



Ravenna , February 2025

Festival delle Culture 2025: “beyond the conflict”

The eighteenth edition of the Festival of Cultures is entitled “Beyond the Conflict” and offers a reflection starting with the words of Eleanor Roosevelt: “**Where do human rights begin? In small places, close to home, so intimate and concrete that they do not appear on any map of the world.**” Because the defense of people's dignity starts in the spaces inhabited on a daily basis: neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, homes.

Last year's extraordinarily well-attended edition, titled Of Lands Near and Far, accompanied the public in a reflection on the relationship between the protection of human rights and major global changes, animating the city with more than 50 events, which attracted more than 46,000 attendees.

This edition keeps the commitment and intensity on the themes of **human rights, intercultural dialogue and solidarity**. It aims to deepen the importance of everyone's knowledge and commitment to a freer and more righteous society, to contribute to a new multi polar humanism, peaceful, solidarity-based and alternative solution to go beyond present and future conflicts. Understanding the complexity of the reality we live in allows us to go beyond prejudice, actively countering, in every sphere and place, discrimination and racism in all its forms.

The Festival of Cultures, promoted by the Municipality of Ravenna - organizational unit Policies for immigration and citizenship, relies on the collaboration of cultural institutions, migrant communities, associations, third sector entities, citizens and the contribution of artists and intellectuals. The aim is **to address major intercultural issues, using the different existing languages - literary, musical, artistic, theatrical, journalistic – to strengthen social cohesion and improve the quality of civil coexistence.**

“Ravenna is preparing for a new edition of the Festival of Cultures,” says **acting mayor Fabio Sbaraglia** - which again, this year will place at the center of its rich proposal many insights to reflect on central issues of our time such as human rights, the intercultural dialogue and social integration on the highest levels. Together with the many realities that have collaborated in the realization of a rich and articulated programming it will be possible to traverse these themes in the light of multiple languages, artistic and otherwise. First and foremost music, through the virtuous collaboration established with Ravenna Festival. Also This year, then, ample space will be given to in-depth moments dedicated to young people, also through the involvement of the school world, with reading paths but also laboratories and workshops. And again, focus to reflect together on gender violence and much more. A Festival that expands its boundaries in the name of cohesion and inclusion, against all forms of discrimination.”

MUSIC.

This year's potential musical events, which represent a universal language, especially for young people, thanks to the valuable collaboration with Ravenna Festival. "If Ravenna Festival's deep bond with the city has always also been expressed in celebrating Ravenna as a crossroads of peoples and cultures, the collaboration born last year with the Festival of Cultures could only be destined to grow over time," stresses **Antonio De Rosa, Superintendent of Ravenna Festival**, "We are delighted that already this year the dialogue will be even more articulated and richer: on the one hand, in fact, the musical program of the Festival of Cultures has been organized in collaboration with Ravenna Festival and in particular with its co-Artistic Director Franco Masotti; on the other hand, the second edition of the Eco-sustainable and widespread review 'Romagna in fiore', created by Ravenna Festival, will include a special event imagined with the Festival of Cultures and under the banner of inclusion. No less important is the initiative with which, through this collaboration, we reach out to the many different communities that are now part of Ravenna's identity in order to offer them new opportunities to access performances, starting with the events of the Alighieri Theater's Winter Season."

"Although the festival has from its earliest years given wide space to the music of the Mediterranean world, the Middle and Far East, there was one important gap left: that of Palestine and its unfortunate people," explains **Franco Masotti, co-Artistic Director of Ravenna Festival**. "Now it is thanks to the partnership with the Festival delle Culture that we can offer the first review ever held in Italy-and at such a tragic time-dedicated to the Palestinian diaspora, with four significant artists from different stylistic areas. The music will give voice to the nostalgia for their homeland." This will be expressed by **Rasha Nahas**, who will perform on the Rasi Theater stage on April 24th at 9 p.m., **Kamilya Jubran** (May 23rd at 9 p.m. at the Alighieri Theater), **47Soul** (May 24th, at 9 p.m. at the Alighieri Theater) and **Bashar Murad** (May 25th, 9 p.m. at Alighieri Theater). Also, in preparation, there is a surprise for the "**Romagna in fiore** event."

LITERATURE AND THEATER

On the literary level, the literary program also involves comprehensive schools this year. It is a format that has now become a distinctive feature of the Festival of Cultures: it begins with the selection of a book that is donated to the students, who will read it during school hours and extracurricular time, and ends in a meeting with the author. In two years, more than 2,500 young people, supported by teachers, have read texts of great literary value and discussed contemporary issues with internationally prominent writers such as Nobel laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah, Maaza Mengiste, Kader Abdolah, Viola Ardone.

This year's choice was the novel "**Mi limitavo ad amare te**" by writer **Rosella Postorino**, which tells the story of a group of Bosnian boys hosted in Italy during **the Balkan conflict**. "This text allows us not only to talk about a war that exploded only a few decades ago a few kilometers from Ravenna, in Europe, about which young people know little, but to address with the right distance current and complex issues such as the relationship between democracy, consensus and nationalism, the genocidal risk, the protection of minorities in a multicultural country, the fragility of international and supranational organizations born after World War II," explains Paolo Fasano, head of the organizational unit Immigration and Citizenship Policies. It is also a topic closely related to the recent history of our territory. **Councilor for Immigration Federica Moschini** recalls that "in 1993, at the height of the Bosnian war, the community of Ravenna welcomed war refugees, 171 Bosnian citizens, for the first time, manifesting a profound sensitivity, a legacy of the past - think of the post-war reception of children from the South - that is also confirmed in the city's current history, as we have had the opportunity to verify more recently for the Ukrainian emergency or during and after the flood that affected everyone. The value of solidarity is undoubtedly engraved in

the DNA of our community.” The 1990s war in the former Yugoslavia is an opportunity to talk about how, even today, democracies can give way to nationalism and how it is possible for peacefully coexisting multicultural communities to crumble, crushing human rights and forcing populations to flee.

The high school reading tour, involving **900 young people**, will conclude with a meeting with Rosella Postorino, who will answer students' questions on May 23 at 10 a.m. at the Alighieri Theater

Instead, the path dedicated to middle school students involves reading the text “**Fortunatamente Nera. Il risveglio di una mente colonizzata**” by the young writer Italian-Senegalese Nogyaye Ndiaye. The theme is that of internalized racism, between the denial of part of one's identity, the need for acceptance and the exhausting and often painful journey of reappropriation of family origins. The writer will meet with students on April 24th at 10 a.m. at Rasi Theater and on May 21st at 10 a.m. at Palazzo Grossi in Castiglione of Ravenna as part of the encounter celebration,

For the younger generation also two new events: **the Sabar dance** workshop scheduled for Feb. 8 and 9 at the Villa Marina Residence in Marina di Ravenna and a two-day of **sports, workshops and music** on May 9 and 10 at the Darsena district. The events are in collaboration with the Tumm and Lizard Ludens associations.

Other in-depth meetings for students and citizens are scheduled at the Muratori Hall of the Classense Library: One, already held on January 23, on the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the causes of the war in the Balkans with Professor Francesco Privitera, the others will be held on March 10 at 5:30 p.m. with writer Elvira Mujčić, author of “**La buona condotta**”, which, starting from an actual event that happened in the aftermath of Kosovo's independence, tells a moving story, showing how a better future can always arise even in the most adverse conditions, thanks to the efforts of individual men and women, despite propaganda and manipulation; on March 14 at 10 a.m. with the meeting “**Ricordi di guerra, lezioni di pace**” will feature the accounts of witnesses direct witnesses who experienced that dramatic experience firsthand, through the words of Professor Emir Šehić. Finally, the show “**1993: Ravenna città aperta**” by Ravenna Teatro, on May 13 at 6 p.m. at Rasi Theater, the last event of the review “Storie di Ravenna,” will tell with the language of theater a touching story of Ravenna community's hospitality.

THE RESCUE AT THE SEA

Ravenna has been nominated a safe port of landing by the government and has handled 16 refugee landings since December 2022. On May 29 at the Muratori Hall of the Classense Library at 10 a.m. the topic of **sea rescue** will be addressed with representatives of NGOs and institutions, journalists and jurists, with the conference **Mediterraneo oggi: libertà di muoversi, dovere di salvare** on the current situation and proposals for a better management of the phenomenon, organized with journalist and writer **Vittorio Longhi**. “The controversial migration policies of recent years prompt a rigorous reflection on the relevance of these values and rights enshrined by the United Nations after the worst conflicts of the 20th century. The Festival will be an opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of these policies, from sea rescue to integration. Ravenna,” says **Vittorio Longhi, editorial director of Carta di Roma**, “represents the ideal place to start this debate, which goes from the local to the international level, precisely because of the sensitivity and commitment shown by the city to the complex issue of reception.

The “**Manica Lunga**” of the Classense Library will host the exhibition of ‘Life Support’, Emergency's SAR (search and rescue) ship operating in the central Mediterranean area. The 20 shots chronicle the sighting, rescue and reception phases experienced by the on-board staff and the survivors. The opening will be held on April 12 at 11 a.m. and the exhibition will be on display until

May 31. It is promoted by Emergency Ravenna in collaboration with the Istituzione Classense Library.

ALL THE FACES OF THE FESTIVAL

The exhibition “Along the border” by photographer Chiara Fabbro, which will be on display at the Legislative Assembly of the Emilia-Romagna Region from March 17 to April 18, constitutes a very powerful narrative of what is still happening today along the Balkan route, the people's living conditions, the collective and chain rejections, how it is changing the protection of human rights along the eastern borders of the European Union in the deafening silence of the media. Her work reaches straight to the heart of each of us, tells us about the resilience and the indomitable hope of tragic protagonists in a human rights epic.

On the topic of **the conflict in Ukraine** with the Malva association will be opened on March 1st at 4:30 p.m. at Casa delle culture, the photo exhibition “Check-point Kyiv. L’invasione dell’Ucraina raccontata sul campo” by journalist Pierfrancesco Curzi, which will be on display until March 23.

Also key to the Festival's programming is the event “**The Power of Courage: Human Rights in Iran,**” a dialogue between activist Taghi Rahmani and Riccardo Noury, national spokesperson for Amnesty International Italy. Taghi Rahmani, an Iranian journalist and writer, married to 2023 Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi, still held in Iran on parole, is a university professor in exile who has dedicated his life to the recognition of human rights and freedoms. For this activity she spent fourteen years in prison and suffered torture in Iran. The event is organized in collaboration with the University of Bologna.

On April 26 at 11 a.m., the exhibition “In fuga” by painter Gabriella Costanzi will be opened in the PR2 exhibition space, which can be visited until May 8. The portraits of migrants recall with great expressive power the other face of the conflict, that of humanity, refugees, people fleeing for survival.

On April 29 at 10 a.m., students from the comprehensive schools will conclude in People's Square the “Compass of Peace” workshop path with the final event “**Giochiamo alla Pace**” organized by the Intercultural Network on Immigration Issues (RITI) in collaboration with The Caravan of peace.

At times, the most insidious conflicts are those encountered in everyday life, which have to do to do with identity, with the bodies inhabited by each person, a tool sometimes of emancipation and expression to occupy space within society, others of racialization and discrimination. This is precisely what Nadeesha Uyangoda, author of the book “Corpi che contano” on Jan. 22 at the Muratori Hall of the Classense Library, while from Jan. 21 February to March 3 at the Mariani Cinema more than 1,300 high school students will attend the screening of the film “**Il ragazzo dai pantaloni rosa**”

For the “**Week Against Racism,**” which celebrates the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination established by the United Nations General Assembly in memory of the victims of the Sharpeville massacre of March 21, 1960, who were killed while peacefully demonstrating against apartheid, on March 20 and 21, also at the Muratori Hall at 10 a.m., there will be a meeting with leaders of the Khoisan communities of eastern South Africa, who through two documentaries will talk about their process of reappropriation of indigenous cultural identity. The event will be in English and is organized in collaboration with South Africa's Nelson Mandela University.

The festival then continues with the installation in Kennedy Square of the work “Ci sono amori senza paradiso” by artist and activist **Gianluca Costantini** from April 15 to May 22, a work

of strong warning against gender-based violence, which will be unveiled at 5 p.m. April 15.

Also on gender justice, systemic inequalities, and cultural and social barriers that still limit opportunities and freedom of self-determination will be offered to high school students the play “Un’ultima cosa” by and with Concita De Gregorio on Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. at the Alighieri Theater in collaboration with the Organizational Unit Gender Policies and Volunteering.

The theme of **labor protection** is addressed on March 13 by remembering the Mecnavi massacre with the show “In fondo a una nave” by the Quarto Quinto Atto company at 10 a.m. at the Rasi Theater. From March 11 to 13 at the Classense Library's Muratori Hall, a spring school entitled “Labor Exploitation and Corporalism: Prevention, Victim Support and Criminal Response” will be held. For the first time all the actors, nationals and locals, involved in the various actions to prevent and combat labor exploitation and caporalism, as well as to protect victims, will meet to discuss scenarios and how to improve the effectiveness and integration of policies. The initiative is in collaboration with the Emilia Romagna Region, Prefecture of Ravenna, University of Bologna, Ausl Romagna and MondoDonna association.

The “**Scritture di Frontiera**” review, in addition to the meetings with writers Elvira Mujčić and Nadeesha Uyangoda, completes its itinerary on April 16 at 5:30 p.m. with Nicoletta Verna, in the Muratori Hall of the Classense Library, who with the novel “I giorni di Vetro” tackles the portrait of a female figure victim of prejudice and violence during fascism.

Also on the theme of fascism and colonialism, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. at the Muratori Hall of the Classense Library will be **a day dedicated to remembering the victims of Italian colonialism in Africa** with the screening of the documentary “Pagine nascoste” by Sabrina Varani and the participation of the director and Siid Negash. The film brings to mind the assassination attempt on Viceroy Rodolfo Graziani in Addis Ababa, which was followed by savage roundups, torture and atrocious massacres of the civilian population.

There are several events in collaboration with the National Partisan Association of Ravenna as part of the “**Esperienze di Resistenza**” review, including: on March 8 at 3 p.m. at the Ragazzini Hall in Largo Firenze the presentation of the book “Non avendo mai preso il fucile in mano. Italian Anti-Fascist Women in the Spanish Civil War 1936-1939,” with the participation of Marco Puppini and Laura Orlandini, and on May 3 at 5 p.m. at the Classense Library's Muratori Hall the seminar “Dalla guerra di Spagna alla Resistenza in Romagna passando da Ventotene” with a story of the experience of partisans from Ravenna.

On June 7 and 8 at the Brancaleone Fortress the public is invited to the second edition of “**Culture migranti alla Rocca**” a weekend of conviviality and participation. Two days full of music, games, workshops and delicious cuisine from the world, in collaboration with the Italia Cuba Association, the Intercultural Network on Immigration Issues (Riti), diaspora associations and migrant communities.

Finally, the Festival collaborates on the Classense Library Institution's exhibition “The Wandering Genius. Negri, Gessi and Matteucci: stories of travelers between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries” and also supports this year's Cinespeyer, an open-air film festival at the Speyer Gardens, which deals with the theme of rejections along the Balkan route, of those suffering from conflict and trying to build a better future, as well as the ‘Sottocasa’ project of the association Sguardi in camera at the Darsena neighborhood. It is confirmed that all events will be free of charge for male and female students from schools and the Ravenna Campus, as well as for children from reception projects, so that culture is as accessible as possible to everyone.

Period: year 2025

Locations: Classense Library, Alighieri Theater, Rasi Theater, Casa delle culture, Kennedy Square, Piazza del Popolo, Speyer Gardens, PR2 exhibition hall, Rocca Brancaleone, Villa Marina Residence (Marina di Ravenna), Mariani Cinema, Mani Fiorite Park - Quake Center, Darsena District, Grossi Palace (Castiglione di Ravenna), the Torraccia.

Organizing entities: Municipality of Ravenna, U.O. Policies for Immigration and Citizenship. The events are held in collaboration with: Ravenna Festival, Amnesty International Italia, Istituzione Biblioteca Classense, Ravenna Theater, Intercultural Network on Immigration Issues (RITI), coop. sociale Terra Mia, coop. sociale Villaggio Globale, ass. Italia Cuba, Scritture di frontiera, Emergency Ravenna, Anpi, University of Bologna, Nelson Mandela University (South Africa), Regione Emilia Romagna, Prefettura di Ravenna, Ausl Romagna, ass. MondoDonna, U.O. Gender Policies and Volunteering, Istituti Comprensivi Baccarini, Canevaro, Damiano, Darsena, del Mare, Novello, Randi, RicciMuratori, San Biagio, San Pietro in Vincoli, Valgimigli-Manara, Liceo Artistico Nervi-Severini, Liceo Classico Dante Alighieri, Liceo Scientifico A. Oriani, IPS Olivetti-Callegari, ITE Ginanni, ITIS Nullo Baldini, ITS Morigia-Perdisa, CPIA Ravenna, ENGIM Ravenna, IAL Ravenna, Scuola Pescarini Arti e Mestieri, coop. sociale Cidas, coop. sociale Teranga, coop. sociale LibrAzione, Il Terzo Mondo ODV, Lucertola Ludens aps, Cittadini del Pianeta aps, Romania Mare ODV, Malva - Ukrainians of Ravenna aps, ass. Mabuhay, Sguardi in Camera aps, ass. Piramide, FIAB Ravenna, ass. Global solidarity, Cinemaincentro, ass. Asra, ass. Italia Chama Brasil, ass. Ammi Mozambican women in Italy, Associazione Nigeriana Ravenna, ass. Opu Ravenna, ass. Ivoriani di Ravenna, ass. Life, Asja Lacis aps, ass. Tumm,

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