Italy and the Geopolitics of Migration: Aesthetic Approaches

Thursday, October 4

9:00am - 12:00pm
Darren Star Theater (Melnitz Hall 1422)

1:00pm - 8:00pm
Royce Hall (Room 314)

with filmmakers Andrea Segre and Medhin Paolos, writer Ubah Cristina Ali Farah, and theorists Alessandro Dal Lago and Alessandra Di Maio

The recent formation of the Five Star Movement and the League coalition government (May, 2018) has catapulted Italy again into the forefront of European conservative politics marked by populism, national retrenchment, anti-immigration sentiment, and skepticism toward joint ventures and platforms of the European Union. At this moment it is worth revisiting the real consequences of continental migration and to explore Italy as a plural, intercultural and transnational space. This symposium brings together artists and scholars to examine recent literary and cinematic representations of non-Western migration. Novelist, poet and essayist Ubah Cristina Ali Farah — author of *Little Mother* (2011), a narrative about the Somali diaspora in Africa, Italy, and other countries — will present a reinterpretation of the paradigmatic tale about civil and moral strife which is Sophocles’ *Antigone*. Andrea Segre, sociologist and director of many documentary and fiction films examining transnational migration to Italy, will screen and discuss his recent feature film *The Order of Things* (2017), based on transnational networks of political, military, criminal and non-governmental organizations involved in European immigration policies. Filmmaker and citizenship activist Medhin Paolos will screen and discuss *Asmarina* (2015), a documentary about the Eritrean/Ethiopian community of Milan. Sociologist Alessandro Dal Lago, author of *Non-Persons: The Exclusion of Migrants in a Global Society* (2004), a seminal study of the juridical and mediatic treatment of immigrants in Italy, will join Mediterranean and cultural scholar Alessandra Di Maio — author of *Wor(l)ds in Progress: A Study of Contemporary Migrant Writings* (2008) — to discuss political and aesthetic representations of Italy and conditions of migrancy. Attempting to take the pulse of geopolitics in Italy today, the symposium aims to build bridges across disciplines in the increasing privation of institutional ones.

Additional Participants: Federica Di Blasio (PhD Candidate, Italian, UCLA), Shelleen Greene (Associate Professor, Film, Television and Digital Media, UCLA), Thomas Harrison (Professor, Italian, UCLA), Áine O’Healy (Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures, Loyola Marymount University), SA Smythe (Assistant Professor, African American Studies, UCLA), and Dominic Thomas (Chair, Italian, UCLA)

Co-sponsored by the School of Theater, Film and Television (TFT), Department of Film, Television and Digital Media, Department of Italian, TFT Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Skoll Center for Social Impact Entertainment, Department of African American Studies, Bunche Center for African American Studies, Center for European and Russian Studies, UCLA African Studies Center, the Italian Cultural Institute, Los Angeles, and UCLA Humanities Division