Through the leading themes of memory, places, and imagination, this course will explore Italian literature between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through a reading of prose, poetry, and theatre masterpieces by authors such as Leopardi, Levi, Calvino, Ungaretti, Maraini, Merini, and Cavalli, among others. We will also scrutinize how words and music came together in some major Italian operas and songs, and will examine how the themes of memory, places and imagination inspired some Italian visual-art makers, particularly painters, film-makers, and photographers.

Students will interpret the various texts through close reading and analysis, and will discuss the contexts from which these works emerged. They will support their interpretation of the texts persuasively, formulating strong and informed arguments, through verbal expression and in the writing of essays. Finally, students will produce and reflect on small creative works inspired by the texts they studied.