ICS EVENTS
Social meetings start at 3:00 PM on the third Sunday of the month, September thru May, at the Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD (See map on back cover)

Sunday, January 20: Riccardo R. G. Cannavò discusses and demonstrates the Teatro de Pupi (Sicilian Puppet Theater) See page 5
Saturday EVENING, February 16: CARNEVALE!! see flyer and reservation form on page 3
Sunday, March 17: Luca Paschini, of Barboursville Winery will speak about wine and his experience at the winery in Virginia.

MOVIE of the MONTH: at 1:00 PM The Flowers of Saint Francis See page 9
Italian Lessons and Conversation on January 20 at 2:00 PM

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Buon Anno! We hope you enjoyed Festa di Natale at our December social meeting. We certainly did (see the pictures in this issue.) Our wonderful performers, WNO coloratura soprano Angela Knight and tenor Anthony Torchia provided us with a beautiful program (who will soon forget Angela's O Holy Night or Torchia's Nessun Dorma!) Le D.I.V.E. provided a lively, well-attended program for children while the performances took place. Singing Here comes Santa Claus ushered in Babbo Natale (Arrigo Mongini), the Elves (Romeo Segnan and a new French one!) and La Befana (graciously played by ICS member Sylvana Ehrman) made the gift distribution portion of the program a lot of fun. Everyone agreed that the potluck foods this year were much more “Italian” and...of course therefore really delicious.

Our plans for the new year begin with Riccardo Cannavò’s presentation on Sicilian Teatro di Pupi in January, and a big, grownups Carnevale party in February co-hosted with the Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society. (See the flyer on p. 3 and make your reservations early.)

Also, the Italian Language Program is undergoing many changes. As has been mentioned before, the responsibilities for administering the education activities of the Embassy of Italy now move on to the Casa Italiana Language School, and after providing the ICS/ILP with excellent service for many years, especially during this last crisis-filled year, Flavia Colombo is moving to that organization to continue to manage Corsi Integrativi and activities in American schools in the metropolitan area as well as assisting in their other programs. We will sorely miss her, and wish her well in her new endeavors.

Beginning in January, Danielle Ehrman will be managing the ILP office as we continue our programs for Adult Classes. Danielle, fluent in Italian as well as several other languages, comes to us with a wealth of experience, especially in her specialty area of communications. She will administer the details of current programs, as well as help us develop new programs as we move forward in this new phase for our Society. Please drop by the ICS office to meet Danielle and welcome her to the ILP. Many of you are fond former students of our Adult Classes. Please remember to mention them to your friends and consider taking another one with us...or perhaps giving an enrollment in one as a present to someone you plan to travel to Italy with soon. Classes for the winter quarter begin on January 7. Again, all the ICS board joins me in wishing you a Happy New Year!

Ron Cappelletti, president

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WELCOME TO NEW ICS MEMBERS
It is with great pleasure that we welcome those Members who have
joined us recently. As we welcome them we hope that they will take
advantage of all that the Society has to offer and that they will
contribute with their knowledge and expertise to the success of the
Society’s mission:
Fran Favretto, John and Marianne Alciati, Galina Venediktova
Benvenuti!

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Costume Party, with Masks & Prizes for the Best!

DINNER CATERED: PIERO'S CORNER RISTORANTE ITALIANO, FFX, VA WINE...MUSIC WITH DJ...ITALIAN FOLK AND BALLROOM DANCING

masks for sale at the door

Saturday, February 16
7pm–11pm

Friendship Heights Community Center
4433 S. Park Avenue,
Chevy Chase, MD

Free parking on Marriott surface lot across
The Hills Plaza. (map: italianculturalociety.org/parking)
Metro 5 min. walk.

Hosted by Italian Cultural Society and
Abruzzo Molise Heritage Society,
Members: $25, nonmembers $30

Checks for reservations must be received by Fri., Feb. 8; no cancellations/refunds after Feb. 11. ICS members register by check to ICS with Nick Monaco, 20414 Meadow Pond Pl., Montg., Vlg., MD 20886. AMHS members register by check to AMHS with Joe Novello, 7035 Hunter Lane, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Non-members register either way. No children under 18. Members $25. Non-members $30. Questions? Call Nick at 301-963-6584 or Joe at 301-927-4766.

List all names in your party below and whether they are ICS, AMHS or non-members.

Name: ___________________________ Telno: ___________________________ ICS or AMHS or non-mem
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Total $ ______
ICS Festa di Natale Lost & Found Items

The photo below shows items left behind at the ICS Festa di Natale. Owners are requested to contact Nick Monaco to arrange for return. Nick can be contacted at: monaco1957@aol.com or tele: 301.963.6584

Antenna Italia

is now on the AMICO website. Get news from Italy and information on Italian and Italian-American events as well as music & commentary in streaming audio. Log on any time
at Pino Cicala’s web site
www.italianamericancommunications.org

LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

National Gallery of Art:
Guided tours of the Italian Renaissance collection, West Building, main floor rotunda Mon., Fri. and Sat. 2:30, Sun. 1:30
Italian Language guided tours Tues. Jan 8 and Sat. Jan 12, West Building main floor rotunda at 12:00 and East Building, ground level info. desk at 2:00. RSVP 202-842-6247
Michelangelo’s David-Apollo: the sculpture, sponsored in part by Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on exhibit through March 3, 2013 in the West Building, Main Floor, Gallery 11.
Italian Cultural Institute: 1938 L’ Invenzione del Nemico, a play about the Holocaust and racial laws in Italy and an illustrated lecture on the racial laws of 1938. at the Embassy of Italy, Thursday, 7 PM January 24, 2013, performed by the Shakespeare Theater Company. Also performed at three other venues: Cong. Tifereth Israel January 26, 7PM Theater J January 28, 7PM Nyumburu Cultural Center (U. of Md.) Jan, 30, 7PM RSVP to be announced http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/IIC_Washington/webform/SchedaEvento.aspx?id=440&citta=Washington
Piazza Italia: http://www.meetup.com/DCitalian/ Italian Language meetup group. See website for details

AUGURI
DI UN PROSPERO
E FELICE
ANNO NUOVO

La Redazione
L’ OPERA DEI PUPI SICILIANI

di Riccardo R. G. Cannavò

L’Opera dei pupi (in siciliano Òpra de’ pupi) è un particolare tipo di teatro delle marionette che si è affermato nell’Italia meridionale e soprattutto in Sicilia tra l’ottocento e il novecento. Il teatro rappresenta storie medievali di scontri tra cavalieri cristiani e musulmani e specialmente le gesta di re Artù e dei paladini di Francia di Carlo Magno. Questa forma di teatro è un aspetto tipico della cultura e della tradizione siciliana ed è stato dichiarato Capolavoro del Patrimonio Orale e Immateriale dell’Umanità dall’UNESCO il 18 maggio del 2001.

I pupi rappresentano già da soli delle vere e proprie opere d’arte; prodotti da artigiani esperti e composti esclusivamente di legno, ottone e velluto. Tutti i pupi indossano bellissime armature, uno scudo e una spada. Il volto del pupo è finemente dipinto a mano dall’artigiano puparo.

Le due grandi scuole tradizionali diffuse in Sicilia sono la scuola palermitana e la scuola catanese. La scuola palermitana è diffusa a Palermo (capoluogo della Sicilia) e nella Sicilia occidentale mentre la scuola catanese è diffusa nella Sicilia orientale e anche in parte nella regione Calabria.

I pupi della scuola catanese sono alti circa 120-130 centimetri e pesano 25-30 kilogrammi, mentre i pupi palermitani sono più piccoli e leggeri, sono alti circa 80 centimetri e pesano circa 10 kilogrammi; i pupi della tradizione palermitana sono quindi leggeri e snodabili (possono piegare le ginocchia), mentre i pupi catanesi sono più pesanti e con gli arti fissi (ma nel complesso più semplici da manovrare).

I principali personaggi cristiani dell’Opera sono Carlo Magno (imperatore di Francia), Orlando, Rinaldo, Ruggero di Risa, Agolaccio, Gano di Magonza (tutti paladini di Francia),

THE SICILIAN PUPPET THEATER

by Riccardo R. G. Cannavò

The Sicilian puppet theater (in Sicilian Òpra de’ pupi) is a special kind of puppet theater very popular in the South of Italy and especially in Sicily between the 19th and 20th centuries. The theater tells medieval stories of fighting between Christians and Muslims, knights, and especially the adventures of King Arthur and the French knights of Charlemagne. This kind of theater is a typical part of the Sicilian culture and tradition and was proclaimed Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO on May 18th, 2001.

The puppets themselves are true artworks. They are made by skilled craftsmen just using wood, brass and velvet. All the puppets wear beautiful, shining armor, a shield and a sword. The puppet’s face is elegantly hand painted by the puparo craftsman. The two big traditional schools in Sicily are the Palermitan and the Catanese. The Palermitan school is present in Palermo (the Sicilian capital) and in western Sicily while the Catanese school is present in east Sicily and partially in the Calabria region.

The puppets of the Catanese school are about 4 feet tall and weigh around 55-66 lb. while the Palermitan puppets are smaller and lighter. They are about 2.6 feet tall and weigh about 22 lb. The Palermitan puppets are articulated (they can bend their knees), while the Catanese puppets are heavier and with stiff legs (but in general easier to maneuver).

The most important characters of the Opera are Charlemagne (emperor of France), Orlando, Rinaldo, Ruggero of Risa, Agolaccio, Gano of Magonza (all French knights), Angelica and Bradamante (female French knights), Malagigi (magician and French knight). The most important Saracens are Ferraù, Falsarone, Marsilio, Agricane,
Angelica e Bradamante (paladine di Francia), e Malagiggi (mago e paladino di Francia). Mentre i saraceni più importanti sono rappresentati da Ferrau, Falsarone, Marsilio, Agricane, Rodomonte ed altri. Tutti i personaggi sono diversi e facilmente identificabili dai loro simboli (Orlando, per esempio, ha per simbolo una colomba, mentre Rinaldo un leone), i simboli venivano incisi dagli artigiani pupari sullo scudo e sull’elmo di ciascun personaggio.

Dopo gli anni ’60 la tradizione dell’opera dei pupi ha sofferto una grande perdita di importanza e di pubblico dovuta all’arrivo della modernità, dell’industria, del boom economico, della televisione e delle nuove tecnologie, inoltre il teatro veniva erroneamente considerato espressione di una società rurale basata sull’agricoltura ormai lontana e composta da persone analfabete o poco istruite. Al giorno d’oggi l’Opera è tornata di moda con moltissimi siciliani e turisti che riscoprono la bellezza e la fantasia delle loro antiche tradizioni, le compagnie di pupari sopravvissute cominciano ad incontrare di nuovo il favore del pubblico e quasi in tutta la Sicilia è possibile assistere alle rappresentazioni teatrali.

Nella mia esperienza di appassionato di pupi e teatro siciliano ho avuto la fortuna di visitare diversi teatri della Sicilia e assistere a numerosi spettacoli. Per tutti i lettori che si troveranno in vacanza nella Sicilia orientale vorrei sinceramente raccomandare di visitare il teatro dell’Opera del maestro Turi Grasso ad Acireale in provincia di Catania. Il maestro Grasso, insieme alla sua famiglia, ci racconta ancora oggi, le appassionanti storie e gesta epiche dei cavalieri senza macchia e senza paura all’interno del bellissimo teatro di famiglia... non ve ne pentirete!

Rodomonte and others. All the characters are different and easily recognizable by their symbols (e.g. Orlando has a Dove, while Rinaldo has a lion), the symbols were engraved by the craftsmen on the shield and on the helmet of each character.

The “opera worker” or puparo (in Sicilian manianti) is the person that maneuvers the puppet behind the scenes during the show. In a show there are 2 or 3 puparos, while the narrator is the person that tells the story or speaks in the character’s voice (male voices for male characters and female voices for female characters). Furthermore the puparo also writes the screenplays that are often true artworks by themselves; He is also the director of the show. The show takes place with real spectacular and noisy fighting between puppets. While the puparos maneuver the puppets behind the scenes, the puppets hit each other with swords, winning and losing fascinating battles.

After the sixties the traditional puppet Opera suffered a great loss of importance and attendance due to the coming of the new age of “modernity” of industry, the economic boom, TV, and new technologies. Furthermore the Opera was mistakenly considered the production of a rural society based on agriculture and far away in time, composed by illiterate and not well educated people. Nowadays the Opera is again a very popular attraction. Many Sicilians and tourists have rediscovered the beauty and the fantasy of their old traditions, the puppet theatre companies that survived are regaining their popularity and almost in all of Sicily it is possible to watch puppets shows. As mentioned above, UNESCO has recognized this theater show as Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Among the old puparo families still working there are: Mimmo Cuticchio, Argento and Mancuso in Palermo, Canino in Alcamo, Napoli in Catania, Pennisi-Macri and Turi Grasso in Acireale, Profeta in Licata, Puiglisi in Sortino, the Vaccaro-Mauceri family in Syracuse, and the Gargano family in Messina.

In my personal experience with puppets and as a Sicilian theater lover I was lucky to visit several Sicilian theaters and to watch several shows. For all the readers that are planning to go to eastern Sicily for vacation I would strongly recommend that you visit the Opera Theater of the Master Turi Grasso in Acireale, Catania province. Mr. Grasso and his family, still today tell us the fascinating stories and adventures of the brave (and never feared) knights inside the amazing family theater... you will be not disappointed!
La Sardegna è famosa per la sua costa frastagliata, per le residenze dei VIP, per i resti preistorici e antichi, e anche per i suoi banditi e rapitori, ma pochi visitatori si rendono conto che molte città dell’isola hanno murales che meritano una visita. Forse perché le città “murales” tendono ad essere nascoste all’interno della Sardegna, sono state trascurate dal turismo, ma ogni visitatore che affitta una macchina può facilmente visitarle e sarebbe ben ricompensato se lo fa. Anche un percorso che si concentra sulle province vicine di Nuoro e Ogliastra (vedete la mappa) si permetterebbe di vedere una grande diversità di questa forma d’arte.

Magari il più famoso luogo per i murales è Orgosolo nella provincia di Nuoro. Il fenomeno muralistico è cominciato qui negli anni settanta quando un gruppo di anarchici milanesi è venuto ad Orgosolo e ha dipinto il primo murale. Così è iniziata la tradizione di dipingere i murales ad Orgosolo che trattano di temi politici, sociali e storici.

L’artista più importante negli anni ‘70 e ‘80 era Francesco del Casino, nato a Siena ma sposato e residente ad Orgosolo. Del Casino ha insegnato la tecnica agli studenti della scuola media che hanno contribuito a mantenere viva questa tradizione.

In contrasto con i murales che si trovano in altri luoghi della Sardegna, quelli di Orgosolo ci danno un messaggio invece d’un’ bella immagine. Adesso ci sono più di 150 di questi murales. I messaggi sono diretti, spesso con annotazioni o citazioni. Per la maggior parte, sono dipinti da artisti locali.

Questo (colonna destra) illustra il capitalismo come un serpente. Questo murale (sopra) ha un messaggio anti-guerra: “Invece di trattori per arare, carri armati sono arrivati.”. Questo legge, “corrotto ex-ministro ricercato per attentato alla salute”. Francesco de Lorenzo è stato indagato per aver accettato tangenti quando era il Ministro della Sanità negli anni novanta. E’ stato indagato nell’indagine Mani

Sardinia is famous for its rugged coast, its exclusive homes and resorts, its ancient ruins, and even for its bandits and kidnappers, but few visitors realize that many of the island’s towns are worth visiting for their murals. Perhaps because these “mural” cities tend to be hidden in the interior of Sardinia they are ignored by the tourism industry. But they are easily visited by anyone who rents a car, and the traveler who does so will be well rewarded. Even an itinerary that focuses on the neighboring provinces of Nuoro and Ogliastra will allow you to see a great diversity of this art form.

Orgosolo in the Province of Nuoro may be the most famous place to see murals. The art of mural painting began here in the ‘70’s when a group of anarchists from Milan came to Orgosolo and painted the first mural. Thus began the tradition of painting murals in Orgosolo that deal with political, social and historic themes.

The most important artist of the ‘70’s and ‘80’s was Francesco del Casino, a native of Siena who married a woman from Orgosolo and settled there. Del Casino taught the technique of mural painting to students of the local middle school who have helped to keep this tradition alive. In contrast to the murals found in other parts of Sardinia, the 150 murals of Orgosolo give us a message rather than a pretty picture. The messages are direct, often spelled out in words or quotations. These are primarily painted by local artists. Some examples:

This one portrays capitalism as a snake.

This mural (left column) has an anti-war message: “Instead of tractors for plowing, tanks arrived.”

This one reads, (left column) “corrupt ex-minister sought for attacks on health.” Francesco de Lorenzo was indicted for bribe-taking while Health Minister in the ‘90’s. He was investigated under the “Clean Hands” initiative. But it seems that he was repentant; after contracting cancer himself, he founded an organization to support cancer victims.

This mural depicts various political slogans such as “Get the Vultures out of Sardegna.”

This one (left column, top next page), with Lenin, Engels, and Marx, seeks justice for workers.

This anti-war mural (next page) recalls the Battle of Caporetto during WWI. The
Pulite. Ma sembra che si sia ravveduto; dopo aver contratto lui stesso il cancro, ha fondato un'organizzazione per il sostegno dei malati di cancro.

Questo (colonna destra, pagina precedente in basso) illustra vari manifesti politici come “Fuori gli avvoltoi dalla Sardegna.”

Questo murale con Lenin, Engels, e Marx richiede giustizia per gli operai.

Questo murale (colonna destra) anti-guerra ricorda la Battaglia di Caporetto durante la prima guerra mondiale. La battaglia era una sconfitta così enorme che gli italiani continuano a dire “è stata una Caporetto” per indicare qualcosa che è un completo disastro.

Quest’ultimo murale da Orgosolo, con donne e bambini, richiede la medicina preventiva.

Altrove nella Sardegna, al di fuori di Orgosolo, si trovano i murali che trattano d’altri temi. Soggetti popolari includono la vita tradizionale sarda, in particolare lo stile di vita della campagna, con lo stretto legame con la terra, e dei piccoli villaggi dell’interno. Ricordano un tempo più semplice in cui la vita era meno meccanizzata e la gente era autosufficiente.

Tre esempi da Bari Sardo nella Provincia di Ogliastra:

Questo (colonna destra, sopra) con le mucche raffigura una festa locale.

In questo murale, i contadini mungono le capre.

Ecco (colonna destra) un costume tradizionale.

E, da Montresta (Prov. di Oristano), viene questo esempio di un murale che esalta le virtù del lavoro di un contadino ed una cestaia.

La città’ di San Sperate vicino a Cagliari si è specializzata nei murales dello stile trompe l’œil.

Negli anni sessanta un pittore locale ha iniziato un progetto per rivoluzionare l’aspetto dei muri delle case a San Sperate. Con il sostegno della popolazione e l’amministrazione per questo progetto, ci sono ormai 300 murales che decorano le vie del paese. San Sperate è diventato un museo a cielo aperto! Due esempi:

Una donna (colonna destra) che ci invita ad entrare in casa sua.

Un ottimo esempio di trompe l’œil e’ questo murale dove e’ battle was a defeat so astonishing that Italians still say “it was a Caporetto” to mean something was a complete disaster.

Elsewhere in Sardinia beyond Orgosolo you find murals that deal with other themes. Popular subjects include traditional Sardinian life, especially the lifestyle of the countryside, with its strong links to the land, and of the small villages of the interior. They recall a simpler time during which life was less mechanized and people were self-sufficient. Three examples from Bari Sardo in the Province of Ogliastra:

This one, with the cows, (above) portrays a local festival.

In this mural, (left column) farmers are milking the goats.

This one shows a man in traditional costume.

And, from Montresta in the Province of Oristano (left column) comes this example of a mural that exalts the virtues of the work of a farmer and of a basket-weaver.

The city of San Sperate near Cagliari specializes in trompe l’œil murals. In the 60’s a local painter began a project to radically change the look of the walls of the houses in San Sperate. With the support of the local people and government for this project, there are now over 300 murals decorating the streets of the town. San Sperate has become an open air museum! Two examples:

A woman (above) invites us into her house.
difficile sapere dove finisce l’albero dipinto e dove comincia l’arancio vivo.

Quest’ultimo murale (colonna destra) si trova a Urzulei, Provincia di Ogliastra. Si chiama “Memoria e Identità”, temi che si vedono riflessi in tutta la Sardegna. I muralisti sardi cercano di conservare il loro patrimonio in un’epoca di cambiamenti rapidi. Il loro lavoro ci impedisce di dimenticare i valori tradizionali, le competenze ed i costumi di questa terra antica.

Vedete www.muralesinsardegna.net per altre fote.

HUMAN SPIRITUALITY IN ROSSELLINI FILMS

By Hospitality Chairman Joe Onofrietti

Academy Award winning director Roberto Rossellini began his illustrious career making war movies in the 1940s. In classics like Open City (1945), he exposes a world reaching the limits of despair, because of the loss of faith. Afterwards, Rossellini brilliantly captures the rediscovery of faith in the epic Stromboli (1949). It is this unprecedented change Roberto sees in the world that inspires him to look for the most accomplished form of the Christian ideal.

“I found it in Saint Francis. I wanted to show the effects of Francis on his followers. My film wants to focus on the merrier aspect of the Franciscan experience, ‘The Perfect Delight,’ the freedom that the spirit finds in poverty and in an absolute detachment from material things.”

- Roberto Rossellini

The Italian Cultural Society January film of the month is The Flowers of Saint Francis (1950). St. Francis (Brother Nazario Gerardi) leads his friars from Rome to Assisi after the pope grants them permission to preach. They are joined by clumsy, but good hearted Giovanni (Esposito Bonaventura), who ruins their dinner by mistakenly putting the firewood in the meal pot instead of underneath it. Meanwhile, the forces of good vs. evil meet eye to eye when Brother Ginepro (Brother Severino Pisacane) asks Nicolaio the Tyrant (Aldo Fabrizi) to stop laying siege to the town of Viterbo. Neorealist Director Roberto Rossellini and his young writer Federico Fellini cast actual monks from the Nocera Inferiore Monastery for most of the roles in this moving portrait of the search for spiritual enlightenment. The Flowers of Saint Francis is filmed in glorious black and white. In Italian with English subtitles.

This mural (left column) is a great example of trompe l’oeil. It’s difficult to tell where the painted tree ends and the live orange tree begins.

This last mural comes from Urzulei in Ogliastra. It’s called “Memory and Identity”, themes that you see reflected in murals throughout Sardinia. The Sardinian muralists are trying to preserve their heritage in a time of rapid change. Their work keeps us from forgetting the traditional values, skills and customs of this ancient land. See www.muralesinsardegna.net for more photos.

SPIRITUALITÀ UMANA NEI FILM DI ROSSELLINI

di Joe Onofrietti

Roberto Rossellini, regista premio Oscar, ha iniziato la sua illustre carriera girando film di guerra negli anni ’40. In classici come Roma Città Aperta (1945), espone un mondo che raggiunge i limiti della disperazione, a causa della perdita della fede. In seguito, Rossellini cattura brillantemente la riscoperta della fede nell’epico film Stromboli (1949). È questo cambiamento senza precedenti che Roberto vede nel mondo che lo ispira a cercare la forma più compiuta dell’ideale cristiano.


- Roberto Rossellini

PICTURES FROM THE FESTA DI NATALE
The expiration date of your membership is shown on the address label. Please renew using the form at the bottom of this page.

ICS membership application

Mail application to:
ICS Membership
4827 Rugby Ave., Suite 301
Bethesda, MD 20814

Please make check payable to:
The Italian Cultural Society

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meeting location

friendship heights village center
4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815