

Acknowledgments: The American writer of the «post-war» generation wins the international section.

Jorie Graham, poet of the Nonino
Prizes to Higgs, Pollan and Gianotti

By MARISA FUMAGALLI

The Nonino Prize is about forty years old and, every time, among the winners of the various sections – all of unquestionable value – there are some names that surprise. The jury, presided by V.V. Naipaul, Nobel Laureate for Literature 2001, for this 38th edition has awarded the International Nonino Prize 2013 to the American poet Jorie Graham, one of the most celebrated of the post-war generation. Author of several collections of poems (in Italy her lyrics are published by Sossella and in the near future by Mondadori), winner of the Pulitzer Prize, has been the first woman to be awarded the prestigious position of Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard. Born in New York in 1950, Graham, who speaks three languages, grew up in Europe and was educated in Italy and France. Her early immersion into European culture – the critics say – is a visible element in her poetry. During the ceremony of January 26th next, at the Distilleries in Ronchi di Percoto, Claudio Magris, as a member of the jury, will introduce to the public the poet «who writes contagious and involving lyrics, where the word recovers its ethical and spiritual nature tending to infinity», and will deliver her the Prize.

But the Nonino, which has evolved and «multiplied» in time, at the beginning was just the «Risit d'Âur» (gold vine shoot, which evokes the land and work of the family that has created the Prize. For this original section, the prizewinner is Michael Pollan, «intellectual, free philosopher of food». This is the way the New York Times described him in 2006, celebrating his *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. Pollan is an out-and-out critic of the modern «agribusiness», which has lost contact with the natural cycles of agriculture. «A merciless analyst of food», the writer, born in Long Island, New York, «enlightens us with a refined and involving literary style on the precious natural treasures we are losing». But there is also a Special «Risit d'Âur» 2013, with the awarding of three chefs that have marked the way of the new Italian cuisine: Annie Féolde, Gualtiero Marchesi and Ezio Santin. They were the first three stars (Michelin) of culinary arts, the pioneers that disclosed the Italian excellence in the world.

The «Nonino Prize» 2013 stakes on two personalities of science. Bound together, somehow. Peter Higgs (Nonino 2013 «Master of Our Time», in the sixties he senses and theorizes the existence of an elementary particle, a «boson» that will be named after him. Then, to the scientist's great sorrow, it will be named «God particle». From the Sixties to July 2012: Fabiola Gianotti in charge of the ATLAS experiment at the Large Hadron Collider of the CERN in Geneva, announces the existence of the «Higgs boson». Antonio R. Damasio, delivering the Prize to Higgs and Gianotti, will tell the story of two confronting generations.

The Jury

It is presided by the Nobel Laureate Naipaul; Magris will introduce the author of the poems.

Personalities

From top left, clockwise: the American poet Jorie Graham, the philosopher of food Michael Pollan; the Researcher Fabiola Gianotti; the scientist of the «God particle» Peter Higgs.