

Il Gazzettino

December 2016

Message from the Board

We hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We are grateful to have so many active members in our club, and we look forward to celebrating with each of you at our upcoming Christmas Party!

Abbracci,

Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii Board
info@friendsofitalyhawaii.org

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Upcoming Events

Christmas Party

We are delighted to invite all of you to join us for our Friends of Italy Society of Hawaii Annual Christmas Party!

Where: Cafe Julia at YWCA
Laniakea in downtown Honolulu
(across from Iolani Palace)

When: Sunday, December 18,
5:30-9:30pm

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Christmas Party (continued)

What: We'll enjoy music from Na Hoku Hanohano Award winning artist Pierre Grill as well as a visit from Babbo Natale. Attendees can also look forward to a silent auction featuring items from local businesses as well as member donations.

Tickets: We are offering a discount for those who register early, so get your tickets today!

Early registration (before December 1st): \$45

After December 1st: \$50

Children under 12: free of charge

Parking: Street parking is available along South King Street in front of Iolani Palace. Ali'i Place offers municipal parking for \$3. Entrance to Ali'i Place parking is on Alakea Street, just past the Mandalay Restaurant on the right hand side. The small parking entry is easy to miss.

More information and to register please visit our new website at www.friendsofitalyhawaii.org.

Past Events

Pasta Making Party

On November 14, we had a fantastic time making pasta from scratch and eating pasta dishes prepared by Andrea Onetti of Onda Pasta.

Andrea taught us tips and tricks about buying the best farina and semolina and about how to adjust recipes based on the feel of the dough.

We were then treated to 3 exquisite dishes: Gnocchi with traditional red sauce, lasagnette with an original corn-pesto sauce, and finally a bis of lasagnette with a cheese sauce.



Andrea sells his handmade pasta and caters private events:
ondapasta.com

You can check out Andrea at farmer's markets around O`ahu:
Wednesday's at the Blaisdell, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Thursday's in Kailua, 5:00-7:30 p.m.
Friday's at Aloha Tower, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Saturday's at Ward Warehouse, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Feature Story

THE MYTH OF THE (ITALIAN) AMERICAN WEST

By Mark Ethridge

The American West has long been a source of inspiration to musicians, writers, painters, sculptors, film-makers and other creative artists. Many of these depictions aren't necessarily realistic, but rather show a romanticized version of that reality.

Italians developed a fascination with the American West in the late 19th century. Initially, the American West was a setting for Italian operas, then expanded to comic books in 1940's, and peaked in the 1960's with the debut of Spaghetti Westerns.

In 1910, Giacomo Puccini's opera, *La Fanciulla del West*, premiered to enthusiastic crowds at the New York Metropolitan Opera, boasting 14 curtain calls. Famous Italians participated in the production including Arturo Toscanini, the conductor, and Enrico Caruso, the lead tenor.



Marcello Giordani and Deborah Voigt in “Fanciulla del West.”
Credit Sara Krulwich/*The New York Times*

Feature Story

The opera was based on the story *The Girl of Golden West* by American author David Belasco. Set in a mining camp at the foot of the “Cloudy Mountains” (Sierra Nevada) during the 1849-1850 California Gold Rush, the story revolves around a love triangle between Sheriff Jack Rance, a saloon owner named Minnie, and Dick Johnson, who is really the bandit Ramerrez. After a series of dramatic events, including a life-or-death poker game, Minnie and her true love, Dick Johnson, alias Ramerrez, ride away on horseback into the California sunset singing:

“Addio, mia dolce terra, addio, mia dolce California, Bei monti della Sierra, o nevi, addio!”	Farewell, my sweet land Farewell, my sweet California, Beautiful Sierra mountains, o snows, farewell!
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Perhaps here a Western tradition was born: the singing cowboy riding into the sunset! Interestingly, Puccini was adamant about the actors riding off on real horses, although later productions did not stay true to this vision.

Fast forward 38 years. Shortly after the end of the Second World War, Gian Luigi Bonelli (writer) and Aurelio Galleppini (artist) created a Western-style comic book. Signor Bonelli developed two characters, Occhio Cupo and Tex Willer, but it was Tex who was destined to become one of the most popular characters in Italian comics, as well as the longest lasting. The character of Tex was conceived as rugged, strong, naturally clever, and I thought to be based partially on Gary Cooper. An incredibly skilled marksman, rider, and tracker, Tex is a likeable character who has a strong sense of justice, but is not bothered by “rules.”

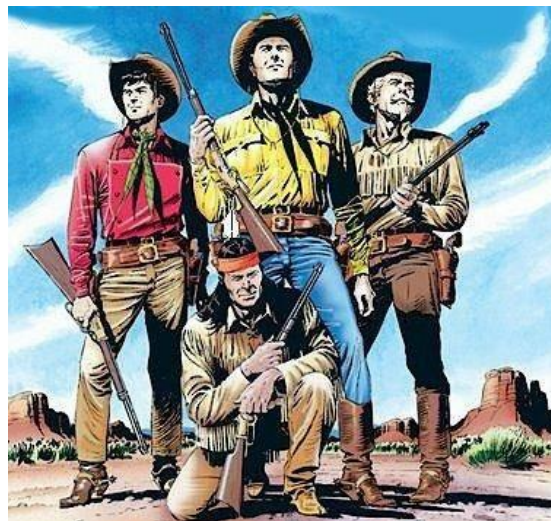
Native Americans in the series have generally sympathetic portrayal. In fact, Tex married a Navajo woman, became chief of the Navajo, and has a half-Navajo son, Kit. Tex was given the name “Aquila della Notte” (Eagle of the Night) by the Navajo. Still, like other military and authority figures, some Native Americans are portrayed as good and some as bad.

Feature Story

In the early part of the series, set before and during the American Civil War, Tex favors the abolition of slavery. A good friend of his joins the Confederate Army and is killed in the Battle of Shiloh. Tex and another friend work for the 3rd Kentucky Cavalry as scouts, but refuse to be part of the regular Union Army. After a period of wandering the Old West, he even becomes a Texas Ranger until his marriage to a Navajo woman named Lilith.

The authors strived to use real historical place names and details and are reasonably historically accurate. Tex has a series of pals or “pards,” the most important among them being Kit Carson (not be confused with the real historical person), and Tiger Jack, a Navajo warrior. Tex also has numerous enemies, the most important being Mefisto, who is a practitioner of black magic. This use of supernatural powers is a rare instance when Tex veers from the traditional Western plot line.

Reading Tex is a fun way to expand your Italian vocabulary, although some expressions may be a bit dated.

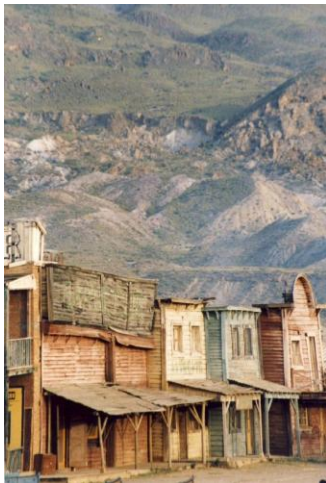


(Left to right) Kit Willer, Tex Willer, Kit Carson, and Tiger Jack (kneeling)

Feature Story

The great Italian director Sergio Leone produced the Dollars Trilogy of Westerns featuring [Clint Eastwood: *A Fistful of Dollars* \(1964\)](#), [For a Few Dollars More](#) (1965), and [The Good, the Bad and the Ugly](#) (1966). Through this trilogy, Leone's distinct style of Western films defined a new subgenre: Spaghetti Westerns.

Sergio Leone was fascinated with the American West from childhood. Now his films are now considered some of the greatest Westerns of all time. Leone's signature dramatic cinematography combines tense extreme close up shots with lengthy long shots. These films redefined a grittier, morally ambiguous and darker version of the American cowboy. While Leone is the inventor of Spaghetti Westerns, the film style was adopted in other Western films produced and directed by Italians, which is how the genre earned its name.



Most of these movies were filmed in Spain but bear a striking resemblance to American Southwest landscapes.

Western film set and landscape used in “*The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*.”

Credit: "Almeria 3" by Nick - originally posted to Flickr as Almeria. Licensed under CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Thanks to following sources for information used in this article:

Giacomo Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*, the 100th Anniversary

<http://www.fanciulla100.org/>

“Puccini's Western, in Search of Lyrical Gold,” By Anthony Tommasini, *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 2010

Comic Vine: Tex Willer <http://www.comicvine.com/tex-willer/4005-64592/>

Announcements

Book Presentation:

Storie Straordinarie di Italiani nel Pacifico

On October 28, 2016, the editor and some of the authors of the recently published *Storie Straordinarie di Italiani nel Pacifico* (Remarkable Stories of Italians in the Pacific) presented a lecture and roundtable discussion at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Guido Pigliasco, co-editor of the book, teaches anthropology and Italian language and culture at the University. He was joined by University of Hawaii colleagues and authors Incoronata (Nadia) Inserra, Lorenz Gonschor, and Louis Bousquet.

The book is a collection of memoirs and narratives of little-known Italian adventurers, explorers, and travelers in late 19th century Oceania. Three of the tales take place in whole or in part in Hawaii, which was at the time a constitutional monarchy. These three tales follow the lives of John Dominis, Celso Cesare Moreno, and Gina Sobrero.



John Dominis originally fled service in the Austrian army and settled in California and then the Pacific Northwest and eventually, moved with his family to Honolulu where he would build an imposing residence called Washington Place. His son, John Owen, studied in the best schools and then became the prince consort of Queen Lili'uokalani.



Celso Cesare Moreno lived an adventure-filled and tumultuous life throughout the Pacific and managed to get himself appointed for five days as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of King Kalakaua. Later, he became a U.S. Congressman where he sponsored legislation, «The Moreno Bill», which banned the exploitation of Italian immigrant children.

Announcements

Book Presentation:

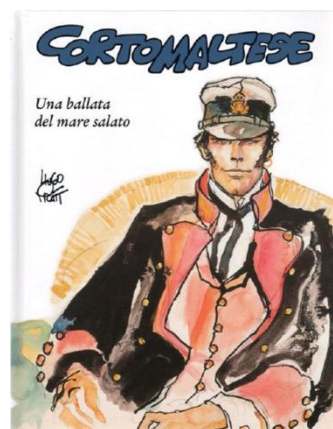
Storie Straordinarie di Italiani nel Pacifico (cont.)



Gina Sobrero with daughter

In the collection is also included the experience of an Italian woman of noble birth, Gina Sobrero, wife of the Hawaiian politician Robert William Wilcox. Her stay in Hawaii and her longing for return to Italy pushed her to write a diary titled the “Expatriate” and published under the pseudonym of Mantea.

In his presentation and in his book, Dr. Pigliasco pays homage to the Italian comic book creator, Hugo Pratt, and to the fictional sea captain/adventurer he created, the “Corto Maltese.” Next year, 2017 will be the 50th anniversary of the debut of the character in the story titled “Una ballata del mare salato” (Ballad of the Salt Sea).



In fact, according to Dr. Pigliasco, Pratt’s stories inspired a narrative for the book similar to that presented in Corto Maltese where the sea captain encounters numerous real-life historical and fictional figures. The biographies of the Italians in this collection seem to announce and in some sense, anticipate those remarkable individuals we see in Hugo Pratt’s fictional creation.

Dr. Pigliasco’s book can be ordered on Amazon (currently in Italian only).