

The West End Museum

150 STANIFORD STREET, SUITE 7, BOSTON, MA 02114

West End Museum Hosts Annual Italian Heritage Month Celebration *Features Italian Photography Exhibit, Honoree Night & Film Series*

FOR RELEASE: September 10, 2015

Boston, MA—[The West End Museum](#) will host events celebrating Italian Heritage Month in October for the sixth consecutive year. Prior to the demolition of Boston's Old West End during the "urban renewal" of the 1950s, many Italian-American families called the neighborhood home. The Museum's month-long celebration honors this former little piece of Italy along with old and new residents of Italian descent.

Members Gallery Exhibit: *Indelebile Italia*

September 22 through November 28 FREE; open during regular Museum hours

Reception: Saturday, October 17; 4:00 p.m. FREE; light refreshments will be served

This photography exhibit, sponsored by [Gallery East](#), captures and celebrates the beauty and mystery of Italy. Photographer and curator Giselle Valdes' stunning and dramatic images feature the cityscapes, churches and historic buildings, Renaissance sculpture and ancient ruins of Rome, Florence and Venice. Photographs are available for purchase, with a portion of the proceeds going to fund future shows at the West End Museum.

Honoree Night

Tuesday, October 6; 6:30 p.m. FREE; light refreshments will be served

This year's West End Museum Italian Heritage Month honorees—recognized for their contributions to preserving the culture of the West End and its rich immigrant history—are Joseph E. Morello, Angela Rotondo and Joseph Russo.

Joseph E. Morello was born and raised in the West End. For more than a decade, he has worked with the Augusta Boston Club, serving a term as president and on several committees such as cultural, scholarship, Festa di San Domenico, membership and bocce. In 2009, Morello received the Club's "Man of the Year Award," which is presented annually to a member who has devoted time and energy to the betterment and success of the group. Formerly known as the Augusta Fraternal Associates, the organization was founded in the West End in 1936 by immigrants from Augusta, Sicily, including Morello's father Gaetano and mother Maria (Mignosa).

Angela Rotondo is a former West Ender who moved back to the neighborhood 17 years ago and has steadily served the community ever since. She is a member of the Museum's Advisory Board; has served in many capacities for the West End Civic Association, including as president in 2014; and is currently director of the West End Place Managing Board and chairs its Community Relations Committee. Rotondo also has been professed a Secular Franciscan 3rd Order, teaching and serving as a councilor-at-large at St. Anthony's Shrine in Boston. She is pursuing a degree in English at Suffolk University.

Joseph Russo was an Italian immigrant who founded his own funeral home business at 42 Green Street in the West End in 1926. The Joseph Russo Funeral Home still exists today in Roslindale, MA. Russo went on to serve as a distinguished member of the Boston City Council from 1938 to 1946 and later served as a commissioner of the City of Boston Election Department for many years. A dedicated West End political figure, Russo also was very active in the Augusta Fraternal Associates (predecessor to the Augusta Boston Club) and served as president at one time. He is the father of the Museum's 2013 Italian Heritage Month honoree, Judge Domenic J.F. Russo. This honor is being bestowed posthumously.

Italian Film Series

Pre-registration is required for all film screenings: thewestendmuseum.org/whats_on/event-registration.

Haymarket (2015; Documentary; Produced by Historic New England & the Haymarket Pushcart Association)

Wednesday, October 7; 7:00 p.m. \$10 (\$5 HNE & WEM members)

Since the 1830s, Boston's Haymarket has served a constant stream of longtime residents, newly arrived immigrants, students and tourists. Despite economic downturns, the advent of the supermarket and massive construction projects in the area, the Haymarket continues to be an economically vital and colorful gathering place for the city. Directed by Justin Goodstein, *Haymarket* uses photographs and oral history interviews with workers, shoppers, fans and historians to tell the story of this beloved marketplace. A discussion with Goodstein and Kenneth C. Turino, manager of community engagement and exhibitions at Historic New England, will follow the screening.

Perlasca: The Courage of a Just Man (2002; Drama; Italian [English subtitles]; Stars Luca Zingaretti)

Wednesday, October 14; 7:00 p.m. FREE

This film is based on the true story of Giorgio Perlasca (Zingaretti), an Italian Fascist supporter in the 1920s who fought in Africa and in the Spanish Civil War. After some years, disillusioned by fascism, he worked in Budapest procuring supplies for the Italian army in the Balkans and lived an easy life among Hungarian high society. When Italy surrendered to the Allied forces, Italian citizens in Hungary were considered enemies of the government, which was allied with Germany, and were at risk of arrest and internment. Perlasca took refuge in the Spanish Embassy. Aware of the threat to Jewish people, he began to help them find shelter in Spanish safe houses. After the Spanish ambassador moved to Switzerland, Perlasca posed as the Spanish consul, tricking Nazi officials and saving the lives of more than 5,000 Jews in Hungary.

I Am Love (Io Sono L'amore) [2009; Drama, Romance; Italian (English subtitles); Stars Tilda Swinton, Pippo Delbono, Flavio Parenti, Edoardo Gabbriellini]

Wednesday, October 21; 7:00 p.m. FREE

Directed by Luca Guadagnino, *I Am Love* tells the story of the wealthy Recchi family, whose lives are undergoing sweeping changes. Patriarch Edoardo Sr. decides to name a successor to the reins of his massive industrial company, and in so doing, surprises everyone by splitting power between his son Tancredi (Delbono) and grandson Edo (Parenti). However, Edo dreams of opening a restaurant with his friend Antonio (Gabbriellini), a talented chef. At the heart of Tancredi's family is his wife, Emma (Swinton), a Russian immigrant who has adopted the culture of Milan. An adoring and attentive mother, Emma's existence is rocked to the core when she falls deeply in love with Antonio and pursues a passionate love affair that will change the family forever.

Boston's North End: America's Italian Neighborhood (2015; Documentary)

Wednesday, October 28; 7:00 p.m. \$10 (\$5 HNE & WEM members)

Through interviews and archival film footage, this documentary tells the story of the families, the friendship, the food and the hard work in the vibrant Italian-American community that has called the North End home for more than 100 years. Highlights include residents George Scigliano and James Donnaruma—who helped shape the neighborhood—as well as events like the Great Molasses Flood and the Sacco and Vanzetti funeral, which still have an impact today.

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About the West End Museum:

The West End Museum is dedicated to the collection, preservation and interpretation of the history and culture of the West End neighborhood. The Museum's permanent exhibit, "The Last Tenement," highlights the immigrant history of the neighborhood through its decimation under Urban Renewal in 1959; two additional galleries feature rotating exhibits. The Museum is located near North Station at 150 Staniford St. Suite 7. Hours: Tuesday - Friday 12:00pm - 5:00pm; Saturday 11:00am - 4:00pm. Admission is free.

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