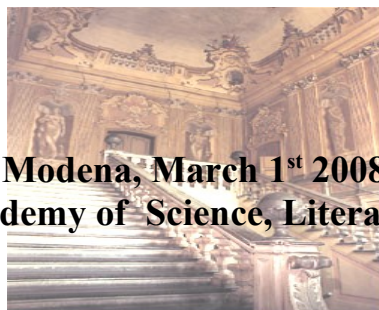


# ***Romolo Ferrari and the guitar in Italy in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century***

International meeting



**Modena, March 1<sup>st</sup> 2008**  
**National Academy of Science, Literature and Arts**

The charming locations (18<sup>th</sup> century) of the Academy of Science, Literature and Arts, in Modena, will be on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 the theatre of the international day ***Romolo Ferrari and the guitar in Italy in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century***. The aim is to underline an important part of the history of the guitar in Italy, trying to put together the efforts of the many people who have been working on this field: researchers, journalists, musicians. The goal, so, is to give a complete outline of this very important moment of the guitar's history in Italy. We are talking of a "recent history": as a matter of fact, just in the last years some researchers and musicians have focused their attention on this part of the history, and with their passion and competences they have ended up with unexpected results. From this point, the idea of this international day came out as an attempt of putting together all the notes on the guitar's history in Italy.



*L'arte chitarristica*  
(Modena 1947-1961)

The central figure of the study congress will be definitely Romolo Ferrari, (Modena, 1894-1959): he was a guitarist, composer, performer and professor of the double bass. Ferrari was a very important musician of the 20<sup>th</sup> century especially for his eclectic and pioneer activity to make the



*Romolo Ferrari*

"scenario" of guitar more valuable. He focused his attention on the guitar "repertoire" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, collecting original scores and taking care of the edition and the diffusion of them. He also cooperated with the publishing company Bèrben (lately acquired by a property in Ancona, but founded by Benedetto Berlino in Modena).

Ferrari was a talented researcher who published very important biographies of guitarists from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, preserved at the *Estense Library* in Modena. His musical archives are kept in the *Istituto musicale Pareggiato O. Vecchi*, in Modena. He is also remembered for the project of creating the chair of guitar among the Italian Conservatories. This project was also supported by the composer Primo Silvestri in Modena and his son Renzo Silvestri, pianist and professor at the *Santa Cecilia Academy* in Rome. Founder of the International Guitarists' Union, Ferrari brought to Italy very popular artists like Andres Segovia, Ida Presti, Maria Luisa Anido, and he worked for known magazines of his time like *L'arte*

*chitarristica* (founder and director). We remember, in those times, a strong connection with the German speaking countries, like Heinrich Albert and Siegfried Behrend (who played several times in Modena), and Heinz Bischoff. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century a strong network of contacts existed between



*Romolo Ferrari with  
Andres Segovia*

musicians, witnessed by the documentation of concerts, their programmes and all the magazines. Italian players were well known, like Luigi Mozzani, Benvenuto Terzi, Giovanni Murtula, Maria Rita Brondi, Teresa De Rogatis.

We are still working on the schedule of the day, and we will definitely focus our attention on the time of Romolo Ferrari: figures playing in concerts, their education, composers, editors, lute-makers, guitarists from abroad. Since we are not decided for the final schedule, we would like to ask researcher who would be interested to take part of this event.

For the moment, the programme is the following: *Romolo Ferrari and the institution of the guitar chair in the Italian Conservatives* (by Enrico Tagliavini), *Romolo Ferrari and the guitarist 's background in Modena* (by Mirko Caffagni), *The 19<sup>th</sup> century's repertoire of Ferrari Fund* (by Massimo Agostinelli), *Books and magazines of the guitarist in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (by Giacomo Parimbelli), *Maria Rita Brondi* (by Maurizio Mazzoli), *Heinrich Albert and the Italian School of guitar playing* (by Andreas Stevens). Two expositions will show documents,

pictures and letters and the art of lute-makers (guitars and mandolins) like

Gatti, Mozzani, Gallinotti and Masetti will be exposed). Fundamental part of this project will be the publication of a book that will put together all the contributions of people attending the congress and everyone who, even later, will supply an article in order to make a tangible product that witnesses the important roots of the history of guitar in Italy.

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