

# ER

N.4  
2002

EMILIA  
ROMAGNA

## IL GRANDE DERBY

Quattro squadre emiliane  
nel campionato di calcio  
più bello del mondo.

### THE GREAT DERBY

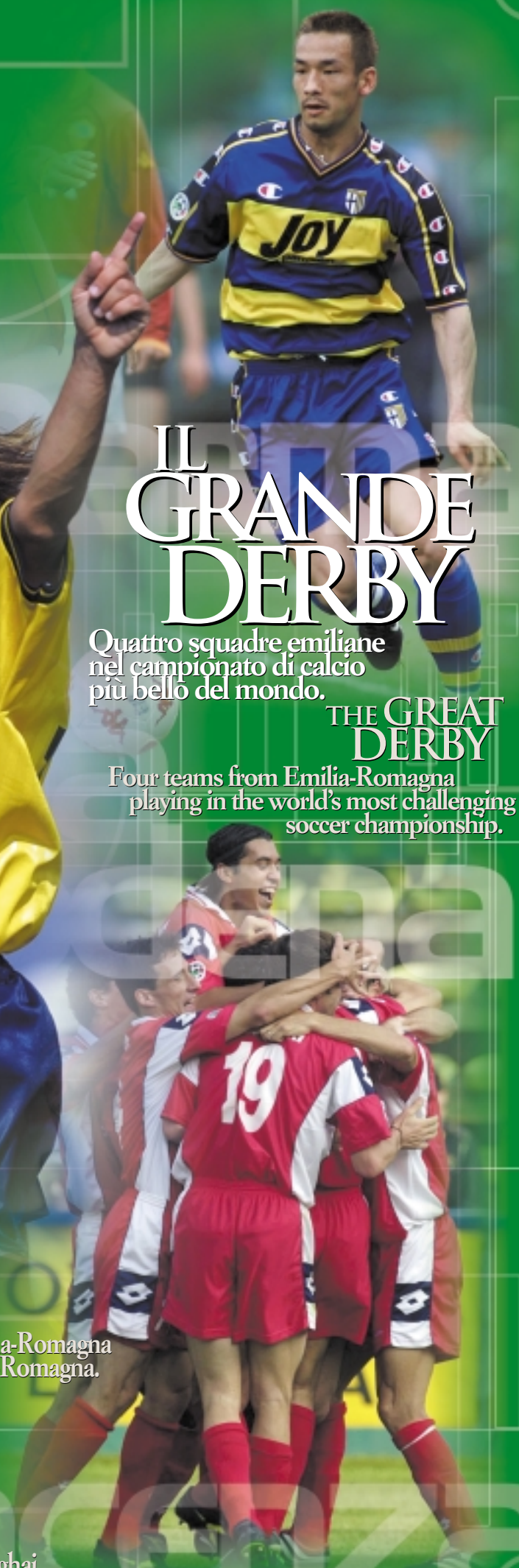
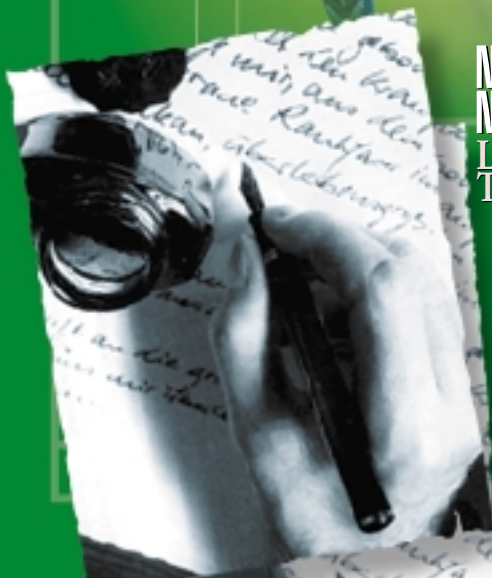
Four teams from Emilia-Romagna  
playing in the world's most challenging  
soccer championship.

### NOIR, FANTASIOSI E LUNATICI Noir, Creative and Lunatic

Lo "stato delle lettere" in Emilia-Romagna  
The "state of letters" in Emilia-Romagna.

### LA CONQUISTA DELLA CINA Taking on the China Planet

A Shanghai un "ambasciata"  
delle imprese.  
An "embassy"  
for businesses opens in Shanghai.







Trimestrale d'informazione  
a cura del Servizio stampa  
e informazione della Giunta regionale  
e della Consulta regionale  
dell'Emilia-Romagna  
per l'emigrazione e l'immigrazione.  
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## FOOTBALL FEVER

by Marino Forlivesi

The upcoming Serie A championship, scheduled to begin on September 1, will be staging as many as twelve derby matches with teams from Emilia-Romagna playing against each other. Eighteen teams will be vying for the championship title (the badge is now sewn to the uniforms of Juventus): among them Bologna, which last season made it into the Intertoto area; Parma, which had struggled but then managed to make it through and bring home the Coppa Italia; Piacenza, which didn't perform as well, even with the championship's top striker, Hubner, in its roster; and Modena, which is celebrating 90 years of football by returning to Serie A, after a lapse of almost 40 years. The last time four teams from Emilia-Romagna appeared in Serie A, playing in the world's costliest, most competitive championship, was 1996-97, with Parma, Piacenza, Bologna (after three years spent in the lower divisions), and Reggiana, which played its first and thus far only Serie A championship that season. With seven scudetto titles, two Coppa Italia titles, and 82 out of 93 championships played in Serie A, Bologna can rightly style themselves the all-time best of football in Emilia-Romagna, even if there have been historically remarkable teams pressing up from behind: witness Piacenza, Modena in the roaring fifties, Cesena in the seventies and early eighties (when they qualified for the UEFA Cup, no less), and Parma from the nineties to now, ranking with the top teams and winning three Coppa Italia titles, one Coppa delle Coppe, two UEFA Cups, plus an Italian and a European Supercup. Spal, Reggiana, and Cesena are now playing in Serie C and D, and Ravenna, after a crushing defeat, won the Excellence Championship last season. The income generated by this football resurgence is noteworthy, too, especially the inflow from specta-

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tors turning out for Serie A matches. In seventeen matches at home last season, Bologna drew 400,000 spectators at Ara Stadium (designed to accommodate 39,000 per match), Parma drew in 305,000 at Tardini Stadium (maximum capacity, 28,000), and Piacenza drew in 162,000 at Garilli Stadium. The box office in Bologna grossed 7,518,779.71 euros during the season; Parma, 6,850,164.69 euros; and Piacenza, 2,936,350.43 euros. Only Braglia Stadium in Modena isn't fit yet for a Serie A championship, which requires football clubs to provide for at least 20,000 seats: Braglia Stadium can sit up to 15,000 spectators, and has been undergoing expansion in recent months so that Modena can play its first matches at home. Even with live broadcasting on pay TV drawing fans away from the stadium, Emilia-Romagna can count on its four teams in Serie A to attract almost one million spec-

tators next season for matches played within the region, grossing up to 21 million euros. And this is not all the revenue there is to be had, since earnings are based not only on the tickets sold, but also on football paraphernalia—like flags, T-shirts, caps, scarves, and key chains—available at the stadium as well as on the Internet. ©

## SPIKE BALL, NO RETURN

By Andrea Dondi

It was an American prisoner of war that introduced the people of Emilia-Romagna to the ABC's of "the ball that volleys". Adler Ascarì, the first secretary of the Panini group, used to tell the story of this introduction, a tale in which memories and legend were mixed. The soldier set up an improvised volleyball court, so to speak, in the prisoner of war camp near Modena's provincial railway station, and

his first disciples were local youths who were intrigued by this new sport and wished to learn the new discipline which had arrived from across the ocean. The novelty introduced by the American prisoner caught on so well that the new men's national Italian championship was won for the first 18 times by teams from Emilia-Romagna. Incidentally, the Italian tricolour which flies over the home of the national champions can also be seen in Emilia-Romagna at the moment. Last year, after five lean years, Casa Modena won its 11th national championship (the 22nd victory for clubs from Modena) in a sport which is second only to soccer, judging by the number of registered fans.

The first trophy won by a team from Emilia-Romagna was won immediately after the Second World War by Robur Ravenna, coached by the legendary Angelo Costa. There were eight teams registered in the championship at that time: besides the Ravenna team, there were also two clubs from Bologna. Robur's domination of the championship lasted four years. Thereafter the roll of honour of championship winners reads like a list of the cities of Emilia-Romagna: Ferrovieri Parma, Ravenna again, Modena in the form of Minelli/Crocetta/Avia Pervia/Ciam Villa d'Oro, Virtus Bologna, Parma again. In the 1969/70 season Panini Modena burst onto the scene. This team was owned by Giuseppe Panini, a genial entrepreneur and self made man who transformed figurines into a business and volleyball into a way of life. Giuseppe was introduced to the volleyball net, where he would remain "entangled" for his whole life, was "professor" Franco Anderlini, who basically lived in the gym of Tassoni high school. These were the years of the uncompromising struggles with Florence and of after match celebrations with pizza and Coca Cola. In 1981 Parma burst onto the scene once again under Claudio Piazza, the famous moustachioed coach. His team inclu-

ded towers of strength such as Negri, Lanfranco, Erichiello and the Korean Kim Ho Ciul. In the finals of the 1984/85 championship, Modena handed the title to Bologna on a plate. The Bolognese coach, Nerio Zanetti, wrote his name into the volleyball history books alongside figures like Babini, Carretti, De Rocco, Squeo, Venturi, Fanton, Giovannini, Minelli, Scarioli and Visini. The debacle on court and the furious argument between Giuseppe Panini and Modena's coach Andrea Nanini led to Julio Velasco becoming the new coach. Velasco was an almost unknown Argentine who would soon become a legend, he was the coach who wanted "players with eyes like tigers" on court. At the beginning of the 1990s Ravenna returned strongly to the top position. While this return to form turned out to be a flash in the pan, it gave people the chance to admire the heroics of the American stars Timmons and Kiraly.

In Emilia-Romagna there have always been incredible games in which, both on court and off court, spectacular play has shared the limelight with rivalries, jealousy and fierce local pride. Such matches included Modena against Parma, Bologna against Modena, Parma against Ravenna, and Modena against Sassuolo. The protagonists included coaches who were brothers, but fierce enemies on the sidelines; great players and able squad men; club directors whose golden rule was to search out the best possible line-up. Volleyball in Emilia-Romagna brings back to the memory a veritable kaleidoscope of names, dates and situations, all of which have their roots in a prisoner of war camp and the sporting passion of an American soldier. ☺

## TAKING ON THE CHINA PLANET

By Valerio Pedretti

The key to the world's biggest market is called Xintiandi. It's the toniest district in the chicest city of the world's most economically dynamic country, meaning China, with over one billion inhabitants and an annual growth rate exceeding 8%. This exclusive and strategic district, close to People's Square, has recently been redeve-

loped in what is thus far the biggest project launched in China for the conservation of a historic center, and here Emilia-Romagna has laid out 600 square meters of a service center designed to welcome visitors and house snack bars, offices, meeting rooms, and exposition spaces for company products—so any business can find here a business outlet of its own. Two small squares lie near the service center, and inside there are a convention hall seating 400 persons and an auditorium seating 3,000, the ideal place in which to set up fashion shows, cultural events, food-sampling events, meetings, and more. The staff specialists working at the center speak Chinese, Italian, and English, and the center itself is the outcome of a joint effort, the first of its kind, by which the Emilia-Romagna Board of Productive Activities (headed by Duccio Campagnoli) and the region's chambers of commerce have teamed up to provide businesses in the region with a solid base from which to broach the Chinese market, seeking out prospective partners, celebrating events, setting up conventions, and displaying products with multimedia support. So the center is not only a showcase for products, but also a facility enabling the goodwill and competence of businesses and institutions in the region to shine through. (The institutional players involved are, in addition to the region and its chambers of commerce, trade-fair agencies, boards of tourism, universities, cultural associations, CISPEL, and professional associations.) This is a vision that Western entrepreneurs have been after since the eighties, when China began to open to a market economy, a vision that grew stronger with China's entry into the World Trade Organization and with its successful bid to host the 2008 Olympics in Peking and the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, where the businesses previously based in Hong Kong have now relocated. The new service center supersedes the traditional mode of promoting business—based entirely on setting up trade shows, sending out missions, and showcasing products—and embraces a more integrated approach providing beginning-to-end support for goods and services to enter the market and

stay there. Besides, Chinese entrepreneurs already feel the appeal of Italian production at large, and of its fashion, gastronomy, and manufacture in particular. The companies active in Emilia-Romagna, and in fact the entire regional system, can play all their cards. ☺

## THIS REGION IS SPEAKING ENGLISH

By Maurizio Ortobene

The official website put up by the Regional Council of Emilia-Romagna is breaking through outside Italy and turning international. The website, after undergoing a makeover that improves its graphical interface and makes for easier consultation even by those unpracticed with online surfing, now features an English version (at <http://consiglio.regione.emilia-romagna.it/english>) whose homepage provides an overview of all the information found within. Four areas make up the site: The Council (explaining what the council does and what institutional agencies it relies on), Activities (what the regional assembly does with support from organisms, council groups, and databases collecting the region's laws), Events and Information (what happens within the council: the meetings, the initiatives, the press releases), and Services (outlining the services offered to citizens: the ombudsperson service, the library, the Office for Government-to-Citizen Relations). You can also make queries entering English words or word combinations, and you can link to the English-language websites put up by other regions in Italy.

In addition to acquiring an international makeup, the council's website makes it easier today to find the text to a regional law even when you don't know all its identifiers. The tool (at [http://consiglio.regione.emilia-romagna.it/fr\\_att\\_norm\\_cercaleggi.htm](http://consiglio.regione.emilia-romagna.it/fr_att_norm_cercaleggi.htm)) is called Search for Laws and contains all acts and legislation enacted since 1970, when the regions in Italy were chartered under statutes of their own. The service is active everyday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. and enables you to find your way through a body of law adding up to 1,378 historical texts on record and 914 coordinated

texts (meaning by this the texts of laws that have been amended over the years). The site brings together the databases collecting the region's entire legislation: you can use subject indexes and chronological listings to pull out in real time the historical texts on record as well as the coordinated text currently in force. Emilia-Romagna, from its inception until 21 December 2001, wrote 1,375 acts into law, 600 of which are currently enforced as valid law. ☺

## THE GERMAN TWINS

By Anna Maria Martina

Ten candles on a cake, and frosting on it too: the frosting consists in a plan to develop a network of regions that's looking to extend to all of Europe. This is how Emilia-Romagna and the German state of Hessen are celebrating a linkup that was made in 1992 and has since given place to a series of joint initiatives focused on institutional, cultural, social, and economic issues; for example, a program is underway promoting an exchange of "good practices" and officials, and the Scuola di Pace in Monte Sole now has German members in its organizing committee. No official ceremonies have been slated as yet, but in October the region's president, Vasco Errani, will be in Wiesbaden for a meeting organized by the state of Hessen on Europe's constitutional reforms. By so doing, Errani will return the visit that his counterpart Roland Koch, president of Hessen, made to Bologna early in May, an exchange that will reinforce the spirit of a joint undertaking set on such firm ground as few others have been in Europe, an initiative that through its base office in Brussels enabled the region to obtain representation in Italy even before the Italian constitution provided for such an arrangement. The two regions still have their joint-operations office in Brussels, and in addition have expanded the initiative to embrace the French region of Aquitaine, with which projects are being worked out to promote exchanges for youths and university students. As Koch says, "we're looking carefully at the discussion on federalism underway in Italy and are focusing on the position

the progressive members of Emilia-Romagna are taking. For on this issue, our regions have similar views." While working on institutional issues and exchange programs with the State of Hessen, Emilia-Romagna is working on tourism with the State of Bavaria, from which comes an inflow of vacationers who every year in the summertime head for the region's Adriatic coast. Exhibitions and concerts staged in Bavaria followed the 17th edition of a training seminar for teachers of Italian in Bavarian high schools, held in Baginacavallo at the initiative of Munich's Institute of Italian Culture and set up in collaboration with Emilia-Romagna. The region's drive to set up European connections expands beyond Germany (where, in Berlin, Stuttgart, and Germering, associations promoting Emilia-Romagna have their base already.) For years now there have been linkups going on with the Pays de la Loire in France and with Generalitat Valenciana in Spain. As Errani points out, "we cannot build a new Europe without bringing the regions into the picture: we need their contribution to the debate on the European Union and its reform." ☺

## THE POPE'S ARCHITECT

By Giorgio Savona

The cinquecento in Italy gave us a great architect who is curiously enough among the least known of the architects from that period. He worked for popes and sovereigns, designing innovative palazzos, churches, and monuments in Rome and northern and central Italy, but has long been considered an academic pedant adverse to all innovation. His name was Jacopo Barozzi, also known as Vignola, and on account of this misconception was upstaged in a way by his contemporaries Michelangelo and Andrea Palladio, but now he's getting his own back, a spotlight that history books have repeatedly denied him.

A thematic map suggests itineraries connecting twenty-two places in Emilia-Romagna, Umbria, and Lazio where palazzos stand that were built to designs by Vignola; a CD-ROM entitled "Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola" focuses on his life and

work and features sacred and secular music composed by contemporaries of his; and a catalogue more than 400 pages long has just come out in conjunction with an exhibit recently staged in his native city—these are just some of the initiatives contributing to this rediscovery of a Renaissance master. Jacopo Barozzi was born in 1507 in Vignola, a city located near Modena, and began his career as a painter in Bologna, showing great talent in drawing and a like mastery of the principles of perspective. In the late 1530s he moved to Rome to work at the Vatican and then transferred to the French royal residence of Fontainebleau, at that time the most important construction project in the whole of France, where he was called in to help execute bronze copies of ancient statues. In 1548 he was in Bologna, where he worked on several projects: he designed the ciborium arching over the main altar of the basilica of San Petronio and designed some main elements of the facade as well; so, too, he renewed the Canale Naviglio, helped bring out Palazzo Achille Bocchi, and redefined the architecture of Piazza Maggiore by designing the stately Portico dei Banchi. In 1550 he was back in Rome, where he reached the peak of his artistic excellence working for five pontiffs, namely, Julius III, Marcellus II, Paul IV, Pius IV, and Gregory XIII. It was in Rome that he died, in 1573. Dating to this period are the famous villa of Pope Julius III; the Pantheon-shaped Chapel of Sant'Andrea, located on the Flaminian Way; and Rome's first oval church, Sant'Andrea dei Palafrenieri. After Michelangelo's death in 1564, he served as chief architect for Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City. In his Rome period, he also became architect to the powerful Farnese Family. For Cardinal Ranuccio he supervised the construction of Palazzo di Roma, and for Cardinal Alexander he designed Palazzo di Caprarola, his greatest work and one of Europe's chief monuments. Cardinal Alexander also obtained for Vignola the project for Il Gesù, the mother church of the Jesuits in Rome, whose design influenced religious architecture for the following three centuries. Finally, for Ottavio Farnese and Margherita d'Austria, dukes of Parma and Piacenza, he designed the colossal and never completed

Ducal Residence of Piacenza. Vignola was not only an architect but also a worthy theorist, the author of two treatises: one, entitled The Rule of the Five Orders of Architecture, was published in 1562, when he was still alive; the other, The Two Rules of Practical Perspective, was published posthumously in 1583 by Egnazio Danti. The first treatise was translated to all major European languages and did much to establish Vignola's fame in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, but it also helped forge an image of him as an academician, a staunch opponent of all innovation. This judgement was applied to his architecture as well, in a period when the study of architectural orders was abandoned and branded as evidence of creative sterility. Although Vignola became known as the architect of "the rule," and his designs equated with a call to expressive order, he was in reality much more modern than many of his contemporaries, as can be gathered from the lasting effect which his work had on architects for years to come. ☺

## MUSIC SPILLS ONTO THE STREETS

By Enrico Betti

You can follow the music on foot or on your bicycle and let yourself be carried away by the rhythm of African percussion, or by the joyful beat of a Dixieland ensemble, or again by the musical gags of a British band. If you wander from the centrally located castle and cathedral and make your way to one of the city's medieval streets, where you'll find a Celtic harp, the moving feeling of Argentine Tango, the distant echo of a flute calling up the magic of the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

This and more is the stuff of the Buskers Festival, which for fifteen years has been drawing to Ferrara the best street musicians from across the world, as will happen again on August 19 to 25 with two shows a day at 6:00 and 9:30 p.m., and a single Sunday show from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. The numbers and tradition involved make this the most important event of its kind: a turnout of 800,000 spectators on the last edition and almost 200,000 square meters of stage space, meaning by this the Medieval and Re-

naissance streets and piazzas where the musicians play—almost 700 of them, doing more than 1,000 performances adding up to more than 2,000 hours of music—and almost 530,000 visits to the official website in the month of August alone. Each year the organizers invite and pay for twenty groups, but many others tag along: 157 from twenty-one countries on the last edition. In fact for street performers Ferrara is one event not to miss out on. For one, the event is a fully international gathering of musicians from the world over (a rare chance for a fruitful exchange), and second, it is also a kind of musical showcase that draws in entertainment professionals, reporters and journalists, and city administrators from across Italy. And there are economic gains to be made, too: some musicians in past years have managed to sell 500-plus CDs each, receiving generous offers from the audience as well. Every genre of music has its place in the sun here; the spotlight turns as well on those virtuosos of the oddest instruments capable of unexpected melodic power, as might happen with seesaws, ironing boards, cowbells, tea boxes, and glasses. The buskers' music is the soundtrack of a journey through a thousand cultures across the world, a chance to discover a city that over the centuries has charmed travelers even in its moments of stillness and silence. ☺

## THE "STATE OF LETTERS" IN EMILIA-ROMAGNA

By Renato Bertacchini

From thrillers to epic fantasy novels, from historical and legendary sagas to bizarre, almost "schizophrenic", short stories. These are the main tendencies which define the current "state of letters" in Emilia-Romagna. One of the region's foremost writers, a man who puts Bologna on the serial killer map, is Lorian Macchiavelli. He has written more than twenty thrillers, including Un triangolo a quattro lati ("A Four Sided Triangle"), Coscienza sporca ("Dirty Conscience"), and I sotterranei di Bologna ("The Bologna Underworld"). Perhaps because of the fog, perhaps because of the city's famed porti-



coed streets, there are many pens ready “to kill”. From singer songwriters such as Francesco Guccini, to scholars such as Lucarelli, and teachers like Daniela Comastri Montanari and Luigi Guicciardi. In the team of Guccini and Macchiavelli, each has a different role: one puts together words and music, the other deals with the twists and turns of the plot. Books conceived in this way include Macaroni, Un disco dei Platters (“A Record By The Platters”) and Questo sangue che impasta la terra (“This Blood Which Soaks The Soil”), mountain-based thrillers, set in Pavana, a poor emigrant town in the Apennines. The presenter of the television show Blù notte, Carlo Lucarelli from Parma, could be called the maestro of the new noir. In *Giorno del lupo* (“Day of the Wolf”) he guides the main character Colandro, an honest but unlucky police officer, through the dark stage of a ferocious Bologna-Bronx where people are killed for small sums of money. Comastri Montanari takes her inspiration from ancient Rome, with “Latin” thrillers whose main character is the senator Aurelius. Her works include *Mors tua*, *In corpore sano*, *Cave canem* and *Moriturus salutant*. Guicciardi, a high school teacher from Modena in his forties, has written psychological thrillers rich in suspense such as *La calda estate del commissario Cataldo* (“The Hot Summer of Commissar Cataldo”), *Filastrocca di sangue per il commissario Cataldo* (“A Bloody Nursery Rhyme for Commissar Cataldo”) and *Relazioni pericolose per il commissario Cataldo* (“Dangerous Relations for Commissar Cataldo”). Tolkien all’italiana and Indiana Jones Is Back! are two intriguing labels given to the work of Pederiali and Manfredi respectively. In effect a new magic realism somewhere between “The Lord of the Rings” and “Furious Orlando” inspires Pederiali’s novels, which are set in the Middle Earth of the southern Po valley. Vitige, the heroic king in *Saga ai tempi delle Sette Città* (“Saga at the Times of the Seven Cities”), belongs to Celtic mythology. This saga tells of a time when the Po flowed into the Adriatic through the mouths of the Seven Seas (*Le città del Diluvio* – “The Cities of the Flood”). In *Il tesoro del Bigatto* (“The Treasure of the Silkworm”),

the medieval search for a giant pumpkin guarded by a worm-dragon evokes dramatic echoes of rural poverty. Following the footsteps of Bertoldo and his *Secchia rapita* (“The Stolen Bucket”), the complex plot of *La Compagnia della Selva Bella* (“The Company of the Beautiful Forest”) describes the colourful adventures of a band of rogues from the Po valley at the time of King Enzo. *Donna di spade* (“Queen of Swords”), a metaphysical-rural fairytale evokes the Carolingian cycle (in it appear the paladins, while Orlando and Angelica return after 13 years.) An archaeologist and lecturer in ancient topography at Bocconi University, Manfredi applies artistic and technological knowledge to a fluent and stratified passion for story-telling. So far he has had nine novels published: *Palladion* (1986), *Lo scudo di Talos* (“The Shield of Talos”), *L’oracolo* (“The Oracle”), *Le paludi di Hesperia* (“The Marshes of Hesperia”), *La Torre della solitudine* (“The Tower of Solitude”), *Il Faraone delle sabbie* (“Pharaoh of the Sands”), *Alexandros*, *Chimeira*, *L’ultima legione* (“The Last Legion”) (2002). Gaining renewed interest and success, Manfredi’s historical fiction tells of ancient/modern Greece between despots and free men; passes from the icy lands of Hesperia (which one day would be called Italy) to the secrets of the Sahara and to the Sinai of the “Egyptian” Moses. It evokes the cruel rites of the Etruscans and the magic sword Excalibur used first by Caesar and then by Romulus Augustus. Perhaps his central work is *Alexandros* (1998), a trilogy over 800 pages long. It deals with the double nature of the Macedonian “centaur” Alexander the Great (intelligence and violence), his military feats, and the “sacred” destiny of dying young at just 33 years old. In the 20th century, our region produced some classic short story writers, from Giuseppe Raimondi to Giorgio Bassani, who brought more modern themes and stylistic finesse (dialogue, monologue) to the genre. The inventive and cultural experiences of Raimondi (Bologna, 1898-1985), who repaired stoves in his fathers workshop for over thirty years, bear witness to a tenacious and dignified faith in the “cleaness” of his work as a literary artisan. Collections such as *Notizie dal-*

*l’Emilia* (“News from Emilia”), *Mignon*, *Le nevi dell’altr’anno* (“Last Year’s Snow”), *Il nero e l’azzurro* (“The Black and the Blue”), *La chiave regina* (“The Queen Key”) recount the artisan’s work and his workshop as the centre of life and the instrument of social elevation. Bassani (Bologna 1916 – Rome 2000) took inspiration from traditional short story writing (“as a writer I’ve always paid more attention to the 19th century than to the 20th century”). In *Le storie ferraresi* (“Ferrara Stories”), he breathed new life into this tradition with his decisive, controversial collective use of reported speech.

Interesting recent short story writers include Tondelli and Conti, Cavazzoni and Barbolini. Drunkenness and cruelty, sordid events and feverish excitement permeate Tondelli’s *Altri libertini* (“Other Libertines”) (1980), a collection inhabited by provincial young people who resemble Fellini’s good for nothings and evoke the burnt out youth of Celine: sex and alcohol, drugs and music in the foggy winters of Correggio. The short stories in Conti’s collections *Della pianura e del sangue* (“The Valley and the Blood”) and *Il cocodrillo sull’altare* (“The Crocodile on the Altar”) (Parma, 1965) force Emilia’s geography and ethnology to spew forth their most secret underground moods and venom. In *I sette cuori* (“The Seven Hearts”) (1992), Cavazzoni reinterprets and rewrites in seven extravagant and ironic versions *Sangue romagnolo* (“Romagna Blood”), Edmondo De Amicis’ famous short story published in *Cuore* (“The Heart”). His next collection *Vite brevi di idioti* (“Short Lives of Idiots”) (1994) brings together 31 short stories which tell of the lives of people on the margins of society, of demented people, of self-styled visionaries; of their friendly, nonconformist and strange behaviour. In the collection of various writers *Nuovi narratori ’90* (“New Narrators ’90), Barbolini is attracted by the wonderful and the unsolved, by the bizarre and by the witchcraft of the Po valley. 1991’s *La strada fantasma* (“The Ghost Street”) is made up of three short stories: *Vandelli*, *Calunnie* (“Slanders”) (which is set among provincial university students) and *L’ultimo giorno del Cancro* (“The

*Last Day of Cancer*”). In *Buffalo Bill sceglie Chico e altri racconti* (“Buffalo Bill chooses Chico’ and other stories”) there are ghost stories, police thrillers, stories on everyday vampires and absurd scenes told in a playful manner. ☺

## PARMA ACCORDING TO SALGADO

“Those who dream by day know many things which escape those who only dream by night.” This quotation by Edgar Allan Poe could have been written for the journey through the streets and squares of Parma of the great Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado. For two weeks last June he dedicated his attention and his lens to this city. From this experience – an experience which saw photographs taken of actors during theatrical rehearsals, operatives working on the production of Parmesan cheese, old men playing bowls, young lovers exchanging kisses at the feet of the Verdi altar, amongst other scenes – came the book *Salgado, Parma*, published by Contrasto in association with Parma City Council, whom we thank for the permission to reproduce some of the photos. Born in Aimorés, Brazil, in 1944, Salgado currently lives in Paris. After a masters degree in economics at the University of São Paulo and a doctorate in the same discipline at the University of Paris, he worked as an economist for the United Nations in Africa. In 1973, at the age of 29, he decided to become a photographer, and immediately began to receive critical acclaim. His *Autres Amériques* (1984) won the Kodak-City Prize in Paris, while *Sahel: L’homme en détresse* was named best photographic book of 1986.

He became internationally famous in 1993 with the publication of his book *Workers: An Archaeology of the Industrial Age* which was published in seven languages and whose photographs were displayed in the world’s most important museums. After this homage to manual work, in 2000 Salgado published another great reportage, *Migration: Humanity in Transition*, a project on migratory movements throughout the world which lasted seven years. The photographer, who concentra-

tes principally on social themes and whose photos are exclusively in black and white, has been able to reinvent the work of the photo journalist, bringing it to an extraordinary level of ethical and aesthetic commitment. It is for this that he is considered one of the greatest photographers of our times.

“Looking at Salgado’s photos I’ve always wondered what is the nature of the light which permeates them” says the director Bernardo Bertolucci. “Now that Salgado has passed through Parma I seem to have understood. It is the light which emanates from the faces, from the bodies, from the things, from the places themselves that Salgado photographs. Therefore, at the moment in which he perceives something very close to that scientific and poetic phenomenon which is called aura, even the humble people of Parma which he shows us find themselves, for an instant but forever, at the centre of the world.” ☺

## THE CHALK VEIN

*By Monica Lugli*

A karstic landscape dotted with blind valleys, sinkholes, and grottoes is fashioned out of a chalky outcrop stretching for over twenty kilometers, along which the fern species *Persian Cheilanthes* thrives (the only example of it in Italy), as does an underground fauna of great interest. The area, a place that kindles the passions of geologists and naturalists, lies halfway between Bologna and Ravenna: it comprises the communes of Borgo Tossignano, Casalfiumanese, Fontanelice, Brisighella, Casola Valsenio, and Riolo Terme, and it’s set to become the Chalk Vein Park of Romagna. The guiding idea is to make this an area for many activities, unlike what you can expect from the showcase philosophy of a museum display: we’re looking to have a place where you can “try innovative contents,” says the regional councilor of agriculture Guido Tampieri, “in view of a new bill on protected areas that the region will be writing into law within the year.” Considering the features of the terrain and the area’s farming economy, the local government—meaning the provinces of Bologna and Ravenna and the cities and

mountain communities of the Sarneterno and Faentina Valleys—is proposing to assign to the farmers a major role in maintaining the park, this by setting up a permanent round of discussion and exchange between the park’s maintenance agency and the local farmers’ associations. Four points of innovation inspire the forthcoming regional law and the birth of the new park: an active role played by the local communities in maintaining protected areas; greater autonomy for the park-maintenance agencies; a park policy framed to encourage sustainable activities and promoting local produce, agro-tourism, and craftwork; and a greater awareness of the question of natural damage. If this new law on protected areas is expected to pass within the year, for the next two years Emilia-Romagna has already set aside an outlay of ten million euros to maintain the thirteen parks and thirteen reserves within the region, an overall surface of 100,000 hectares. A wide range of public works has been funded: green areas will be reclaimed and facilities put up for nature lovers, prevention plans will be effected against the natural damage brought on by the local fauna, and environment education programs will be launched; also, some of the moneys put up will go into scientific research and into initiatives to support local agriculture and produce. ☺

## THE CREATOR OF CORTO MALTESE

*By Claudio Bacilieri*

Hugo Pratt was born on a beach in Rimini. Those of us who have loved him, who have dreamed of wonderful adventures with Corto Maltese and the other unforgettable characters of Pratt’s comics, were convinced that he was from Venice. Venice was his adoptive city, and in its tangle of narrow streets and canals, Corto Maltese went looking for a hidden and mysterious place, the Corte Sconta. Instead, the first sea the great drawer set his eyes on was that of the Romagna Riviera, the Adriatic, and not the more exotic seas of Africa, of the Antilles or of the Pacific which provide the setting for Corto’s adventures.

We were told about Pratt’s birth in Rimini by an Argentine reader of ER who still remembers the day in 1994 when the great artist, by now very ill (he would die a year later in Lausanne, aged 68), was present at an exhibition in his honour at the Centro Cultural de la Recoleta in Buenos Aires. “It seemed like he wished to say goodbye to Argentina before dying” says our reader. Hugo Pratt’s links to Argentina were very strong. In fact, they still are – one only has to look at the numerous websites dedicated to him in Spanish. He founded *Asso di Picche*, the first magazine of comic strips entirely created by Italian authors, in Venice with a group of friends. In 1950 the group moved to Buenos Aires, where the publishing company Editorial Abril agreed to publish the stories of *Asso di Picche*, which was also the name of the first important character created by Pratt. His Argentine period lasted about ten years, during which other comic book heroes such as Sergeant Kirk, Ernie Pike and Ticonderoga came to life.

After brief spells in London, in Mexico (where he married for the second time, the first time having been in Venice in 1953), and in West Virginia, the artist returned to Argentina to work on a series of adventure stories set in Africa. In 1961 he moved to Brazil where he founded the *Escuela Panamericana de Arte*. However, he felt homesick for Argentina, and soon returned there. Years later he would dedicate to his favourite country the now famous adventures of Tango and El Gaucho, the latter being produced together with Milo Manara. In 1962 the Argentine financial crisis forced him to return to Italy, but the red thread which linked him to South America was not cut.

In 1967 a rich property dealer who loved his adventure stories offered him the chance to produce a top quality magazine using and expanding on the works published in Argentina. It is thus that Sgt. Kirk came on the scene in Genoa. In the first issue there was a story called *La ballata del mare salato* (“The Ballad of the Salty Sea”) a long saga with many interesting characters, the most striking of whom was a lone sailor with an earring. This

was Corto Maltese, destined to become one of the world’s most loved comic characters. Everything possible has been said about this romantic, Conrad-style adventurer, an existentialist globe-trotter always thirsty for justice. He has been discussed by respected intellectuals such as Umberto Eco, and hundreds of students have made him the subject of their graduation theses. A quick search on the internet will throw up innumerable discussion forums on Corto and on Pratt’s work, especially in France. Pratt dedicated to his alter ego, to his rogue shadow, the years from 1970 to 1975, years which were spent in and around Paris. In this period, for the French magazine *Pif*, he produced perhaps his best works: the great narrative structures – true graphic novels, not simply comics – of *Sotto il segno del Capricorno*, *Le Celtiche*, *Le Etiopiche* and *Corte sconta detta arcana*. These masterpieces were followed up in the following years by *Favola di Venezia*, *La casa dorata di Samarcanda*, *La giovinezza di Corto Maltese*, *Tango*, *Le Elvetiche* and *Mû*. In this way Hugo Pratt became a cultural myth. His live and work are so completely intertwined that perhaps his birth on a Rimini beach was in itself a sign of destiny. So to perhaps his youth and adolescence spent in Ethiopia with his father, a member of the Italian colonial police. The young Hugo spent the years from 1937 to 1941 in Africa, enough time to learn Swahili, to hear the tam tam of the Dinkal and to experience the fascination of a different culture.

Pratt was not only the author of comics, but a true novelist: he wrote words to put to pictures (“for me the comic is a form of writing” he said in an interview) and his drawings are like photographs, framed scenes somewhere between dream and reality. Today, while fans debate whether the colour of his later works lack some of the magic from the earlier black and white works, we have to ask ourselves about the universal value of Pratt’s work. What we all find in them is the ability to dream: adventures in far off places and countries, mysterious and fascinating women, strong feelings such as friendship and honour are the ingredients which make Corto Maltese the greatest Italian comic. ☺