



english theater torino

Newsletter

February 2011

Trials and Tribulations: the Director's lot

The beginning of the year saw **ett**, and particularly Connie Quercetti, **ett** President and director of "The Odd Couple", in something of a turmoil. In the space of a few weeks Connie lost two cast members and had to reduce the workload of another for various reasons. Happily, two new members made up the numbers but Connie had to reassign the majority of the roles to make the most of the actors' talents. As a result, out of a cast of eight, only three parts are still being played by the original actors!

But it's not just a matter of getting somebody new to learn the lines and move about the stage as per the script. Connie's directorial approach, based on Lee Strasberg's teaching of "The method", demands a great deal more of the actors and of herself to create convincing and engaging drama. Every character, however small the part, must have an "inner life" and a history that has shaped the character and the relationships between the characters that we see on the stage. So Connie requires every actor to create their own character's profile and story, to immerse themselves in the life of the character and to "live" this through their part. And so, though the lines are the same, every time a role is recast the actor will bring a different back-story and interpretation of the character. This means that Connie, too, has to readjust to the different interpretations and reorchestrate the relationships between the characters. And it's certainly a challenge for the actors, especially as the cast often has to work with stand-ins for members unable to attend a rehearsal. As one of the cast pointed out "When you arrive you never know who's going to be playing who."

But nothing daunts Connie or **ett**; rehearsals for "The Odd Couple" are progressing well and we have so many new members that Connie has managed to find understudies for every role. As she remarked to a defecting cast member, "We're a drama group, why shouldn't we have a little drama of our own?"



Little Red Riding Hood - on the road again

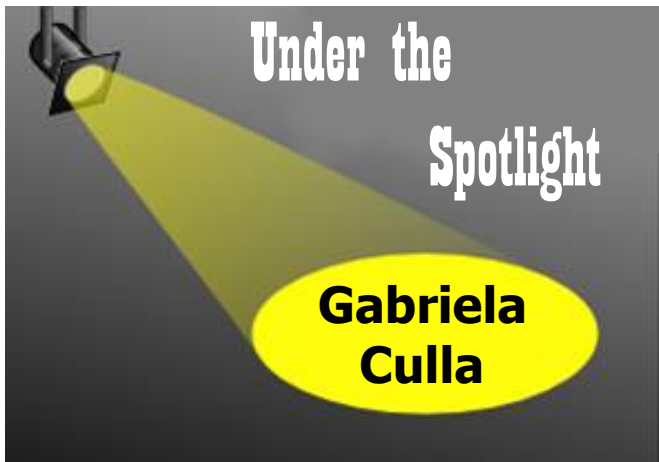
And just to show that **ett** is going from strength to strength, we have been booked for another private "command performance" of Little Red Riding Hood at the Lycée Français Jean Giono on March 28th. Sally Rava is busy re-adapting the script of the Christmas version to suit the season and the audience. It looks as if this one will run and run!

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Meet another ett member

There are two "sharp ends" to showbiz – we've been looking at life behind the proscenium arch, but the business side of the theatre is just as important, even for amateurs. Every show means means money invested in props, equipment, professional expertise, theatre rental etc. etc. Without expert financial control we wouldn't be able to perform anything. So on the next page we're putting Gabriela Culla, our Treasurer, Under the Spotlight.



Though Gabriela claims to be “simply the bean counter”, her role as ett’s Treasurer is absolutely crucial to the success of the group and its productions...and she brings a wealth of financial and legal experience to the job.

She was born in Turin but has spent most of her life abroad. Her job as a financial consultant took her all over the world and she has lived in South America, the US and various European countries from Bulgaria to Switzerland. Her last port of call was the UK, where she met her Anglo-American husband and where her daughter was born. She came back to Turin to live with her family in 2002 because, she says, “We like the relaxed lifestyle here”. Her daughter is now eleven and “quite a handful, but then she’s eleven”.

Gabriela has been an ett member for five years. She got to know the ett people when she joined IWCT on moving back to Turin and then, she recounts, “In the inclusive and slightly melodramatic way of ett (“...we will never, NEVER manage to handle the SIAE with out you!”) I was roped in to help with the economic and legal stuff and never allowed to leave again.”

She claims that she hasn’t “a theatrical bone in my body” but she *did* appear in high school musical chorus lines and has always been a regular theatregoer. She says, “I enjoy the ‘real life’ experience and the fact that every performance is unique”. Her other passions embrace the cultural – reading and cinema – and the sporting: besides skiing she also rows, but not competitively, “I’m not competitive, I row for the fun and exercise”.



And, of course, she’s still travelling ... and really enjoying it. Her current job for an investment fund specialising in emerging markets – “I invest particularly in Latin America” – still takes her round the globe. But “It isn’t all meetings and offices”: these photos were taken while she was on business trips. What’s more, unlike so many jaded travellers, Gabriela also gets great pleasure just out of being on a plane and having the time to herself. It goes without saying that ett is hugely grateful for the precious time she finds for the group.

See the next page for Gabriela’s answers to our quick fire question round

Under the spotlight: Gabriela Culla

Quick fire question round

We asked Gabriela:

Who would play 'you' in the film of your life?

Katherine Hepburn

What is your guiltiest pleasure?

Not answering my mobile/email if I'm doing something more interesting

What single thing would improve the quality of your life?

Can't think of any, I really like my quality of life

What is the most important thing that life has taught you?

Always look forwards, always be optimistic

What is your earliest memory?

My rocking donkey (never qualified for a rocking horse)

What is the worst job you have ever done?

Marlboro girl at a tennis tournament: I don't smoke and I hate wearing high heels

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

My current life balance

What is your most treasured possession?

None, I have very limited attachment to physical objects