



March 2006

La Rondine

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS

"The Stonecutter's Aria" by Carol Faenzi

Next Meeting

Wednesday

March 15th

Cocktails – 6:30p.m.

Dinner – 7:00 p.m.
\$22 per person

RSVP
Dan and Jan Viele

(636) 537-5960
or

ItalianClubSTL@aol.com
by noon
Tuesday March 14

The speaker at our March meeting will be writer, speaker and new Italian Club member, Carol Faenzi. Carol has recently written The Stonecutter's Aria. The Stonecutter's Aria is a novel in the unique format of an opera program narrated in first-person perspective, based on the true stories of an Italian marble carver and opera tenor during the beginning of the twentieth century. Aristide, the protagonist, immigrated to America where his skills in gothic architecture led him to carve some of this nation's most distinguished landmarks, including the National Archives, Duke University and the University of Chicago. Over a century later, his spirit reaches out to help his troubled great granddaughter. A vigorous and attention-catching narrative about an artist's passion, adventures,

regrets and remembrance." by the *Midwest Book Review*

Additionally, the book was the *November 2005 - Reviewer's Choice for Fiction/Small Press Bookwatch*.

Carol Faenzi, a former St. Louis resident, is a New York City-based writer and speaker. She has traveled and conducted historical research throughout Italy, and studied marble production in the vast quarries of Carrara. She also heads a consulting firm that coaches women in leadership roles. Her passion for all that is Italian takes her frequently to her ancestors' homeland. Her work has been published in Ancestry Magazine, and she is currently preparing a collection of stories on unconventional and charming Italian-American women.

MULTI-MEDIA VISIONS OF HELL

Selections from a silent film of Dante's l'Inferno, drawings by Gustave Doré, and music by Tangerine Dream by Eugene Mariani, Ph.D.

As introduction to his topic, speaker Gene Mariani began with a test, entitled How Much Do You Know About Hell, containing such questions as - how many circles in Hell, how many rivers, how long was Dante in Hell, what is the name of the city in lower Hell, what is the name of the couple sent to Hell's second circle for the sin of adultery, which Pope is at the eighth circle? - and other such tidbits about Dante's great poem. A pamphlet, *The Road Map to Hell*, was distributed giving both the answers and, more importantly, serving as the tour guide for the evening's journey. It contained diagrams showing the location and geography of Hell; its Ante-Inferno, its nine circles, its pit at the center of the earth, and the "winding path" to Purgatory. Another diagram gave "the schedule of sins" the over-arching structure which Dante used to organize the nature of sins and to relate their severity to the elements of the Inferno's geography.

The "road map" also contained information on Dante Alighieri and his Beatrice, on French artist Gustave Doré, the most successful book illustrator of his time, whose famous mid nineteenth century drawings depicted scenes not just from the Inferno but from the entire Divine Comedy, and also information about the film on the Inferno which was a key component of the presentation.. As examples of Doré's work, the pamphlet contained drawings depicting some of the Inferno's especially fa-

mous events. One was of the legendary Minos, the King of Crete and a wise legislator. In classical literature, e.g. in Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, Minos is favorably depicted as the honorable and noble Judge of the Dead, however in the *Inferno* (Canto 5, second circle), Dante depicts him as a demon with a long serpentine tail whose eternal task is to be the arbiter of the damned; who continuously winds and unwinds his tail around himself, with the number of coils indicating to what circle in Hell a particular soul is condemned. Another illustration was of the carnal sinners who are punished by being eternally buffeted by furious winds (Canto 5, second circle). Here Dante meets Francesca da Rimini and her lover, who is also her brother-in-law, Paolo Malatesta. In her story, considered the most popular of the *Inferno*, Francesca recounts how one day, when she and Paolo were alone together reading the story of Lancelot and Guinevere, they were caught up in a burst of passion, kissed, embraced, and committed adultery. However while they were together, Francesca's husband, Paolo's brother, came in unexpectedly, found them, and killed them both. Next came the story of Count Ugolino della Gherardesca and Archbishop Ruggieri of Pisa (Canto 33, ninth circle). Due to a complex series of treacheries, committed by both Ugolino and

(Continued on page 2)

March 8-
La Festa
della Donna

March 19-
La Festa
de Papà

L'angolo del Presidente by James Tognoni

My Fellow Members and Friends: Spring is in the air. Can you feel it? This time of year amazes me. We are still in the holds of winter but spring comes flirting with us. Very much a time for renewal of the earth and our spirits. Down to business; your Board of Directors met for an all day session to look at ideas for making your Club interesting and exciting. Our monthly programs are great but we want to find additional ideas for offering you more options for getting together. Be looking for a survey to be coming out very soon or if you wish give me a call and share your ideas. There are

few other pieces of business to cover this month. Remember the price of our monthly dinner had gone up slightly to \$22. I am pleased to announce that Gloria DiMartino Etling has accepted the nomination for the open Director slot on the Board. Her nomination by the Board will be presented to all of you at the March meeting. Gloria has served on the Board before and will make a great addition to a great team of individuals. The March meeting promises to be very interesting. Carol Faenzi a new member and author from New York will be here to present highlights from her book and

touch about the subject of heritage and immigration. On April 7, 2006 Carol will be doing a multimedia presentation at the Missouri History Museum presenting her book to the St. Louis public. Watch for details on this event which is partially sponsored by the Italian Club. Another reminder, please mail in your dues if you have not yet done so. That's all I have for now. Looking forward to seeing you at the March meeting. Remember to make your reservation.

Ciao, Jim
(314) 865-1005 jtognoni@earthlink.net

Visions of Hell (Continued from page 1)

Ruggieri related to the long struggle between the Guelfi (supporters of the Pope) and the Ghibellini (supporters of the Emperor) that marked the history of medieval Italy, Ruggieri condemns Ugolino, his children, and grandchildren to be starved to death in the Tower of Pisa. In the *Inferno*, Dante portrays Ugolino as a damned soul (because of his treachery,) as well as a punishing demon, who, for all eternity, gnaws vengefully at the face and skull of the evil and also damned Ruggieri. The final illustration was that of the Lake of Ice at the very floor of Hell (Canto 34, ninth circle) where Lucifer, Hell's Emperor resides and who, with his three mouths, continuously devours the bodies of the traitorous Judas, Brutus, and Cassius. With the above as prologue, segments of

Giuseppe Di Liguoro's amazing 1911 silent film, *l'Inferno*; the first full length Italian feature film and only successful film version of the *l'Inferno* ever made were shown. The discussion first compared the Doré drawings to the film's scenes of the same events, and then moved to the key question of the presentation, "if in 1911, you chose to make a silent film of one of the greatest poems in the history of western literature – how would you do it?" Remember that in 1911 cinematic technology was extremely limited; there was no artificial lighting of any significance, no moveable camera platforms, no multiple cameras, no fancy special effects and, of course, no sound – presenting the basic part of the question "how would you convey the passion and meaning of the greatest poem in Italian literature with actors who could gesture and move – but, given the level of current technology, were doomed to be silent?"

Gene Mariani

Dues Are Due-

Please send in your dues for 2006. The amount is \$30.00. If you would like to make an additional donation to help defray the costs of our special events and scholarships, we would sincerely appreciate it. Please send your dues to:
Dan Viele, Treasurer
1931 Schoettler Valley,
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Reminder-

Beginning with our meeting on March 15, our dinner will be \$22.00. You will continue to pay Baldo's. Please make your reservation by noon on Tuesday, March 14. Those making reservations after noon on Tuesday or walk-ins will be charged \$27.00.

Editor's Note-

At the recommendation of our membership, we would like to begin a "Meet Our Members" column in the *LaRondine*. Please let me know if you would like to interview our members or be interviewed. You may contact me at: mcucciasbj@aol.com or (314) 993-2252

"THE STONECUTTER'S ARIA" - An Evening of Music, Drama and Fiction

April 7, 2006 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Lee Auditorium , Missouri History Museum, Forest Park

Inspired by genealogical research, Carol Faenzi's novel, *The Stonecutter's Aria*, is the true story of an Italian marble carver and opera tenor at the beginning of the 20th century. Based on the novel, this program creatively combines opera and first-person narrative. Faenzi will sign copies of her book after the program. Join us for an evening of music, drama and fiction. www.mohistory.org

St. Joseph Altar at St. Ambrose – Sunday, March 19th

The St. Joseph Altar will be Sunday, March 19th in the St. Ambrose School Cafeteria, 5110 Wilson Avenue at Marconi. Following the 7a.m. Mass, the side altar will be blessed and those items may be purchased. The main altar will be blessed following the 11a.m. Mass. From noon – 3p.m. Italian specialties will be available. The Mass in Italian will be celebrated at 3p.m. Following the Italian Mass, all items on the main altar will be sold.

Our sincerest condolences to **Debbie Monolo** on the recent death of her father, **Nicholas Torpea**.

TERZA PAGINA

I capolavori della poesia italiana

a cura di Barbara Klein

Camillo Sbarbaro (Santa Margherita Ligure 1888–Savona 1967) si dedicò agli studi letterari e, oltre ad essere un poeta ed uno scrittore, fu insegnante di latino e greco. Ma la sua fama fu data anche dal fatto di essere un importante erborista. In occasione della festa del papà, il 19 marzo in Italia, presento una sua poesia che appartiene alla raccolta di Pianissimo.

Padre, se anche tu non fossi il mio

di Camillo Sbarbaro

Padre, se anche tu non fossi il mio
padre, se anche fossi a me un estraneo
per te stesso egualmente t'amerei.
Ché mi ricordo d'un mattin d'inverno
che la prima viola sull'opposto
muro scopristi dalla tua finestra
e ce ne desti la novella allegro.
Poi la scala di legno tolta in spalla
di casa usciti e l'appoggiasti al muro.
Noi piccoli stavamo alla finestra.

E di quell'altra volta mi ricordo
che la sorella mia piccola ancora
per la casa inseguivi minacciando
(la caparbia avea fatto non so che).
Ma raggiuntala che strillava forte
dalla paura ti mancava il cuore:
ché avevi visto te inseguir la tua
piccola figlia, e tutta spaventata
tu vacillante l'attiravi al petto,
e con carezze dentro le tue braccia
l'avviluppavi come per difenderla
da quel cattivo ch'era il tu di prima.

Padre, se anche tu non fossi il mio
padre, se anche fossi a me un estraneo,
fra tutti quanti gli uomini già tanto
pel tuo cuore fanciullo t'amerei.

In giro per l'Italia

a cura di Barbara Klein

Le Cinque Terre: il sentiero azzurro

Il "sentiero azzurro", che collega Riomaggiore a Monterosso, è il più rinomato e spettacolare percorso in Liguria. Molto del successo turistico le Cinque Terre lo devono ai sentieri che si snodano lungo la costa o raggiungono i santuari di ciascun paese. Per percorrere tutto il sentiero sono necessarie circa sei ore e complessivamente si supera un dislivello di 500 metri. E' un sentiero che è stato tracciato, nei secoli, da chi lo utilizzava abitualmente per spostarsi, perciò in alcuni punti si tratta di una vera e propria mulattiera.

Riomaggiore - Manarola

Partendo dalla stazione ferroviaria di Riomaggiore, si trova la scala di accesso che portano alla Via dell'Amore, il caratteristico percorso che collega il borgo con Manarola. Il tracciato, scavato nella dura roccia della costa, corer vicino al mare sul quale si affaccia. Lungo il percorso si possono ammirare vari quali agavi, fichi d'India, ruta e molti altri.



Manarola - Corniglia

Arrivati a Manarola, più precisamente alla Marina, il sentiero offre due possibilità di proseguimento, a seconda del tempo a disposizione. Chi non ha premura può percorrere la passeggiata "Bioroli" che porta al Palaedro, un tratto di 250 metri che gira intorno alla Punta Bonfiglio recentemente attrezzata di un parco giochi. Altrimenti ci si inerpica per la salita che porta al cimitero di Manarola dove, costeggiando il mare si prosegue il cammino che adesso è praticamente in piano. L'ultimo tratto del percorso è caratterizzato da un lungo spiagione di ghiaia e ciottoli che si sostituiscono al nudo scoglio.

Corniglia - Vernazza

Il sentiero prosegue costeggiando i numerosi vigneti di Corniglia. L'ambiente è ombroso e il terreno ricoperto da un prato, dove si trovano numerose piante quali anemone e orchidee. Si procede poi scendendo una scalinata sulla sinistra tra uliveti, vigneti e macchia mediterranea fino a sovrastare l'abitato di Vernazza.

Vernazza - Monterosso



E' il tratto più impegnativo del sentiero, bisogna uscire dal paese e incominciare a salire verso il cimitero, che si costeggia. La mulattiera è in forte salita: in breve si raggiunge quota 150 metri; da questo momento si proseguirà, con un leggero saliscendi, fino alla precipitosa discesa verso Monterosso. Ci si inoltra nella macchia mediterranea che occupa i terreni ormai abbandonati. La vegetazione è molto varia, si trovano il leccio, la ginestra, il ginepro.

Per ulteriori informazioni vedi:

<http://www.parks.it/parco.nazionale.cinque.terre>

<http://www.vacanzeinversilia.com/rivieraligure/viadellamore.html>

Buon viaggio in Italia!!!

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS
LA RONDINE**

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Prossime manifestazioni

FUTURE ITALIAN CLUB MEETINGS & EVENTS

March 15- "The Stonecutter's Aria" by Carol Faenzi

**April 19- "Theodoric the Great" by Anna Amelung
Washington University student awards will be presented at the April meeting.**

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

Cocktails—6:30p.m. Dinner- 7:00p.m. \$22.00 per person**

****Please note the new price for dinner beginning at our March 15th meeting.**

Reservations are due Tuesday, March 14th by noon.

Those who register after noon on March 14th or "walk-ins" will be charged \$27.00 per person.

Pirandello's "Henry IV"

The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis

February 8–March 10, 2006

Pirandello's play is a masterpiece of love and jealousy, psychosis and self-awareness, brought to new life with flair and humor by Tom Stoppard. An Italian nobleman falls from his horse during a historical re-enactment, awakening to believe he actually is his character, the medieval German emperor King Henry IV. For two decades, everyone indulges his "madness". He lives in a fantasy world, an illusion engineered by his family, complete with an 11th century castle and a retinue of costumed courtiers. But his family now believes they can cure him and have come to shock him into the 21st century, only to receive a shock of their own.

Italian Film Festival of St. Louis

March 31-April 15, 2006

The Italian Film Festival of St. Louis will present the local premiere of six Italian films, beginning with "Manuale d'amore" by Giovanni Veronesi on March 31, 2006 at 8 p.m.. The other films will be shown on April 1, 7, 8, 14, and 15. All films are subtitled in English and the screenings, which are free and open to the general public, will be held in Brown Hall 100 on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis at 8 p.m. The festival is sponsored by Washington University's Program in Film and Media Studies and the Istituto Italiano di Cultura di Chicago. For further information, please visit the festival's website www.italianfilmfestivalstlouis.com or call 314-422-3102.