

# Monday Night at the Master

October 8, 2018 7:00 pm

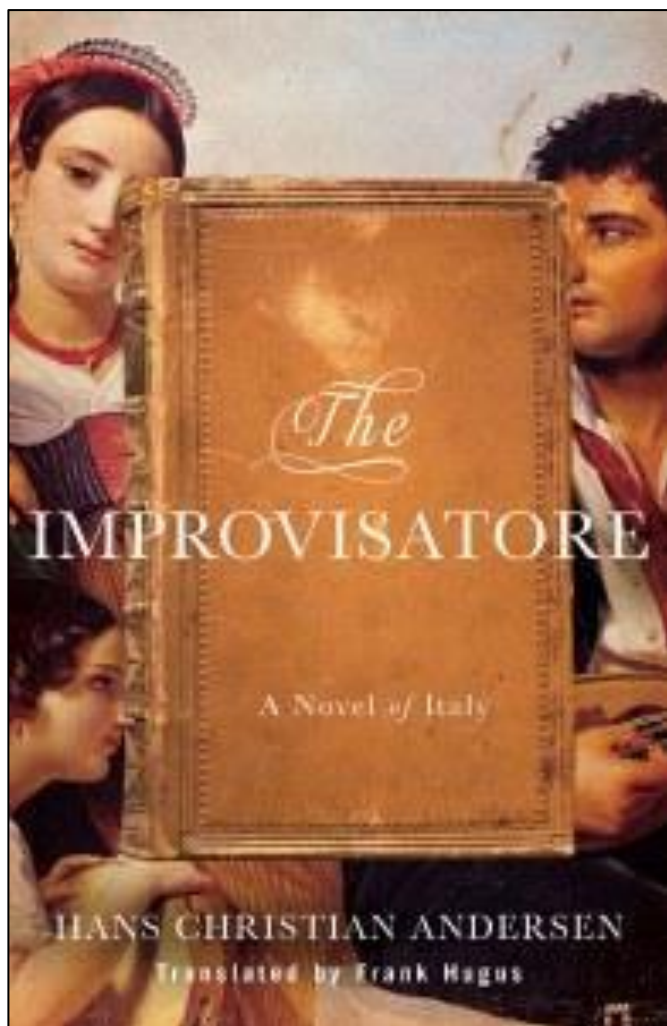
Riverside Lobby

## *The Improvisatore:*

*A Novel of Italy*

---

Frank Hugus, a resident of the Master Apartments since 2001 and a scholar on Hans Christian Andersen, has translated *The Improvisatore*, Andersen's debut novel into English, the first translation since the 1840's. Published to great acclaim in 1835, this novel initially eclipsed his fairy tales, which first appeared in the same year. The novel captures the brilliance and brio, the sweep and the nuance that made *The Improvisatore* one of Hans Christian Andersen's most widely read and best loved works. Frank will read passages from the novel and comment on Andersen's life and art, particularly as encountered in *The Improvisatore*.



Andersen, the captivating teller of enchanted tales, is very much in evidence in this classic Bildungsroman, inspired by his travels in Italy earlier in the decade. The novel's hero, Antonio, much like Andersen himself, rises from impoverished beginnings to become a successful artist, at every turn learning charming and often alarming lessons in the ways of the world. Adopted by a nobleman, smitten with an opera singer, challenged to a duel, captured by bandits, beset by a temptress, Antonio follows a dizzying itinerary on his path to enlightenment and, perhaps, happiness. Along the way he experiences the delights of Italian culture and nature so clearly absorbed by Andersen, the peripatetic author.

Frank Hugus has taught German and Scandinavian studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst since 1970 and has translated three novels by the Danish author Hans Scherfig in addition to dozens of short stories by contemporary Danish writers. He has published scholarly articles on Hans Christian Andersen's novels and plays.

