



December 2006

La Rondine

LA RONDINE

"Little Red Riding Hood Revisited" **by Roy DeBellis and the Panettone Players** **at our December 20th Christmas Celebration**

Next Meeting

Wednesday

December 20th

Cocktails – 6:30p.m.

Dinner – 7:00 p.m.
\$35 per person

RSVP
Dan Viele

(636) 537-5960
or

ItalianClubSTL@aol.com
by noon
Friday Dec. 15th

It's Christmastime in the forest and Mamma sends Little Red Riding Hood to deliver a fresh Panettone to her Grandma. But she must travel through the forest, which is filled with all kinds of strange things and beings. Just as you would imagine she does encounter a variety of characters. Will she reach grandma's and, if so, what will she find? Mr. Wolf has his own ideas. Will Grandma become lunch? Will a Hunter be of any help?

Come see *Little Red Riding Hood Revisited* at the Italian Club monthly get together on December 20st at Baldo's. This pre-dinner show will be performed by the world famous *Panettone Players*. Starring in this year's production are the multi-talented: Roger Gennari, Emily Koetting, Mary Lou March, Anthony Perrone and Jim Tognoni. Their exquisite performances have to be seen to be believed. Directing this extravaganza, although little directing is required of such an accomplished, star-studded cast, is Roy DeBellis.

In keeping with tradition the production will be in Italian, and the audience will be furnished individual scripts in English to follow the scintillating dialogue. Join us in the festivities as a prelude to Christmas. (Many thanks to Baldo for providing the rehearsal space and refreshments, gratis.)

Roy DeBellis

"Caravaggio in Rome" **by Cynthia Stollhans, Ph.D.** **Presentation at our November 15th Dinner Meeting**

One of the reasons that I love a presentation by Cindy Stollhans is that she always manages to surprise me ; and this time was no exception. Her first slide was typical of the way such presentations usually begin, e.g. with a portrait of the subject – in this case, Michelangelo Merisi (1571-1610), a.k.a Caravaggio. But her next slide was the famous "School of Athens". Why am I looking at a painting by Raphael I asked myself. I thought this was supposed to be about Caravaggio? Now having my full attention, Stollhans proceeded with her intellectual process of connecting the cognitive dots leading me to begin to appreciate the tremendous impact of Caravaggio on the history of painting. To explain this, let me go back to the Italian Club presentation that Stollhans gave almost exactly a year ago (November 16th, 2005) entitled, *Art Patronage in Renaissance Rome*, in which she analyzed Raphael's "School of Athens" and "The Disputation" as examples of Renaissance painting. It struck me that, in tonight's presentation, she was picking up where she had left off a year ago - beginning with an archetypical Renaissance painting as a datum plane in order to compare it with selected works of Caravaggio - "The Supper at Emmaus", "The Calling of St. Mathew", "St. Mathew and the Angel", "the Martyrdom of St. Matthew", "The Calling of St. Paul", and especially "The Crucifixion of St. Peter", - to demonstrate the dramatic stylistic differences. With such works Caravaggio had literally created a new style of painting, "the Baroque", which transformed the history of art. The Baroque was an exciting break from the earlier Renaissance style, which had emphasized balance, order and symmetry. Instead the Baroque was far more dramatic; with use of strong light and shadow, abandonment of symmetry, acute observation of physical and psychological reality, and concentrating on relatively few key figures. With such examples, Stollhans illustrated the emblematic characteristics that collectively constitute the critical mass of the Baroque style. I liked the way she described such Baroque features as the use of the diagonal (the SLASH); having the subject stare at the main point of the painting (the GAZE – for example Peter staring at the nail pinning his hand to the cross in "The Crucifixion of St. Peter"); and TENEBRISM with its emphasis on dark shadows. (It has been said that Caravaggio put the "oscuro" in chiaroscuro).

The early sixteenth century was especially difficult for the Church; a period of religious and political turmoil, with Luther nailing his 95 theses on Wittenburg's Cathedral door (1517), the horrific Sack of Rome (1527), and England's Henry VIII establishing the Anglican Church.(1530s). In 1545, Pope Paul III convened the famous Council of Trent to address the fundamental causes of such problems. An outcome of the proceedings was a statement about the role of art in the Church; declaring art as intrinsically good – but that it should be clear and unambiguous with the artist neither adding to, nor subtracting from, the textual sources and focus on the meaning of the religious message.

(Continued on page 2)

""Caravaggio had literally created a new style of painting, "the Baroque", which transformed the history of art. The Baroque was an exciting break from the earlier Renaissance style, which had emphasized balance, order and symmetry?"

L'angolo del Presidente by James Tognoni

My Fellow Members and Friends:

I hope that you all had a marvelous Thanksgiving. By the time this reaches you Christmas will be only days away. How many of you use Xmas as an abbreviation? Not many I hope. The celebration of the birth of Christ seems to elude some people today. As a matter of fact if you notice that in order to be "politically correct" many people now say Happy Holidays at the risk of offending another person with the word

Christmas. I for one wish to call it what it is- the celebration of the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. Those of you that know me well know that I am not a particularly religious person but there are certain things from my Roman Catholic upbringing that will always stick with me.

I want to encourage everyone to attend our annual holiday get together and Christmas party on December 20th.

The food will be marvelous, the camaraderie engaging and the performance by our very own Pannetone Players wonderful. Hope to see you on the 20th. As usual if you want to voice an opinion or have a suggestion, let me hear from you.

Buon Natale,

Ciao, Jim

(314) 865-1005 jtognoni@earthlink.net

Turandot at the Touhill, Sunday, February 11th

The Italian Club is planning to go to the Touhill Theater on **Sunday, February 11, at 7:00 p.m.** to see the opera, "Turandot." The tickets will be at a group rate at a cost of \$36. *Please call Gloria Etling at 965-6972 to make your reservation.*

Caravaggio – cont'd from page 1

Rome was the place to be for an artist in those days; loaded with unbelievably rich nobility –both ecclesiastical and secular - all eager to build new churches and palazzi and to commission new art works. And at about the same time, Caravaggio comes to Rome and takes the Council's guidelines to heart. As they say, timing is everything and Caravaggio's dramatic new style becomes the talk of the town. The rough and tumble brawler from Lombardy becomes an artistic super-star in his own time; not only jump-starting painting's Baroque style - but also, in some people's opinion, sowing the seeds of what centuries later will become Modern Art.

Another thing I love about a presentation by Cindy Stollhans is that she always leaves me asking myself questions. Two came immediately to mind; if the Council of Trent had not made its statement about art, would Caravaggio have taken the same approach to his painting? And, was the break that Baroque architecture made from Renaissance Mannerism, also be attributed to the declaration of the Council? I'll end this review with the words I used when I wrote my review of her talk last year. Molte grazie to Dr. Cindy Stollhans for another excellent presentation, one that made me think, question some prior assumptions, and do a bit of additional reading. But isn't that what great teachers, ever since the time of the School of Athens, are supposed to inspire their students to do? Cindy, spero che ci vediamo l'anno prossimo.

Gene Mariani

Congratulations Rachel Godspa & Megan Rogers!

Rachel and Megan were awarded the Gene Mariani Award for Excellence in Italian Language at the November meeting. Both Rachel and Megan are Sophomores at St. Louis University. The Mariani award was established in 2002 to honor President Emeritus Eugene Mariani and award two students in SLU's Italian language program each year. The award is sponsored by Southwest Bank, the Italian Club and the Mariani family.

**Fourth Annual Hill Nativity Walk
December 2—January 6**

The Fourth Annual Hill Nativity Walk is a cultural exhibit of Italian and Italian-style presepi (nativity scenes), much like the exhibits that take place each Christmas season in cities and villages all over Italy. The presepi displayed here on the Hill have been entered by individuals, organizations and merchants from the St. Louis Italian-American community. These presepi have been placed in the windows of merchants on the Hill and surrounding area so that they can be viewed as you take a leisurely walk with friends and family through this historic neighborhood.

To best enjoy this self-guided tour, pick up a nativity walk brochure from a participating merchant or print one at www.italiausa.com/italianclub. In the brochure, along with information about traditional Italian Christmas celebrations, you will find the history and origin of the presepio in Italy, and a map and listing of display locations. As you reach each display you will find a window card bearing more detailed information about that presepio and other related points of interest.

This year the exhibit will include handcrafted presepi of terra cotta, wood, gesso and a variety of other materials. Some were newly purchased, some are treasured family heirlooms carefully brought by our immigrant ancestors. Some come from Naples, the region most famous for the production of presepi, some from Sicily, others represent the styles and materials found in the northern regions.

We hope this exhibit will enrich your appreciation of this Italian tradition and its value as a religious art form. Please visit us each year, watch the exhibit grow, and make the Hill Nativity Walk an annual Christmas tradition. From display to display you may find your pace begin to slow as you step out of the frenzy and back into the true spirit of the season-Italian style. Buon Natale!

The Hill Nativity Walk is co-sponsored by the Italian Club of St. Louis and the Hill Business Association from December 2 through January 6, 2006.

Notice from the Board of Directors:

After many years of holding the annual membership dues at \$30, the Board has approved an increase to \$40 for next year. While the Board works hard to operate each year within the resources generated by the annual dues, many regular operating costs have increased over recent years (such as the monthly production and mailing of the LaRondine) and other new annual costs have arisen (Special projects and programs, SLU Scholarship, website, etc.) As a result of these increased operating costs, the Board determined that a dues increase was finally necessary at this time. The Board of Directors sincerely appreciates your membership participation and commitment to the Italian Club of St. Louis.

TERZA PAGINA

I capolavori della poesia italiana

a cura di Barbara Klein

Giovanni Prati (Campomaggiore, Trento, 1814 – Roma 1884) laureato in legge a Padova, si dedicò presto alla poesia e alla politica. Nei suoi versi trovano posto tutti i motivi di canto del primo romanticismo italico-patria, amore, idilliaca celebrazione degli umili. Fra le sue opere: *Canti lirici* (1843), *Passeggiate solitarie* (1847), *Storie e fantasie* (1847), *Una raccolta di sonetti è Psiche* (1876).

La rondinella

di Giovanni Prati

Son qui sulla gronda,
che canto gioconda
gli occasi e i mattini
di porpora e d'or,
che tesso ai piccini
la casa superba
con muschi, con erba
con larve di fior.

Su prore ed antenne
posando le penne,
fra il marzo ed il maggio
mi reco dal mar;
e scordo il viaggio
pensando al mio nido,
se un portico fido,
se un embrice appar.

Gran Dio, se ti piacque
recarmi sull'acque,
se l'esca segreta
trovar mi fai tu,
deh! rendimi lieta
d'un raggio di sole:
pel nido e la prole
non cerco di più.

In giro per l'Italia

a cura di Barbara Klein

Madonna di Campiglio: la perla delle Dolomiti di Brenta

Madonna di Campiglio, adagiata a 1550 metri di quota nella bellissima conca tra il gruppo delle Dolomiti di Brenta e i ghiacciai dell'Adamello e della Presanella, fu lanciata turisticamente nella seconda metà del secolo scorso da Giambattista Righi. Nel 1868 egli acquistò l'intera sostanza dell'ex-monastero di Santa Maria di Campiglio appartenente alla

mensa capitolare di Trento. Al posto dei fatiscenti fabbricati del vecchio ospizio stretti attorno ad una chiesa tardo medioevale egli eresse un primo albergo, destinato ad accogliere i primi turisti della montagna. Nel 1875 intraprese a proprie spese la costruzione della strada che collegava i centri dell'Alta Val Rendena con Madonna di Campiglio.



L'imprenditoriale fu portata avanti da Franz Joseph Oesterreicher, già proprietario del Grand Hotel Trento, il quale subentrò nella proprietà di Campiglio nel 1882. Egli trasformò Madonna di Campiglio nel ricercatissimo luogo di ricca borghesia

austriaca e mitteleuropea. Tra i suoi ospiti, nel 1889 e nel 1894, ebbe addirittura la principessa Sissi e l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe che trascorsero qui lunghe giornate passeggiando per i boschi, raggiungendo i laghetti attorno a Campiglio e dedicando spensierate serate ai walzer e a ristretti incontri con i loro cortigiani. La famiglia Oesterreicher rimase a Campiglio fino al 1955, quando le sue proprietà furono gradualmente acquistate soprattutto da imprenditori Lombardi.

Nel 1948 fu inaugurato il primo impianto, una seggiovia che univa Madonna di Campiglio allo Spinale; negli anni '50 furono realizzate la funivia 5 Laghi ed alcune sciovie. Oggi il circuito degli impianti si sviluppa lungo 90 km di piste con una capacità di 30.700 persone all'ora e si pensa al collegamento con le piste di Pinzolo (essendo già attivo quello, sci ai piedi, con Folgarida e Marilleva).

Madonna di Campiglio oggi è certamente la numero uno tra le stazioni sciistiche italiane e una delle più importanti dell'intero Arco Alpino: la varietà del suo ambiente montano assicura d'inverno la possibilità di percorrere, sci ai piedi, innumerevoli chilometri di piste fino a 2600 metri, sempre diverse per grado di difficoltà, per gli emozionanti scorci sui gruppi delle Dolomiti di Brenta e dell'Adamello e della Presanella.

Il fascino di Madonna di Campiglio non è precluso ad alcuno: è un fascino che si svela poco a poco, vivendo il silenzio della natura, immergendosi nello scintillio dei cristalli di neve. L'avventura inizia infilando gli sci da fondo oppure le racchette da neve - che qui prendono il nome di ciaspole - oppure affrontando la sfida appagante di una escursione con gli sci alpinismo.

Per ulteriori informazioni vedi: <http://www.campiglio.it/>

Buon viaggio in Italia!!!

Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo



La Rondine

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS

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FUTURE ITALIAN CLUB MEETINGS & EVENTS

December 20th- Annual Christmas Celebration and presentation by the Panettone Players
Special dinner = \$35.00

January 17th- "The Memories Project" *by Roger Gennari*

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

UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Saturday, December 2—Sunday, January 6- Hill Nativity Walk

January 20- "Lucia di Lammermoor" at the Touhill Performing Arts Center

February 11- "Turandot" at the Touhill Performing Arts Center



**ITALIAN CLUB OF ST. LOUIS
CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION DINNER MENU
DECEMBER 20, 2006**

Join us for a evening of great food, great company, some giveaways and a performance by the renowned Panettone Players. Not only will we enjoy each others company but we will a fantastic meal. Make your reservation early.

Antipasto – Involtino di Melanzane

Primi – Pasta Cognac

Secondi – Medaglioni di Filetto Salsa Porcini

OR

Tilapia Mediterraneo

Contorni – Seabonis Vegetables

Dolce – Panna Cotta

Coffee and House Wine

\$35.00 per person. Reservations must be made by Friday, December 15th.
Call (636) 537-5960 or e-mail: ItalianClubSTL@aol.com