The mythology which surrounds Enrico Caruso is founded on the exceptional qualities of his voice, but rests also on his intelligent approach to, and curiosity towards modern media, and is accompanied by his ability to remain (proudly) Italian as a New York star while circulation as an international figure. We might say Caruso was a cosmopolitan star, not a globalized one. In her talk, Guiliana Muscio will analyze the role of Enrico Caruso in the development of different aspects of the modern entertainment industries, from the birth and growth of the recording industry to his innovative performances in two silent films, My Cousin and The Splendid Romance (1918), and the use of Caruso in advertising as part of the star system. She will examine the interaction of these two factors – Caruso’s influence on media and the development of mass media in the early 20th century.

Giuliana Muscio is an emeritus Professor of Film Studies at the University of Padua, Italy. She received her Ph.D. in Film Studies from UCLA in 1993. While her career has been primarily within the Italian university system, she has taught as a Visiting Professor at the University of Minnesota and UCLA. Professor Muscio is the author of Hollywood’s New Deal (Temple University Press, 1996), Media Ethnicity: New Italian-American Cinema (New York: Calandra Institute, 2010), and Napoli/New York/Hollywood (forthcoming from University Press of Mississippi), among other titles, and she has published widely on a variety of cinema and media topics, with an emphasis on institutional approaches to modes of production in a comparative transatlantic framework. She has also curated retrospective film and photographic programs at the Museum of Modern (New York), the Pordenone Silent Film Festival, and the Festival del Cinema Ritravato/Cineteca de Bologna.