



UPDATE

Italic Institute of America
“Italian Pride on a Classical Foundation”

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www.italic.org



What Will It Take?

by John Mancini, Executive Director



In our last Update we broke the news to you that *de facto* control of *La Casa Italiana* at Columbia University has gone “kosher.”

This is an amazing turn of events, any way you look at it. Even if you have no connection with Columbia University or New York City, this news strikes at the heart of our Italian-ness. The only major Italian cultural center - a six story, 30,000 square foot palazzo - conceived, built, and operated by Italian Americans for sixty-three years has been taken from us.

Another Try

We have attempted for a number of years to persuade the Italian government, owner of *La Casa Italiana* since 1991, to appoint an Italian American to the governing Board. We have been alternately ignored, rebuffed, and misled by the Consul General in New York as well as the Ambassador, who sits on the Board. We can only speculate that the Italians either resent our interference in academia or have some animus toward Italian American participation. In some thirty years of Italian ownership, Italian Americans have had no place on the staff or the Board of the Italian Academy at *La Casa Italiana*.

With his permission, we are formally withdrawing our nomination of scholar Richard Gambino, which went nowhere. We shall now nominate Dona De Sanctis Bracone (right), a Ph.d in Literature, who served in leadership positions at the National Italian American Foundation and the Order Sons of Italy, for appointment to the Board. Dona (DOUGH-na) has the added credentials of fluency in Italian and being a female. The 14-member Board currently has only three females - one German, two Jewish. It’s about time to include one of our own.



Concerted Effort

I was struck by an observation Consul General Genuardi shared with me during one meeting, to wit: the Italic Institute was the only organization interested in this issue.

Despite our ten years of revelations, shared with the entire community, only the Commission for Social Justice (CSJ) of the Sons of Italy joined the fray. This time, we intend to obtain written commitments from key individuals and organizations to accompany our new nomination. They will join newly-re-elected NYS Assemblyman Anthony D’Urso (left) in bringing our efforts to fruition.



Our Staff at Work

Working from their “no-rent” home offices, my colleagues at the Institute have quite a division of labor. I just want to point out how we collect information and brainstorm.

Joe Graziose (top) of Long Island, runs our “Jewish Desk,” gaining news and insights from that very effective community.



Bill Dal Cerro (right) of Chicago is our “Media Desk,” keeping us apprised of movies in the works. Bill has alerted us to three 2019 films: Scorsese’s *Irishman* (featuring the Mafia, of course), *Fonzo - Al Capone* in retirement, and David Chase’s *Many Saints of Newark*, a Sopranos prequel. The film *Green Book* just premiered - a loving tribute to a *goombah* chauffeur driving a Black pianist *circa* 1960s.



Blogs & Things

We have enclosed an op-ed by our Senior Analyst Rosario Iaconis and a sample Blog. Our blogs can be read *gratis* on our website (click the Subscribe icon to receive it automatically, weekly) or sent to you in hardcopy.

Spread the word to build our following!