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## Rome International Literature Festival: John Grisham and Calibro 35

by Nicola Ferlei Brown (columnist) | Thursday, June 18th, 2009

Internationally acclaimed American author John Grisham was warmly welcomed with applause at this year's Rome Literature Festival after addressing the audience in Italian and speaking of how much he and his wife love Italy.



US author John Grisham at the 2009 Rome International Literature Festival, Basilica di Massenzio (by Nicola Ferlei Brown)

The Basilica di Massenzio is playing host to 'Letterature 2009-Festival Internazionale di Roma' organised by *Zetema*, in association with the Casa delle Letterature. Ten balmy evenings featuring 16 renowned authors and musicians, reading never before heard pieces inspired by themes and myths of the moon, to an audience of 2,000. The theme of 'Terra Luna' explores the diverse myths and theories related to the moon and is divided into different facets culminating in June 25 finale with scientists hypothesizing on the relationship between man and the moon.

John Grisham and Milanese band 'Calibro 35' performed last night (Tuesday, 16 June) for a special evening entitled 'Il vento della luna' (The Wind Of the Moon). Authors spoke in a whimsical way about the sense of longing for the moon, which was echoed by the music that served as accompaniment to the pieces read out aloud.

John Grisham, best known for his thrillers, has written 21 books in 46 languages, 8 of which have been adapted for film. His piece entitled 'Tranquillity' was based on a man waiting on Death Row who wanted to see the moon for one last time. In it he explored man's relationship with the fear of dying, ending with the line, "and without fear, he looked at the moon for one last time". There was a great feeling of suspense in the audience as John recited this unread work which was slowly revealed over a 30 minute slot.

Greek author Petros Markaris gracefully spoke about how our image of the moon has changed over time so that man's ideal of the moon has become warped, due to technological advancement. The distance between fantasy and the moon is longer, because the distance between man and the moon has become shorter through technology.

The evening was truly atmospheric as the authors voiced their visions of the moon amidst the neon pink lights that tickled the arches of the Basilica di Massenzio. Added to that were the wacky waves of a typical Roman summer evening in which we were truly spoilt by 09's fantastic line up of authors and musicians from all around the world.

It is not all over yet though as there are still a few days left to grab an evenings entertainment. The tickets are free while they last and can be claimed from the box office on Via Fori dei Imperiali [www.festivaldellelettere.it](http://www.festivaldellelettere.it) so go get one!

### Extra: Calibro 35 Interview

Milanese band Calibro 35, are four Italian musicians inspired by Italian cop ('Poliziotteschi') thriller movies and 1970s Italian cop soundtracks, by composers such as Franco Micalizzi and the Film score genius Ennio Morricone. Their music is indicative of the 60s and 70s in an almost nostalgic way. Band members are Luca 'nano' Cavina, Bass, Enrico Gabrielli, organs and horns, Massimo Martellotta, electric and lapsteel guitar, Fabio Rondanini, drums and percussion and Tommaso Colliva, sounds and research.

Interviewing the four performing band members after the show afforded an incite into how they've evolved and here is what they had to say...

#### 1. What attracted you to the Rome Literature Festival, and the theme of the moon?

"It's a great honour for us to play tonight at the Rome Literature Festival. Calibro 35 started as a band playing soundtracks taken from Italian movies but we found a lot of connections with literature and noir literature in particular. We have also been invited to The Turin International Book Fair last spring and we're working on a special project about Giorgio Scerbanenco, the best noir writer Italy ever had".

#### 2. Tell me more about this Milan concert 'Il paese e Reale? You are taking part as one of '19 artisti per il Paese Migliore'? Do you think Italy is the 'paese migliore'?



Milanese band Calibro 35 at the 2009 Rome International Literature Festival, Basilica di Massenzio (by Nicola Ferlei Brown)

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think Italy is the paese migliore :

'Il Paese è Reale' is a project started by Afterhours (the most famous Italian rock band) that involves 19 underground bands, representing what's going on in Italian music scene right now. The idea behind "Il Paese è Reale" is to highlight the fact that there are people who believe in making this country a better place to be. The message is "Stop talking! Stop Complaining! Do Something To Make Italy a Better Place!"

**3. You are playing the same evening that John Grisham is appearing. John Grisham is best known for his thriller novels, do you admire his work and any of the films based on his books?**

"I've personally been a John Grisham fan from my teenage years. My favourite book and film are A Time to Kill. For Calibro 35 this is the first time we have been asked to do something about foreign thriller stories and this has been fun and challenging at the same time. Italian and American thriller/noir styles are really different as they're based on really different reality scenarios. There's an Italian b-movie from 1968 called 'Roma Come Chicago'... we tried to do the same tonight".

**4. Is there a current movie director whose work you admire the most in your favourite thriller genre?**

"Can we call Quentin Tarantino a thriller movie director? He has got everything on his movies and we really like his approach. He's taking a lot from exploitation movies from the past and he's putting them all together to create his own personal and unique style. We also believe that knowing the past is the key to create something new nowadays".

**5. Would you say that your music style is unique in its genre?**

"When we started this band we thought about a good way to describe what our idea was. We ended up with 'Music Inspired by Italian Golden Age Soundtracks', a pretty long name to declare where we are coming from. Italian soundtracks from the 60s and 70s were so full of different music styles, ideas and genres that is pretty hard to describe what made them so special. We are trying to recreate that puzzle bringing jazz, noise, rock, avant-garde music together again".

I think it can safely be said that they are achieving that re-creation, check them out at: <http://www.myspace.com/calibro35>

Tags: [Calibro 35](#), [International Literature Festival](#), [John Grisham](#)

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November 3rd, 2010 at 20:35

I always love the novels of John Grisham, they are full of suspense and surprises "

**HDTV Calibration %0A Says:**

December 2nd, 2010 at 08:35

All of the novels of John Grisham are very good, i love all the stories "-:

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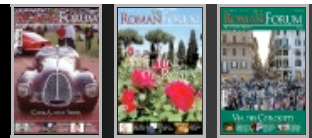
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