



# Giornata in ricordo di Claudio Chiuderi

**Place and date:**

Firenze, Arcetri, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Organisers:**

Department of Physics and Astronomy, Università degli Studi di Firenze  
Arcetri Astrophysical Observatory, INAF – Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica

Luca Del Zanna<sup>1</sup>, Francesca Bacciotti<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Physics and Astronomy, Università degli Studi di Firenze

<sup>2</sup>INAF- Arcetri Astrophysical Observatory

**Abstract.** Claudio Chiuderi sadly passed away on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2022. A few months later in Arcetri friends and colleagues honoured his memory in an event described in this contribution. Claudio was the father of Italian research into astrophysical plasmas and, for many ex-students, simply THE professor, a mentor, a colleague and a friend.

**Keywords.** Plasma astrophysics.

Claudio Chiuderi was born in Trieste in 1936. He graduated in Physics at Università degli Studi di Firenze in 1960, and was appointed for an early teaching position in nuclear physics at the same University. In New York with his beloved wife Franca Drago (also an astronomer and colleague) from 1968 to 1970, he developed an interest in a new branch of research, plasma physics, and in the possible applications to astrophysics. Back to Italy, he began teaching Astrophysics at Florence University and Plasma Physics at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa, where he accompanied the first students to work on this novel topic. Claudio initiated and maintained many international collaborations, with colleagues in Meudon (Paris), Nice, Utrecht, St. Andrews, to name but a few. He had important appointments for ASI and ESA was scientific *attaché* at the Italian embassy in Paris for four years. In 1980 he became Full Professor at Florence University and continued teaching his famous Astrophysics course, which fascinated so many students, until his retirement and beyond. He continued pursuing his institutional, teaching and scientific activities until 2011.

Claudio was a key figure at Florence University, where he held in several important positions, including the directorship of the Astronomy and Space Science Department, on Arcetri hill, initially at the Astrophysical Observatory, and later at the Garbasso building. Claudio and his colleague Franco Pacini, Director

of the Observatory, were undoubtedly the most representative and influential researchers in astrophysics in Florence, even after the transfer of the Department of Physics and Astronomy to the scientific campus of Sesto Fiorentino. For many former students, like the authors of this brief report, Claudio simply was THE professor. His lectures were at the same time fascinating, rigorous, and extremely clear, despite the complexity of the subject. Many of his former students decided to choose a thesis in astrophysics or plasma physics with Claudio as supervisor, and he has always provided support for the completion and continuation of their studies and excellent advice for their early career.

Claudio's legacy is nowadays represented by the Arcetri Space and Astrophysical Plasma group of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, one of the leading groups on the subject worldwide. We were lucky to see Claudio recently, in November 2021, when he came for one day at the annual Arcetri Workshop on Plasma Astrophysics, managing to meet several ex-students and colleagues, some of them now working abroad. Given the audience and the topic, we thought we would dedicate the 2022 edition of that workshop to Claudio's memory, and we invited the family, friends, ex-students and ex-colleagues at the opening day of the meeting, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November. Many of us had the chance share memories, pictures, anecdotes. After the institutional welcome of the Department of Physics and Astrophysics by A. Marconi and G. Risaliti, and by the Director of Arcetri Observatory S. Randich, speeches were made by Claudio's son Sergio, by former University Rector P. Blasi, and by many former colleagues and friends: L. Del Zanna, F. Bacciotti, M. Landini, A. Righini, F. Pegoraro, G. Einaudi, P. Veltri, R. Giachetti, P. Boncinelli, S. Landi, R. Bandiera, M. Romoli, M. Velli, and W. Matthaeus.

All the participants and speakers remembered Claudio's great human qualities and his many cultural interests, like classical music, reading and even writing, from plasma physics to personal stories and original novels. His love of touring and skiing was also mentioned. Lastly, it was remembered how his passion for teaching went far beyond his professional duties: Claudio was very active in giving lectures in high schools, at public events and even to convicts. His love of teaching and extreme respect for the students will always be remembered and honoured, with most of his former students, now professors themselves, endeavouring to adopt the same attitude and transmit his precious legacy to future generations.

Ciao Claudio, thank you from us all!



Claudio at the teacher's desk in the Garbasso building in 2006, and near the 'Fermi well', with former students and colleagues, during the Arcetri Workshop on Plasma Astrophysics in November 2021.