



"Gomorra" Reaches the New York Stages

Carmen Cutugno (May 21, 2010)



The theatrical company Kairos Italy Theater, directed by Laura Caparrotti presents the reading of the theatrical adaptation of "Gomorra", Roberto Saviano's bestseller



"Gomorra" is without doubts one of those novels to have indelibly marked the history of the Italian publishing industry, at the same time without risking imprisonment within the "book format" it was conceived as. Whoever has had the opportunity to read the pages written by writer and journalist from Campania [Roberto Saviano](#) [2], will probably agree in defining them quite intense, and also because of this, ideal as starting point for other forms of communication. Therefore, many of us weren't at all surprised when, in 2008, two years after the book was published, director [Matteo Garrone](#) [3] decided to make a movie out of it.

But what many people don't know is that Saviano himself, while writing the novel, was already thinking of a theatrical adaptation of "Gomorra", before it was published and became one of Italy's most popular bestsellers.

"Gomorra", for the few who don't know it, is Roberto Saviano's first novel with which he boldly denounced the reality of Neapolitan Camorra, and organized crime in general, thus "earning" himself death threats from the Camorristi themselves, and forcing him as a consequence to submit himself to an intense protection protocol, which has seen him living under constant surveillance since October 2006.

The theatrical adaptation of "Gomorra" mentioned above was written in collaboration with [Mario Gelardi](#) [4] and during the last three years was successfully performed on Italian stages. Today the text reaches the shores of New York, thanks to the English translation by [Laura Caparrotti](#) [5] and Dave Johnson. It will be performed at [The Flea Theater](#) [6] on May 23 at 7pm, in collaboration with NYU's [Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò](#) [7]. This reading actually is part of a larger project, "THE KIT PROJECT", with which the [Kairos Italy Theater \(KIT\)](#) [8] and its artistic director Laura Caparrotti wanted to inaugurate a series of particular readings of Italian theatrical works.

"I've wanted to organize a series of theatrical reading for a long time to be able to present English translations of Italian theatrical texts - Laura explains to us - I'm referring to little known or unknown texts in the United States which in Italy were very successful. Texts that perhaps we Italians love but nobody has heard of here. A way to spread our beautiful theater and, I hope, convince some American company to mount something that isn't by the usual (great, but usual) Eduardo, [Pirandello](#) [9] or Goldoni. In Rome, Giovanna Marinelli, at that time director of the [Teatro di Roma](#) [10], had suggested some texts, among which this theatrical adaptation of "Gomorra". When I got down to reading the text, written by Saviano in collaboration with Mario Gelardi, I decided that it should be translated and presented right away. And that's where The Flea Theater became involved. They had already accepted to present a series of readings of translated Italian theater together with my company - Kairos Italy Theater. We set a date and here we are today, presenting a beautifully built text, from the hands of Mario and Roberto, presented with enormous success in Italy for three whole years. I have first rate actors, first and foremost [Rocco Sisto](#) [11] who received an Obie Award a few days ago for "continuous acting excellence"... so what more would I want?"

When we ask her what she thinks about the fact that in Italy someone states that we shouldn't talk about the Mafia abroad, because it means exporting an ugly image of Italy, Caparrotti answers: "I admit that while translating the script with Dave Johnson and Rocco Sisto we would joke about the fact that after the reading no one would go back to Naples or Campania. But it's a joke. The truth is that it's not about Italian Mafia, but about perfectly legal industries that rely upon the illegal system because it's to their advantage and because they don't have alternatives that allow them to spend less. Basically it's about a legal system that cohabits and collaborates with the illegal one, pretending not to know that it's illegal. I continue to say that what just happened in the Gulf of Mexico is the result of negligence of those in power: they knew it could happen, but didn't do anything to avoid it, because that is what was most convenient for them. It's important to underline this: it's not only an Italian problem, but as Saviano states in the script, it's a problem of a continent... and I would add 'of all continents'."

And it looks like the "KIT PROJECT" has stimulated the curiosity of the New York public, since the reading of "Gomorra" on May 23 at The Flea Theater is already been 'sold out'. "I think the American public's answer to this event will be great! And we can say this already since the reading (and I



underline 'reading', since someone might think it's a real staging) is already sold out and there's a pretty long waiting list... which has led to the decision of having another reading of the text to satisfy the many demands”.

To all those theater aficionados or simply those who are curious, who don't want to miss the opportunity to attend the reading of the theatrical adaptation of "Gomorra", don't waste time in reserving a seat for the June 13 performance, once again at 7pm at The Flea Theater (41 White Street).

THE FLEA THEATER and KAIROS ITALY THEATER

present
THE KIT PROJECT:

READINGS OF ITALIAN THEATER IN TRANSLATION

GOMORRAH

A theatrical adaptation by Roberto Saviano and Mario Gelardi
Translated by Laura Caparrotti and Dave Johnson in collaboration with Rocco Sisto

Sunday May 23, 7 pm
The Flea Theater (41 White Street)
Free Admission

Sunday June 13, 7pm
The Flea Theater (41 White Street)
Free Admission

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sarahw@theflea.org [12].

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