



# The Los Angeles Italian Community



## THEATRE IN L.A. With a touch of Italy

**"The moose on the loose" the new hilarious and family friendly comedy written and performed by Dina Morrone on stage at "Theatrewest".**

LOS ANGELES, CA With the one woman show "The Italian in me" the actress/writer Dina Morrone had the chance to show her versatility and sense of humor that were greatly applauded by critics and audiences, and she was subsequently selected by reviewplays.com as one of the Top Ten Best Actresses of 2006. Now she is ready to perform again from June 3 to July 10 at Theatrewest,(one of the oldest established equity waiver houses) this time in a comedy with a curious title "The moose on the loose". Here follows her open-hearted interview that really makes you feel like watching this promising play that will make you laugh, think and probably somehow identify with the characters.

**First of all Dina, would you like to introduce yourself to our readers and tell us about what you did in the past?**

I was born in Canada, but I moved to Rome Italy to work in the entertainment business as an actress. I had many wonderful

fulfilling years living and working in Rome as an actress, tv host, voice over artist and model. I saw the Pope and I met Federico Fellini. Based on my experience in Rome, I wrote my one woman show called The Italian In Me, which is like a full immersion Italian lesson about cinema, sex and saints, or and Federico Fellini too. During the work in progress phase of The Italian In Me, it was entitled "Getting there, by going Nowhere".

The Italian In Me was very well received and I was thrilled about the outcome, the audiences response, and the critics kind words. After the initial ten week run, I continued to perform it around Los Angeles and also took it to Toronto Canada, and I still perform it today.

I work in Voice Over as an Announcer for Awards shows as well as on feature films where my speaking Italian does come in very handy.

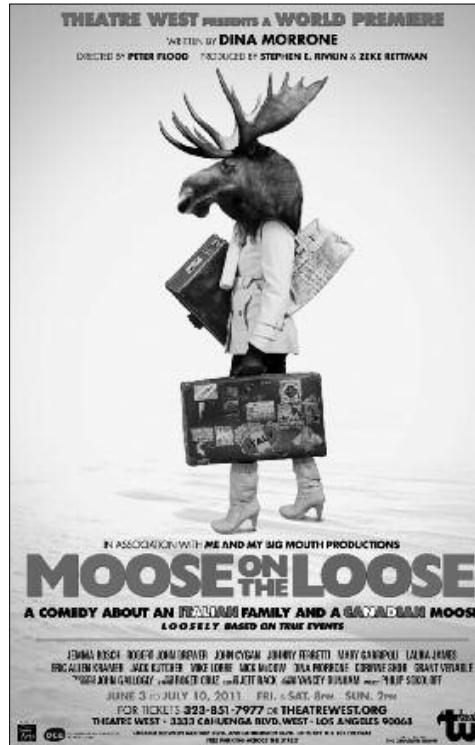
Although I love voice over and working with my voice, it's the voice that is inside of me that I

am the most proud of and the one I want to share with everyone. Having audiences laugh and be moved to tears, or to make them feel like it's their story too or that they can relate to what I am saying, that makes me very happy. Theatre, performing and writing for the stage gives me and my voice that opportunity. I figure, I'm an Italian, but I'm also first generation Canadian, but I am also fortunate enough through my families sacrifices of leaving Italy, now able to live in this great country America... and now to share with you my stories... I feel blessed!

**As you are an Italian-Canadian, may I ask you if you took any inspiration from your family when you decided to write this comedy?**

As I already said, I'm a first generation Canadian. My parents immigrated from Calabria to Thunder Bay, Ontario, in Canada and there I was born along with my sister and brother. And let me tell you, we were like fish out of water because we weren't living in some urban metropolitan city where there was a little Italy or a lot of Italians. The city I grew up in was small and isolated and yes there were Italians but in a city of about 109,000 there were about 15 thousand Italians, if that. It was a city where there were mostly people from Finland, Ukraine, local Aboriginals, and a lot of English people. So we were considered a minority. And Italians when I was growing in that small city, well, we were looked down upon.

We did have our Italian Church, our Italian Banquet hall, our Italian grocery store, our one hour of Italian tv on Sunday after church and one hour of Italian radio once a week and a lot of Italian records playing at home. I never even spoke English until I started kindergarten. We spoke Italian, we spoke Calabrese Dialect, and we spoke a mixture of Italian/Calabrese/English words. It all became a mumble jumble at times. When I was in grade school and highschool I was quite embarrassed to be Italian and to have parents and grandparents who did not speak English. I so badly wanted to fit in. To blend in. To be Canadian. And of course it was very difficult to do so as we only ate Italian food, we only hung out with Italian relatives, and we couldn't hide, because we were very Italian, even if my siblings and I are all three very fair, with blonde hair and blue eyes. But, there we were living in this COLD, snowy, place in the middle of nowhere so we were just like a fish out of water. The place was better suited for MOOSE but somehow there was work there and so that's where they ended up.



\*Quick side story. I wanted to fit in so badly and be Canadian, that when my parents would go out on weekends to some Italian wedding, we would beg them to let us buy "Chef Boy R Dee" Pizza Mix. (spelling) So we could eat THAT pizza and not the Italian one my mom made fresh with her bare hands with real flour and real sauce and cheese etc. That's how desperate we were to blend in!

My play is about being and feeling displaced... Immigrants in general all have that in common. They are all displaced and feel displaced. And their children, even if born in the new country, feel just as displaced because where do they belong? How do they fit in? What is their culture? Am I American? Italian? Canadian? And then when they begin to marry outside their own culture, what happens? What happens to those kids? What happens to them?

**What have a Calabrian family and a Canadian moose in common?**

The moose is a metaphor for displaced people. Here you have part of Canada that really is and should only be MOOSE COUNTRY but now there are small cities that have sprung up all over and suddenly the moose has lost his home and so when he wanders into town (true story) people are shocked that there is a moose on the loose. No actually, THIS IS his home! We belong in big cities! Not in bush towns.

So they are all out of place.  
**Can you tell us how did Moose On The Loose come about?**

TRUE story... one day on the phone with my mother who lives in Canada... we were talking about some nature catastrophe that had just occurred here in LA. It was either the fires or rain and mud slides etc., something bad.

In talking about this my mother said, in Italian, "Well, that's terrible. At least around here we really can't complain. I mean, it's cold and we get a lot of snow, but not much else happens. Maybe just a moose wanders into town." I laughed. But my mom told me that it was a true story. That in fact it had just happened up the street in her Polish neighbor's house. Well, I laughed. And I thought, he didn't wander... he used to live there until all of us came along.

And that conversation is what sparked me to write this play. Once I had my first reading of Moose On The Loose, I knew I had very something. I knew I was on to something. And I knew that yes, it was going to be a very funny play, but that it wasn't just going to be funny... but that it was going to be about something. That I was touching on some very universal themes that people of all cultures can relate to. Canada, we used to say when I was growing up was a melting pot, a mixed salad, because we had so many different

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# Los Angeles and Southern California

## Italian's a big part of the 2011 Long Beach Grand Prix

By FJ De Santis, Jr.

**LONG BEACH, CA.** The Long Beach Grand Prix is a mix of racing enthusiast, curiosity seekers and regular attendees. The glamour of fast cars and daring drivers brought thousands to view the event.

Ferrari is always an eye catcher with their professional racing team. Their cars have done well and they always draw a crowd at their paddock.

Jaguar sponsored the racing team of Paul Gentilozzi. Paul has been racing for many years

has the charm needed to encourage sponsors and the ability to handle a high speed race car. He is the co-founder of RSR Racing, and is both a businessman and a world class sportscar driver. He is a confirmed in the lineup for the #33 JaguarRSR XKR GT entry in 2010. Paul won the GTS class at the "12 Hours of Sebring" in 1992, earned eight IMSA / Grand-Am victories, won the 1993 IMSA GTS Manufacturers' Championship with Oldsmobile,



and as an experienced driver knows the dangers and rewards of a winning team. Paul's family is from Rome and Naples. He

won the 2002 Rolex 24 at Daytona in the GTS class with Scott Pruett, Brian Simo and Michael Lauer, won Trans-Am



**Paul and Deborah Gentilozzi**  
titles in 1998, 1999, 2001, 2004 and 2006 and ranks first in virtually every Trans-Am performance category, including wins, podiums, top-five and top-ten finishes, race starts, laps led, fastest race laps, lead-lap finishes and total winnings. With all that under his belt, the Long Beach Grand Prix is old hat. Paul is proud to be an Italian in the racing arena and has many Italian friends and competitors right along side here at the Grand Prix.

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ent cultures all living together. But living in Los Angeles now, over the years I have been witnessing this shift, this change... this amazing blend of ethnicity and culture. And a lot of people who don't speak English, who stick to their own, who create pockets, who feel displaced and I think that's how my parents must have felt when they first left Italy and ended up in Canada.

My grandfather immigrated to Canada when he was 50. At the time, it was not common to leave at 50. Most people immigrated when they were young men. My grandfather only went so he could then invite his young married daughters, my mom and dad, etc., to come to Canada and work since there wasn't any work where they lived. And the plan was that, maybe after they worked a couple of years they would move back. But life takes over and the move back never happened. He sacrificed a lot to leave at such an advanced age. He never really learned to speak English. Never learned to read or write



Dina Morrone  
the language. He worked so hard, and always wondered if he had done the right thing, to leave his home and land and move his

family to Canada. He always second guessed his decision. And my dad on the other hand did not want to leave Italy or his family, but he was young, newly married to my mom and his family was poor and there was no work there for young people so he basically had to go when the opportunity arose. And I know it was very difficult for him because he missed his family and especially his mother every single day. In fact, he only went back to Italy one time and, saw his mother just that one time. And in a way maybe my grandfather might have even felt guilty for taking my dad away from his family. I guess, in some way, by writing this play, the fact that I am here, the fact that I can read and write English which he never could do, the fact that I am telling a portion of his story and my families story, I guess if my grandfather were alive today he would have his answer and know that he did do the right thing.

"Thank you Dina."

Dina: "Thank you for your time, grazie mille."



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