

J. Productions, Milan in association with  
Cinema la Compagnia, Teatro della Pergola & the British Institute of Florence, presents

# speaking DANTE

A once-in-a-lifetime live reading of *The Divine Comedy*  
marking the 700th anniversary of Dante Alighieri

## INFERNO PURGATORIO PARADISO

performed in **ENGLISH**  
with **ITALIAN SUBTITLES**  
in a translation by  
**Robert & Jean Hollander**

### CINEMA LA COMPAGNIA

Via Camillo Cavour 50/r, 50121 Florence - Italy

**19:00 MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER -**

**19:00 TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**

**TO ATTEND LIVE OR ONLINE:**

[www.cinemacompagnia.com](http://www.cinemacompagnia.com)

*24 hours ...*

*100 cantos ...*

*live in Florence ...*

*streamed across the world*

Cast includes

**RALPH FIENNES**

**JOHN NETTLES**

MARY CHATER

CLARA FRANCESCA

ANDREW HARRISON

RUPERT MASON

JAN NOBLE

directed by

**JUSTIN BUTCHER**

video design by

**DAMIAN HALE**

illustrations by

**GABRIELE DELL'OTTO**

*All proceeds go to support*

**THE COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO**

*WORKING WITH REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN FLORENCE*

[WWW.SANTEGIDIO.ORG](http://WWW.SANTEGIDIO.ORG)





700 years since his death, Dante Alighieri's epic *The Divine Comedy* continues to grip the imagination of artists, composers, film-makers, writers and scholars across the world. Translated into more than one hundred languages, *The Divine Comedy* stands alongside the Bible and the works of Homer and Shakespeare as one of the ultimate achievements of literary creation – Dante's dream-journey through Hell (*Inferno*), Purgatory (*Purgatorio*) and Heaven (*Paradiso*) guided by the ancient Roman poet Virgil, in 100 cantos of some of the most sublime poetry ever written.

For the first time ever, in celebration of Dante's astonishing legacy, Milan theatre producer **Julia Holden** in collaboration with award-winning UK playwright **Justin Butcher** is curating a 24-hour live reading in Florence of the whole of *The Divine Comedy*, in the acclaimed English translation by **Robert & Jean Hollander**, with a live audience & live-streamed, with contributors including **Ralph Fiennes**, **John Nettles** and a team of top UK and international theatre professionals.

***Speaking Dante*** will be hosted and live-streamed by **Cinema la Compagnia** in Florence, in partnership with **Teatro della Pergola** and the **British Institute in Florence**, from 19:00 on Monday 13th September – 19:00 on Tuesday 14th September.

As a victim of political persecution in the civil war that engulfed the mediaeval Republic of Florence, Dante was exiled on pain of death, at the height of his career. He lamented his cruel betrayal by his mother city, and the bitterness of exile, for the rest of his life.

***You shall leave everything you love most dearly:  
this is the arrow that the bow of exile  
shoots first. You are to know the bitter taste***

***of others' bread, how salt it is, and know  
how hard a path it is for one who goes  
descending and ascending others' stairs.***

### **Paradiso XVII, 55-60**

In sympathy with this theme of exile, ***Speaking Dante*** will raise funds and awareness for projects working with refugees and migrants in Italy, specifically in Florence. Our charity partner is the **Community of Sant'Egidio**, whose pioneering work supporting refugees and migrants in Italy includes the Schools of Language & Culture, the Humanitarian Corridors Project, the *Genti di Pace* (People of Peace) project and their work with the Roma People.

As a celebration of the first great work of Italian literature written in the vernacular, ***Speaking Dante*** will raise funds for the **Schools of Language & Culture, Community of Sant'Egidio, Florence** – a vital, creative and empowering project enabling refugees and migrants to learn the Italian language and engage with Italian culture, in an inspiring and transformational environment described as a 'workshop of the culture of co-existence'.

<https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30104/langID/en/Schools-of-Language-and-Culture.html>

ALL PROCEEDS FROM ***SPEAKING DANTE*** WILL GO TO SUPPORT  
**THE COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO**  
WORKING WITH REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN FLORENCE