California Italian Studies CFP Issue 1, Volume 12 (2023): Calvino’s Memos: Between the Old and the New Millennium

Discussion published by Claudio Fogu on Friday, March 4, 2022

California Italian Studies is seeking submissions for its thematic Issue 1 of Volume 12 entitled "Calvino’s Memos: Between the Old and the New Millennium" to be published in 2023.*

Issue Editors: Lucia Re (UCLA) and Anna Botta (Smith College).

For this issue, we are looking for comparative and interdisciplinary essays written in English or Italian inspired by or related to the ideas and/or the works of Italo Calvino (1923-1985), in particular (but not exclusively) his Memos for the Next Millennium (1988).

Calvino’s memos (originally lectures prepared for the Charles Eliot Norton Lecture series at Harvard) theorize six main principles or “values” that in his view were especially relevant and important for literature – always seen in relation to other forms of discourse and expression – as it faced the new millennium. These values would also be crucial to the reading and interpretation of literary works from the first and second millennia: Lightness, Quickness, Exactitude, Visibility, Multiplicity and Coherence (only a draft of the last memo survives). A fundamental issue underlying the Memos is: does literature still have an important function and place in the new millennium? Can it still be “of value”? And if so, how? This issue of CIS invites contributions that evaluate the validity, desirability, and viability of these values as Calvino articulates them for both the present and for the previous millennium, and in relation to literature as well as other kinds of discourse.

We welcome contributions ranging from essays discussing classical antiquity, the Middle Ages and the early modern era (e.g. on writers and artists such as Dante, Cavalcanti, Ariosto, Michelangelo, Giordano Bruno, and Galileo, about whom Calvino wrote, and whose influence on his own writing he discusses in the Memos), to discussions of modernist and contemporary authors and thinkers, across disciplines and fields of discourse.

How have Calvino’s “values” surfaced in or inspired (directly or indirectly) cultural productions and critical interventions beyond literature or in conjunction with it? In light of the interdisciplinary approach of the journal, we especially encourage contributions concerning links and intersections between Calvino’s Memos and themes or problems in fields such as ecology, animal and posthuman studies, art history and theory, architecture and urban studies, dance, music, theatre, cinema and television, anthropology, philosophy, mathematics, semiotics, communication and media studies, food studies, Mediterranean studies, postcolonial studies, gender studies, geopolitics and transnational humanities.

Please send preliminary contribution proposals (300-400 words) and a brief autobiographical note about yourself by March 30, 2022, to Lucia Re re@humnet.ucla.edu and Anna Botta abotta@smith.edu. If your proposal is accepted, you will be expected to submit your essay for peer-reviewing by September 15 through the portal of our journal.

Articles can also be submitted without preliminary proposals up until the deadline (September 15),
but they are not guaranteed peer-reviewing.

All submissions, whether in English or Italian, must follow our submission and formatting guidelines. Failure to meet both will result in the article being sent back to the author for correction at the risk of not meeting the deadline for acceptance.

Unless encouraged otherwise, submissions should not exceed 30 pages of double-spaced text or 10,000 words.

Submissions should fulfil at least one of the journal’s criteria for selection:

a) an interdisciplinary scholarly study that combines the practices of multiple disciplines, making significant use of the tools of one discipline in the service of another, or that studies a cluster of scholarly works representing the approaches of various disciplines to a single topic.

b) a comparative work that relates the history, culture, society, artistic products or languages of the Italian peninsula, islands and diasporas to other geographical, cultural and linguistic formations.

c) a critical work that, in studying a given object, engages in theoretical or methodological reflection on its own approach and its implications within larger disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts.

*Non-thematic submissions to our journal are accepted on a rolling basis, and, if accepted, will be published in the order in which they have been accepted, and as space becomes available in our volumes.

Related date:
March 4, 2022 to March 30, 2022