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Lend Me Your Ears by Ken Wlaschin

American Anna Moffo steps into 'Traviata' furor

AMERICA, IN THE FORM OF SOPRANO ANNA MOFFO, has entered into the continuing fuss over the controversial new production of "La Traviata" at La Scala Opera House in Milan. The revolutionary production, one of the biggest musical events in recent times at La Scala, aroused comment from Trieste to Taranto (a lot of it hostile) and the center of criticism was soprano **Mirella Freni** who sang the role of Violetta. Miss **Freni** was reportedly suffering from nervous exhaustion after the strain of the turbulent premiere and she was substituted at the performance on Sunday by Italo-American Miss **Moffo.** The influential Corriere della Sera reported that **"Anna Moffo,** very experienced in the role, succeeded in winning the sympathy of the audience. Her fine acting and her clear and expressive singing won her heated applause" Milan papers agreed that the whole production went better the second night and conductor **Herberi von Karajan** came in for his share of praise. Rumors that he has requested the substitution of Miss **Moffo** for Miss **Freni** were denied but it was expected that the American would sing the role again tonight. Miss **Freni's** difficulties with the role began even before the first performance when "anti-**Freni**" groups sprayed stink bombs in the upper galleries. Feeling the tension in the hostile audience, she slipped on a high note of a word in the first act and received a chorus of whistles and boos from the galleries. She came out on the stage to face the crowd after the curtain closed but instead of bowing, she put her hands on her hips and stared up defiantly at the galleries. As one not very sympathic critic wrote the next day: "She may be questionable as a singer but we have to bow to the strength of her character."



ANNA IN THE ART WORLD — Italian actress Anna Magnani looks over two of the paintings that go on sale tonight in the big benefit show being held by the Accademia Gallery in Piazza Accademia di San Luca. Thirty well-known artists have donated works for the exhibition and all the proceeds will be used to help the adopted children of Josephine Baker

Here and there

Osvaldo Rossini, the amiable gent who runs the Calypso restaurant-bathing establishment on the sea near Torvaianica, likes people and parties. When German artist **Judith Lange** dropped in on a cold Sunday afternoon and he found out it was her birthday (21st), he insisted on giving a party in his club for her at his own expense. And so the Calypso rocked all day as Teutonic guests poured in and exhausted themselves on a 12-course meal and dancing from noon till night. As an extra **Rossini** had his well-known son, singer **Aldo Gioffi,** on hand to sing a few of his latest recordings. Among those sampling the unusual hospitality (and some of the best food we've had in a long time) were American artist **Arthur Elliot, Gianni Patara,** of Alitalia, German architect **Friedhelm Pfannmuller** and wife **Dagmar,** writer **Melton Davis** (who naturally squired **Judith**), Egyptian poetess **Nadia Motta, Doreen Cusack,** Prof. **H. Henningsen** (director of the Villa Stuart), Dr **Vittorio Ortali,** Mrs **Marion Swoboda** and German writer **Otto Rock** and his wife **Dorrit** . . . exhibition of paintings by primitive artists at the Feluca Gallery worth taking a look at . . . British actress **Dawn Addams** and her Italian husband, Prince **Vittorio Massimo,** have apparently failed to reach an out-of-court settlement in their five-year-old separation case. A hearing on Friday ended with a postponement until Feb. 5 which could be the final hearing . . . **Stephen Schmidt,** staff writer and story editor for Compass Films, and his wife **Mitzi** were hosts at a Christmas party this weekend for Rome's answers to the **Beatles,** the ever-swinging **Rokes.** The crowd included **Alberto Simonelli,** director of Telesport, and most of the Compass film folk.



GIOFFI

Via Venetopics

The scene moved to Trastevere again Sunday night as much of the Roman art world gathered at sculptor **Sergio Lanzavecchia's** studio to say goodbye to art editor-historian **Linda Perlman,** who returns to the U. S. tomorrow after two years work in Rome. Among those seen wandering in the dark labyrinths of the studio were architect **Michael Wurmfield** and his photographer wife **Hope, Judy** and **Roger Eastman,** director **Jerry Jacobson,** visiting Oxford scholar **Nevin Schreiner, David Shirey** and **Norma Stevenson** of Newsweek, photographer-writer **John Howard, Kristin Moehlman** and **Annemaree Sheehan** . . . agent **Olga Chart** branching out into producing now and will start shooting on her first film on Jan. 4. It's called "The Treasure of the Petrified Forest" and stars **Gordon Mitchell, Eleonora Bianci** and **Carmela Maio. Emimmi Slavi** will direct the flick which will be filmed in Eastman color, six weeks at the De Polis Studios and two weeks in Yugoslavia . . . some nice drawings in a manner as modern as you can imagine have just gone on show at the Odyssia Gallery. Among the artists exhibiting are **Festa, Maselli, Fioroni, Del Pezzo, Schifano** and **Bignardi** . . . **John Mather** and **David Niven Jr.** of the William Morris Agency noted dining in George's with director **Frank Perry** (who made "David and Lisa" remember). **Charles Forte,** considered the Italian restaurant king of London, was there with a party (comparing menus?). And in listening to **Charlie Beal's** late, late piano were British producer **Sidney Box** (here to set up a film with **Jack Cardiff** as director), **Kurt Poulter** and Count **Serego Alighieri.**



Miss PERLMAN

People and places...

Artist **Manfredi Lanza** will open an exhibition of his paintings at the San Marco Gallery on Via del Babuino next Monday. **Lanza's** wife **Audrey** is well-known to most of the American colony in Rome as she has been a teacher at the Overseas School since its founding (until this year). **Lanza,** who started off as a set designer, has won many prizes in painting competitions (including a first at Tivoli this past summer). All his paintings are views and scenes, painted from life in villages and country places around Rome. His show at the San Marco will continue through Jan. 8 . . . a 17-year-old Japanese boy named **Kensho Sugi** is looking for a penpal in Italy. If you're interested (and his hobbies include pingpong and seeing movies) write him at 2005 Funueshoji, Chofu-cho, Shimonoseki City, Yamaguchi-ken, Japan . . . Mr and Mrs **Henry Joseph Rosen** are staying at the Hassler Hotel . . . the Scuola Grafica Salesiana in Rome has published a new book by Mother **M. Jerome Roman,** president of Manor Jr. College in Pennsylvania, on St. Basil the Great. Titled "The Flaming Pillar of Cappadocian Caesarea" it contains 12 photos and tells the story of one of the great fourth century doctors of the church. It can be ordered from the Orphanage Book Store, 1825 West Lindley Avenue, Philadelphia . . . the December issue of the Casa dello Scugnizzo News has just come out reporting on happenings in Father's **Borelli's** home for streetboys in Naples. If you're interested in obtaining a copy (and learning a lot about Naples that you never knew before) write to the editor at 3 Largo San Gennaro in Naples.



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