

**NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY**  
 Learn Filmmaking & Acting for Film  
 1-800-611-FILM | WWW.NYFA.EDU



**IADP i-Italy**  
 Italian/American Digital Project

Save the Date  
 Italian Language Inter-Cultural Alliance  
 7th Annual ILICA CE\*  
 Terroni e Polentoni  
 Conference and Gala Dinner  
 In Celebration of the 150 Year Anniversary of the Unification of Italy

MAGAZINE | FRONT PAGE | FACTS & STORIES | ARTS & CULTURE | LIFE & PEOPLE | OP-EDS | SPECIALS

Home » Magazine

EVENTS **NEWS**

All the News That's Fit to Read... Online



Italian Ties That Bind



Italians thriving in Miami despite economic woes



Susan Sarandon calls the pope a 'Nazi'

FACTS & STORIES

# Getting Rid of Totò

N. L. (August 11, 2011)



photo courtesy of the De Curtis family

Prince Antonio Focas Flavio Angelo Ducas Comenno De Curtis di Bisanzio Gagliardi, best known by his stage name Totò (15 February 1898–15 April 1967) and nicknamed il principe della risata ("the prince of laughter") was an Italian comedian, film and theater actor, writer, singer and songwriter. He is widely considered one of the greatest Italian artists of the 20th century.

A small town's mayor, Roberto Avogadro, is getting rid of the statue of one of Italy's greatest actors simply because he was from a different part (the south) of the country. The decision has provoked many who see this as a threat to the unity of the peninsula.

Like Send Tweet 2 Email Print Permalink

It is made of bronze... just like many other busts... busts of important people, people we have admired, cherished, supported.

The bust of one of Italy's eternal actors, the Neapolitan comedian Totò, that has been held at the gardens of Piazza Stalla in Alassio (in the province of Savona) for the past three years is leaving its home because the town's mayor has suddenly decided to get rid of it. What exactly is the story? Simple, the town's mayor, Roberto Avogadro, who has ties to Italy's Lega Nord (literally the Northern League, a political party that wants the independence of the north) has stated that he wants to let go of it and "substitute it with the bust of a really illustrious man." Meaning who? Who could this really illustrious man be? It doesn't really seem to matter as long as he is from a certain part of the country... but let's not assume and just stick to the facts.

The statement has, obviously, bothered many and the association based in Cuneo called "Uomini di

IN THIS SECTION

Rome, from Peaceful March to Mayhem—but "nobody got killed"

JUDITH HARRIS



Gian Antonio Stella: Madly in Love with Italy and Italy Screws Me Over

LETIZIA AIROS



Technology Transfer in the US and Italy

MARIO GATES



Saying No to Kebabs

PATRIZIA ORIOLI



Naples. Danger for Via San Gregorio Armeno

N. L.



View all >>

Watch Current Shows

glee New Girl modernfamily dancing stars

huluPLUS Try It FREE ▶

MULTIMEDIA

Parading on 5th Ave



Columbus Day Parade 2011 - Giulio Terzi di Sant'Agata



Casa Italiana NYU, "The Towers, the Portico and the Farm"



Mondo” (Men of the World) has launched a campaign to buy the statue of the great comedian, as many other cities and towns have. “Totò was from Naples,” the mayor affirms as he continues to dig his grave “so what is the connection with Alassio?”

Avogadro, also known as being the mayor who twenty years ago forbade people from wearing bikinis around town, has opened Pandora's box and the reactions are never ending. It is now the turn of one of the Board Members of the independent cultural center, Centro Pannunzio, Pier Franco Quaglieni, who accuses the mayor of Alassio of “being a threat and an offense to the Unity of Italy.” He supports his accusations by reminding people of the mayor's past in the Lega Nord and the activities he promoted when he first started, including posters written in the local dialect (thus incomprehensible to people from any other area). Furious, he almost quoted Totò but unfortunately his renown sentences cannot be translated here as they lose their soul and humor in translation...

The fate of Totò's bust has shaken many but it is still unknown. Liguria's tourism commissioner, Angelo Berlangieri promises that the statue “will not remain in a burlap bag in the basement for long. This is a piece of news that does not help the promotion of Liguria, a region that welcomes many cultural events during the summer and that loves the film industry.” So Barligieri promised he and his office will fight to find the statue a new home, within the region.

As we said earlier, many want it: first and foremost Finale Ligure (Savona), then Florence and Portici. But having Avogadro done his military service in Cuneo, Alassio's mayor hopes that the statue will end up in the Piedmontese town. He has said “they are interested, so I really hope it will end up there.” (Why, I wonder, would he care considering that Totò had no ties to Cuneo either?). Indeed, Cuneo's mayor, Alberto Valmaggia has publicly replied: “If they give it to us free of charge we are more than happy to take it.”

The people's reaction is of disgust, for a gesture that at times seems just a desperate cry for attention. Diana De Curtis, Totò's niece, has justly said that Totò belongs to everybody as his art has graced and still is entertaining Italians, no matter if they are in the north or south. Richard Peña, director of the Film Society at Lincoln Center, during a retrospective dedicated to the great comedian, said that “he was the one and only person who was able to overcome the distinction of left and right in Italy.” Laura Caparrotti, representative of the De Curtis family in the US, thinks that “this is just a silly move, that will only end up being a waste of money for a township that could use it for something really important. Also, whether you love him or not, Totò really is a symbol of Italy, a piece of its culture, of its history, of us all. His art knows no boundaries, it is not a region that can stop it. This man, this mayor I mean, will soon be forgotten, while Totò will continue to live in the hearts of all Italians.”



TAGS [Alassio De Curtis](#) [Film Society at Lincoln Center](#) [Lega Nord](#) [Liguria](#) [Totò](#)

[Add a comment](#)

[View all >>](#)

ITALY.IT



“Crețuza de mă” sbarca negli Usa  
DANIELE DEVARCO

Roma. Dentro quel corteo che voleva urlare all'umanità  
DORIANA VARI



Columbus Day con l'ANFE. L'orgoglio delle famiglie italiane a New York  
GOFFREDO PALMERINI



Tra i Draghi Ribelli di via Nazionale  
MARIA RITA LATTO



[View all >>](#)

Developed and Powered by Digitalians Corporation, NY



Web2PDF

converted by [Web2PDFConvert.com](http://Web2PDFConvert.com)