



Culture & Trends

# 12-color 'Lakeside Recital' held by 12 poets in Como, Italy

About 500 citizens and students enjoyed European Int'l Poetry Festival with distinguished poets from seven countries

By **Doo-hyun Ko** May 30, 2023 (Gmt+09:00) | 5 Min read



**COMO, ITALY** -- Como, a lakeside city with a glacial lake at the foot of the Alps in northern Italy. The 13th European International Poetry Festival "[Europa in versi](#)" was held from May 19 to May 21 in this place where historical buildings and villas of celebrities are concentrated.

This year, 12 poets from seven countries were invited. Three South Korean poets, Choi Dong-ho, Kim Gu-seul, and Ko Doo-hyun, as well as one each from Vietnam, Russia, the United States, Colombia and Hungary, and four from Italy, the host country, participated. One Kosovo poet could not participate because of a traffic accident.

Poet Laura Garavaglia, chairman of the festival and founding president of the House of Poetry of Como, together with international poets visited Insubria University, three high schools, the ruins of Villa Gallia, the city square and the Duomo, held conversations and recitations about poetry for three days.



Choi Dong-ho

The highlight was the poetry recitation and conversation held in a small church on the afternoon of the last day. As poet Choi Dong-ho recited "Wonderful Man, Buddha" against the background of the stained glass of the cathedral of Villa Sormani Marzorati, questions about light and man poured out.

"I listened carefully to your poetry and was impressed. The part that mentions the mystery of the light coming through the stained glass is impressive. Where does this sensitivity to light come from?" (an audience)

"I have been thinking about light for a long time. Buddha delivered light to humans 2500 years ago and Jesus 2000 years ago. The two great saints of the East and the West I call the Men of Light. Buddha's enlightenment and Jesus' teachings were all delivered through light. Light is life, darkness is death." (Choi Dong-ho)

"Italy and Korea are also facing difficulties. How does the light you speak of in your poem apply in this situation?" (an audience)

"Italy has economic difficulties and Korea has political difficulties. All these problems are attributed to humans. A man of light knows how to overcome the difficulties of reality with full light, resolve disputes and conflicts through it, and open the way to eternity. That power I call the wondrous light." (Choi Dong-ho)

"I sympathize with your deep thought and poetic insight. Thank you." (an audience)

The conversation between the poet and the audience continued even at the outdoor tables. The programs for students were also enriched. It was a high school named after Alexandro Volta, the inventor of the battery, they visited the first day. As descendants of Volta, who was born in Como and once dreamed of becoming a poet, the students surprised the poets with their bouncing questions and creative book reports.



Kim Gu-seul (far right)

Students from Insubria University and students from two other high schools presented various poetic experiences as stage performances. Their videos, music, paintings and plays inspired by the poets received many rounds of applause.

Walking around historical buildings and parks and sharing poems was also interesting experience. The recital held at Piazza Duomo in the center of Como was attended by local poets and tourists standing in a large circle.

“The number of Korean language courses in Italian universities and high schools is increasing rapidly, which will lead to increased interest in Korean literature. I hope that cultural exchanges between the two countries will increase further,” said Kang Hyung-shik, Consul General of S.Korea to Milan.

American poet William Wolak gained great popularity with his sensuous rhythm and graceful gestures at the festival. The wonderful voice of Hungarian poet Attila Balazs, the cheerful recitation of Russian Julia Pikalova, and the dynamic recitation of Colombian poet Carlos Velasquez Torres were also noted.

The distinctive tones of Vietnamese poet Kieu Bich Hau, the soft rhythms of Italian poets Emilio Coco and Giuseppe Bova, and the creative expression of Deborah Zingariello and Laura Capra were also impressive.



Ko Doo-hyun(second from left), invited poets and students from Insubria Univ.

The most eye-catching thing was the attitude of the students interacting with the poets. They asked again and again what the symbolic meanings of the poets' sentences and words were.

“I want to major in literature, and I wonder how to develop my imagination,” one of the students asked the poets.

After listening to poet Kim Gu-seul's "Writing Poetry", a student performed a short verse drama. Another student showed a performance by hanging a shirt with Korean writing on the clothesline while listening to poet Choi Dong-ho's "Laundry".

When poet Ko Doo-hyun's "Tulip Roots Ring a Bell" was recited, tulip flowers were drawn on a large piece of paper and displayed on the screen by a student.

Insubria University student representatives accompanied the organizers until the last day of the event. Not only the enthusiasm of these young generations, but also the enthusiasm of local writers to participate was great. While walking in the city center and along the lakeside and feeling poetry, they did not leave their seats even when raindrops fluttered. It was like watching the inner life of Italy, a cultural powerhouse.

Over 500 students and citizens interacted with the poets for three days. It was meaningful to connect the global village as one by editing the works of the invited poets in their native languages, English and Italian, publishing them as books, and sharing them.



Laura Garavaglia

Poet Laura, who oversaw this festival, handed out small boxes to the invited poets on the first day.

"There are some seeds in the box with a sheet of paper. Write a short poem, bury them together, and water them. The plant that grows there will be a symbol of your poem that will spread everywhere," she said during the festival.

On the last day of the festival, the cloudy weather cleared up brightly. A "wonderful light" poured over Lake Como.

**Write to** Doo-hyun Ko at [kdh@hankyung.com](mailto:kdh@hankyung.com)

#european international poetry festival #europa in versi 2023 #poetry festival como #como italy #laura garavaglia

## More to Read



Culture & Trends

### Three S.Korean poets invited to European Int'l Poetry Festival

May 15, 2023 (Gmt+09:00) | ⌚ 5 Min read

## Comment 0

After logging in, you can write a comment.

## THE KOREA ECONOMIC DAILY GLOBAL EDITION

BRANDED C

<a href="#">Companies</a>	<a href="#">Korean Investors</a>	<a href="#">Deals</a>	<a href="#">Markets</a>	<a href="#">Culture &amp; Trends</a>	<a href="#">Perspectives</a>	<a href="#">Hidden Champions</a>	<a href="#">Future Unicorns</a>
<a href="#">Companies Home</a>	<a href="#">Korean Investors Home</a>	<a href="#">M&amp;A</a>					
<a href="#">Latest on Korean Startups</a>	<a href="#">Who's Who in Korean Investors</a>	<a href="#">ECM/DCM</a>					
<a href="#">Future Unicorns</a>	<a href="#">Asset Owners Report</a>						
<a href="#">Hidden Champions</a>	<a href="#">Asset Managers' Perspectives</a>						
<a href="#">Branded Content</a>	<a href="#">Best Asset Managers by Korean Investors</a>						
<a href="#">Companies A to Z</a>	<a href="#">RFP Alert</a>						

► [Family Site](#)   [The Korea Economic Daily](#)   [The Korea Economic TV](#)   [The Korea Economic Daily Magazine](#)   [Hankyung BP](#)   [Ten Asia](#)

About us   Help Center   Contact us   Advertise with KED Global   Terms of Service   Privacy Policy   Copyright Policy   Editorial Policy & Code of Practice   Online newspaper registration No: 서울, 아53319 Date of regis  
Publisher: Park Haeyoung | Address: 13F The Korea Economic Daily Bldg., 463, Cheongpa-ro, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea 04505 | Business registration No: 796-87-01625 | Contact: kedglobal@hankyung.com, +82-2-360-4319 | K  
KED Global 中文(Chinese) | KED Global 日本語(Japanese) | Sitemap | Company list | News topic

Copyright© 2023 KED Global News Network . All Rights reserved