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LEND ME YOUR EARS:

London Hails Gassman's 'Heroes'

VITTORIO GASSMAN AND HIS COMPANY, Il Teatro Popolare Italiano, was warmly received Wednesday by London critics. The Italian program "The Heroes," a series of excerpts from plays from Aeschylus to Pirandello, opened last night and will run until the end of the week.

The performances are in Italian with an English running commentary.

The Mail said **Gassman** is one of the day's most impressive stage actors . . . his voice is like a cello . . . sawing along its part in the Beethoven Quartet." The Express said **Gassman** reveals himself "as a actor of impressive presence and power which has been cruelly misused by the producers of Hollywood sword-and-sandal epics." The Guardian said **Gassman** "is one of the few rhetorical actors in the world." The Times said "**Gassman** considers himself an heir to the grand manner of the Nineteenth century, and the opening scenes in the program bear this out." The Evening News said "There is no doubt that a great actor — brain as well as heart throb — is on a bold experimental new course and are joyously at work."

THE WELLES FAMILY, Mel, Meri and son Timothy, say good-bye to pet leopard before leaving Rome on PIA. Mel stopped in London to work on the film "A Quiet Business," which he is producing and acting in, and Meri and Tim flew on to Los Angeles where she'll work on "Soldiers in the Rain."

Here And There

Hundreds of Italian telephone girls swarmed through London's streets early this week and not all were looking for tourist sights. "It would be an interesting experience to go out with an Englishman," said one. Others agreed. About 300 operatives from the Veneto Telephone Social Club are on a five-day tour of the capital. In addition to the regular tours the club members will go night-clubbing in Soho and have side-trips to Oxford and Stratford-on-Avon before returning home Friday . . . Knoll International, a leading modern furniture concern, held its annual European conference in Italy this week at the Savoy Hotel. Small delegates from 18 countries reviewed new chair designs for 1964. **Alden W. Boyd**, U. S. executive vice president and **Kurt Burgold**, in charge of design engineering, attended. . . . Members of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association, representing the major American firms, have been visiting Milan and were guests at a cocktail party offered by Martini & Rossi at the Terme Martini . . . a group of 50 visitors, traveling under the aegis of Playboy magazine, are in the Eternal City. Wednesday they took in a fashion show at the Majestic Hotel with such Roman names as **Litrico**, **Brioni** and **DeLuca** showing their wares. The show was presented by **Robert L. Green**, Playboy's fashion authority . . . **Luciani** women's store has been so successful it will soon open a Rome men's store.

Memorial Day Services

Memorial Day services will be held again this year at the American Cemetery in Nettuno starting at 11 a.m. May 30. Lt. Gen. **Ralph P. Swofford Jr.**, commander of Allied Air Forces in Southern Europe will address the ceremonies. Americans are urged to attend.

Via Venetopics

Luchino Visconti is back from a scouting expedition in Cairo for one of the episodes of "The Bible" which he'll direct next fall . . . **Elizabeth Taylor's** take — to date — on "Cleopatra" is more than $1.7 million and she has another 10 per cent due from all receipts over $7.5 million. If the film earns the $62 million needed to break even, Miss **Taylor** would net something like $7 million. "That was her going price when we signed her," **Darryl Zanuck** told 20th Century-Fox shareholders at a meeting Tuesday. **Richard Burton** gets only $250,000 for his efforts . . . Moscow audiences applauded enthusiastically for six Italian ballerinas who danced in "Swan Lake" in the Bolshoi . . . Sotheby's of London sold Leonardo da Vinci's tiny drawing "Madonna and Child" to a private buyer for $51,200 this week . . . **Ignazio Silone** arrived in Washington Tuesday fatigued by heat which forced him to cancel a lecture in Atlanta. The Embassy denied reports that the Italian writer was ill: "Just exhausted," a spokesman said . . . Television actress **Fedora Bontempi** was awarded Italy's Star of Solidarity Wednesday for her work with the Italian community in New York. Her husband, **Pino**, is a previous recipient of the award . . . **Gina Lollobrigida** will have a hospital named after her in Tehran, where she's visiting now. She visited the still incomplete "Gina" children's hospital Wednesday with Empress **Farah**. Earlier the Italian film beauty had ashes of burned herbs thrown over her by veiled Iranian women — to protect her from evil eyes.

Rome Jottings

Agostino Cardinal Bea, president of the secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity of the Ecumenical Council, will officiate at commencement exercises at the Notre Dame International School on Sunday, June 2, at 5 p.m. . . . Royal Shakespearean actor **Julian Brooks** and his stepson **Richard Hall** have taken an apartment in Rome, telephone 758.8.773. Rome theatergoers may remember him as Huggins in "The Amorous Prawn" at Teatro di Servi . . . Time Magazine correspondent **Robert Piser** has legally changed his name to **Robert B. Kaiser**. He'll be in Greece this week, in New York next week, then in Yugoslavia before returning to Rome June 10 . . . In the Eternal City on a flying visit is **R. Casper**, Toronto businessman, to check on the progress of the rapidly developing Rosa Marina Estates at Ostuni, south of Bari . . . Messaggero art critic Prof. **Arturo Bovi** presented the personal volume of **Linda Buonaiuti** at the Scorpio Gallery, 23 Via Sistina, last night. Miss **Buonaiuti** has an exhibition at the gallery . . . Violincellist **Evelyn Steinbock** will give a recital at the American Embassy Theater at 9 p.m. Monday, May 27. Pianist **Letizia Indiati** will accompany her in pieces by Beethoven, Frescobaldi-Cassadò, Isadore Freed, Leslie Bassett and Bela Bartok . . . an exhibition of paintings by **Urbano de Cupis** opens Tuesday at the Galleria San Marco, 61 Via del Babuino, and will run through June 6 . . . **Alan Robert Posner**, son of Mr and Mrs **Irving L. Posner**, 16 Via Leonardo Pisano, Rome, has been tapped for membership in Keidaeans, University of Rochester senior men's honorary. Members are selected on the basis of leadership, scholarship and character.

If you have any news for "Lend Me Your Ears" about your or your friends' parties, social gatherings, arrivals, departures, engagements, marriages, etc., please telephone Rome: 587.116 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. or write to 8 Via Dandolo, Rome, Italy.

U. S. Conductor A Hit

MOSCOW, May 22 (AP) — Lorin Maazel, 33-year-old American conductor, led the Soviet State Symphony Orchestra through the long and intricate Maler Second Symphony last night and brought a big Moscow audience storming to its feet in what Soviet conductors called a "remarkable" performance.

Soviet Admits Cannes Entry Compromise

CANNES, France, May 22 (AP)— A propaganda drama about the Russian Revolution was the official Soviet entry today at the 16th annual Cannes Film Festival.

A Communist attending the international film competition candidly admitted that the picture, "The Optimistic Tragedy," was a compromise choice by the Soviet selection committee.

"We had a better picture but there was an argument, so this one was selected," he said. For obvious reasons, he declined to be identified.

The Communist blamed Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's recent blast at Soviet writers and artists for the compromise choice.

The picture was given a gala premier in the best Hollywood tradition. The Festival theater facing the Mediterranean was jammed with first nighters in black tie and evening gown. The Soviet Ambassador to France, Serguei Vinogradov, was on hand for the performance that began a few minutes before midnight. Later the Soviet Union gave a vodka and caviar reception that lasted into the wee hours at the ornate ballroom in the Municipal Casino.

Festival critics doubted that the frankly propaganda movie about the struggle of the Communist Party during the 1918 Revolution held much promise for Russian honors at the Festival.

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