



# La Rondine

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS

May 2004

## **Luigi Pirandello: The Man and the Playwright presented by Anthony Perrone**

### Next Meeting

Wednesday

May 19

Cocktails— 6:30p.m.

Dinner— 7:00p.m.

RSVP—Dan Viele

(636) 537-5960 or

ItalianClubSTL  
@aol.com

At a time when the field of contemporary Italian letters had climbed to new peaks of expression through the work of such writers as Pascoli, Carducci, and D'Annunzio, along came a new "giant" also fully deserving enshrinement in the "Pantheon" of modern Italian literature. He was Luigi Pirandello (1867 - 1937); considered to be the greatest Italian playwright of his time. Instrumental in making modern Italian letters internationally recognized, influential and acclaimed, Pirandello, who received the Nobel Prize in 1934, was to share, and perhaps even to surpass, the fame and

prestige of the above mentioned writers and to leave a lasting mark on all playwrights who followed him. Pirandello, in his private life, was a melancholic, taciturn, brooding and unassuming man, ascetic in taste, professorial in demeanor, and totally immersed in his art. Born in Agrigento, in "Greek" Sicily; he later resided in Rome and graduated from the University of Bonn, Germany. Acclaimed universally for his unparalleled contribution to contemporary drama, this descendant of Aeschylus and Sophocles was a catalyst that substantively formed the structure, shape, and

direction of modern theater. The program will be presented by Anthony Perrone, who received a Masters Degree (1968) from the University of Illinois, and has since been teaching Spanish Language and Literature at Lindenwood College and Normandy Senior High School. Perrone, is an active member of the Italian Club of St. Louis. His earlier Italian Club presentations have been *The Unfinished Pietas of Michelangelo*; *The Italian Republic: A Historical Perspective*; and *Gabriele D'Annunzio: The Exuberant Poet*.

by Gene Mariani

## **Roman Gladiators: Blood, Guts and Glory presented by Anna DiPalma Amelung**

To recap the Anna Amelung presentation at the April meeting of the Italian Club is like trying to capture a moonbeam in a jar. It really is! She was as dynamic and as vivacious as ever. Her knowledge of the subject was profound. She discussed the gladiators not in terms of Hollywood but as they actually existed. The gladiators fought and entertained for 700 years, 264BC to 404AD. Countless thousands died entertaining arena spectators. The games started in Campania and came to Rome 150 years later. A typical spectacle lasted all day.

The morning sessions usually consisted of criminals and slaves fighting against wild animals. The arena floors were covered in sand to more easily absorb the huge quantities of

blood that would be spilled. Later in the day, the prized gladiators would take center stage. Contrary to popular folklore, the combatants did not always fight to the death. Champion gladiators took years to train and to perfect their individual styles. The spectators preferred a good fight rather than a bloody mess. In their own way, although they were slaves, often prisoners of war, gladiators were considered sports heroes and were often treated like celebrities.

Anna described the various costumes and types of padding and helmets that were used. Not unlike a choreographed performance, the combatants were limited to price methods of swordsmanship. They entered the arena

through the 'door of life' and when defeated exited by the 'other door'.

This recap does not do Anna's presentation justice. As I stated earlier, it was like trying to capture a moonbeam in a jar.

**About the presenter...** Anna Amelung received a Ph.D. in French Literature from Washington University and currently teaches Latin and French at University City High School. She is President of the Classical Club of St. Louis and an active member of the Italian Club of St. Louis. Her previous IC presentations have been *Augustus, Virgil, and the Aeneid*, and *Gravestones of Ancient Roman Women*.

by Vito Tamboli

***"Contrary to popular folklore, the combatants did not always fight to the death. Champion gladiators took years to train and to perfect their individual styles."***

## L'Angolo Del Presidente by James Tognoni

### My Fellow Members:

Here is a salute to your health, happiness and well-being. Things in our Club hum along. We were treated to a fine presentation by Anna Amelung in April and honored by the attendance of our award recipients and guests from Washington University. In the upcoming months you can expect a continuation of great pro-

grams, a Film Seminar Series, a trip to Herrin, Illinois, and, of course, enjoyable dinners at Baldo's. In the past few months I have asked for volunteers. I need to have three volunteers to set-up and run the sound system each month. This is an important task since the sound system allows us to listen to beautiful music during our meal and

adequately hear our speakers. I know I can count on you to help us with this important task. Please contact me via email or by phone to lend your support. Thank you in advance for your continued support and expertise.

Ciao, Jim

jtognoni@earthlink.net or 314-753-9618

### Washington University Students Honored

Each year at the April Italian Club meeting we honor two students who are studying Italian language at Washington University. Each student receives a \$500 award to study in Arezzo. At our April 21st meeting, Adrian Alexander received the Fred Giacomo Award from Southwest Bank and John Hamel received the Frank LoPiccolo and Mario Pertiwi Award from the Italian Club of St. Louis.

**Adrian Alexander** is a junior at Washington University from Henderson, Kentucky. Adrian is a double major in biology and psychology. After graduating from Washington University next year, she plans to attend medical school. Adrian is extremely interested in the Italian language and culture, which has motivated her to attend the Washington University Summer Institute in Arezzo, Italy, this summer. After returning from Arezzo, she plans to continue studying Italian for her enjoyment.

**John Hamel** is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences of Washington University, majoring in history. He is a dean's list student and an officer in the campus pro-life group. After his time in Arezzo this summer, John will continue to study Italian in his senior year, and he may pursue a minor in it. Although he is currently unsure of what he will do after graduation, John is considering the idea of Officer Candidacy School with the U.S. Army, and perhaps eventually a career in international diplomacy.

### Italian Club Seminar on Classical Italian Cinema

The seminar will consist of a series of four sessions, based on American director Martin Scorsese's recent four hour documentary on the influence of classical Italian cinema on his own work. The seminar will be led by WU Professor Carla Bossola. All film clips used will be sub-titled. Discussion will be in both English and Italian. Admission will be strictly limited to 25 participants. *There are only a few places left.* An enrollment fee of \$10 will be charged to participate in the seminar. The dates are: May 13, 20, 27 and June 3. The Seminar will be held at Southwest Bank on Kingshighway. For additional information: Barbara Klein at 314-422-3102.

**Our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Sr. Felicetta Cola who passed away this past week. Sr. Felicetta was the 1993 recipient of the ICSL Italian Heritage Award.**

### ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS TOUR HISTORY OF HERRIN AND THE HERRINFESTA ITALIANA EXPERIENCE SUNDAY MAY 30, 2004 (MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND)

For many Italian-Americans, especially those in St. Louis, whose families originally came from the town of Cuggiono, and from several other small Lombard villages clustered near Milan, the city of Herrin, Illinois is particularly important. For it was to Herrin that their ancestors first came to work in the coal mines in that part of southern Illinois, known as Little Egypt, bringing with them their culture, heritage, customs, and traditions. This history is celebrated annually with the HERRINFESTA ITALIANA.

But there is a dark side; for Herrin is also historically infamous for a series of bloody events, which took place during the period known as "the roaring twenties" and which severely impacted the lives of the Italian immigrants. There was labor warfare between striking union miners and non-union strikebreakers culminating in the 1922 "Herrin Massacre". There was strife between immigrants and local "Americans", religious tension between Catholics and Protestants, and often-violent discord between people who enjoyed making and drinking wine and anti-drinking "Prohibitionists" - all reaching climax in the 1923-1924 takeover of the town by the Ku Klux Klan. And finally came the 1926-1927 battles between the Birger and Shelton gangs for control of southern Illinois' bootlegging and prostitution rackets.

**The Italian Club tour of Herrin will enable you to learn the fascinating history of Herrin from noted local historians, to tour the town and its shops and stores, to meet local people, and to enjoy the food, entertainment, and events of the 2004 HERRINFESTA ITALIANA. This is a small portion of the itinerary:**

- 8:00a.m. -** Meet at Shaw Community School. View SIU documentary film *A History of Herrin* en route. Upon arrival in Herrin we will meet our hosts and visitors from Cuggiono.
- 11:00a.m.** Attend Mass (optional) at the Church of Our Lady of Mount-Carmel (named after the Parish Church of Cuggiono, Italy).
- Noon-** Italian buffet lunch (included) at the Lombard Café. Hear presentations on the history of Herrin and Italian immigration followed by a guided bus tour of the town.
- 3:00-6:30p.m.** Visit the HERRINFESTA ITALIANA.
- 6:30-9:00p.m.** Leave Herrin for St. Louis. View SIU documentary film "The Legend of Harry Birger".

**Tour cost is \$40 per person payable upon making reservations. For information or to make reservations, please contact either Gene Mariani at 314- 352-5484 or at emariani@sbcglobal.net or Gloria Etling at 314-965-6972 or at gloandcho@hotmail.com Please make reservations as soon as possible.**

**Special Request:** Two couples from our sister organization Ecoistituto della Valle Ticino in Cuggiono, Italy, will be traveling to the St. Louis area at the end of May. They will be guests of the HerrinFesta Italians from May 25 through May 30, when they will return to St. Louis. The ICSL would like to find hosts for these two couples, who do speak English, for the nights of May 30-31 and June 1. ICSL will organize day activities for them as they will be meeting people on the Hill for their club's upcoming project of translating into Italian Gary Morminio's book "Immigrants on the Hill: Italian-Americans in St. Louis 1882-1982" and a documentary project regarding the book "Rosa: The Life of an Italian Immigrant". If you are interested please contact Barbara Klein 314-422-3102 or Gene Mariani at 314-352-5484.

# TERZA PAGINA

## I capolavori della poesia italiana

a cura di Barbara Klein



*Dopo aver combattuto durante la terza guerra d'indipendenza, Edmondo De Amicis (Oneglia, Imperia 1846 - Bordighera 1908) scrisse delle sue esperienze di caserma in **Vita militare**, riscuotendo immediato successo. Si dedicò allora alla letteratura, pubblicando **Cuore**, la sua opera più famosa nel 1886. In occasione della festa della mamma, il 9 maggio, presento la sua poesia dedicata a sua mamma.*

### A mia madre

di Edmondo De Amicis

Non sempre il tempo la beltà cancella  
o la sfioran le lacrime o gli affanni;  
mia madre ha sessant'anni,  
e più la guardo e più mi sembra bella.

Non ha un detto, un sorriso, un guardo, un atto  
che non mi tocchi dolcemente il core;  
ah se fossi pittore  
farei tutta la vita il suo ritratto.

Vorrei ritrarla quando inchina il viso  
perch'io le baci la sua treccia bianca,  
o quando inferma e stanca  
nasconde il suo dolor sotto un sorriso.

Ma se fosse un mio prego in cielo accolto  
non chiederei del gran pittor d'Urbino  
il pennello divino  
per coronar di gloria il suo bel volto;

vorrei poter cangiar<sup>2</sup> vita con vita,  
darle tutto il vigor degli anni miei,  
veder me vecchio, e lei

<sup>1</sup> Raffaello

<sup>2</sup> scambiare

## In giro per l'Italia

a cura di Barbara Klein

### Genova: Città europea della cultura nel 2004



I governi dell'Unione Europea hanno nominato Genova, e la città francese di Lille, "città europee della cultura nel 2004". Fu Atene, nel 1985, la prima città designata a rappresentare la cultura europea e da allora solo due città italiane hanno avuto tale

nomina: Firenze nel 1986 e Bologna del 2000. E solo nel 2019 l'Italia riavrà questa opportunità.

Sarà il tema del viaggio, ispirato al passato marinairesco di Genova, a fare da filo conduttore in questo 2004. Un viaggio inteso sia in senso fisico (il porto, i traffici, l'emigrazione, il turismo) sia come percorso attraverso storia e città, arte e scienza.

Nel filone "Genova Città d'Arte", di particolare spicco saranno la mostra "L'età di Rubens, dimore, committenti e collezionisti genovesi" - sul tema del collezionismo e del mercenatismo artistico che ha caratterizzato la cultura genovese in età moderna - e la costituzione di un Polo Museale Antico, che unirà Palazzo Rosso, Palazzo Bianco, Palazzo Tursi, Palazzo Reale e Palazzo Spinola di Pellicceria in un unico percorso espositivo sul concetto di strada-museo.

Nel filone "Genova Capitale del Mare" la manifestazione più importante sarà "Transatlantici", un'esposizione sul Novecento visto dal mare che vedrà coinvolta tutta la città per l'allestimento e le ricostruzioni di ambienti e mostre d'arte, dove verranno affrontati i temi dell'arte, dell'industria e del sociale attraverso oggetti, opere artistiche, iconografia pubblicitaria, filmati, modelli, fotografie e documenti. Inserito all'interno di questo filone sarà il Polo della Darsena, un nuovo polo ludico-culturale dove confluiranno strutture già esistenti e nuove aree espositive e d'intrattenimento interamente dedicate al mare, alla natura e all'avventura. Punto focale saranno i Musei del Mare e della Navigazione.

Per "Genova Città Contemporanea" l'evento più significativo sarà la mostra evento "Arti&Architettura", un viaggio nella contemporaneità attraverso un excursus sul rapporto fra architettura e arti visive, cinema, teatro, musica e letteratura, un confronto tra l'architettura e tutti i possibili linguaggi, un tema contemporaneo con una forte spettacolarizzazione. Per questo filone, infine, sarà realizzato il Polo dei Musei e dei Parchi di Nervi con l'obiettivo strategico di esaltare le caratteristiche ambientali e paesaggistiche di Nervi, con i suoi musei, i parchi, la passeggiata panoramica e il mare.

Per ulteriori informazioni vedi <http://www.genova-2004.it/>

Buon viaggio in Italia!!!

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ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS  
LA RONDINE**

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## **Prossime Manifestazioni**

### **FUTURE ITALIAN CLUB MEETINGS & EVENTS**

- May 13-** First night of the Italian Film Seminar
- May 16-** Fraschina concert
- May 19-** Luigi Pirandello: The Man and the Playwright  
*by Anthony Perrone*
- May 30-** Trip to Herrin, IL
- June 16-** Report of the Vice-Consul  
*by Joseph Colagiovanni, J.D.*  
Presentation of the  
Italian Heritage Award
- July 21-** Italian Dinner Theatre

***The Italian Club meets the  
third Wednesday of each month for  
dinner at da Baldo's Restaurant***

**Cocktails - 6:30p.m.  
Dinner - 7:00p.m.**

### **THE SPRING FILM AND OPERA SERIES PRESENTED BY THE ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS AT THE BOCCE CLUB**

**Friday, May 7- "ATTILA" by GIUSEPPE VERDI** : La Scala presents a rare revival of this early Verdi masterpiece. Conducted by the renown Riccardo Muti, this production comes to life through the thrilling voices of the infamous bass Samuel Ramey and soprano Cheryl Studer. Set in the time of Empire, "Attila" tells a story of murder and barbaric mayhem.

*The opera will be introduced by Dorotea Rossomanno-Phillips. All programs are in Italian with English sub-titles and begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free. The St. Louis Bocce Club is located at 2210 Marconi Avenue. For further information contact Dorotea Rossomanno-Phillips at 535-9748 or e-mail: dorotearp@aol.com.*

### **OPERA THEATRE OF ST. LOUIS**

The Opera Theatre of Saint Louis will be presenting two one-act Italian masterpieces, *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni and *Sister Angelica* by Giacomo Puccini, on the same evenings May 27, 29 June 2, 4, 15, 19, 23, 27. For further information see: [www.experienceopera.org](http://www.experienceopera.org)

### **MEDICI EXHIBIT OPENS IN MEMPHIS**

On Friday, April 23, 2004, an exhibit of artifacts from the Medici's opened in Memphis. The Medici's were the primary family in Florence for over 400 years. Under their tutelage the Renaissance began and developed. This exhibit includes many artifacts owned or are associated with the Medici.

The Medici were responsible for sponsoring the major artists of Florence by providing them with commissions for their work. Some of the artists that received commissions from the Medici were Michaelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Giotto, Sandro Botticelli, Donatello, Fra Angelico, and Filippo Brunelleschi. Works by all these artists are included in the exhibit.

Some of the other objects include the Papal Ring of Pope Leo X, a fork that Caterina de' Medici introduced to the French court when she became Queen of France, a copy of Galileo's telescope, and a pair of Michaelangelo's slippers. The exhibit will be at the Pyramid in Memphis through October 3, 2004.

For additional information call 1-800-2MEMPHIS or online to [www.wonders.org](http://www.wonders.org).