



American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences

ARA Interim President: Ileana Costea

Board of Directors:

Ileana Costea, Vasile Staicu, Dinu Leonte, Oana Leonte

ARA website: <https://main.ara-as.org>

ARA info email: info@ara-as.org

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Title:

Tribute Celebrations, News

Editorial Board:

Main Editor:

Ileana Costea - Email: arainterimpresident@gmail.com

Co-editors:

Diana Brown & Oana Leonte (Romanian version) & Deborah Zournas (English version)
The newsletter is published in two different editions, one in English and one in Romanian

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Content

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- ARA Members Activities
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History of ARA Newsletter

In the past, for many years, ARA had a very successful newsletter. Its editor, Prof Alexandra Gruzinska, was a non-Romanian, passionate for everything that is Romanian. We take this opportunity to give a big Thank You to her. She made an important contribution to ARA. Then a long gap followed.

In 1988, under the Manoliu Manea Presidency, ARA felt there is a need of an ARA Newsletter as a means of communication among members, but there was no one willing to take the task. In 1989 the ARA Executive Committee has decided to entrust the publication of an ARA Newsletter to an editorial Board, whose members were Professors Aleksandra Gruzinska, Dan Gabriel Cacuci, Nicolette Frank (Europe), Monica N. Grecu, Peter Gross, Olga Porumbaru, and Mircea Sabau. The General Assembly approved the project and the first newsletter (Vol. 1:1) appeared in August of 1989. ARA members were invited to contribute news of significant interest about their scholarly activities. The General Editor of the ARA Newsletter was Prof. Alexandra Gruzinska, School of International Letters and Cultures, Arizona State University. For a few years the ARA Newsletter was listed in Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory. You can find some information about Prof. Gruzinska and download a few issues of the original ARA Newsletter (Summer 2000, Fall 1999, Spring 1999, Fall 1988, and Vol 1, June 1996) at the following web address: <http://www.public.asu.edu/~gzl747> . Gruzinska was a professor of French, interested in Romanian culture and one of her research topics was the Romanian philosopher, Emil Cioran.

We are now reviving the ARA Newsletter. It will be in both English and Romanian. The first three issues will be sent to all ARA members, past and present, as well as all ARA friends and other people we know whom we think appreciate learning about Romanian values. After that, the newsletter will be distributed to only the active ARA members, as a bonus for their membership, at the beginning of each month. Its title will reflect the themes and/or main subject(s) presented in the respective newsletter issue. It will contain information about ARA activities, events, news, as well as various short articles on Romanian issues, like ARA itself, in the fields of Arts and Sciences, in Romania and around the world. New items will be posted on the ARA website (<https://main.ara-as.org/>)

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Some events in which ARA members were involved.

- **The bouquet celebration, at Hayward, of the Day of National Culture of Romania, and the Days of Eminescu, and the Union of Romanian Principalities**

On Sunday, January 22, 2023, a bouquet celebration of three important events: Day of National Culture of Romania, Eminescu Day, and the Union of Romanian Principalities took place at the Holly Resurrections Church, in Hayward in the San Francisco area. That's how it was done there for years before the pandemic. Now, finally the habit has been resumed. The event was organized by two members of the ARA Board of Directors, Oana and Dinu Leonte. This is an example of how ARA celebrates these significant events for Romania. A motivation for all of us who feel Romanian. All these actions are in the spirit of the ARA Mission statement.



Click on the underlined words to see the [Invitation](#) and [Program](#).

Before the event, at the traditional Sunday meal, there were presented the most beautiful songs on [Eminescu's lyrics](#) from the clip that you can access by the underlined words.

CELE MAI FRUMOASE MELODII
PE VERSURILE LUI
Eminescu



01. MONDIAL - ATÂT DE FRAGEDĂ
02. STELA ENACHE & FLORIN BOGARDO - LA STEAUA
03. TUDOR GHEORGHE - SARA PE DEAL
04. PRO MUSICA - ȘI DACĂ
05. NICU ALIFANTIS - O, RĂMÂI
06. FLORIN BOGARDO - DINTRE SUTE DE CATARGE

The *Hora Unirii* was enthusiastically sung and danced at the event that followed the meal.

Here are a few words from Dr. Oana Leonte about our beloved national poet Mihail Eminescu: He is ours and he is with us, forever, "in our hearts and minds" and in the language we speak. He is different for everyone, but the same Mr. Eminescu, who surrounds the world, on all the meridians, with invisible fibers, but so strong that he makes Romanism and patriotism vibrate wherever we are. His colloquial greeting resonates in all those who carry it in their hearts: "Long live the Nation!" God help us forever!

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- **ARA represented at a cultural event in Campina**

At the *Prajitoria cu povesti / Story filled coffee roasting bakery* in Campina, Romania, tastefully decorated by manager Denissa Voicu, a cultural event took place on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, on *World Read Aloud Day*. This is a day to celebrate the power of reading aloud together. Thus, children and adults are encouraged to pick up a book, find an audience and read aloud. The event is celebrated in over 170 countries.



The cafe is the same one where Mr. Badiu, ARA Member by call and Ileana Costea, ARA Interim President gave an interview (click [here](#)) to Mr. Florin Fratila from the local magazine *Oglinda Zilei*, on November 5, 2023. In the interview they are presenting the role and activities of the Romanian American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

On the walls of the cafe, you can see the paintings of the drawing teacher, Carmen Bălan, who had an opening there not long ago.

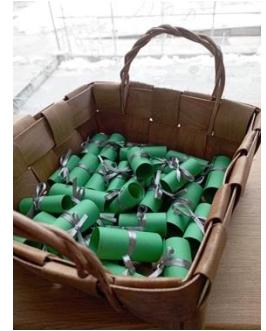


Over a tasty coffee, Mr. Vasile Badiu talks to two ladies who participated in the event



On the occasion of the event, each participant brought a book to give as a gift to the Prajitoria cafe. Mr. Badiu, who participated as an ARA representative, chose to gift the book by the writer Lucia Olaru Nenati, *Eminescu, from the music of poetry to the poetry of music*. Nice idea, because recently it was The Day of Eminescu / the National Culture Day. The book had been received by Mr. Badiu from the author at the ARA 42 congress in Ipotești. Mr Badiu and Mrs. Nenati remained in touch since both are active on Facebook.

Each participant in the event read and commented on a fragment of a book. The fragments were taken from a box. Mr. Badiu read a fragment from Anton Pan.



Denissa Voicu talking to Valentin Tigau

The journalist Tigau recorded the event and presented it on Radio Romania International on Friday, January 3, 2023. Click [here](#) to listen to the show [in Romanian].

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- **Recent articles and Interviews on Smaranda Braescu, by Ileana Costea [in Romanian]**

Ileana Costea, ARA Interim President, published two new articles in her cultural column of the Romanul Australian/ The Australian Romanian magazine. Click here for No. 266 (pp. 3 & 16, *Feelings about Bucharest and Romania today*) and [here](#) for Nr. 265, p. 3 & 16 (*Smaranda Braescu in California*, co-authored with Cornel Mitut). This article also appeared in the online magazine Melidonium, Roman, Romania.

On November 2nd, 2022 there was an interview on TVR1, with Ileana Costea and Cornel Mitut, in the show *3 ceasuri bune/3 Good Hours*, about the Smaranda Braescu events that took place in California (12-24 October, 2022). Click [here](#).

In October 2022 Hildegard Ignatescu interviews Ileana Costea immediately following the Smaranda Braescu ARA-Historial Events-ARPIA Cluj events that took place in California. Click [here](#).

On Monday, January 30th, 2023 Ileana Costea was interviewed at Academic Radio of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, in the program "Laurentiu's World". To hear it click [here](#).

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Excellence Awards at the Romania Day reception in Los Angeles



On Romania's National Day celebrated in Los Angeles the Consul General Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu and his wife, Mrs. Mirela Dumitrescu offered a reception at which five Romanians from the American diasporas were awarded. The high-profile event, which took place at the Peninsula Hotel in Beverly Hills, was attended by representatives of local and federal American authorities, the foreign consular corps accredited in Los Angeles, as well as of the Romanian American business, cultural and academic community in Los Angeles and Silicon Valley.

You can find a [link](#) about this event on the site of the Romanian Consulate in Los Angeles.



The Consul General, Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu, and his wife, Mirela Dumitrescu, Head of the Consular Section, meeting guests.



Among the honorees of the Gala were Nelu Mihai, CEO and founder of Cloud of Clouds, Silicon Valley, who received the excellence award for entrepreneurial innovation.

The Cybersecurity Academic Excellence Award went to university professor Dr. Raluca Ada Popa, CEO of Opaque from Silicon Valley. Raluca is an associate professor of computer science at the University of California Berkeley and has developed practical systems that protect data privacy and designed new encryption schemes that underlie these systems.

Adina Simu, founder of the Silicon Valley company Auditoria.AI, was awarded the GlobalTech Leadership Excellence Award. Adina has over 20 years of global technology leadership experience across multiple functional areas, including product management and marketing, cloud engineering and operations, sales engineering, and professional services implementation and delivery.



The General Consul offering awards to Aura Imabrus and Jacob Seagal

The Women Empowerment Excellence Award was given to Aura Imbarus from *See Beyond Magazine*, Los Angeles. Dr. Aura Imbarus is a journalist, coach, speaker and author of the Amazon best-sellers - *Out of the Transylvania Night: A Story of Tyranny, Freedom, Love and Identity* and *Conversations with the Past: A Journey* Aura Imbarus founded *See Beyond Magazine*, a bimonthly magazine that focuses on the challenges faced by teenagers in the 21st century.

Last, but not least, the Network Excellence Award went to Mr. Jacob Segal of Investors Research Group, Los Angeles. He is an active investor and advisor in Southern California companies with sales up to \$10 million. His investment experience includes transactions with companies in airport concessions, financial services marketing, wire and cable manufacturing, radio programming distribution, bakery equipment and medical devices.

During the Gala, Anastasia Soare, the founder of the Anastasia Beverly Hills companies, also received the recognition of success in the American entrepreneurial environment, on the completion of 25 years of activity of her companies with notoriety and success at the global level.



The Consul General offering a recognition diploma to Anastasia Soare.

During the event, Consul General, Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu, presented the guests with the positive economic and social evolution of Romania, which has become a security provider in Eastern Europe. He emphasized the special importance of the Strategic Partnership between country and

the United States, Romania's contribution to NATO and condemned the illegal and unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation on Ukraine.

Also, Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu reiterated the special priority for the Romanian authorities to strengthen the relationship with the members of the Romanian communities outside the country, protect their interests and support them to preserve the cultural and linguistic identity.



The musicians, Cristian Fătu and Evangelyia Delizonas

The laureates' gala was followed by an extraordinary concert of classical music, performed by the renowned Romanian violinist Cristian Fătu, accompanied by the pianist Evangelyia Delizonas.

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The National Day of Romania celebrated in Southern California



On Sunday, December 4, 2022, in a large hall, beautifully arranged, with the chairs at the tables decorated with wide bows in the colors of the Romanian flag, the celebration of the National Day of Romania in Southern California took place in San Marcos, San Diego area. The venue took place in the event building



of a beautiful Serbian church, set on a hill with a panoramic view of the surroundings.

Those who set up this Romanian community event were two young couples, two Romanian sisters with their non-Romanian husbands: Cristina and Carlos Cruz (Mexican) and Laura Ciorei and Elie Haddad (Lebanese). The idea and initiative belonged to Carlos Cruz, who also in the summer of 2022 had the idea of the Southern California Romanian Festival.

The two sisters come from a family of musicians: their father, Radu Ciorei, acclaimed master of the baton (with a conducting career of more than 45 years), and opera enthusiast, for a long time the Director of the "Marea Neagră" Philharmonic from Constanța. Their mother is a pianist at the "Oleg Danovski" National Theater of Opera and Ballet in Constanța. Cristina plays the piano, graduated from the Faculty of Music Pedagogy. She was also part of the Constanța "Marea Neagra" Philharmonic Choir. Laura plays violin and vocals and also has a European music school in San Diego. Elie sings the voice and the guitar, and has appeared several times on television in Romania in the programs of Antena 1 in the music competition X-Factor, as well as in the TVR 1 morning show "Cu capu-n zori".



The organizers of the event, from left to right, Eli Haddad with his wife, Laura Ciorei, and the couple Carlos and Cristina Cruz.

The Cruz couple were busy with the logistics of the event, and Laura and Elie oversaw the show, in which they also performed. Esther Sefora and her son Brandon from Sacramento also performed in the show.

At the opening of the event, on a large screen, several messages addressed to the participants of the event were shown wishing "Happy Birthday Romania!". Among them were messages from the music band Voltaj, as well as from Dan Bittman (Holograf band), Dan Negru (TV presenter), Gheorghe Gheorghiu, Mihai Traistariu and many others.

200 people participated in the event. They were Romanians from around San Diego, but also many came from Orange County and Los Angeles, and some from even further away. It is wonderful that the organizers managed to attract so many people, families with three generations, children, and many young people. The gala dressing code was nicely respected, people were dressed elegantly, the food was up to the mark, with traditional Romanian appetizers (telemea Feta cheese and ham), and Romanian dishes (big bone bean soup, sarmale /stuffed cabbage, and mămăliguță/polenta). The Consul General of Romania in Los Angeles, Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu, also participated with his wife. He took the floor speaking beautifully, briefly and to the point, exactly as befits a party event. There were also several other speeches.



Elie Haddad and
Consul General Dr. Cosmin Dumitrescu.



Two little girls in Romanian folk costumes
and the traditional" ie, "blouse"

Romanian music and from other European countries as well as American music, pop and popular music were played, in a successful musical show for all tastes and all ages. The hora was danced, but also "Brasoveanca", "Dansul Pinguinului" and Macarena. For the Hora dance, red, yellow, and blue paper handkerchiefs were distributed to people at the tables. This was another nice note to mark the Romanian character of the event.



The "hora" dance



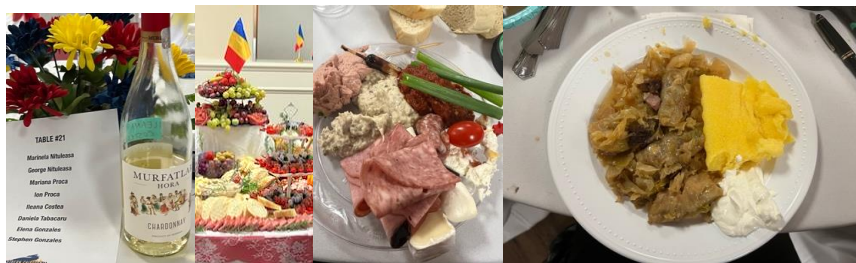
The traditional handkerchiefs used in the hora dance, in the colors of the Romanian flag

There are a few important things to note: two of the organizers were not of Romanian origin; the event was strictly based on volunteering; the event was designed for all ages; and the organizers were young and not older people as we are used to the events of recent years.

The husbands of the two sisters, Carlos, and Eli are not of Romanian origin. Both lived in Romania for some years and fell in love with Romanian culture and gastronomy. Carlos arrived in Romania for the first time in 2011 with the US Army from the Marines. How nice to see two foreigners appreciating Romanian values with such enthusiasm and passion.

An important feature was the fact that this was a volunteer event. Volunteers from the community arranged the hall, made, and offered the flower arrangements to decorate the tables and served at the tables. Two important volunteers were Cesar Cruz and Carlos Cruz Sr (respectively Carlos's brother and father) who served at the bar throughout the event. The wine was of various kinds from which one could choose, Romanian or Californian. Part of the Californian wine was donated by one of the volunteers.

Those employed to prepare the food were: Daniela Mezei and Adriana from Los Angeles (appetizers) and the soup and stuffed cabbage with polenta (sarmale cu mamaliguta) and the bread came from "Ramona Country Bakery" (of husband and wife, Viorel and Carrie).





Delicious food. A real traditional Romanian feast.

There is also the aspect that we are used to Romanian community events being organized by older people, making us think that only they are interested in meeting each other, to soothe their nostalgia. But this event showed that there are also young people passionate about Romanian values. How nice!



The atmosphere was relaxed, and as a fun gesture there was also a "Photo Booth" where one could have three photos taken for free, alone or in a group, as one wished. One could also choose a mask or decoration for the face or head. The three pictures would be printed on a paper strip like a small bookmark, with the emblem of the event with the Romanian flag at the top. Ingenious point of attraction for children, but also for adults ready to have fun.

People sat at tables, but also moved around to talk with friends or acquaintances from other parts of the hall, or to join the dance. Everyone was in a good mood, and one could feel the joy in their souls that they were celebrating Romania's Day together.

At the end, a group photo was taken.



This was a high-quality event for all Romanians. It was designed to please all ages, from children to the very young and the elderly. The food was particularly beautifully presented, tasty and plentiful. Everything was in full swing. Everyone I spoke to was thrilled to be at this event and super complimentary of the organizers.

The main conclusion I drew is how united the Romanians in the San Diego area are, being able to form a model for any Romanian community in the US.

Once again, sincere congratulations to the organizers.

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IRF 4th Annual Conference for the Romanian American Professionals



Immigration Research Forum (IRF)



On December 2nd and 3rd, a two-day Zoom conference was held by the [Immigration Research Forum](#) (founder and president Theodor Stan, Washington DC; he was the moderator).

Teodor Stan and IRF collaborated on two of the six Zoom sessions organized by ARA in 2021: Zoom ARA Smaranda Braescu and Zoom ARA Gheorghe Mateescu. We take this opportunity to show our appreciation for the help he offered ARA his and the IRF activities. Ileana Costea, ARA Interim President, was invited to make a presentation at the conference in December 2023.

There were many presenters at the 4th annual IRF conference. On the first day, several official representatives gave a welcome speech, among them: the Ambassador of Romania to the USA, Adrian Muraru, and the Director of the Romanian Cultural Institute (RCI/ICR), Dorian Branea. Both mentioned that they strive to support the activities of Romanian American professionals and various Romanian organizations in the US. Sebastian Burduja, the Minister of Research, Innovation and Digitization also spoke from Bucharest.

The program of the conference is given below:

First Day

Featured Speakers Opening Plenary Session, Dec. 2nd 2:00PM-5:30PM EST

2PM-2:15PM EST Welcoming remarks: Teodor Stan, President of Immigration Research Forum, Washington, DC

2:15PM - 2:30PM EST Formal opening remarks by guest of honor H.E. Andrei Muraru, Ambassador of Romania to the United States, Washington, DC

2:30PM – 2:45 EST Address by Sebastian I. Burduja, Romanian Minister of Research, Innovation and Digitalization, Bucharest, RO

2:45PM- 3PM Presentation by Dorian Branea, Director of Romanian Cultural Institute, New York, NY

3:00PM- 3:15PM EST Ion Rațiu Chair of Romanian Studies, Professor Diana Dumitru, PhD., Georgetown University, Washington, DC

3:15PM-3:30PM EST Stefania Magidson, President Blue Heron Foundation, Beverly Hills, California

3:30PM-3:45PM EST Horia Vulpe M.D – Director, Cancer Care Program BH; The Queen’s Health System Cancer Center, Honolulu, Hawaii

3:45PM - 4PM EST Jennifer Hill, President and Executive Director, Refugee Protection International, Belmont, Massachusetts

4:00PM – 4:15 EST Honorary Consul of Romania to Connecticut, Immigration Attorney Dana R. Bucin at Murtha Cullina LLP, Hartford, CT

4:15PM-4:30PM EST Jackson Howard, Regional Coordinator, EURAXESS North America, “Researchers in Motion” Washington, DC

4:30PM-4:45PM Prof. Dana-Andreea Percec, Dean Faculty of Letters, University of the West, Timisoara, RO

4:45PM-5:00PM Ionel Dragos Hau, PhD President, Romanul Corp., Fairfield, CT

5:00PM-5:15PM Eugenia Popa, Heritage Organization of Romanians in Minnesota, St. Paul, MN

5:15PM-5:30PM Jessica Miller, Administrator Center for Eurasian, Russian, East European Studies, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington, DC

2nd Day

Panel presentations, Dec. 3rd 10:00AM-3:00PM EST

Consecutive panel sessions allowing participation in multiple roundtable discussions:

Arts and Culture:

10:00AM-10:15 EST John V Hill Professor Maria Bucur, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

10:15-10:30AM EST Professor Julieta Paulesc, Romanian Studies Coordinator, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

10:30-10:45AM EST Cristina A. Bejan, PhD. Executive Director, Bucharest Inside the Beltway, History and Theatre Professor, Metropolitan State University of Denver, CO

10:45AM-11:00AM EST Roxana Cazan, PhD. Executive Director ARCHER, Senior Lecturer, University of Oklahoma

Panel on professionals in medicine and public health:

11:00AM-11:15AM EST Gabriela Gheorghe MD, Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital, Memphis, TN

11:15AM-11:30AM EST Carmen Uscatu, Cofounder and president of "Daruieste Viata", Bucharest, RO

Legal counseling and public policy panel:

11:30AM-11:45AM EST Honorary Consul of Romania to San Francisco, Prof. Dana Beldiman UC Hastings Law, San Francisco, CA

Panel on professionals in biomedical sciences, STEM and IT:

11:45AM-12:00PM EST Laura Marcu, Ph.D. Professor, Departments of Biomedical Engineering and Neurological Surgery Director, National Center for Interventional Biophotonic Technologies (NCIBT) Co-Director, Biomedical Technology Program - UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center University of California – Davis, CA

12:00PM EST -12:15PM EST Ion I. Moraru, MD, PhD Professor of Cell Biology Director, High Performance Computing Facility Deputy Director, Center for Cell Analysis and Modeling Co-Director, National Center for Reproducible Biomodeling, Farmington, CT

12:15PM EST -12:30PM EST Simona Puiu, Scientific Reviewer at U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Columbia, MD

12:30PM EST -12:45PM EST Silviu-Alin Bacanu, Ph.D. Lead, Bioinformatics and Analysis Core, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

12:45PM EST -1:00PM EST Daniel Murariu, MD, Director of Microsurgery and Lymphatic Surgery, Co-Medical Director of Clinical Access, Allegheny Health Network, Pittsburgh, PA

1:00PM EST -1:15PM EST Prof. Ileana Costea, Interim President American Romanian Academy Revival, Manufacturing Systems Engineering, California State University, Northridge, CA

Community civic engagement and social entrepreneurship panel:

1:15PM EST -1:30PM EST Raluca Bucur, Alianta Communications Director, CEO of TranscConcentric, co-founder of Romanians Abroad, Washington, DC

1:30PM EST -1:45PM EST Marie-Louise Paulesc, American Romanian Cultural Society (ARCS - Washington State and Arizona) Director of Strategic Planning, Communication Lecturer, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

1:45PM EST -2:00PM EST Oana Zayic PhD, ADAC – Board Member, Federation of Romanian American Organizations (FORA), Executive Director, Heritage Organization of Romanian Americans in Minnesota (HORA), Human Rights Commissioner, City of Chaska, MN
2:00PM EST -2:30PM EST Alina Simpetru, Strategic Planning Consultant, Bucharest, RO and Mihai Lehene, president FOR A, president of Romanian United Fund (RUF), Chicago IL
2:30PM EST -2:45PM EST Julia Velculescu and Sofia Velculescu, Interns - Immigration Research Forum, Washington, DC
2:45PM EST -3:00PM EST Brief Q&A session followed by closing remarks on the charting of goals in the consolidation of our diaspora’s associative ecosystem by IRF president and host.

The IRF Annual Conference was recorded and can be watched online by clicking at: [1st day](#) & [2nd day](#). Here you can watch all presentations in English.

For a brief presentation of the conference, in Romanian, you can listen to an interview in Romanian taken by Mihaela Dinca to Ileana Costea on Radio Romania International as part of the program Romanian Associations Around the World, which can be found at: <https://ileana.ic-art-gallery.com/interviews/RRI-IRFdec32022.m4a> .

Other News, Additional links:

<https://online.pubhtml5.com/paxb/ppie/#p=1>

Revista Portile Nordului, January-March 2023 [in Romanian]

<https://www.aosr.ro/en/the-30th-mihai-eminescu-symposium-173-years-since-the-birth-of-the-poet/>

Hibrid Zoom Symposion Mihai Eminescu

Romanian education and culture today – Assessment and directions

Imaginary dialogue with Eminescu.

January 23, 2023, Father Theodor Damian, New York