



(Patrick Leigh Fermor with Dolores, October 2010)

I had the great privilege of knowing Patrick Leigh Fermor, in his house in Greece when he was already well advanced in years. By this time he could barely see anymore, barely hear. It must have been a great effort for him to establish relationships with strangers, and it's quite likely that my presence was nothing more than a fleeting shadow at the end of his days. Even so, he received me with open arms. He sat me down at his table, stuffing me with food and drink (particularly the latter). He made me feel completely at home. In short, he granted me access into his universe.

It was a huge and generous gesture, one of those which cannot be forgotten. Gratitude is an active feeling; something had to be done. Write about him. Talk, not only about the author, but about the man. Tell what kind of person – so full of humanity and charm, of tolerance and affection – he was. Out of this emerged *Drink Time!*, a homage, an token of thanks and a love letter at the same time. It goes without saying that Paddy would never have allowed such a dithyramb while he was still alive. Today still at times, three years after his death, when I walk along the beaches of Mani or I sit down to a glass of wine in the local taverns, I get the feeling that his spirit is shadowing me, to tell me off a little bit. Just a bit though, for I believe that at the heart of it all, one of the things that pleased Paddy most was that we loved him. He was a kind, funny, warm, tender man.



Drink Time!, the first Campari. November 2010