



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici
e Culturali Comparati



ICARHUS

John Fante: Thirty Years After

December 12, 2025

Aula Baratto, Ca' Foscari - Dorsoduro, 3246, Venice

Call for Papers

Thirty years have passed from the legendary May 1995 John Fante Conference at California State University, Long Beach, which resulted in the collection of essays *John Fante: A Critical Gathering* (1999) edited by Stephen Cooper and David Fine, a groundbreaking pillar for Fante scholars and the U.S. letters. During these three decades, John Fante's legacy has accomplished two public outcomes: the John Fante Festival "Il dio di mio padre" in Torricella Peligna (Abruzzo) – Fante's father's hometown – since 2006, and the 2010 inauguration of John Fante Square at the corner of 5th Street and Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles. But the 1995 Conference gave also a decisive impulse to Fante's works' spreading across the world and to its never-ending global scholarship, until very recent times, whether in form of articles, monographs, miscellaneous collections, book chapters, and translations. The reason for such prosperous research is that Fante's literature, as for every classic, keeps changing with times and with new readers demanding for new understanding. Fante's novels and short stories, which cover a period of 50 years, still hold as spaces of (dis)illusions, conflicts, and encounters, dealing with peoples, spaces, natural elements, and diverse cultures across the Mountains of Colorado, Southern California, and Los Angeles. They trace relevant Southern Californian geographies and histories: the degraded 1930s Bunker Hill, liminal neighborhoods such as Terminal Island with its docks and canneries, a then-isolated Malibu, the suburban Wilshire Boulevard, the countryside of Roseville, and the Mojave Desert. Fante's works are valuable multiethnic narratives which encompass interactions among diasporic, indigenous and segregated communities (Italian American, Jewish American, Asian American, Mexican American, African American), but also generational and political countercultures in 1930s and 1960s Los Angeles. Fante's relationship with Italy and Europe, his work as screenwriter, along with his late works – e.g., "My Dog Stupid" and *Bravo, Burro!* – still need deeper analysis.

Scholars from every field are welcome to submit contributions on John Fante's works at large. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following perspectives:

- Environmental studies
- Animal studies
- Californian literature
- Italian American identity and representation
- Cinema
- Mexican Americans
- Filipino Americans
- Black Americans
- Gender and Sexuality
- The use of humor
- Fante's minor works
- Children's literature
- Literary influences
- Reception of Fante's work in the world

Confirmed keynote speakers: **Stephen Cooper** (California State University, Long Beach) and **Fred Gardaphé** (John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, Queens College, CUNY).

Please, send an abstract (300-500 words) and a bio note (150-200 words) to Elisa Bordin (elisa.bordin@unive.it) and Enrico Mariani (enrico.mariani@unive.it) – by **May 15, 2025**.

Notifications of acceptance and formal invitations will be issued by May 30, 2025.

Scientific committee: **Elisa Bordin** and **Enrico Mariani**

Organizing Committee: **Elisa Bordin, Enrico Mariani, Andrea Acqualagna** and **Felicità Gelmini**