

Amy Barone

Island Exiles

The Tremiti Islands enchanted on that one visit.
Pinewoods, glistening grotto waters, the coves on San Domino,
and St. Mary's Church with its rare Byzantine cross.

We arrived by hydrofoil from Termoli, a city on the Adriatic,
where a street honors my second cousin Cleofino Ruffini
and the Swedish castle in old town houses his tomb.

World War II hero gone too soon. Longing to return one day,
I set out to honor the magical place and memory,
but altered mindscapes intervened.

I discovered that in 1334 pirates ransacked the five islands.
Centuries later, Mussolini rounded up Italy's gay men,
created internment camps, kept the citizens confined
on the once-glorious Tremiti Islands whose vistas had changed.

Amy Barone's poetry collection, *We Became Summer*, from New York Quarterly Books, was released in early 2018. She wrote chapbooks *Kamikaze Dance* (Finishing Line Press) and *Views from the Driveway* (Foothills Publishing.) Barone's poetry appears in *Café Review*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Sensitive Skin*, and *Standpoint* (UK.) She lives in NYC.