

PRESS RELEASE

“Commit to democracy”. Writer Paolo Giordano’s appeal to future scientists

At SISSA Opening Ceremony 2018, in occasion of the School’s 40th Anniversary, the Premio Strega winner with a past as physicist encourages young researchers not to avoid the today’s challenges



Trieste, 31 October 2018

A passionate defence of intellectual freedom but also of the responsibility not to betray democratic values. Paolo Giordano encourages tens of young students who are continuing their education at SISSA in Trieste, making an unpublished speech during the opening ceremony of the academic year. With a past in the research of elementary particles, he invites the audience of SISSA physicists, mathematicians and neuroscientists to never forget in their professional life the fears of what we could call - borrowing the expression of the physicist Robert Oppenheimer - the “human-being-in-general”, namely that which we all are when

we get out of the comfort zone of our limited knowledge. We must never forget this, because it is the loss of contact between different worlds that reduces democratic exchanges and in which, ultimately, the seeds of mistrust, incomprehension and intolerance lurk. Themes that are truer than ever and part of the morning that SISSA dedicates to celebrating its first 40 years. The Opening Ceremony will be held on 5 November from 10 am in the Aula Magna “Paolo Budinich” and will be the occasion to welcome new students. The most salient moments will include the presentation of the *Alumni* Society, composed of former SISSA students.

The guests

Paolo Giordano, Premio Strega 2008 winner, is one of the most eagerly awaited guests of the ceremony. His participation will be meaningful not only because the writer (physicist by training) is teacher of creative writing at the SISSA Master’s course in Science Communication “Franco Pratico” (MSC), but also for his role as celebrity endorser of Trieste European City of Science, a title which the capital city of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia will be able to boast in 2020, when it will host the Euroscience Open Forum.

“Black holes in the eyes of a particle physicist” is the title of the *Lectio Magistralis* of Gian Francesco Giudice, former SISSA student and currently Head of Theoretical Physics Department at CERN. In his speech, he will describe how the contemporary study of black holes, involving both astronomers and particle physicists, represents an example of the potential of interdisciplinary research, one of the distinctive features of SISSA.

The ceremony will be chaired by the communicator Silvia Bencivelli, voice of Radio3, former MSC student who has recently won the Premio Classico 2018 for her work as science journalist.

The ceremony

The opening of the academic year will be a moment to tell new students about all the activities carried out at SISSA, from the academic to the recreational ones, from the outreach initiatives to the administrative activities. To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the School will also launch the *Alumni* association, composed of former students of PhD and post-graduate specialization courses.

The prizes

Numerous prizes will be awarded during the ceremony, such as the prize for the 25 years of service and for the services rendered to SISSA. Prizes for best Doctorate theses in Physics and Neuroscience, prizes in memory of Franco

Lutman (for best Doctorate thesis in Mathematics and for best MSC thesis) and the prize for the collection of oral testimonies in a scientific context in memory of the journalist Romeo Bassoli, will also be awarded.

The entire ceremony will be broadcast live in streaming and live on the School's Facebook page.

USEFUL LINKS

Full programme:
<https://bit.ly/2zi8oTj>

Live streaming:
<https://bit.ly/2St0Zt2>

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