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Lend Me Your Ears by Ken Wlaschin

Mozart's 'Figaro' to open Florence opera season

OPERA HOUSES ALL OVER ITALY are getting ready to start their new seasons. The Teatro dell'Opera in Rome opens its doors Nov. 28 with Verdi's "I Vespri Siciliani," La Scala will begin its official season (after the Bolshoi company leaves) on Dec. 7 with "Turandot," La Fenice in Venice will hold its gala inaugural on Dec. 18 with "Un Ballo in Maschera" and the small but still excellent Teatro Comunale in Florence has just announced its six operas for the season. Mozart's great "The Marriage of Figaro" has been chosen for the premiere on Nov. 27 with **Ilva Ligabue, Giuliana Matteini, Graziella Sciutti** and **Herbert Handt** starring. **Vittorio Gui** will wield the baton while **Carlo Piccinato** will see to the staging. "Figaro" will be repeated on Nov. 29, Dec. 1 and Dec. 3. It's back to Verdi on Dec. 11 with a new production of "La Forza del Destino" featuring **Marcella De Osma, Anna Maria Rota, Florindo Andreoli** and **Paolo Washington. Walter Boccacini** will direct the production while **Francesco Molinari Pradelli** will conduct. It will be performed again on Dec. 13, 16 and 20. **Shostakovich's** "Caterina Ismailova" will receive its first ever production in Florence on Dec. 23 with **Sonja Barbieri** as the heroine assisted by **Mirto Picchi, Augusto Vicenti** and **Dino Dondi. Enrico Colosimo** will stage the Russian work while **Bruno Bartoletti** will conduct the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Orchestra. "Caterina Ismailova" will also be staged on Dec. 27 and Jan. 3. Rossini's "The Barber of Seville" will premiere on Jan. 7 with **Mario Zanasi** in the leading role (repeat performances on Jan. 10, 12 and 14). **Magda Olivero** will star in Puccini's "Tosca" which opens on Jan. 15 with **Ettore Bastianini** also in the cast. Final opera of the season will be Verdi's "Ernani" which will star American soprano **Margaret Roberts** and **Umberto Borso.** It will premiere Jan. 24.



JUST A LITTLE LONGER — The impatient "Girl With the KLM Bag" will be on exhibition a little longer than she planned. Marvin Cherney's one-man show at the ACA Gallery, which includes the above painting, has been extended until next week

Via Venetopics

The scene shifted from Monteverde back to Via Veneto Wednesday night as the thousand and one friends of former British boxing champion **Dave Crowley** poured into the basement of the Savoy Hotel to view the new grill room that **Dave** will be hosting in addition to his dive. "It looks just like an English club," said one demure maiden and the tasteful styling by interior decorator **Margaret Haven** certainly creates that effect, dark paneled wood with old English prints, hanging leather straps with brass medallions and an assortment of hunting horns. Genial manager **Ambrogio Luvini** beamed as **Sarah Churchill, Lobo Nocho, Polly Lewis, Elaine Olcott** and most of the other folk from that evening of color across the river arrived for a long stay. The Savoy pianist **Francesco Gallo** provided the musical background but gave way at one point for a masterful one-man show by **Charlie Beal,** guitar stylings from **Romano Allegratti,** and some fine blues singing from **Willie Gordon.** To mention just a few of the hundreds who dropped in, we noted writer **Guy Elmes, Frank** and **Tine Mayers,** model **Pat McCormack, Paul Ventola** of Jerry's on Via Veneto, **Colin Watson, George Hovsepian** (who must surely live in Dave's), **Louis Del Pizzo, Gloria Wall,** actress **Diane Aubrey, Eva Darin,** actress **Anne Marie Nielson,** opera singer **Padrica Mendez,** drummer **Charles Campbell** and **Bob Tannock** . . . someone (we won't mention his name but his initials are **Nick Alexander**) asked us why **Melton Davis, Harvey Matofsky** and **Hal Frederick** seem to be at every party given in Rome. The answer probably has something to do with festomania (party syndrome) but they weren't at **Dave's** anyway. The carrot-topped **Matofsky** is in Paris beating the publicity drum for "Casanova '70," actor **Frederick** got as close as the front door of the Savoy on his way home to work on his changed role in "Giulietta of the Spirits" and **Davis** marked a milestone in Rome inaugural nights by merely not being present . . . **Stephen Boyd** has been signed to play the role of Nimrod in the epic "The Bible" and was due to arrive in Rome yesterday. Old Romans will remember that he hit the big time here when he made "Ben Hur" . . . in spite of rumors you may have heard the fine Odyssia Gallery just off Via Veneto is not closing and will be staging its first big show of the season starting Monday. The inaugural exhibition will feature new paintings and drawings by **Mario Schifano** . . . those posters you've been seeing around town publicizing the Christmas cards for sale at St. Paul's American Church were all done by the art department at St. Stephen's School. We found out that the students who did them (nicely, nicely) are **Marshall Thompson, William Barnsdale, Janet Judd** and **Katherine Rossow.**



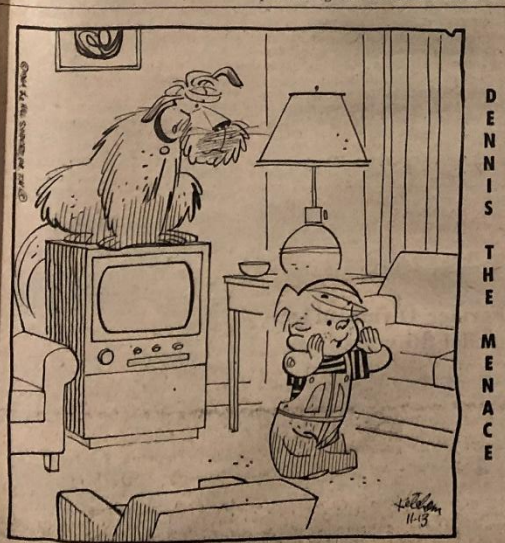
A WOLF ON CAPITOL HILL — SYMBOL OF ROME? — But the descendants of Romulus and Remus' mammy are kept in a cage, aren't they, asks actress Joan Collins of smooth and forward Vittorio Gassman. The pair are pictured shooting one of the final scenes of their movie "La Congiuntura" on the Capitoline (AP photo)

Here and there

Anonymous Celebrities Dep't: That handsome couple wandering back and forth on Via Veneto the other night, ignored by the paparazzi and unrecognized by the madding crowd were none other than **Joan Collins** and hubby **Anthony Newley.** That's the price of fame, people just never leave you alone . . . **Fred Marshall** and **Gene Ruggiero's** tongue-in-cheek short, "From Bed To Worse," will have its world premiere in Rome next week at a private screening. Italian actress **Franca Polisella** stars with **Marshall** in the flick, based on a book he wrote . . . the much-traveling directors of the Obelisco Gallery, **Irene Brin** and **Gaspero Del Corso,** flew back to Rome after a month in the U.S. attending exhibitions by many of their gallery artists including **Pompa** and **Foppiani** . . . **Guy Madison** was down for a snack(?) at Da Meo Patacca . . . **Daniel J. Pinto,** headmaster of the Overseas School, presented Letters of Recommendation from the National Merit Scholarship Program to three seniors at an assembly this week. They were **Susan Huey, Ruth Rosenblatt** and **Maja Zimmerman** . . . and **Carolyn Neale,** a senior at Marymount International School, has been named a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship competition. She is the daughter of **William Neale,** the U.S. Army attaché at the embassy . . . views of Italy by **Siora Lepri** went on show at the Qantas Australian Center on Via Bissolati Wednesday . . . **Catherine Spaak** due back in town momentarily from Paris where she has been dubbing in "La Calda Vita" . . . **Richard T. Webster** will discuss the philosophical writings of Ayer and Ryle today at 6 p.m. at the British Council in a talk titled "What Is A Person?" No charge and a very pleasant way to do a little thinking without too much effort . . . blues fans (and we're one) will be interested in knowing that a series called "Folk Blues U.S.A." has just been issued on LP in Italy by Fontana. Among the singers now available are **John Lee Hooker, Memphis Slim, Sonny Terry, Lightnin' Hopkins, Bubble Bee Slim, Joe Turner** and **Brownie McGhee** . . . **Joe Levine,** the Embassy Pix dynamo, due in town yesterday for a stop at the Excelsior . . . **Claudia Cardinale's** flick "La Ragazza di Bube" opened in New York this week but though she was liked, the film didn't win much praise from most critics. But the Daily News in the person of reviewer **Wanda Hale** loved it. Three and one-half stars in her diary . . . it's like having to say that our leg is to be chopped off but we must report that the great lady of expatriate song, **Bricktop,** is talking off for London in three weeks. We're not certain yet but she may just be leaving permanently this time . . . **Wally Witwer** has discovered that if you stand in the exact center of the Pantheon during a heavy rainstorm, you get just as wet as if you were standing in the street. "I've got a special cloud that follows me," he explained.



NEWLEY



If you have any news for "Lend Me Your Ears" about your or your friends' parties, social gatherings, arrivals, departure, engagements, marriage, etc., please telephone Rome: 587.118 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. or write to 8 Via Dandolo, Rome, Italy.

Actor Paul Muni ill in hospital

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., Nov. 13 (AP) — Officials at Cottage Hospital disclosed that actor Paul Muni, 67, is under treatment there for what was termed a serious heart condition.

Attendants said the Academy Award winner also was suffering from pneumonia when he entered the hospital Oct. 30, but this subsequently cleared up.

Muni and his wife have been living in retirement here for several years. The Austrian-born actor won an Oscar as the best male actor of 1936 for his title role in "The Story of Louis Pasteur."

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