

Italy's 39th 'Mauri School' on January 28: 'The New Future'



In Feature Articles by Porter Anderson / January 17, 2022 / Leave a Comment



'Il Nuovo Futuro'—The New Future—is the title of this year's Umberto and Elisabetta Mauri program in bookselling and publishing.



At Venice's San Giorgio Monastery, the usual setting for the Scuola per Librai Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri. Image - Getty iStockphoto: Rimbalzino

By Porter Anderson, Editor-in-Chief | @Porter_Anderson

Stefano Mauri: The Year of the Renaissance

Our regular readers will recall that the 38th edition of the Scuola per Librai Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri program, a "School of Booksellers," had to retreat in early 2021 from its usual setting on Venice's island of San Giorgio Maggiore to the safety of the Internet.

This is one of Europe's sturdiest conference-and-seminar events, which prior to the pandemic era had flown somewhat under the radar of the wider industry because its usual conference event is limited primarily to the bookselling community and is held at the San Giorgio Monastery. Its digital renditions, last year and now this year, have opened its to the world industry, displaying its dedication to how many nuances and subtleties lie behind the selling of a book.



While many of us had hoped that this year the program could return to Venice's Fondazione Giorgio Cini, the omicron variant, of course, had a different direction in store for us. But the program—like so much of publishing—has shown remarkable resilience, examining, even on the ether, some of the most telling components of international publishing and bookselling in the context of cultural and economic lenses.

So it is that the three-hour sequence of seminar events has again been arranged online, and registration now is open for the 39esimo Seminario UEM—the 39th seminar of the Scuola per Librai e Elisabetta Mauri, being live-streamed on January 28, starting at 10 a.m. CET / 09:00 GMT / 4 a.m. ET. Last year's program drew close to 1,000 attendees to its online evocation, representing 29 nations—cyberspace's curious compensation for COVID-curbed colonnades and cloisters: worldwide access.

The program—again this year led by the very able secretary-general of the Fondazione Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri, Nana



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Lonrengei—contains both statistical data on the Italian publishing industry's 2021 performance as well as contextual and strategic observation from Italy and other markets.



Nana Lohrengel

In a message from Daniela Poli at the [Association of Italian Publishers \(Associazione Italiana Editori, AIE\)](#) today, we have a couple of top-line numbers for you ahead of the event on the 28th: Print sales of fiction and nonfiction in 2021 grew in both physical and online retail and in large-scale distribution by 15.5 percent in value and 18.8 percent, compared to results in 2020. A total 115.6 books were sold for a total (cover price) of €1.7 million (US\$1.9 million).

And the 28th, then, is another chance for those who can't be on the *vaporetto* to see this program at work. You can read [our follow-up on the program from last year](#) to get a sense for the nature of the seminar. And today (January 17), we can offer you a look at the programming prepared for the 2022 edition on January 28.



Speakers in the 2022 Scuola di Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri program are, top row from left, Michael Busch; James Daunt; Ferruccio de Bortoli; Dario Franceschini; and Ricardo Franco Levi. On the lower row, from left, are Andrew Franklin; Doris Janhsen; Stefano Mauri; Alberto Ottieri; and Angelo Tantazzi

Scuola 'UEM' 2022 Program Notes, January 28

10 a.m. CET / 09:00 GMT / 4 a.m. ET

Opening Comments

Achille Mauri, president of the Fondazione Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri, again will preside, making his introductory address at the top of the program.

The program places special emphasis on two awards each year, and Mauri will confer those:

- The 16th Luciano and Silvana Mauri Award for Booksellers goes to the Ultima Spiaggia, Fabio Masi's bookstore on Ventotene—a small Tyrrhenian Sea island off the west coast of Italy
- And the third annual Nick Perren internship is being awarded to Alessandro Tridello of Ubik Bookshop in Venice's mainland borough of Mestre



10:15 a.m. CET / 09:15 GMT / 4:15 a.m. ET

“Economic Market Scenarios”

Alberto Ottieri of Messaggerie Italiane and Emmelibri introduces:

- Angelo Tantazzi of Prometeia with a “Forecast for 2022: Where is Italian Family Spending Going?”
- [Ricardo Franco Levi](#), well known to *Publishing Perspectives* readers as the president of the [Association of Italian Publishers \(Associazione Italiana Editori, AIE\)](#), on the Italian and “International Book Market”—AIE's research unit will be releasing its 2021 analysis as Levi goes over it

11 a.m. CET / 10:00 GMT / 5 a.m. ET

“Book Publishing Reloaded: Selling Books in a Changed World”

Publishing Perspectives moderates this roundtable featuring:

- Michael Busch of Germany's Thalia
- [James Daunt](#) of Waterstones and Daunt Books (United Kingdom) and Barnes & Noble (United States)
- Andrew Franklin of the UK's Profile Books
- Doris Janhsen of Germany's Droemer Knauer
- [Stefani Mauri](#) of Messaggerie Italiane and the publishing group Mauri Spagnol

12:30 a.m. CET / 11:30 GMT / 7:30 a.m. ET

"A Policy for Books"

Journalist Ferruccio de Bortoli interviews the Italian cultural heritage minister [Dario Franceschini](#)

1 p.m. CET / 13:00 GMT / 8 a.m. ET

Concluding Remarks

Achille Mauri

And for some thoughts prior to the event, we might point you to [Paola Coppola's interview for Rome's La Repubblica](#) earlier this month with Stefano Mauri, who is the president and CEO of GeMS and vice-president of Messaggerie.

"Under the bombing of COVID," Mauri tells Coppola, "the book was like an air-raid shelter, a comfort for many, an information tool for others because it satisfies two fundamental human needs, evasion and understanding."

And so, "If 2020 was the year of the book's resistance," he says, "2021 was the year of the renaissance."

The big question for January 29 will be how bookselling and publishing can use what has been learned in the first two pandemic years: what does the industry do now to capitalize on that post-renaissance energy?

If you need information on the program, you can write to info@fondazionemauri.it.



San Giorgio Maggiore. Image - Getty (Stockphoto: Jamie)

More from *Publishing Perspectives on Italy and its book publishing industry* is [here](#). More on Stefano Mauri is [here](#), more on Ricardo Franco Levi is [here](#), more on James Daunt is [here](#), more on Thalia is [here](#), and more on bookselling is [here](#).

More from us on the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic is [here](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Porter Anderson

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Porter Anderson is a non-resident fellow of Trends Research & Advisory, and he has been named International Trade Press Journalist of the Year in London Book Fair's International Excellence Awards. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Publishing Perspectives*. He formerly was Associate Editor for *The FutureBook* at London's *The Bookseller*. Anderson was for more than a decade a senior producer and anchor with CNN.com, CNN International, and CNN USA. As an arts critic (National Critics Institute), he was with *The Village Voice*, the *Dallas Times Herald*, and the *Tampa Tribune*, now the *Tampa Bay Times*. He co-founded *The Hot Sheet*, a newsletter for authors, which now is owned and operated by Jane Friedman.

□ Tags: [Association of Italian Publishers](#), [Associazione Italiana Editori](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), [Book Sales](#), [Bookselling](#), [Coronavirus](#), [COVID-19](#), [Ebooks](#), [Europe](#), [Gruppo editoriale Mauri Spagnoli](#), [Industry Statistics](#), [Italy](#), [James Daunt](#), [Publishing Conferences](#), [Ricardo Franco Levi](#), [Scuola per Librai Umberto e Elisabetta Mauri](#), [Stefano Mauri](#), [Thalia](#), [United Kingdom](#), [Waterstones](#)

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