



IL CENACOLO

ITALIAN CULTURAL CLUB

Founded in 1928

Regular Thursday Meetings, Noon to 2:00 P.M.
San Francisco Italian Athletic Club
1630 Stockton Street (3rd floor), San Francisco, CA 94133

www.ilcenacolosf.org

"Il Cenacolo is an organization that preserves, enhances and encourages all aspects of Italian arts, language and culture and recognizes the unique contribution of Italian heritage that is intertwined in the history and life of the San Francisco Bay Area."

MARCH 2018

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

Alycia Paletta, CPA

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2018

Ukraine's Path to Freedom

Kateryna Korniyko

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018

The San Francisco Fair: Treasure Island in 1939 and 1940

Kathryn Ayres

THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018

Open Forum

THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2018

The Tenderloin Endures

Don Falk

This month's programs arranged by Richard De Bono.

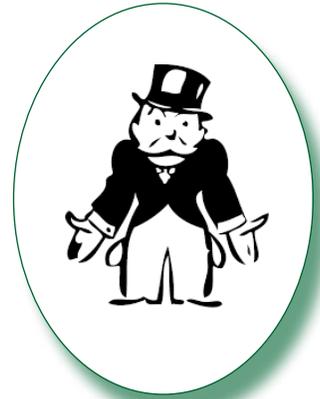
PROGRAM PROFILES

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

How Will I Be Affected by Trump's 2017 Tax Cuts & Jobs Act?

Alycia Paletta, CPA

On December 22, 2017, President Trump signed into law the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA). The TCJA, with its multitude of changes, will inevitably impact each taxpayer on some level and has left many people questioning, 'How will I be affected?' Those residing in California will see a greater impact than most.



Alycia Paletta is an active Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with over 18 years of practice, including, most recently 10 years as a tax preparer. She is a native of the Bay Area, and a graduate of the University of Arizona and now resides in Marin County where she opened her own tax practice two years ago.

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2018

Kateryna Korniyko

Ukraine's Path to Freedom

Dr. Kateryna Korniyko will introduce Ukraine and will share her family history, affected by Soviet politics, as well as her personal involvement in Ukraine's path to freedom. Her presentation will include an overview of Ukraine traditions, culture, religion, and history through the Soviet era to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and up to the present.



Kateryna Korniyko was born in 1976, in Kyiv Region, Ukraine. She practices as a pediatrician and has held numerous positions in children's hospitals, clinics and private practice. Besides volunteer work to provide emergency first aid, she routinely donates services to a local orphanage and low income families. Kateryna is also a founder of a US non-profit, KDCharity.org.

Dr. Korniyko contributed to the Oscar-nominated documentary, *Winter on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom (2015)* [available on Netflix]. Her passionate involvement in Ukraine's path to freedom has earned her many awards including the Order of Courage, 3rd Class; the Presidential Award in 2017; and the Medal for Medical Service provided during the Orange Revolution, 2004.

PROGRAM PROFILES

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018

The Magic City on Treasure Island in 1939 and 1940

Kathryn Ayres

The Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island celebrated the completion of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, dedicated on November 12, 1936, and the Golden Gate Bridge, dedicated on May 27, 1937.

Throughout the run of the fair, multicolored searchlights were visible for hundreds of miles. Approximately 1,200 gardeners worked in the wee hours to design flowerbeds that corresponded with the seasons. The magnificent garden courts were designed to showcase California's balmy weather in contrast to that of New York, which was hosting a world's fair at the same time. As both fairs were partially financed by federal funds, no doubt New Yorkers felt slighted by President Roosevelt's statement after he made a visit to the Treasure Island fair: "I think you people out here on the Pacific Coast, when you start to do something, do it better than anyone else in the United States."

Kathryn Ayres, a fifth-generation Californian, serves as the Vice President of the San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club, a club dedicated to the collection and preservation of vintage postcards. Kathryn also serves as the Inkslinger (Newsletter Editor) of the San Francisco Corral of Westerners, International.

Join us for a presentation of postcards and other rare ephemera of the Magic City on Treasure Island, 1939-1940.



CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

PROGRAM PROFILES



THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018

Open Forum



THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2018

The Tenderloin Endures

Donald Falk

How did the Tenderloin come into being? Donald Falk will trace the history of this important San Francisco neighborhood through the 1980's, its demographics and its theatres, library, [Tenderloin Museum](#), restaurants, etc. Today, the Tenderloin is undergoing a transition to gentrification and the challenge is to make this development an equitable one for all the constituents involved.

Donald Falk is the Chief Executive Officer of the [Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp.](#) TNDC, a community-based, nonprofit housing development, management, and social services agency with 400 employees and 40 affordable properties in San Francisco. Mr. Falk earned a Master's in Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley, and a BA from Oberlin College.

TENDERLOIN
MUSEUM

Dear Cenacolisti,

I hope that you are well. It's been a terrible flu/cold/whatever season. Hopefully, it's behind us! As usual, this bulletin contains announcements that I hope you will find useful and informative.

PEOPLE—

—As before, I encourage you to join one of our committees. These committees are key to our operations and you can make a difference by joining one. Please take the time now to contact one of the team chairmen (they are listed after this message) and get involved!

—We have now completed the process of contacting club members to ask about their willingness to serve on the Board of Directors or one of our committees. To those of you who said “yes” to serving—many thanks! The Board's nominating committee (David Giannini, Ken Sproul and Chuck Stagliano) have reviewed all candidates and made a recommendation to the Board of Directors. The director nominations will be finalized soon and, in accordance with our by-laws will be published in June prior to our June Annual Meeting.

BILL TOGNOTTI

Bill passed away on January 28 at a retirement community in Millbrae. He was 86 and had suffered from Parkinson's disease. Bill was an active member for many years—attending Thursday luncheons as well as the Gala and Opera Outing. He was a Marine Corps veteran and served in Korea during that war. He now joins his wife who passed away about two years ago. Please remember him in your thoughts and prayers.

WESLA WHITFIELD

Wesla, the wife of our member Mike Greensill, passed away in February. We send our condolences to Mike and offer prayers for Wesla.

NEW MEMBERS

We continue to receive applications for admission to Il Cenacolo. And that's great as our membership has declined in the last few years because of the aging of our group, relocations away from the Bay Area and deaths. It will be good to see our ranks increase.

As you know, we will be admitting women to Il Cenacolo starting in April. As of this writing four women (two of whom are the wives of existing members) have applied and are in process of being accepted for membership effective April 1.

Il Cenacolo exists for you—and because of you. If you want to be part of securing its continued success, please help to recruit new members. Our membership chairman, Ron Derenzi, would be happy to explain the details of the process (it's easy) and to assist.

EVENTS & PROGRAMS—

Thanks to John Benson for organizing the February programs. These were excellent and varied and provided enjoyment as well as camaraderie with fellow members. Well done John!!

This bulletin highlights our March programs. Please support your Club by attending as many of the Thursday luncheons as possible. Your attendance is much appreciated.

Just a reminder that you are invited to attend and observe a Board meeting. If you would like to come, please e-mail me (ilpresidente@ilcenacolosf.org) and let me know your preferred date (we usually meet at 930am on the second Thursday of each month, immediately before the weekly luncheon meeting).

We continue to plan for meaningful events during the upcoming year. Please see our calendar on the next page for dates to save, and don't forget to put them on yours! (Details to follow.)

CIAO: Coalition of Italian American Organizations—

As you probably know, most of the Bay Area Italian-affiliated organizations have started to collaborate under the acronym of CIAO. The leaders of these organizations have already had two meetings—thanks to organization by Nick Figone at the San Francisco Italian Athletic Association. Chuck Stagliano and Ken Sproul have represented us. The first “project” is to determine CIAO's response to the City of San Francisco's insulting resolution to change the name of “Columbus Day” to “Indigenous People's Day.”

One of the other functions of CIAO is to better promote activities that are occurring throughout the Bay Area Italian community. In that regard, I'd like to make you aware of an event on April 28 that is sponsored by Cinema Italia SF in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute and the Italian Consul General. Cinema Italia SF will be presenting five films of Michelangelo Antonioni. Ticket information will be available at its website.

With best regards,

**Franz Cristiani
President**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 28, 2018

FIVE FILMS OF MICHELANGELO ANTONINI
CINEMA ITALIA SF*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

JUNE 28, 2018

IL CENACOLO ANNUAL MEETING
(AT THE REGULAR THURSDAY LUNCHEON)
SF ITALIAN ATHLETIC CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

AUGUST 24, 2018

ITALIAN HERITAGE NIGHT
SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS BASEBALL GAME
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

NOVEMBER 3, 2018

ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL & DINNER
SAN RAFAEL, CA

SEPTEMBER 23, 2018

SAL REINA OPERA OUTING
ROSS, CA

DECEMBER 7, 2018

HOLIDAY GALA
ST. FRANCIS YACHT CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

** In collaboration with the Italiana Cultural Institute and the Italian Consul General*

IL CENACOLO TEAMS

FINANCE/INVESTMENTS

CHAIRMAN: Marv Pheffer (m.pheffer@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: John Benson, Ron Derenzi and David Giannini

HOLIDAY GALA

CHAIRMAN: Ron Derenzi (r.derenzi@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: Eugene Lanzone and West Whittaker

ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL

CHAIRMAN: Ken Sproul (k.sproul@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBER: Lido Cantarutti

LUNCHEONS/SFIAC LIAISON

CHAIRMAN: Eugene Lanzone (e.lanzone@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: Ken Sproul and Lou Sarto

OPERA OUTING

CHAIRMAN: Chuck Stagliano (c.stagliano@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: Ron Derenzi, Don Lewis and Richard Ruff

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN: Alex Kugushev (a.kugushev@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: David Cobb, Bill Dito and Mauro Zanetti

STRATEGIC PLANNING/MARKETING

CHAIRMAN: Richard DeBono (r.debono@ilcenacolosf.org)

TEAM MEMBERS: Jim Boitano, Pietro Bonanno and Mike Prior

RIDE SHARE

FROM:

CONTACT:

SF—Pacific Heights and the Marina .. [Richard DeBono](#) 415-730-2584 cell

SF—Marina [David T. Giannini](#) 415-921-4407 home
415-713-9219 cell

SF—Jordan Park, Inner Richmond ... [Chuck Stagliano](#) 415 531-6900 cell

Marin County [David Cobb](#) 707-888-2311 cell

SFIAC PARKING

(all within 1-4 blocks away)

- Valet parking at [Original Joe's](#) restaurant at the corner of Stockton and Union. You do not have to dine there to use the valet. The current charge is \$20.
- [APM Parking at 721 Filbert](#). \$10 with SFIAC validation.
- [North Beach Garage at 735 Vallejo](#) (between Stockton and Powell). \$4 per hour.
- [Vallejo Street Garage at 766 Vallejo](#). \$4 per hour.
- [Green Street Parking at 626 Green](#) (between Columbus and Powell). \$10.
- [Powell Street Garage at 1636 Powell](#) (between Union and Green). \$12-\$25.

(Click on links for directions to SFIAC)

VITTORIO GASSMAN
(1922-2000)

This month's essay discusses a famous Italian actor who worked both in Italy and in Hollywood. Vittorio Gassman, in addition to being an accomplished actor, was also a director, screenwriter, and writer, who was active in theater, film and television. Nicknamed "Il Mattore" (derived from the name of a character in a popular television show in which he starred and directed in 1959), he is considered one of the best and most representative Italian actors of the last-half of the 20th century. He is remembered for his absolute professionalism (bordering sometimes on the extreme), his versatility, and his magnetism. He epitomized the quintessential Italian leading man—"tall, dark, and handsome"—but his conventional good looks sometimes obscured his talent and versatility in both serious and comic roles. He was an artist with deep roots in the world of serious theater (he was the founder and director of the Italian Theater of Art), performing in plays by Tennessee Williams, Vittorio Alfieri, Shakespeare, Aeschylus and Ibsen, among others. He also performed in side-splitting and absurd comedies. (According to many critics, he was one of a handful of the greats of post-war Italian comedy, even approaching the popularity of Marcello Mastroianni during the 1960s). He was a truly versatile and talented man whose productive life contributed to the cultural development of Italy in the last half of the 20th century.

He was born on September 1, 1922 in the village of Struppa, at the time an independent municipality of Genoa. His father was a German civil engineer, Heinrich Gassmann; his mother, Luisa Ambron, was of Jewish ancestry from Pisa. Not much is known about his early life; however, he often spoke favorably about memories of a year spent in Palmi (province of Reggio Calabria) when he was five years old. His family lived there while his father was engaged in the construction of one of the new residential districts in Palmi—"Ferrobeton."

After the sojourn in Palmi, the family moved back to Genoa, then on to Rome where Vittorio received a classical high school education at the famous Liceo Torquato Tasso. Upon graduation from the Liceo, he began to study for a career in law at the University of Rome (today called Sapienza Università di Roma). However, recognizing his interests in the theater and in dramatic performance, his mother encouraged him to become an actor, having been dissuaded by her own parents from pursuing an acting career. With this encouragement, he enrolled in the prestigious National Academy of Dramatic Art in Rome.



Following his dramatic education at the National Academy, he began his theatrical acting career in Milan with the Elsa Mellini Company in 1943 where he debuted in the *La Nemica (The Enemy)* by Dario Niccodemi. He then moved to Rome, where he joined the Teatro Eliseo and performed regularly with Tino Carraro and Ernesto Calindri. There, he quickly became established as a rising star, and the popular trio performed regularly in numerous plays, ranging effortlessly from intellectual theater to bourgeois comedy.

His striking good looks and talent were soon put to use in Italian cinema playing the romantic figure in a number of period pieces. In 1946, he made his film debut in *Preludio d'amore (Prelude of Love)*. His performance as Silvana Mangano's lover in his fourth film, *Riso Amaro (Bitter Rice, 1949) (right)*, made him an international star. The film was considered one of the first masterpieces of the Neorealist movement. (The pair proved so popular, they were reunited for 1951's *Anna*, in which Gassman undertook a less heroic role).



It was with Luchino Visconti (a person discussed in the November, 2017 Bulletin essay) that Gassman achieved his acting maturity. Under Visconti's masterful stage direction, he played Stanley Kowalski in Tennessee Williams' *Un Tram che si Chiama Desiderio (A Streetcar Named Desire)*, as well as leading roles in Shakespeare's *Rosalinda (As You Like It)*, and in Vittorio Alfieri's *Oreste*. After joining the Teatro Nazionale (National Theater), he staged a successful *Peer Gynt* by Henrik Ibsen.

In 1952, with Luigi Squarzina, he co-founded and co-directed the Teatro d'Arte Italiano (The Italian Art Theater), producing the first complete version of *Hamlet* performed in Italy, followed by performances of rare works such as Seneca's *Thyestes* and Aeschylus's *The Persians*. In 1956, he played the title role in an Italian production of *Othello*, in which he rotated with the great actor Salvo Randone in the roles of Othello and Iago on alternate nights.

Inevitably, Hollywood called him and Vittorio was put under contract at MGM, but the studio did not know how best to exploit his capabilities. Instead of giving him important roles in major movies, MGM relegated him to roles as stereotypical Europeans in such light-weight fare as *The Glass Wall* (1953), *Cry of the Hunted* (1953), *Rhapsody* (1954) with Elizabeth Taylor,

and *Mambo* (1954), the latter opposite his then-wife Shelley Winters. His last US film for many years was the role of Anatole in King Vidor's filming of *War and Peace* (1956), with Audrey Hepburn (*right*). These Hollywood films did little to popularize him in the U.S. He eventually tired of trying to make it in the U.S. and, after divorcing Winters, returned to Italy where he had had great success. He was dismissive of his work in Hollywood, considering it a misadventure. "They didn't understand that a European actor could be anything but a cliché Latin lover," he said. "After a couple of years I was anxious to go back to Italy, and they were anxious to send me back, so it was easy."



Immediately upon his return to Italy, Gassman undertook a dream project, writing, starring, and co-directing (with Francesco Rosi) in *Kean* (1956), a film version of Jean Paul Sartre's adaptation of Alexander Dumas' *Kean*, about the legendary British actor, Edmund Kean. The film was not a success. Many critics noted his tendency to overact in the role and this "hammy" quality occasionally informed some of his subsequent film roles. Commenting on this criticism of overacting, he once said: "In a country where the most desired honor is to be considered simpatico, I have built my career and reputation on being considered anti-patico." (On screen, he was able to combine the two, allowing moviegoers to understand characters they might normally consider to be reprehensible).

Gassman once again established himself as a film star in Italy in the 1958 Rififi parody *I Soliti Ignoti* (*The Usual Unknown*, released in English with the title *Big Deal on Madonna Street*) (*below*). This was Mario Monicelli's classic crime comedy in which Gassman co-starred with Marcello Mastroianni as a pair of thieves who head a gang of criminals in a break-in attempt of a business by drilling a tunnel from an apartment adjacent to the business. The comedy is en-



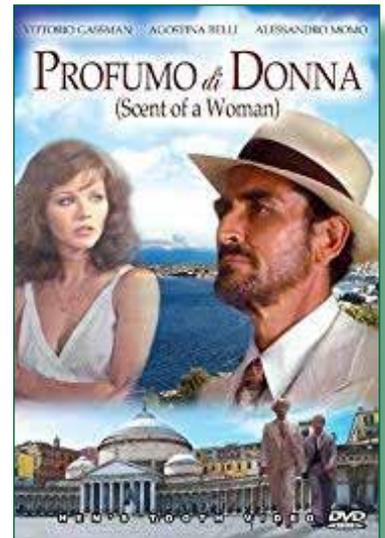
hanced when the group finds that they haven't tunneled into the store at all, but into a different room of the apartment building. With this film, Gassman established himself as one of the great comedians of Italian cinema, and his popularity in Italy soared.

In 1956, Gassman also created the Teatro Popolare Italiano (Italian Folk Theater), his own traveling theater troupe. Using a portable stage, he traveled across Italy with this group, bringing theater in repertoire to millions of

people. His productions included many of the famous authors and playwrights of the 20th century, with repeated returns to the classics of Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, and the Greek tragedians.

Throughout much of the 1960s and '70s, Gassman divided his time between his traveling theater troupe, with its classic serious roles, and the cinema, in which he was usually cast in comic, often satirical, roles.

An important career highlight came when he won the Best Actor award at the Cannes Film Festival in 1975 for his portrayal of a blind army captain in the comedy *Profumo di Donna* (*Perfume of a Woman*, 1975) (right). (The film inspired an American version, *The Scent of a Woman* starring Al Pacino, 1992). The '70s also saw him perform other notable roles in Italian cinema. Among them were *C'Eravamo Tanto Amati* (*We Were So Dear to You*, released in English as *Those Were the Years*, 1975) and *Caro Papa* (*Dear Dad*, 1979),



After nearly 30 years away from American cinema, he returned to Hollywood as the groom's father in Robert Altman's *A Wedding* (1978) and was poorly cast in Altman's critically panned *Quintet* (1979). These were followed by roles in other films that were not very notable, *The Nude Bomb* (1980), and *Tempest* (1983). Once again, he found himself unable to find suitable roles for his talents in many American films.

In addition to his theater and film work during the 1960s through the 1980s, he also founded in 1979 il Bottega Teatrale di Firenze (the Theater Workshop of Florence), a theater school in Florence, which has trained many of the more talented actors of the current generation of Italian theater and cinema. He was personally involved with directing the school from its founding until 1992 when it moved its campus to Prato. (It closed permanently in 1994 on account of a lack of funding).



After returning to Italy in the 1980s, he once again found cinematic success. In 1983, he and his son Alessandro co-wrote and co-starred in the highly praised *Di Padre in Figlio* (*From Father to Son*) (left). In 1987, he was critically acclaimed in dual roles as a patriarch and the patriarch's father in flashbacks in *Ettore*

Scola's *La Famiglia (The Family)*. As the 90s dawned, Gassman's film work dwindled a bit, but he did offer a fine performance as an aging Mafia don in Barry Levinson's *Sleepers* (1996), a rare match of role to talent for him in a Hollywood film.

In addition to other prizes, Gassman won several important European film awards, including the Golden Lion award for lifetime achievement at the Venice Film Festival (1996) and Spain's Prince of Asturias prize for lifetime achievement (1997).

PERSONAL LIFE

Vittorio Gassman had three wives and several important companions, always female actresses:



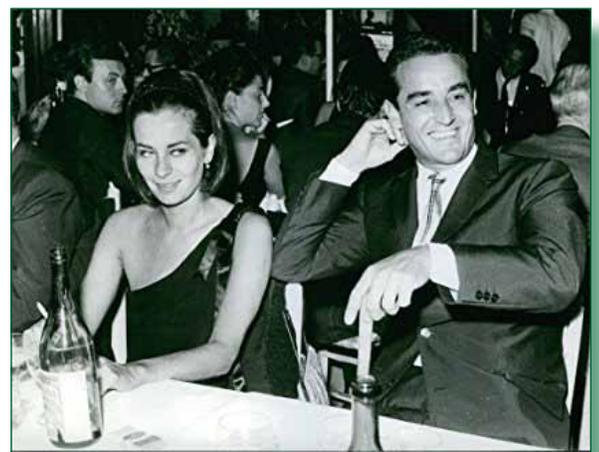
His first wife was Nora Ricci, the daughter of Renzo Ricci and Margherita Bagni. They were married in 1944 and their marriage was annulled by the Church in 1952. They had a daughter, Paola, who was born in 1945 and followed her father into acting.

His second wife was American actress Shelley Winters (*left*). They were married in 1952 and divorced in 1954. They had a daughter, Vittoria (Tori) who was born in 1953. She is an MD in geriatric medicine in Connecticut.

The French actress Juliette Mayniel was his partner from 1964-68. They never married, but had a son, Alessandro, who was born in 1965. Alessandro became an actor and director, like his father.

His third and final wife was Diletta D'Andrea (*below*). They were married in 1970, and she survived him at his death in 2000. They had a son, Jacopo, who was born in 1980. He became a director and has directed several films, including two documentaries about his father.

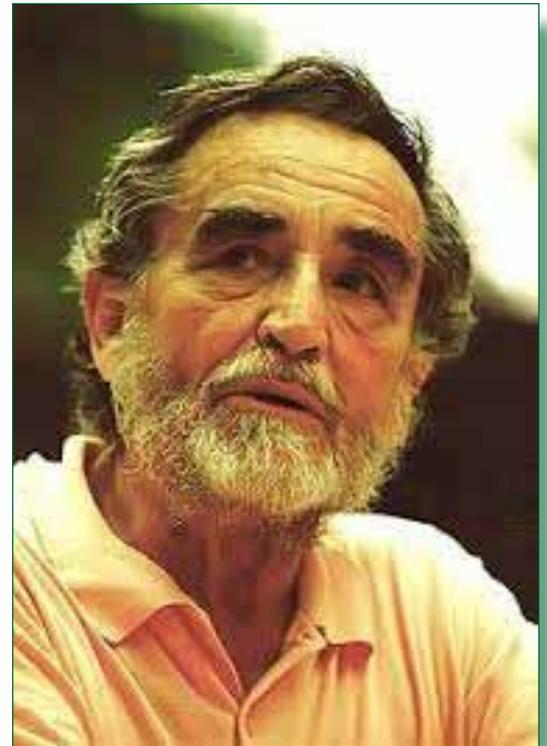
Gassman also had a long and tumultuous relationship with Anna Maria Ferrero between 1953 and 1960, a period in which the two often worked together in their cinema work. From 1961 to 1963 he also was linked to the Danish actress Annette Strøyberg.



He was often publicly criticized for his private life with his casual attitude toward marriage and sexual liaisons. The criticisms were reinforced by the examples of a marriage annulment of his first marriage by the Church so he could marry again immediately; followed by a divorce in the US; then an extra-marital affair that produced a son (Alessandro). All of these caused scandal and tabloid fodder during the 1950s and '60s. In addition, early in his life, he was a committed atheist who flaunted his atheism in public discussions. Later, however, this attitude gave way to a very personal religious faith.

TRUTH AS LUXURY

Vittorio Gassman died on June 29, 2000, at the age of 77, from a sudden heart attack in his sleep at his home in Rome. He was cremated and his ashes were buried in the tomb of the D'Andrea family (his wife Diletta's family) in the Verano Cemetery in Rome. A quote of his summarizes his view of the art of acting and the actor: "As an actor you live your life watching yourself live your life and watching others watch you, too. Acting is based on lying, a noble type of lying, which is why I decided to tell the truth; it's my chief luxury."



Adapted by James J. Boitano, PhD from: Brennan, Sandra. "Vittorio Gassman Biography." AllMovie.com website; Encyclopedia Britannica website; Gussow, Mel. "Vittorio Gassman, 77, Veteran Italian Star Comfortable in Classics and Comedy, Dies." New York Times online edition. June 30, 2000; Maltin, Leonard. Leonard Maltin Classic Movie Guide. New York: Penguin Group (USA), 2005; 2010. Accessed on TCM.com website; UpClosed.com website; Wikipedia (Italian), translated using Google Translate.