

Italo Calvino's Literary Legacy (1923-2023)

Symposium

Programme

9.00-9.15 Opening session

Astrid Söderbergh-Widding (President of Stockholm University), **Francesco Di Lella** (Director of the Italian Culture Institute in Stockholm)

9.15-10.15 Keynote lecture

Martin McLaughlin (Oxford University): *Calvino and the legacy of literary classics*. Chair: Cecilia Schwartz.

Coffee break 10.15-10.30

10.30-11.00 **Isotta Piazza** (Università di Parma): *“Il divertimento è una cosa seria”. I diritti del lettore secondo Italo Calvino* 11.00-11.30. Chair: Michele Colombo.

11.00-11.30 **Francesca Rubini** (Università di Roma – La Sapienza): *“A book is not a meteorite”. Italo Calvino and the discovery of translation*. Chair: Bengt Novén.

11.30-12.00 **Elio Baldi** (University of Amsterdam): *Non c'è linguaggio senza inganno: a reflection on translating Le città invisibili*. Chair: Santi Luca Famà-Berglund.

12.00-12.30 **Laura Di Nicola** (Università di Roma – La Sapienza): *Qui e altrove. Il cosmopolitismo di Calvino*. Chair: Cecilia Schwartz



Partners: Laboratorio Calvino, Italian Cultural Institute in Stockholm, Embassy of Italy

ABSTRACT (McLaughlin): From his earliest short stories and novels Calvino was committed to passing on the values of modern literary classics such as the works of Hemingway, Conrad and Kipling. In the works of the 1950s, particularly in the trilogy, *I nostri antenati*, he went back to less contemporary classics such as Ariosto, Voltaire and Stendhal. Even his most experimental works such as *Le città invisibili* were inspired by classic texts such as Marco Polo's *Il milione* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, while *Il castello dei destini incrociati* evokes Ariosto and Shakespeare. His final fictional works are also indebted to literary works of the past: *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* draws on modern novels from all over the world, while *Palomar* is inspired by Valéry's *Monsieur Teste* but also by Pliny the Elder and Dante. So the idea of the legacy of classics of literature is bound up with Calvino's intertextual practice, and is explored in the seminal 1981 essay, *Perché leggere i classici*. The posthumous *Lezioni americane* are explicitly concerned with literary legacies: indeed one of the draft English titles he had thought for this work was *Six legacies for the incoming millennium*. The lecture charts diachronically Calvino's interest in classic texts of the past and the way he actively exploits their legacy to nourish his own modern and often experimental creativity.