



Questo *divertissement* è stato realizzato in omaggio a (e amicizia di) Wolfgang “Ulli” Dressler, in occasione della festa in suo onore organizzata presso l’Università di Vienna nell’ottobre 2008.

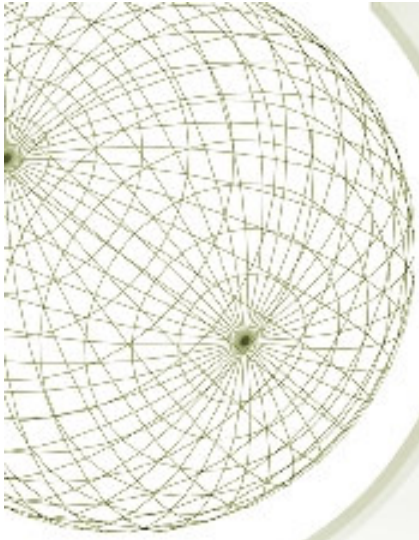
L’autore ci tiene ad avvisare gli eventuali lettori che questo testo, pur dicendo cose vere, non ha pretese di serietà. Anzi non è per nulla serio. (Tant’è vero che non osarono proiettarlo in quell’occasione.)

A clapperboard is positioned in the upper left, tilted diagonally. It features a black and white striped top bar and a white body with fields for 'PROD', 'ROLL', 'SCENE', and 'TAKE'. A director's chair with a black seat and backrest and gold-colored frame is on the right. The backrest has the word 'DIRECTOR' printed on it. A black cone is on the floor in front of the chair. The background is a light, neutral color.

The Silent Films
presents

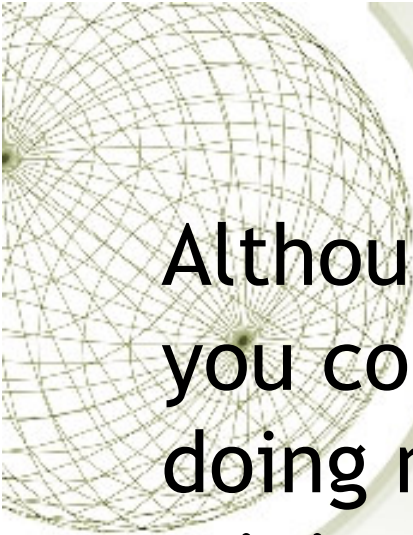
The Ultimate Evidence!

Die Dressler Variationen




Dear Ulli Baba

(you know why I call you so),



Although it is hard for anybody to imagine you comfortably sitting on an armchair doing nothing, it seems that the Austrian ministry of education sees the matter differently. Looking at it from the other side of the Alps, this looks somewhat strange.

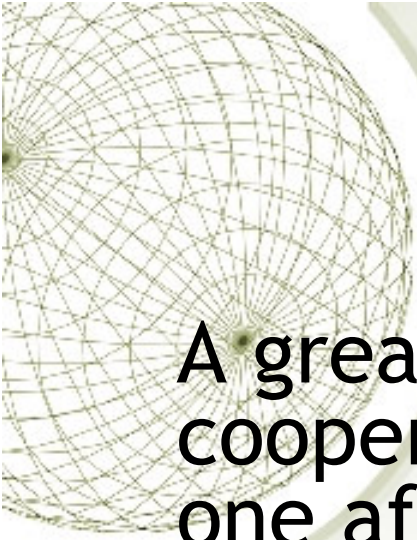
My colleagues in Central and Northern Europe are retiring one after the other at an age when they would still be perfectly active in my country.



When I was younger, I used to think that they were lucky: they would continue to do what they like most, to the extent they wish.

Perhaps this is how one should consider the matter.

However, I have to avow that the whole thing begins to make me nervous.



A great deal of the people with whom I cooperated for a long time are retiring one after the other, and the result of this is that the whole net of my scientific relations in a large part of this continent is evaporating.


The process is occurring at an embarrassingly fast rate and makes me at the same time unhappy (as a personal note) and worried (because I sense that this will also affect my pupils).



But let us forget about this for today.

My mind goes back now to the first time I saw you in person. At that time, you were only known to me as the author of a book on Text Linguistics.

Since I knew almost nothing of it, I decided to travel from Torino to Pavia, where you were supposed to give a talk on that topic, invited by the late Maria-Elisabeth Conte.





After carefully examining the timetable, I went to the train station much ahead of time and sat comfortably on an empty coach, sinking myself at once into reading, as I usually do on a train.

Trains are, in my view, a wonderful place to work (provided no known people are around...).



I do not remember
what I was reading.

What I do remember,
however, is that,
looking out of the
window, one-and-a-half
hour later, I realized
that

I was sitting on the
wrong train...



Later on, that very day, I discovered that there were two trains leaving Torino station at exactly the same minute: something definitely uncommon, that indeed I saw in those days for the first and only time in my life (at least as far as the Italian railways are concerned). Ironically, both trains had the same path during the first hour of their journey, so that it was not immediately obvious that their final destination was different.

Since, however, at that moment I ignored all these details, I had the only reaction that one could have in a case like this. Namely:

I felt stupid.

Very stupid!

But you only know a person when you see her/him in difficult situations.



Since, as all young people do, at that time I was carefully monitoring myself, I decided to react as a real man.

I jumped out of the train at the first opportunity.





Regrettably, I found myself in Serravalle Scrivia (more Liguria than Piemonte, definitely not Lombardia, where I was supposed to be).

But I did not discourage.
I took the first train to
Pavia and managed to
arrive in front of the
intended class-room
one hour after the
announced time.

At that point, I had to
consider what to do.
And once again...



I felt utterly stupid!

I concluded that it was silly to enter the class-room little before the end of the lecture.

I thus decided to wait outside and maybe have a chance to talk to you and Maria-Elisabeth afterwards.

My guess was that I would wait no more than 20 minutes. In fact, I waited over one hour.

As I learned afterwards, your lecture had begun later than scheduled.

So, after all, I was not exceedingly late!!!

But when I realized that, I felt

exceedingly stupid!

You may now understand why I feel so bitter, although I never found the courage to tell you.



Sometimes I am about to find the right words...



But you never listen until the end ...



Even Ivy did not!



I am not proud of my feelings about you.
But please, consider my position: since
the very first time, you made me feel

LATE & STUPID!

As a reaction, I decided to start running
after you.

But you were always faster than me. I
could never catch you, except for the
wrong things. I give you an example.

I was always fascinated by the exceptionally **ordered disorder** in your home office





At that time, I managed to keep my
own office in good order.
Now, no more: it looks like yours.

PICTURE NOT AVAILABLE

(the author denied himself
permission to spread around
any recent picture of his home
office)

Dear Ulli Baba

(and you know **why** I call you so),

I am still running behind you.

Unfortunately, your retirement will not help me, because I know for sure that you will continue to be as active in your research as ever before.

My only hope rests on **Paul Serafin**.

He seems to be the only person able to prevent you from working like a dog.

**Come
on, Paul
!!!**



Come on, Paul and Emma!



Come on, Paul and Bruno!



Un forte abbraccio dal tuo

Pier Marco