



# The voice of Maria Dolens

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## The world at the polls

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While the President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella was giving his exemplary end-of-year speech, the values of peace and constructive interaction between peoples and nations were highlighted on a global level as were the ever-topical issues of health, work, education, equal rights and the fight against gender violence on a national level. Around the same time (*décalage horaire* aside) other Heads of State and Government, representatives of authoritarian regimes, of so-called “competitive authoritarianism” and countries in a state of war, were interested in communicating very different principles

and priorities in their objectives in their respective speeches over the airwaves.

In particular, the indefinite continuation of ongoing conflicts until the “total destruction” of the adversaries was evoked almost in unison both by presidents Putin and Zelensky, in relation to the Russian/Ukrainian war now approaching its third year of devastating existence, and by the leadership of Israel and Hamas, engaged in bloody military operations since 7 October, in which - as evidence of their barbarity - the number of civilian victims far exceeds those in combat.

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## STORIES OF TRENINO PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

# From the Non Valley to Montreal

### MARCO CALLIARI MUSICIAN WITHOUT BORDERS

*We asked some descendants of the Trentino people who emigrated in recent decades to tell their stories firsthand, emphasizing how much their origins guided and influenced them in life. This would not have been possible without the active and friendly collaboration of the Trentini nel Mondo Association, founded in 1957 with the aim of social solidarity and as a means of aggregation and assistance for Trentino migrants and their descendants. The first individual to discover is the musician Marco Calliari.*

I always wanted to be a musician, a singer. Since I was a child I have had the desire to learn to sing and play the guitar and other instruments. And luckily, being a singer-songwriter has become my profession. But it wasn't just "luck". If I have been performing on stage for three decades, I owe it to my family, to the place where I was born, to the friends I have had and to some personal qualities: the passion for beauty, the curiosity for diversity and tenacity. My name is Marco Calliari and I was born on 27 August 1974, in Montreal, Québec, Canada. I am the son of emigrants. My parents, Franca Pagliarulo and Mario Calliari, were both born in Italy. My mother in

Milan, to a family that arrived in the Lombard capital from Foggia, in Puglia. My father was born in Cressino (or Crescino), a hamlet of Campodенно, a town in the Non Valley, in Trentino.

They arrived in Montreal in the same year: 1961. My mother, the last of nine children, had come because both of her parents had died, following her older sister, Aunt Ada. My grandfather on my father's side, Luigi, had already worked in Montreal in the 1950s, then returned to Italy to prepare for the move of almost the entire family to Canada.

I was therefore born in an Italian environment but in a French-speaking context: in Québec, out of a population of around eight million inhabitants, French is the mother tongue of almost 80 percent of the population. I am a "child" of the so-called "law 101", i.e. the "Charter of the French language", which ensures the protection and promotion of French in Québec and contemplates the use of French at all levels of society, from public services to businesses. Immigrants are also invited to enroll their children in French schools.

I therefore grew up learning French and English (the other official language of Canada) but also Italian



and I also speak a little Spanish. And these four languages are also those with which I expressed myself in music.

At 14, with some friends of mine, Carlos, born in Santiago de Chile, and twins Daniel and Oscar, sons of Spaniards from Barcelona, and therefore Catalans, we founded the group «Anonymus». We played heavy metal music and the lyrics of the songs were in the four languages mentioned.

Our first album was released in 1994, entitled *Ni Vu, Ni Connu* (Neither Seen, Nor Known): it was the first heavy metal album with songs in French. There were no groups of that musical genre in France either. I played with them for seventeen years, before embarking on my solo career. But our bond is still very strong and in January I went on stage with them again, for a spectacular concert with which they celebrated thirty-five years of uninterrupted activity.

An important stage in my personal and professional growth occurred in 1994, when I had the opportunity to take part in the "stays" in Trentino, which were organized by the Emigration Office of the Autonomous Province of Trento, reserved for children and descend-

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ants of Trentino emigrants all over the world, to introduce them to the history, culture, economy and traditions of the land of their ancestors. I had been in Trentino with my parents when I was six years old, but those two weeks spent in Candriai on Bondone, the mountain of Trento, at the age of twenty left a profound mark on me, they made me understand that I belonged to a world made up of relationships, attachments, bonds handed down from generation to generation.

After the “stay” in Candriai, during which I met relatives from Trentino, my stay in Italy was extended for another few weeks, with stops in Milan, Turin and Rome, arranging more meetings with relatives and friends. And in Igea Marina, where I went with my cousins from Turin, I improvised a concert in a hotel together with Franco, also a guitarist, whom I met in those days. As a repertoire I proposed songs from the popular Québec tradition. Franco played English songs. A spectator asked us if we knew any Italian songs. But neither was able to meet that request.

I confess that at that moment I was ashamed of not knowing any Italian songs. When I returned to

Québec I felt the need to fill that gap. I began to listen and learn Neapolitan songs, such as those of Carosone, battle songs such as *Bella ciao*, and many other musical pieces, such as mountain songs. In 2004 I recorded *Che la vita*, my first album with songs in Italian, most of which were composed by me, both the music and the lyrics. I anticipated that fifty copies would be enough to give as gifts to family and friends. And instead it sold twenty-five thousand copies. An unexpected and unforeseen success, which made me understand that I had taken the right path to express my artistic abilities. I have been a professional musician ever since.

I have published another five albums, I have done hundreds of concerts in Canada and across the border, I have brought numerous Italian artists to play in Québec, because I firmly believe in the value of music and its ability to create bridges between cultures. I am proud to introduce Canadians to the Italian spirit through my music, in which there are traces of the most beautiful Italian musical traditions, from Alpine choirs to tarantella. And I am deeply grateful to my parents, who passed down to me their love and passion for music, who made me study classical guitar and singing when I was young, who always believed in my abilities.

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My father is 82 years old and when he comes to attend my concerts I call him on stage to sing *La montanara* together

My father is 82 years old and recently widowed. He has a great voice. And when he comes to attend my concerts, I always call him on stage to sing *La montanara* with me: and every time it is a very strong emotion for both of us.

Marco Calliari





## HAPPENING AT THE UNITED NATIONS

# Attack (almost) never works

Wars don't end when you stop talking about them. And the conflict between the Russian aggressor and the Ukrainian people who defend their territory continues even if it has almost disappeared from the news, overshadowed by another catastrophe, which began with the barbaric terrorist attacks by Hamas against Israel and continued with the bombing of the Gaza Strip which have already caused tens of thousands of deaths.

You must keep your memory alert and above all consider what will happen next, like what the consequences will be of actions implemented for reasons of immediate convenience by a number of states. We need to understand whether the strategies will work or not in the long term.

Remaining in the news, it can be said that Russian President Putin has had proof that in an interconnected world a country cannot be conquered in a week. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, for his part, is realizing that a generalized armed response, even if "justified" by a cowardly and terrible attack, risks creating more problems than it solves. Even Hamas terrorists and their acolytes in the region have to deal with reality: the "attack" which was supposed to "resolve" actually brought new suffering to the Occupied Territories, with thousands of deaths and orphans who will grow up surrounded by hatred. A result very far from the vaunted goal of Israel's destruction.

But these could be opinions, so let's stick to the facts, the numbers, which often provide a safe haven in a sea of news that is difficult to interpret. Let's focus on those of

the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which, having been under way for the longest time, provides tragically reliable data. According to estimates provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of 30 November 2023, 5,908,200 refugees from Ukraine were registered in Europe, of which 5,298,000 have obtained asylum, temporary protection or similar assistance. Furthermore, at the end of September 3.7 million people were displaced within the country.

Given the emergency justified by the fighting, this exodus is currently considered a "side effect" to be addressed in due course. This will be the case until the fighting stops, then it will be time to think about the colossal investments that will be necessary to rebuild a largely destroyed country. The humanitarian issue will be addressed last, and usually limited to the economic effects that a large movement of people entails. What is often missing in these processes is attention to pacification. There will be throngs of international industries ready to rebuild everything better than it was. And there will be weapons manufacturers ready to offer new army catalogs of combat-tested missiles and battle-proven machine guns. The same will happen in the Gaza Strip, where most of the homes have been destroyed, and in Israel, where it will be necessary to increasingly secure the cities in an attempt, which has so far failed, to avoid new attacks.

Without giving in to easy rhetoric or naive pacifism, the question to ask those who decide to attack a civilian population is always the same: "Does it work as a strategy?". History provides the answer: almost never.

## HAPPENING AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

# The future of communication

The Council of Europe Days were among the main themes of the plenary session of the Club of Venice which was held at Palazzo Franchetti between 30 November and 1 December of last year. The initiative highlighted the theme “The future of public communication” during the round table and is considered a good practice for institutional communication as it makes citizens aware of how the decisions taken in Strasbourg directly impact their daily lives. Most people would struggle to list the key points of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter. Few people know about the various conventions in force which cover every

aspect of rights, from the prevention of torture to the fight against human trafficking, to the fight against violence against women.

But the future of public communication in Europe was also at the center of the debate in Venice in light of the many variables found on an institutional, political, technological and professional level.

Initial reports concerned the approach to the next European elections, which will take place in June 2024.

In fact, it is a crucial test to measure the degree of trust and awareness of citizens. The role that communication strategies will be able to play

is important, in particular when promoted at every level. More generally, the need for intergovernmental collaboration and a system approach involving institutions, businesses and civil society was highlighted.

A second part of the conference addressed the specificity of technological evolution and the delicate balance between risk and opportunity that must be taken into account when using artificial intelligence. The main problem before everyone’s eyes is that of manipulation, falsification and distortion of online content. At the moment there are no precise regulations in these areas, nor are there tools within everyone’s reach that allow us to distinguish between true and false. In this sense, 2024 will be a real test, above all due to the fact that it is «an epic electoral year which will see around 2 billion people involved over the next 12 months (essentially half of the world’s electorate) spread across over 70 countries on the planet”, as explained in the editorial of this issue by the Foundation President Reggente Marco Marsilli.

## THE WALLENBERG PRIZE TO NEVA TÖLLE WORKING AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Fighting domestic violence means suffering constant threats and intimidation. It takes courage and perseverance, as demonstrated by Neva Tölle, a Croatian citizen who has spent her entire life working to protect women. For this reason, the Council of Europe awarded her the 2024 Raoul Wallenberg Prize. Her work, as read in the motivation of the jury which was chaired by Ambassador Robert Rydberg, demonstrated courage, determination, capacity for innovation and creativity and had « a real and lasting impact.” In addition to providing direct support to victims, Tölle has worked to promote the introduction of legislative changes and more severe penal policies. “Fighting a

battle like this means overcoming many obstacles, but she persevered and literally saved lives,” pointed out the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić, addressing the award winner. «This award is not just for me – commented Tölle – it is also a recognition for women who have survived violence. They are my heroines and the inspiration that gives me strength every day. I consider myself privileged to have had the opportunity to be with them, to listen to their stories and to witness their incredible courage.”





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*To be continued from page 1...*

This makes any temporal prediction on the duration of hostilities, in both cases, practically impossible, since the “annihilation” of the rival, due to its radical character, represents a much more complex result to achieve than, let’s say, the (re)conquest of a territory or even the political/military downsizing of the opposing army. As an inevitable consequence, this inflexibility is bound to spread like wildfire, involving other areas already characterized by strong instability, as is the case of Yemen, a territory from which the Houthi rebels (with the support of the Iranian ayatollahs) are seriously threatening the security of the Red Sea shipping route, essential for the international trade of European countries (and not only), with terrorist action.

Among the not exactly reassuring announcements at the beginning of the year is evidently that of Chinese President Xi Jinping, due to the references - without the need for too much detail - to the circumstance that China will be “certainly reunified” and that Taiwan will be “brought back under the control of the motherland.” Even if it has already been made explicit on previous occasions and even if it lacks references regarding implementation dates, it is still - and as such has been interpreted by international observers - a “strong” announcement, not surprisingly reiterated by inaugurating an important year in the history of the People’s Republic of China, that of 2024, in which the seventy-fifth anniversary of its existence will be commemorated (and will certainly be adequately celebrated).

Equally significant appears to be the fact that Xi’s televised speech took place just a few days after the presidential and

parliamentary elections were held on the “rebel island” of Taiwan (this is the name given to it by Beijing). The clear affirmation, in the presidential elections, of the current vice-president and candidate of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), William Lai, the most convinced supporter, among the three contenders for office, of a clear line of autonomy, obviously represented the more unwelcome result for the Dragon, which would have instead hoped for the success of Hou Yu-in, exponent of the Kuomintang (in opposition) and theoretician of an approach based on greater cooperation towards the People’s China. For the latter, a reason for partial consolation appears to be represented by the vote for the renewal of Parliament, where the DPP did not obtain an absolute majority of seats. However, it goes without saying that even for William Lai the term “independence” is banned from political jargon, and is replaced by the more realistic “maintenance of the status quo”.

It should also not be forgotten that, in the (failed) attempt to influence the outcome of the polls, Beijing had not hesitated, until the eve of January 13, to combine political pressure with other forms of intimidation, such as the adoption of restrictive economic measures and the use of ostentatious military provocations, specifically a targeted “mix” of aerial overflights, repeated passages of significant naval forces in the Strait and cyber-attacks aimed at Taiwanese infrastructure.

More generally, after the vote which took place at the beginning of January in Bangladesh, that of Taiwan represented the second part of an epic electoral year which will see around 2 billion people involved over the next 12 months (basically half of the electorate worldwide) spread across over 70 countries on the planet.

In the first months of the year, it will be Asia that will be mainly called upon to renew (or confirm) its leadership (with the very important Indian general elections scheduled for April), while, subsequently, the attention of governments, media and public opinion will be destined to move to Europe (European Parliament elections in June) and, in the last part of the year, to the United States, where, the “primaries” recently started, with the same candidates from 2020 possibly competing as representatives of the Democrats and Republicans.

In this very broad electoral round it will obviously be necessary to accept the inevitable, that is to say that both in Belarus and the Russian Federation (called to vote in February and March respectively) nothing can be changed with respect to the continuation, for yet another mandate, of the dictatorships of Lukashenko and Putin.

Nor can “better” results be expected in other contexts equally dominated by today’s regimes in power, such as the cases of Venezuela, Iran and, above all, North Korea. What appears important is that wherever the elections are expected to be fair and free and, even more so, in geographical areas other than Europe (Asia itself, Africa, Latin America), the parties and movements that place the values of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights at the top of their respective political manifestos are rewarded by the electoral bodies.

In this way, the result of refuting the image, dear to autocratic regimes, of an increasingly marked detachment from said values which characterizes the societies of those continents will also be achieved.

In support of this argument, the direct contrast of the *West against the Rest* is often cited which would find concrete expression, according to this interpretation, also during the vote of the United Nations General Assembly in New York and precisely in relation to the two main conflicts in progress.

To counteract this misleading interpretation, it should not be forgotten that economic growth, the progress of science, widespread well-being and technology within everyone’s reach are, within each individual country, strictly connected to democratic government systems, capable of combining the freedom of markets to social protection measures and open, above all, to international dialogue and cooperation. A state model, in other words, completely unacceptable for regimes solely interested in prolonging their own, unquenchable thirst for power indefinitely over time, escaping any “serious” electoral verification.

Also for these reasons, the Taiwanese vote in mid-January which, in rewarding William Lai clearly reiterated Taipei’s belonging to the “team” of democracies, is destined to have an even greater importance, although certainly not secondary, than the territorial context in which the island is inserted. “We have only one hope, to continue living according to our democratic and free model” were the first words of the new president in the message of thanks to his voters. The hope is that these statements, evidence of a virtuous system in which an exchange of roles between the majority and the opposition is conceivable at every single passage from the polls, may meet with an abundance of proselytes also on the occasion of other political disputes of this, electorally so important, year of grace 2024.

Reggente Marco Marsilli, Foundation President



## FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

# To die happy

In Calliano on 23 May 1925 it rained. A little, but it was raining. People didn't mind getting wet and stayed in the street to wait as it was a special day. The Bell that was cast on 30 October of the previous year was arriving in the Piedicastello district of Trento, at the foot of the Doss Trento hill, where ten years later the monument to Cesare Battisti would be erected.

The Colbacchini foundry had done a good job, the sponsors had come from all over Italy and had joined the representatives of the «Legione Trentina». Bishop Celestino Endrici, who had to wait until 14 June 1929 to be elevated to the dignity of archbishop by Pope Pius, had blessed the feverish work of the artisans in the large forge illuminated at times by tongues of fire. The actual fusion had lasted less than ten minutes. There were moments of tension. But in the end the cry "Long live Italy" announced that everything had gone well. The largest Bell on the peninsula, one of the most impressive in the world, was born. It weighed 11 tonnes, was 2 meters and 58 centimeters high, the diameter was 2 meters and 55 centimeters and the clapper weighed 600 kilograms.

For a few months a lot of thought went into preparing the baptism and inauguration ceremonies. Don Rossaro devised a series of initiatives to accompany the "glorious rites" of the Bell which involved local artists and artisans. A commemorative medal in the style of Renaissance medallions was minted. Luigi Ratini, master of the art of engraving, prepared a celebratory postcard.



Coats of arms, acronyms, covers, stamps, headings, friezes of various kinds were produced by numerous artists. Meanwhile, the architect Giovanni Tiella was completing the project for the strengthening of the Malipiero bastion.

On March 29, 1925, two months before the rain of Calliano, the commission met which had to choose the official anthem of the Bell among the works that had participated in the competition announced the year before. The text was written by Don Rossaro. Among the 97 participants, Elio Marini (under the pseudonym Ero Mariani), a composer from Merano, prevailed. What was appreciated in his score was "the simplicity, the character, the ease of singing and the temperament of the verses set to music".

Less than two months later, on May 18, there was the testing and assessment by three commissions of experts, all of whom agreed in declaring that they found themselves «in the presence of a true work of art, which will bring great decorum to the city guarding it, that of Rovereto and will simultaneously bestow great honor to the company which oversaw its fusion".

It was time to bring the Bell home, but to get to Rovereto a route was chosen that allowed everyone to understand what had happened. A cart towed by a motorized vehicle left the foundry, passed through the streets of Trento, left the city and visited the villages of the valley with crowds on either side. In Calliano on 23 May 1925 it rained. A little, but it was raining. Flower petals were thrown from the windows. An elderly lady shouted: «Now I can die happy!» No translation necessary.

