female victims of domestic violence

## CADMI

*What does it stand for?*

*What does it do?*

*Who does it help and how?*

**Mirella Dicancro**

2014/2015 *Liason Benvenuto/CADMI*

**T**he word CADMI in Italian is short for “Casa di Accoglienza delle Donne Maltrattate”. This can be translated into English as “Refuge for Mistreated Women”. CADMI, a registered Association created in 1986, was the idea of a group of women belonging to the UDI (Women’s Union of Italy). Their mission is to create a support group for women who were mistreated by their partners, husbands, or family members. Their goal is to empower these women to change and move from being “victims” to a new active role in society.

CADMI’s first point of contact is their telephone helpline which receives more than 200 calls per month.

It was set up to provide support to the victims of domestic violence and to encourage them to call whenever they needed help. This can then lead to personal contact, family counselling, or legal and financial advice.

CADMI provides a neutral environment for women to discuss the couple’s domestic or family violence issues. If the problems can’t be resolved in the short term, CADMI can provide the victim with a secure place to stay, a refuge run by them. Women applying to stay at such a refuge must agree to live “at a secret address” and not to reveal where they are living, to ensure the safety of all the women protected by CADMI. The first step has to be taken by the victims themselves. Often, by this stage, the violence has become unbearable or life-threatening.

Most of the ladies working at CADMI are trained volunteers: only a few administrative staff are paid by CADMI. Once a year CADMI runs a Volunteer Training Course. The candidates are interviewed to assess their empathy and interest in working with these women, as well as their ability to deal with highly sensitive cases. After the course they do administrative and public relations tasks and help

with the hotline, until they have gained enough experience to deal directly with the victims. Utmost professional discretion must be exercised at all times as the safety of the women coming to CADMI for help depends upon this.

### **WHAT HAS CADMI ACHIEVED SINCE ITS CREATION IN 1986?**

They have saved the lives of thousands of women. Apart from providing the hotline and counsellors, they work to reconcile the people involved in domestic violence cases and help them to relate to each other in a different way.

### **WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOW DO WE RECOGNISE IT?**

Domestic violence crosses all social, economic, racial and generational boundaries.

Domestic violence is not only physical violence: physical violence is merely the most visible type of domestic violence. **Women who are being financially controlled by the family breadwinner and therefore unable to make any important decisions e.g. regarding the family property, family holidays, the choice of children’s schools, etc., are also victims.** Their self-esteem will nose-dive if their views are never taken into consideration. Their place in the family will make them feel powerless.

### **WHO ARE THE PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?**

Not all perpetrators of domestic violence are drug addicts, psychotic, or alcoholics. **Many are just given tacit permission by outdated cultural norms to behave in this way.** Partners of domestic abuse victims often refuse to accept new roles in society for women. These views are not appropriate in today’s evolving society, where both higher education and leadership roles are open to women. These men are also unable to accept the loss of control involved when their ex-spouses/partners

move on with their lives, or in with a new partner.

There are many studies and articles about how many men in Italy (both Italians and foreigners) view their partners or any loved ones as their possession. They view their spouse, partner, girlfriend, or children as “theirs” and often make decisions at home without consulting their partner. If their loved one wants to leave the relationship the man starts to feel he is losing his power over her and therefore does not want to let her go. A spiral of psychotic behaviour results, often leading to crime. The so-called “jealousy” factor is often an explanation given by the perpetrator for his actions. There is no doubt however that this is partly condoned by the community, who traditionally have tolerated this controlling behaviour.

Therefore educating everyone about new social roles is vital. Shockingly, in many recent cases of domestic violence many perpetrators have preferred to eliminate their “loved one” without considering the consequences for themselves or their family. Fathers need to be more involved than in the past with raising children. Mothers have a fundamental role in raising both girls and boys.

A mother who teaches her daughter to be outspoken about domestic violence will teach her to say NO before anything happens. A mother who teaches her son to treat a women with respect and equality will be showing him the way to treat his partner/spouse with fairness.

### WHICH WOMEN ARE LIKELY TO BECOME VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

The victims of domestic violence are not all women from deprived backgrounds or women from backward foreign cultures. **CADMI sees many cases from all social, economic and cultural backgrounds.** Highly educated women with University degrees, high achievers in the professional world, foreign women married to Italians. They have all agreed “involuntarily” or “voluntarily” to become victims.

**Becoming a victim is not a choice - the will to resist is just not there anymore.** These women become trapped in a situation where they are just trying to survive the many hurts inflicted on them, as if it was part of their feminine condition to accept degrading comments, or comments making fun of their defects, or to hear themselves being called by names that lower their expectations or their self-image.

Be it overreacting, screaming or orders that could endanger body or mind – there are of ways to make a person feel controlled. If you don't feel good about a comment your loved one has made, tell him so in a gentle way. If the comments still keep coming, you just might be dealing with a controlling partner/spouse.

Often perpetrators are not taught to be violent, but they are just not taught how to treat women well, especially if women are in a minority in the family environment. It may be that the woman feels she cannot stand up to the family breadwinner as this would bring “shame” upon all, her status in the family might change and she may be shunned by the social group she belongs to.

### Excuses often used by a perpetrator of domestic violence:

“It is just because I love you that I get upset”.

“If I didn't care, I wouldn't react”.

“Your attitude makes ME angry, you were asking for it”.

NOT ONE of these excuses justifies the use of physical, psychological or economic violence against women. Unless women stand up to this behaviour, the abuse will not stop. If there is someone who can bear witness to this psychological or physical abuse and the perpetrator knows it, this may be enough to make him stop. Even calling the CADMI hotline or counsellors can help women in distress feel they are not alone.

**It is very important that the abuse is taken out of the family environment and into the OPEN as this may be enough to stop it.**



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AT PRESENT

In Italy during the first months of 2015, 56 women were killed in a domestic incident (by a partner or family member); more than 2 women a week. Many of these deaths had been triggered by a seemingly uncontrollable jealousy felt by the perpetrator towards a woman who had been "his". By the time of the incident they had either separated, were in the process of separating, or there was a threat of separation.

**The only way to stop family and domestic violence is once again, to speak out. Not telling anyone about it, does not keep the victim "safe", it just leaves the perpetrator free of shame or punitive restraint.**

In Italy, a recently approved law (Law 119/2013) is instituting new procedures to protect women from domestic violence. Some of the benefits of the law are:

- It protects the victim even if they are no longer living with the perpetrator, if there had been or there still is, an emotional bond.
- Electronic devices are also considered as possible tools of pressure and domestic violence if used without the approval of the victim and with a will to ridicule, harm, put in peril or give false information about a woman with whom there is an "emotional bond".
- It protects women from "stalking" by physical means, through threats on the web, in the press or the media in general.
- It guarantees protection and anonymity to those who provide information on domestic violence or report domestic abuse. The new Law provides a new code of behaviour for future generations.
- It specifically calls any crime or abuse committed against women in the context of domestic violence "femicidio".

Other statistics can be found on WE WORLD ([www.weworld.it](http://www.weworld.it)) in its Report "Rosa Shocking 2" on gender violence and different generational views on the condition of women: This association points out

at the answers from questionnaires of men in Italy:

- Men from 18 to 29 years old think "violence" against women means a fit of violence and therefore is not a serious issue.
- Among the men interviewed 20% thought women would not be sexually abused if they dressed less provocatively.
- One out of three Italians think domestic violence should be resolved within the family without outside help or advice.
- Only 11.8% of women suffering from domestic violence and abuse dare to report their situation to the Police.



In 2014 CADMI worked with other refuges in Lombardy to give the victims of domestic violence an occupation and a new home. Since then 3,015 women have been given a new start. They are now able to lead independent lives and rebuild their self-esteem without the threat of violence. CADMI provides courses and conferences so that they can learn new

skills, receive psychological help and a new home in a Refuge.

CADMI has the support of the Regional Council of Lombardy and the European community and is open to all contributions in the form of financial legacies, wills and testaments and financial contributions from private institutions, associations and private individuals.

CADMI believes in re-educating women about their roles. Domestic violence should not be tolerated and the victims themselves need to learn how to say NO. The victim's resistance can lead to a change of attitude. Although this is not easy, it is a step in the right direction.

In 2014 the Benvenuto Club's Charities Committee decided to contribute to CADMI financially with a third of the proceeds from the Christmas Bazaar and Easter Fair.

**On the occasion of International Women's Day 2016 we would like to congratulate CADMI on their 30th Anniversary of existence.**

*edited by Louise Hopkins*

**THE CADMI HOTLINE NUMBER IS: 02 5501.5519**

Mondays & Thursdays from 13pm to 19pm  
Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 8.30am to 14.30pm

**Pass on this phone number!**

Let it be known to all women around you there are other women to help, to listen to their own kind. There is no need to feel either hopeless or ashamed....lend a hand, pass this number on to others, by sharing it, you could be helping to save a woman's life!

*NB: personal opinions are not CADMI's but based on my own research & interviews with women of different nationalities.*

# Faces of Benvenuto



# My early memories of Iran

Nawal Felippone



The famous Imam Mosque and its minarets, Isfahan

Having lived in Lebanon, one of the Middle Eastern countries, I had the opportunity in the early 70's to visit Iran during one of my husband's assignments abroad. At the time, the country was still under the reign of Shah Reza Pahlavi. A one month stay gave me ample time to visit **Teheran, Isfahan, Shiraz,** and **Persepolis**, exploring the souks, the market places where spices, a myriad of food products and other handwoven items are made. You would also come around precious carpets with elaborate patterns and brass and silver containers, trays, tea cups, saucers, coffee pots with creative designs. Quite often, carpet weaving was done by women, sitting in front of their loom passing and intertwining woolen and silk threads with amazing ability, while brass or silver work was done by young apprentices sitting outside their shops, intent at hammering their objects, where passers by could see and admire their work at hand.

In addition, I visited some important archaeological sites, starting with Isfahan, an ancient town in a fertile valley, internationally renowned from the 16th century, adorned with magnificent mosques, palaces, with the 2nd. largest square in the world, gardens, fountains and bridges, including a bridge dating back to 1602. It is interesting to note that Isfahan is a **UNESCO World Heritage** site.

Shiraz is non the less beautiful. It is known as the city of roses and

nightingales and famous for the tombs of medieval poets and artists. Even after so many years, I still remember the long day trip to Persepolis, some 50 kms from Shiraz, the dusty road and the many hours driving to reach the place where you'll find the magnificent Palace of Darius, the centre piece of which is the hall of 100 columns, destroyed by Alexander the Great in 330/31 B.C. when he conquered Persia, but the ruins including some standing columns, are still imposing!

Iran, a Middle Eastern country in south west Asia, is officially known as the Islamic Republic of Iran (Jumhuriye Eslamiye Iran), bordering many countries and gulfs. It would certainly be easier to follow all the following names on your map and you'll find: Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey north west, Caspian Sea to the north, Turkmenistan north east and Afghanistan east, while Pakistan and the Gulf of Oman south east, the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz south and finally Iraq to the south.

Though the size of Persia is considerably reduced in the XIXth century during the Qajar Dynasty, Iran has a total area of 1,648,195 sq.km, equivalent to the total area of U.K., France, Spain and Germany put together, with a population of 80,840,713 (2014 estimate). Known to the Western world as Persia since 1935, it is home to one of the most ancient civilizations.



Persian soldier from the archaeological site of Persepolis

The first dynasty was founded during the reign of Elam in 2800 B.C., in later years occupied by the Medes who tried to unify the various kingdoms. In the year 625 B.C., Cyrus the Great overthrew the Medes and founded the Achemenide dynasty which extended from the Indus to the Nile reaching the zenith of its splendour in 525 B.C.

Persia fell to Alexander the Great in 331 B.C. and a succession of rules followed until the Arab invasion in 633 A.D. which brought about the definite collapse of the Sasanian Empire in 651 A.D. By the mid 800's, Persia had become an international scientific and cultural center. Under the Salavid Dynasty (1501-1722), the dominant religion became Shiite Islam. The Persian empire reduced in size during the Qajar Dynasty (1794-1925). During World War I, Iran's neutrality did not prevent it from becoming a battlefield for Russian and British troops.

A coup d'état in 1921 brought Reza Khan to power.



**One of the Majestic bridges built by Shah Abbas I in Isfahan, XVth c.**

In 1925, he became Shah and changed his name to Reza Shah Pahlavi. He subsequently did much to modernize the country and abolished all foreign extraterritorial rights.

The revolution in Iran put an end to the power of Reza Shah Pahlavi on February 11, 1979 and a new era for the country began, but that is another story.

photos: Fabiola Felippone

references: [www.theguardian.co.uk](http://www.theguardian.co.uk)

## *Announcements from Nawal:*



“To all our Benvenuto friends to share in our joy of becoming ‘nonni’ for the third time, born to Serena and Felice Felippone, their first child.”

Jacopo  
born on January 20th  
weighing 3kgs, 300 grs

“Both mother and baby are enjoying good health.”

### **FLASHDANCE, The Musical**

Palketto Stage of Busto Arsizio, is presenting to its young audience of High School students in Italy, another interesting production by English speaking actors and actresses, entitled *FLASHDANCE The Musical*.

**Date:** Wednesday, March 16th.

**Where:** Meeting at Carcano Theater, Corso Porta Romana 65

**Time:** 11:00 am, performance starts at 11.30 am

**COST:** € 13 Benvenuto members; € 15 non-Benvenuto members

ONLY 20 seats available. Please confirm your participation as soon as possible to:  
[nawal\\_felippone@hotmail.com](mailto:nawal_felippone@hotmail.com)

**Synopsis:** *FLASHDANCE The Musical*, is a stage adaptation of the 1983 musical film *Flashdance*. The title refers to a kind of jazz dance, quite in vogue in the 1920's and 1930's, which combines dance with acrobatic movements. Directed by Adrian Lyne, the film had quite an influence on movie making in the 1980's, for having introduced some sequences filmed in video-clip style.

Hi Benvenuto members,

My name is Donovan. For those of you who do not know me, I'm an English (from London) Personal Trainer/Athlete based in Central Milan. I'm also an Ambassador for "Sci-mx" Sports Nutrition company. My goal is to help people reach their full physical and mental potential using proven fitness, nutrition and training techniques.

I work with men and women of all fitness levels and offer "Gym", "Outdoors" and "Private Home" training sessions. "One to One", "Partners" and "Group" training sessions are available. My training sessions are fun, effective and challenging! For more in depth information about my training visit the "Training" section of my website:

**[www.donovanrussell.com](http://www.donovanrussell.com)**

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## A MONUMENTAL GATEWAY TO MILAN: “STAZIONE CENTRALE”

**Mirella Dicancro**

**M**ilan's Central Station is with 320.000 passengers and 600 trains daily the second biggest and busiest train station of Italy, after Roma Termini. Until 1850, Milano had two train stations, Porta Nova and Porta Tosa, that were not connected with each other and two direct train lines to Monza and Venice.

The idea of improving the train network was supported by former King Vittorio Emanuele III, who had realized the importance of this station not only for passengers, but also for the industries in Lombardy. He laid the founding cornerstone of the Central Station even before a project was selected for its construction.

One of the earliest project call was made in 1906, but the administration's choice was not approved by many of the decision makers of the time. Finally in 1912, a new call resulted in the selection of Architect

Ulysses Stacchini's project. His first inspiration had been Washington's Union Station in the USA, but the Milano Central Station project underwent modifications, a consequence of the upcoming political changes in Europe. Indeed, decorative elements coming from the Liberty and Art Deco movements were added to the grandeur of sculpture elements seen already in Roman architecture.

The new fascist state created at this time, represented by heroic sculptures, tower clocks and art elements inspired in Germanic art, are seen today at the Stazione Centrale. With the approval of the final project in 1924, the decorative style summed up Italy's past and glory. The Central Station of Milan was going to be the monumental gateway to the city of industry and trade.

One of the important changes to the original project was the 341 meter long metallic structure above the rails. This was an important addition for the passengers as this iron “um-

brella” protected them from the cold, rain or snow when arriving to Milan, yet it still allowed natural light into the main arrival hall.

The majestic high ceiling vault was also a beautiful piece of engineering, as its highest point reached a height of 72 meters. At the time, the highest metal structure in Italy, it was an object of admiration.

The official opening occurred in May 1931 and due to its majestic architecture, this station in particular has been a symbol of Milan for decades and a mandatory stop for many, journeying towards other European and other Italian cities.

Today in this area of Milan, we see buildings of Art Deco style, but at the time of the station's construction, this area was the periphery of the city and the enormous white building would stand out against grasslands and a few farms in the vicinity.

*edited by Laurie Fink*

**See page 7 for guided tour info**

References: “La Stazione Centrale, un monumento moderno” by Gian Luca Lapini  
“Stazione di Milano Centrale, storia & architettura” by Alessandro A Potalivo

## A LIFELONG PASSION FOR STAINED GLASS “GRASSI VETRATE ARTISTICHE”

**T**his month our visits to the best artisans of Milan take us to Grassi, producer and restorer of antique stained glass windows. Starting from the end of the 1800s, the company has always been a family run business. Mr. Alessandro Grassi, who is the current managing director, is supported by his daughter Barbara and her husband Antonello. Together with their highly skillful staff, they continue to produce antique glass in the French tradition, which is remarkably similar in colour, texture, and shading to the glass that was used in the 12th- and 13th-century windows of great Medieval cathedrals, such as Chartres in France. Chartres, by no means the largest of the cathedrals, contains more than 2,500 square metres of stained glass, in 176 windows. No wonder, it has been a studying ground for Mr. Grassi, too. “Antique” glass remains the basic material used in stained-glass windows to this day. The technique involves the soldering of the finest quality stained glasses, to be held together by lead strips, painted with the grisaille method and heated under high heat to last forever.

*Insofar as stained glass may be considered an art of*

*painting, it must be considered an art of painting with light. Whatever techniques or materials it may employ, its own most unique and indispensable effects are always the product of colouring, refracting, obscuring, and fragmenting light.*

*It is with unbound passion that the Grassi family has made this art their daily bread. Counting many of world famous architects such as Caccia Dominioni, Capogrossi, E. Castiglioni, Niemeyer, Pomodoro, Sottsass jr., Spreafico, and Zanaboni among their clients, you may also admire their stained glass works not only found at religious sites, but also in commercial and private venues. Here in Milan, they have proven their artistic as well as technical capabilities in their continuous assignments for the Duomo of Milan, but also the headquarters of Banca Commerciale Italiana, the famous glass dome of the electrical company Edison, various restaurants and hotels and private residences bear the signature of Grassi, masters with a lifelong passion for the art of stained glass.*

**See page 10 for free visit information**

# Backup, backup, backup...

**Joanne Clerk**

**J**acques Nadeau, one of the top Canadian photojournalists, arrived at his home in July last year to discover that it had been vandalized. Gone were his computer and external drives containing several thousand photographs, his entire life's work! It was, to use his words, like a tsunami hit him. He was just a week away from completing the last step to a proper backup strategy for his precious photographs. The one element everybody neglects.... Read on.

It doesn't matter if you're a professional like Monsieur Nadeau, a world traveler or a loving parent, the photos you take are valuable. We often don't know just how much until they are gone, gone, gone...

Before we discuss what a good backup strategy consists of, let's talk about a couple of good practices: organization and tagging.

If you're not already doing so, import all of your photos into a single managed environment on your computer. This means using dedicated software not the software that comes with your camera. If you are a serious photographer, I suggest Adobe Lightroom, otherwise there are a number of very efficient alternatives on the market including some that come free with your computer like Photos on the Mac and Photo Gallery on Windows. There are a number of others including the very popular Picasa. Pick one and start organizing.

Get in the habit of tagging your images to make them easier to find. Tags are key words that best describe each photograph and most organization software have that functionality. So, if you want to find all the sunset photographs taken on vacation, you would search for "sunset" and "vacation" and voila, the software would filter your entire collection to show you only those beautiful sunsets.

Alright, you've organized and tagged your photos. Now you are ready to back them up.

A good strategy consists in storing your photographs in three places: your computer and two external disk drives, one of which you would keep outside your home. This is a good strategy but it is not optimal. It is not optimal because your external disk drives are almost always out of sync, particularly the one kept outside your home.

So what would make it optimal? Make one of your backups with an online backup service. This method is very efficient in that every time you add a new photograph, that file gets uploaded to a server. It all happens in the background. So, for an annual fee, you can securely store all your important files and photographs on the cloud. There are a number of options here: CrashPlan, IDrive and Carbonite are frequently mentioned.

What do I do? I backup to external disk drives, one which I store outside my home and I upload all of my favorite photographs to my website. The reality is I take too many pictures. This backup strategy forces me to select my favorite images soon after capture and I upload them to my site. This ensures that all my favorite images are already sorted, securely stored and available for my family to download.

Whatever you decide to do, don't delay. You wouldn't want to learn the hard way.



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# A beginner's guide to the MOUNTAINS

**Fiona Betournay**

**E**ver thought about going on a winter holiday but you don't ski? That was what happened to me this year having been persuaded it was a good idea. My husband's brothers thought it would be fun for a group of us to get together for a trip to Saas Fee in Switzerland in January this year.

Of the group of 6 of us only half were skiers so I wondered what on earth we were going to do in a ski resort in January. I didn't even know what I was going to wear or what to pack for temperatures predicted to be up to a maximum of -5 Celsius.

So we headed off from Milan with the car packed full of borrowed ski jackets, hats, gloves, boots and layers and layers of woollies for a journey into the unknown.

Only about a 3 hour drive from Milan Saas Fee is a small village of about 1600 permanent residents located in the Valais canton of Switzerland in the district of Visp. It is at about 2000 meters above sea level and surrounded by mountains going up to nearly 3000m. It is beautiful.



Our little apartment looked out over the nursery slopes with a backdrop of the mountains. You could step right out of the backdoor onto the slopes. There are lots of cable cars and ski lifts up to the higher slopes and these are also available to hikers and non-skiers at a much reduced price.

So what do you do if you cannot ski? First of all we tried the ice skating. I have done this before so it was just a case of getting used to it again, looking less like a penguin on ice and regaining a bit of

confidence. Luckily when we went the ice rink was deserted so it was nice not to have any humiliation witnessed by local children who could whizz round at high speed without a care in the world. It was lovely to be outside surrounded by wonderful scenery.

The next day we had a go with snow shoes. After a practice walk we decided to go on a guided hike with someone who knew what they were doing. A small group of us headed off into the fresh

snow uphill above the village. That was hard work! It was absolutely worth the effort for the wonderful views. The guide gave us lots of information about the area, the mountains and pointed out the tracks of animals that could

be seen in the snow. Coming back down was great fun as you slid and skidded at high speed down the slopes back into the village.

The best thing of all though was the toboggan run. If you take the Hannig cablecar up to the top you can hire a sledge for just a few euro and then hurl yourself down the mountain on the sledge run. It must have been about 3km long, with twists and turns, slow descents and some very steep slopes too. There was no way to steer apart from turning your body and the only way to slow down was to dig your heels into the ice. You soon learnt if you didn't want to crash into a snowbank or fall off the edge exactly what you had to do. It was exhilarating, scary and a lot of fun.

But if all of this sounds like too much hard work it was also very pleasant to ride the cable car up to one of the restaurants, enjoy the view, take photos and have coffee or lunch. The village has hiking trails that were easily walked just in ordinary boots.

So if you have never considered a few days in the mountains in winter, think again, you may enjoy it very much. We did.

# SPRING *Fashion Show*

## **Marti Biles**

Spring is on the way and the time for our April Fashion Show is fast approaching. This year Fashion Park, created and managed by Mary Cuccu, will be featured. Mary has forty years of experience in the Milanese fashion business. She started with Valentino when she was 19, opened her first shop on the Navigli in the '70's, converted to a designer's laboratory/shop in the '80s, opened an atelier-meeting place in Via Melzi d'Eril in the '90s and, finally, in 2004 Fashion Park was born. Today it is located on Corso Sempione 49, not far from Arco della Pace in Parco Sempione.

Fashion Park is not just a dress shop. It provides free consultancy from qualified personnel to help women find not only the styles and models which best suit them but all the accessories that go with the chosen model. Even the least experienced shopper can create a perfectly accessorized and coordinated outfit. She can find shawls from Seville, straw hats from Tuscany, shoes designed by Spaniard Ramon Tenza and jewelry in various materials and semiprecious stones.

The result is a triumph of colors and fabrics and an international flavor that attracts buyers from all over Europe, from America, Japan and South Africa. You can find clothes in all sizes and for all ages, for the young and trendy and for the career woman who wants something practical but very "curato" or women looking



for a special dress for a special occasion. For the more exacting clients there are models made to measure.

Mary often repeats that a woman has to feel good in her clothes and this is and always has been her objective: to create a style that feels made to measure even when it is not; a style that can change with you, moves with you and expresses your personality, makes you smile and is fun.

There is certainly something for all of us and you can see for yourself on April 12 at our Fashion Show. If you want a preview take a look at the Fashion Park facebook page or please do go by the shop in Corso Sempione 49. It is easy to reach with public transportation. The Domodossola stop on the lilac Metro line or the Ferrovie Nord are very close or else you can take the 57 bus or trams 1-19. On a nice day it is a pretty walk or bike ride through the Park.

Again this year I need models!! I need ten ladies who would like to taste the runway and show off these beautiful clothes. If this is one of your secret dreams, just give me a call.



## Kolbe March program

Dear Benvenuto members,

Here are two events where our Benvenuto members, specially newcomers who are interested in helping with charities, will have the chance to participate.

### **VISIT TO THE NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUM** *(and Public Gardens - time permitting)*

**Date:** Sunday March 6th

**Time:** 3.30 pm in front of the museum,

**Place:** Corso Venezia 55 - MM 1 Palestro stop then a short walk to the museum.

This is the most important naturalistic museum in Italy and one of the most important in Europe. Its 23 halls host prestigious collections of vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fishes) and invertebrates, minerals, fossils, ethnology and botany. The only protagonist is the wonderful performance of nature: it is possible to admire spectacular pieces, such as the almost complete skeleton of a rorqual whale, almost 20 meters long, and of an African elephant of enormous proportions.

Remembering the great interest my children expressed for these visits and now our grandchildren, I would suggest to our members to bring theirs along as the visit is in the afternoon.

Please call me if interested as the event is prior to the Main Coffee (349 0590 286).

### **CELEBRATING EASTER**

**Date:** Sunday, March 20th:

**Time:** 12.45 pm-3.00 pm (approx.)

**Place:** the church square, viale Corsica 68 reachable by bus 73 (from San Babila square)

Lunch is in the Oratory hall, across the garden.

Celebrating Easter means sharing what each one of us can get, to enjoy a couple of hours in good company

and making our disabled friends feel happy and serene.

Usually, following the classic Easter 'colomba', the group sits down for a 'tombola'.

*From our Kolbe people, a Happy Easter to all our Benvenuto friends!*

Nawal Felippone

Benvenuto Club/Kolbe Charity coordinator

Nawal\_felippone@hotmail.com

## *Charity applications open*

It is already the time of year to **propose charities** for the next Benvenuto year that begins in July.

- ❑ Support for a charity involves both monetary and volunteer support
- ❑ Selected charities must permit and promote active participation of Club members in their activities
- ❑ Organizations that are presented must be non-profit, community service type organizations
- ❑ Charities selected should serve the Milan community and represent diverse service areas
- ❑ Keep in mind that Benvenuto is a non-political and non-denominational organization
- ❑ Each application must include the name of a Benvenuto Club member who is willing to be the charity liaison
- ❑ Proposals must be in writing and in English

**The deadline for proposals is March 31st.**

If you have questions or would like to propose a charity, please contact Fiona Betournay, [fbetournay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fbetournay@yahoo.co.uk)

Thank you in advance for your support of this important aspect of the Benvenuto Club.

# XXI INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF THE TRIENNALE DI MILANO “21st Century. Design After Design”

APRIL 2 TO SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

## Isabel Margulies

After a 20 year break, the Triennale is finally back. The Triennale di Milano is an international institution which produces exhibitions around the theme of design, art, architecture, photography and contemporary art once every three years.

The Triennale began in Monza in 1923 and then moved to Milan in 1933. It was held every three years until 1996. Now after 20 years it is back and bigger and more international. It will be held in 12 locations all over the city, including some pavilions of the Expo 2015 site, the Triennale (in

the Parco Sempione), Fabbrica del Vapore, HangarBicocca, Museo delle Culture, Politecnico University, IULM University, and the Villa Reale di Monza.

More than 90 ambassadors and representatives from foreign countries will participate. The exact calendar of events has yet to be published, but this Triennale promises to be interesting. One artist that I am looking forward to seeing is Xu Bing, a Chinese contemporary artist who recently created two large birds (27 and 30 meters long) out of construction debris and tools. They are now in the Cathedral of St. John the

Divine in New York.

A season pass for the Triennale will be 22 euros while a single entry will be 15 euros.



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# Oriental Abroad (OA) News

## Happy Women's Day!

**M**arch 8th is not only Benvenuto's Main Coffee Meeting day but is also an important day for all women worldwide! It marks the celebration of International Women's Day and the many "battles" women had to fight in order to achieve the rights we enjoy today in various fields, from human rights, the right to vote, to labour and access to work opportunities (equality of treatment not yet reached in many countries), education and health, just to name a few.

It is true that today we can boast about women astronauts, doctors and researchers, politicians and scientists, etc. but what is most needed is solidarity amongst women themselves which is often lacking. Let's lend a hand to those women who are still suffering injustice and need our help.

Amal Salvatore will be away from Milan for a couple of weeks, visiting her family abroad. We wish Amal a safe and pleasant trip.

**Amal, Bianca, Maria Angela, Maria, Nawal,**  
Oriental Abroad Board

## March 17: OA MONTHLY MEETING

**TIME:** 10 am - 12.30 pm, after the coffee break, TALK starts at 10.00, please be punctual.

**VENUE:** Palazzo Cusani, Circolo degli Ufficiali, via del Carmine 8. Please remember to bring your ID card. Being registered is important for being admitted, so kindly sign up either at the O.A. table or via email to an O.A. Board member.

Guest Speaker: Alessandra Mariano  
**"Iran - A Country To Discover"**

Thanks to Anna Ferrante Viganò, a former Benvenuto member and friend, who has lived in Iran for 20 years in her childhood, and an Iranian friend of hers, Mr. Abbas Daoodi, who had a stand representing his country at the BIT Tourism Fair in Milan, we will have Ms. Alessandra Mariano, a tourism operator, talking to us about Iran. For some background on Iran, read *"My Early Memories of Iran,"* in this month's magazine.

**COST:** Starting this month, March 2016, we request a monthly contribution of 3 Euros from every attendee as our funds are dwindling and may not suffice till the end of Benvenuto year. We rely on your collaboration. Of course, you will continue to get a coffee/tea and brioche as usual.

**LUNCH:** About 1 pm, after the Talk

**VENUE:** Sapori della Persia Restaurant, Via Gaetana Agnesi 2 /crossing viale Sabotino (Porta Romana zone)

The restaurant has been reserved for this event only and a minimum of 20 people is required, as they do not open at lunch time, except on Saturdays.

**COST:** 20 Euro (plus €1 tip). Event is open to all BV members, husbands/partners are most welcome. Please confirm attendance at O.A. table at Main Coffee, March 8th.

## March 10:

### GREEN WALK

O.A. and Garden Group organized this event with member Maria Tieghi, open to all Club members, specially interested in discovering hidden places in Milan, or just like to walk and breathe some fresh air with friends.

**DATE:** Thursday March 10th, at 3 pm

**MEETING PLACE:** Corner of Corso Sempione/via Torino.

**COST:** FREE, comfortable walking shoes and high spirits, ready for a walk at leisure.

## March 23:

Photography Exhibit by Enrico de Santis, **"DON'T FORGET NEPAL"** until end March.

Remembering the devastating earthquake which hit Nepal last April 2015 causing a lot of destruction in the country.

**VENUE:** National Museum of Science and Technology Leonardo da Vinci, via San Vittore 21

**MEETING PLACE & TIME:** 3 pm in front of the museum

**COST:** For groups of 10 or more: €7.50 (guide cost to be added if required)

Please confirm your presence to maria.tieghi@gmail.com or nawal\_felippone@hotmail.com

## Classifieds

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# Neighbor to Neighbor Get Together

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*HAPPY EASTER TO EVERYBODY!!!*

I do hope that after the Easter holidays everybody will come back with renewed enthusiasm to attend the many activities offered by our Benvenuto Club and, in a special way, to attend your NTN meetings kindly hosted every month by generous friends.

**Loredana Mandelli**

NTN Chairperson

Tel. 02 8139540

NEIGHBOURHOOD	CO-ORDINATOR	LOCATION	DATE/TIME/EVENTS
CENTER Zone 1	Heidi Meyers Tel. 320 8169301	Anna Christtreu Tel. 02 58437258	Tues. March 22nd 10.00 – 12.00 a.m.
PORTA ROMANA/ SAN DONATO Zones 4/5	Rosella Damiani Spinelli Tel. 334 7958326 Laura Cafagna Tel. 02 36552791	Home of Laura Cafagna Tel. 02 36552791	Tues. March 15th 10,30 a.m - 12,30 p.m.
LORETO Zones 2/3	Nawal Felippone Tel. 349 0590286 Ernesta De Laurentis Tel. 02 6704038	Home of Rina Dragone Tel. 02 26110084	Tues. March 15th 3,30 p.m.
WASHINGTON/ FRUA / NAVIGLI Zone 6	Marianne Schuck Tel. 02 58112217 Marilena Ciolina Tel. 02 4882746	Cremeria Buonarroti Hosted by Anna Giulia and Luisa	Fri. March 11th 10,30 a.m.
BUONARROTI / SAN SIRO Zone 7	Alessandra Felicetta Tel. 02 90390526 Maria Pia Locatelli Tel. 02 4046409	Irma Rega Tel. 02406246	Tues. March 15th 3.00 p.m.
FIERA/SEMPIONE Zones 8/9	Lois Elaine Heckman Tel. 02 39265910 Giuliana Anni Tel. 02 4984057	Home of: Anisa Vukovic Tel. 389 2360143	Thurs. March 10th 10,00 a.m.
MILANO DUE	Janet Pinci Paola Salano Tel. 02 2640025	Home of Joke de Jong Tel. 02 36555337	Fri. March 18th 10,30 a.m.
SAN FELICE	Fiona Betournay Tel: 02 753 0357 Anne Marie Ellis Tel. 02 55600377	Home of Anne Marie Ellis Tel. 02 55600377	Fri. March 18th 10,30 a.m.

# All Sorts Groups

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All current special interest groups featured below are free of membership fees and therefore are called all sorts groups:

## MAHJONG FOR FUN

Mahjong is a game that originated in China. We play for fun, it is a few hours to relax in good company. Beginners and experienced players are welcome or, just come and watch to see if it's for you! We play mainly on Tuesdays and Thursdays, morning or afternoon.

**Contact:** Susan Plomin splomin@mac.com

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## COUPLES&BUBBLES

Benvenuto couples exploring Milan's stylish aperitivo venues.



**Contact:** Noelia Damata noeliadamata@hotmail.com or Adriana Vivian Tilve adriana.vivian.tilve@gmail.com

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## ORIENTALS ABROAD

Benvenuto members exploring Asian cultures. Non OA members pay 3 euros for coffee and brioche at their monthly Main meeting - every 3rd Thursday at Circolo Ufficiale.

**Contact:** Amal Salvatore aroumie@hotmail.com or Nawal Felippone nawal\_felippone@hotmail.com

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## BURRACO - ITALIAN CARD GAME

Players meet every Wednesday from 3-6pm at Passerini Pasticceria, on the corner of Via Spadari and Via Cantù

**Contact:** Beatrice Vigliani beatrice.v@libero.it

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## GARDEN GROUP

We are 5 members strong and would love to welcome new members to our group!

**Contact:** Pia Dolci piadolci@tiscali.it or Nawal Felippone nawal\_felippone@hotmail.com 349 0590 286

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## CHOIR

The choir meets up regularly with a teacher to learn a variety of styles of songs. Singing together is great fun so do come and join us!

**Contact:** Maria Dikacz Tiegghi maria.tiegghi@gmail.com

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## MOMS AND TOTS

Moms and babies of Benvenuto meet and play weekly at members' homes or at Parco Sempione if the weather allows. We are currently 3 active members and would love to recruit new members!

**Contact:** Franziska Faerber franziska\_uk@yahoo.de

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## CENTRAL BOOK CLUB

Meets once a month, usually every 1st Tuesday

**Contact:** Betty Manfre 02 3311476

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## WEEKLY MOVIE GOERS

Barbara Cocchini and Leah Maggia-Rosa meet weekly on Tuesdays for English language movies at Cinema Arcobaleno.

**Contact:** Leah Maggia-Rosa angmagg@tiscali.it or Barbara Cocchini barbara.cocchini@tiscali.it

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## LANGUAGE EXCHANGE

We are an international group of Benvenuto members, meeting regularly every Monday afternoon from 3:30 to 5:30pm at the Villa Necchi Caffeteria in Via Mozart 10. Our aim is to exchange points of view on various topics using both English and Italian.

We strongly encourage newcomers of English mothertongue to join us, hoping that our gatherings will prove fruitful for them.

**Contact:** Luisa De Crescenzo Dassi luisadcr@alice.it

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## Would you like to take up a new hobby?

...Or are you willing to teach yours?

## Why not set up your own sub-group?

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