

NELIDA MILANI KRULJAC

THE DIRECTOR'S BATON

Three exemplary narratives of a writer of merit, Nalida Kruljac, conducted along the thread of memory, in search for a world of painful nostalgia and piety, of poetry and of a childhood that could never return - but which is recovered by memory, restoring our sensibility and intelligence. Her writing is simultaneously evocative and colloquial, and the characters of her Istria, that corner of the world that history has not spared of tragedies, emerges vivid and vital, like the wonderful octogenarian teacher-musician in the story "The Baton"; a teacher named Michele who now also lives in New York, like so many children of a suffered diaspora. But from the exchange of letters between Michael and Ines, through pictures and memories, there is a reassembling of a small slice of the world, of existences, of domestic truths and love, of equally painful and moving public truths, up until the return of the conductor's baton ... from where it had left ... which restores to Ines a piece of her late father's life.

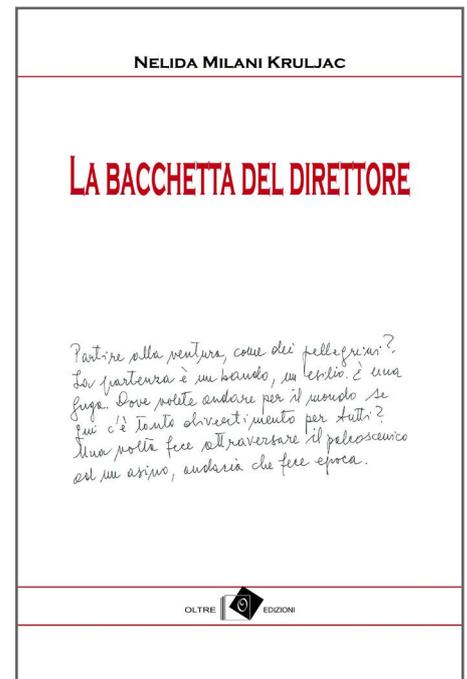
The author

Nelida Milani Kruljac was born in Pula (Istria) in 1939. She served for years as deputy head and head of the Italian section at the Faculty of Arts in Pula. For a decade (1989-1999) she served as editor of the quarterly cultural magazine *La Battana*, coming out for the Edit Fiume publishing house.

In 1991 Sellerio publishes her work *Una valigia di cartone* (Mondello prize 1992). The collection of short stories *L'ovo slosso-Trulo jaje*, published in Zagreb for Durieux (1996), proposes some of her most significant accounts along with the translation into Croatian. In 1998 the publisher Frassinelli publishes *Bora*, which Milani co-authored with Anna Maria Mori, a journalist for "La Repubblica".

In 2006 a collection of short stories *Nezamjetne prolaznosti* (Subtle steps) is released in the series "Istria attraverso i secoli". In 2007 the publishing house Edit of Fiume publishes her *Crinale estremo*, a collection of short stories, and in 2008 *Racconti di Guerra* comes out in the series "Passaggi de Il Ramo d'Oro di Trieste".

Milani has published books, essays and articles with a sociolinguistic character, focusing her interests on



the learning of a second language, as well as on issues relating to cultural identities, with interdisciplinary research on languages and cultures in the multiethnic society of Istria. In 2004 she was appointed with Order of Merit "star of solidarity", by the President of the Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.