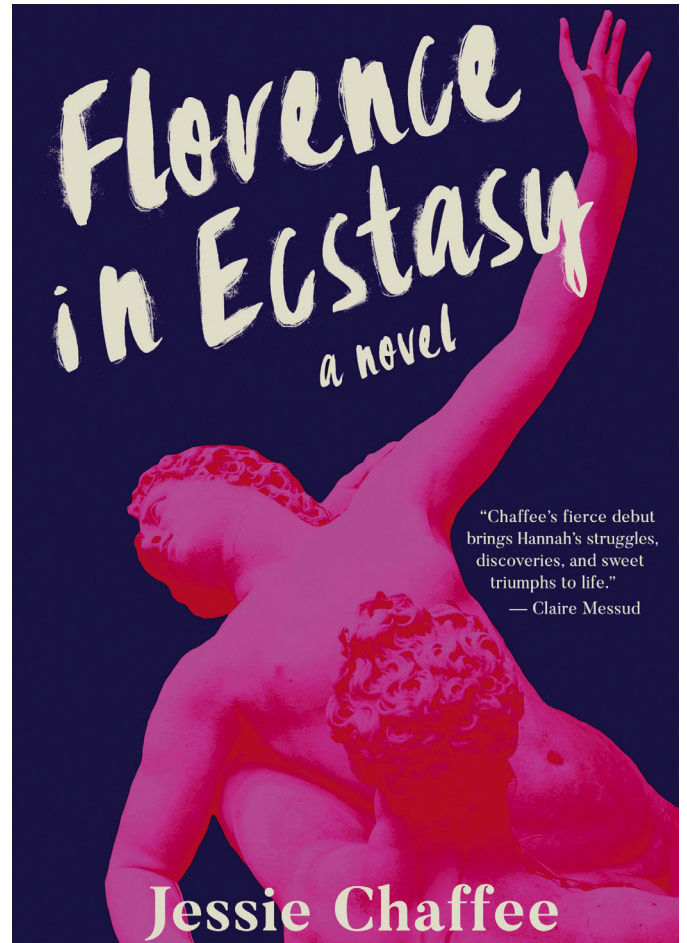


BLENDING

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BREAKING NEWS

FLORENCE IN ECSTASY: JESSIE CHAFFEE RETURNS TO FUA TO DEBUT HER NOVEL

by Blending Staff
Photo courtesy
of the author

On Thursday, November 30th, FUA alumna Jessie Chaffee presented her debut novel, *Florence in Ecstasy*, at the Palazzo Bombicci Guicciardini Strozzi FUA Library, as a precursory event to the school's annual conference with Stony Brook University on December 1st and 2nd. The event was moderated by FUA professor Nicoletta Salomon and included a reading by Chaffee as well as a book signing.

From 2014-2015, Jessie received a Fulbright grant to complete the research for her book and was the FUA Writer-In-Residence during that time. Inspired by her own personal

experiences, as well as the writing of famous Italian women writers such as Elena Ferrante, Natalia Ginzburg, and Dacia Maraini, Jessie spent ten years writing the book – between work, her studies, and other things. Chaffee tells the story of Hannah, a young American woman who flees to Florence and, by joining a rowing club on the Arno, finds a much-needed opportunity to reconnect with her physical body.

During the presentation of the book, author Jessie Chaffee and Professor Salomon spoke about how the book does not fall into the stereotype of Florence, or Italy, as a cure-all medi-

cine. The story is about the relationships the protagonist develops with the people and the city – not a romantic tourist idea of Florence, but the real, modern Florence. In the novel, Chaffee also weaves in the tales of women and female saints from the Catholic church of the 13th through 15th centuries. In fact, Chaffee shared, these women were often writers, or in some way engaged in a form of “rebellious expression” in which Hannah, the book’s protagonist, finds a connection. In fact, the word “ecstasy” is inextricably linked to the concept of the female religious experience. “While the title is a nod to the saints, it is also about an ecstasy that is spiritual in a broader sense, and a kind of ecstasy of place—in this case, Florence,” Jessie writes.

Florence in Ecstasy was published in May 2017 by The Unnamed Press and has received high praise from the San Francisco Chronicle, Rumpus, and New York Times best-selling author Claire Messud. Chaffee will continue her book tour with another presentation and reading at the British Institute in Florence on Thursday, December 7th at 4:30pm in the Harold Action Library.



Photo by Heather Waraksa



APICIUS NEWS: FAST TRACK FOR WACS CERTIFIED CHEF DE PARTIE

by Blending Staff

Florence University of the Arts and the Apicius International School of Hospitality are proud to announce that our culinary arts graduates will now be eligible to apply for the World Association of Chefs Society (WACS) Certified Chef de Partie level.

Previously, Apicius alumni were already able to benefit from our WACS Fast Track for the Commis Chef certification, and this new level comes as Apicius has yet again been recognized for its quality and excellence in culinary arts education.

The World Association of Chefs' Societies was founded at the Sorbonne in 1928. Currently WACS' global network has 100 chefs' associations and over 10 million professional chefs internationally. WACS launched the first global culinary certification in the world for culinary professionals who can apply for nine distinct titles within the culinary certification



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scheme. The association is non-political and its mission is based on setting global culinary standards through education and professional development.

Further details may also be requested from info@apicius.it