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Lend me your Ears

By RACHAEL BAUMEL

PLAYWRIGHT-ACTOR PETER USTINOV is the exact reverse of that song popular some seasons back about the lady who preferred the gentleman who was there. When it comes to his two professions — **Ustinov** prefers the one he's not engaged in at the moment. He does, however, admit, "Acting is rather easier. It's not easy to give a good performance. But it's easier to give a bad performance than to write a bad play." Whether the fact that he was an actor first influences his thinking on the subject, he doesn't say.

At any rate, **Ustinov**, who has the happy conversational faculty of coming up with amusing lines that could go right into his plays, started his career as a scrivener during the war, and had his first play, "House of Regrets" produced almost immediately — in London, in 1942. He gave the play to a famous writer of revues (Herbert Farjeon), who was even after three months, "extremely evasive about it. Then I picked up the Sunday Times the day that Germany marched into Russia and started reading James Agate's column (he was the dean of drama critics, sort of an English **George Jean Nathan**) and he was talking about this new dramatist. I was very envious and I was about halfway down the column before I realized it was I. Somebody bought the option in New York on the basis of the notice. It was never done there, but I had 100 pounds to live on, which made a difference. Then I was a private."

Although **Ustinov** has written 12 plays, the actor hasn't taken too many of the playwright's parts. The first one was the role of the Wicked Fairy in "The Love Of Four Colonels." This is the role that **Rex Harrison** took in the American production, which, says **Ustinov**, was cut considerably. They phoned him from the States to consult re the cuts, but he recalls, "all I heard was the Atlantic. First **Rex** saying 'hello, Peter,' then gloop, gloop, gloop." He didn't find out exactly what the cuts were until sometime later. Opuses 11 and 12—"Romanoff and Juliet," in which he will play a part, and "The Empty Chair" which is being done by the Old Vic company, will open in England this spring.

The actor-author is busy here winding up "I Girovaghi" (originally "Cardello") which he's been shooting down in Sicily. He had to grow a beard for the film—"The same beard I grew for 'Quo Vadis' but the producers said it didn't look real so I had to wear a false one." And one day in Taormina, wearing the ragged clothes of the Sicilian peasant he plays in the film—and with beard—he went into a library to buy the London Daily Telegraph. Two tourists wearing rimless glasses ("you know those octagonal ones. The glasses that pretend they're not there and transform a whole face") saw him. One said to the other: "I can't get over how primitive these people are. They're way behind the times. I just want to extend the hand of friendship to them." At this point he boomed out "in a loud and senatorial voice. (I tried to get a sort of gnarled timbre). Has my Rome Daily American come in yet?" But **Ustinov** adds, "I felt guilty immediately afterwards, because I had obviously spoiled their holiday."

Ustinov's wife, **Suzanne Cloutier**, is also in the acting business, although at the moment she's expecting their second child — any minute. Their first youngster, **Pavla**, now 20 months, is a little too young for the stage, "But not too young to talk on the phone. **Pavla**, born in Los Angeles, travels on an American passport; his wife has a Canadian one, and **Ustinov's** is English, a situation which frequently drives customs and border officials crazy.

ROMAN MEANDERINGS: American Ambassador **Clare Boothe Luce** slated to fly to Paris Monday on her way to New York and Washington to prepare for the visit of Italian President **Giovanni Gronchi** to the States . . . U.S. Consul General for Italy **Wilson C. Flake** and **Mrs Flake** toasted before going on home leave at a party given by **Jane** and **Woody (Merrill) White** . . . any Roman lady who has ideas of taking the place that's currently said to be **Bettina's** in **Aly Khan's** heart, should go to Ciampino this p.m. The Prince will be there for a while, between arriving via Air France from Paris, TWAing out to Cairo . . . add additions to the Eternal City — **Count Bluecher-Altona**, Denmark's leading publisher. He and the Countess are currently spending the winter in Rome . . . executive committee of the American Women's Association said farewell to fellow board members and committee chairman **Charlotte Weller** and **Mary Begon** at a luncheon at the Taverna Flavia. **Mrs Tom Laforest** takes **Mary's** place as chairman of the hospitality committee and **Mrs Burton Wohl** taken over for **Charlotte** as publicity committee chairman . . . sorry to hear that **Rudy Brunst**, director of the Rome bureau of National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service, is in Salvator Mundi, downed by the weather . . . **Joe Angotti**, recently arrived budget and fiscal officer at the embassy, is apartment hunting . . . **Mrs Connie Chancellor** and **Mrs Andre Waters**, two ladies who have been traveling around Europe for the last three months with their little daughters, aged 4 1/2 and 3 1/2 respectively, PAAed home from Rome last night. The two ladies, who are from Chicago have been proving it's not hard to travel with kids and gathering information and taking photos for stories for Chicago newspapers. They've also been making tape recordings of their youngsters' impressions and their meetings with other kids. The tapes are slated to be heard on NBC's Monitor show in the States . . . Italian actor **Folco Lulli** TWAed to Madrid yesterday.



ALY KHAN

CULTURAMA: Baritone **Albert Lane**, who's leaving soon for the States, will give his farewell concert at St. Paul's American Protestant Church tomorrow evening at 6. **Lane**, who's been a member of St. Paul's choir for some time, will be accompanied by **Lydia Ivanova**, the church organist . . . another musical event on the agenda for the church: concert by Fulbright bass-baritone **Peter Harrower**, which will he held Wednesday evening at 6:30 at St. Paul's parish house. Pianist **Robert Feist** will accompany him . . . English pianist **Patricia Flory** and tenor **Mario De Petris** will present a joint recital this afternoon at 5:30 at the Circolo Artistico, 54 Via Margutta. **De Petris** will be accompanied by **Renata Gabry** . . . show of paintings by **Chiara Luraghi** opens this evening at 6 at L'Asterisco Gallery . . . paintings by **Enzo Brunori** go on view at La Medusa this evening, also at 6.

Strip Teaser, Sugar Heir Get Tax Bills



LILI ST. CYR

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 17 (AP) — Sugar heir John D. Spreckels III, strip teaser Lili St. Cyr and movie actor Eric von Stroheim all have been billed by the U.S. government for back income taxes.

Spreckels, who had his name changed to John D. Smith, last December, owes $10,843.16 on his 1940 income. So says a lien filed with the county recorder.

Spreckels or Smith told the judge who approved the name change that he is paying $25 a month in back income taxes.

He is a salesman for a brother who operates a custom cabinet show in Seattle.

Another claim said Miss St. Cyr ower $4,391.65 for 1954.

The lien against Von Stroheim asks $8,760.49 on his 1949 income and gives his address as care of 65 Champs Elysees, Paris.

U.S. Women's Unit Aids Rome Villages

The American Women's Association of Rome is sponsoring a rush relief drive to aid villages near Rome stricken by the cold.

Members and friends of the organization are urged to donate warm clothing, sturdy shoes and blankets. Donations will be received at 6 Via Lucullo on Monday and Tuesday morning between 10 and 12 noon.

What's Going On In Rome

MUSIC

TEATRO DELL'OPERA — "The Magic Flute," by Mozart (in German), with artists of the Vienna Staatsoper; Vittorio Gui, conductor; tonight at 9 . . . "Manon Lescaut," by Puccini; Giannandrea Gavazzeni, conductor; tomorrow afternoon at 5 and Tuesday night at 9.

TEATRO ARGENTINA — Santa Cecilia Orchestra symphony concert; Antonio Pedrotti, conductor; soloist: Dietrich Fischer-Diskau, baritone (works of Bach, Kodaly, Martin, Stravinsky); tomorrow afternoon at 5:30.

AULA MAGNA, Rome University — Recital by American soprano Lucretia West (Negro spirituals, songs by Purcell, Handel, Dvorak, Piccinni, Schubert, Granados); this afternoon at 5:30.

FORO ITALICO AUDITORIUM, 26 Lungotevere Diaz — RAI Orchestra symphony concert; Sergiu Celibidache, conductor (works of Vivaldi, Mozart, Petrassi, Stravinsky); tonight at 9:30.

EXHIBITS

PALAZZO BARBERINI — American Architecture of Today. Hours: 9-1, 4-8. Through Feb. 24.

EXPOSITION PALACE, Via Nazionale — Seventh National Quadriennal of Roman Art. Hours: 9 a.m.-9 p.m. daily. To run till April.

SCHNEIDER GALLERY, 10 Rampa Mignanelli — Paintings and charcoals by Giovanella (Joan Markson). Hours: 11-1, 4:30-8. Last day.

OBELISCO GALLERY, 146 Via Sistina — Paintings by Lilian Caralan. Hours: 10:30-8:30; closed Sundays.

GALLERIA DELLE CARROZZE, 44/a Via delle Carrozze — Works of Colombian artist Emma Reyes. Hours: 11-1, 5-8; closed Sundays. Through Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS GALLERY, 22/b Via Lazio — Paintings and drawings by Mariette Lydis. Hours: 10:30-1:30, 3:30-8:30.

ST. PAUL'S PARISH HOUSE, Via Napoli off Via Nazionale — Exhibit of woodcuts and drawings by James N. Wines. Begins tomorrow.

GALLERIA D'ARTE SELECTA, 2 Via di Propaganda — Paintings by Filippo De Pisis. Through March 2.

FILMS

FIAMMETTA THEATER, 3 Via San Nicolò da Tolentino — "Rebel Without A Cause," starring the late James Dean. Today at 5:30, 7:45, 10:15 p.m. Telephone 470.464.

ARCOBALENO THEATER, Palazzo di Vetro, Via XX Settembre — "My Sister Eileen," with Janet Leigh, Jack Lemmon, Betty Garrett. Today at 6, 8 and 10 p.m. Telephone 470.470.

SPORTS EVENTS

HORSE RACES — At Capannelle race track tomorrow at 2:30.

CLUB MEETINGS

ROTARY CLUB meets every Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.; dinner at the Excelsior.

ZOO

GIARDINO ZOOLOGICO, Villa Borghese — Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

NIGHT CLUBS

FLORIDA, 18 Via Fr. Crispi (Largo Tritone) — Nightly shows, dancing. Telephone 471.406.

KIT KAT, 28 Via Liguria, near Via Veneto — Floor show, dancing. Telephone 487.242.

LA BIBLIOTECA VALLE, 9 Largo Teatro Valle — Night club, dancing, restaurant. Telephone 551.292.

OPEN GATE CLUB, 3 Via San Nicolo da Tolentino — International floor show, dancing. Telephone 481.625.

SCHEHERAZADE, 1 Vicolo della Tinta (Monte Brianzo) — Dancing, restaurant. Telephone 564.203.

TOR FIORENZA, 2 Via Monte delle Gioie, near Piazza Vescovio — Dancing. Telephone 880.892.

VICTOR, 84 Via Emilia — Dancing. Telephone 471.538.

VILLAFRANCA-JOLLY CLUB, 31 Via della Vite (behind General Post Office) — Dancing. Telephone 670.484.

Good News Letter Ends 'Honor' Trial

TRENT, Italy, Feb. 17 (AP)—A letter from the Italian Defense Ministry yesterday ended a trial which an elderly couple, Emma and Osvaldo Maffei, started against a neighbor for "reasons of honor."

The letter said the couple's missing son, a soldier on the Russian front during World War II, was known to be alive in southern Russia. The parents had not heard of him since 1942.

They immediately dropped the legal action. "We cannot embitter this day with a trial," they said.

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