

Rome. A Cinema Feast, not a Festival

FROM ITALY by MARIA RITA LATTO (October 21, 2007)



Many parts of the Eternal City are deeply involved in the second edition of the Rome Cinema Fest (18-27 October) that will bring 167 titles including films, documentaries and retrospectives, 24 tributes and meetings with directors, authors and writers, 15 videos, 12 international projects and 14 movies by debutant directors in the New Cinema Network section. And more...



More and more a Feast and not a Festival. This is the main impression going around Rome, noticing that many parts of the Eternal City are deeply involved in the second edition of the Rome Cinema Fest (18-27 October) that will bring 167 titles including films, documentaries and retrospectives, 24 tributes and meetings with directors, authors and writers, 15 videos, 12 international projects and 14 movies by debutant directors in the New Cinema Network section. And more: there will be a contest involving 14 films, examined by a jury of 50 spectators chaired by the Oscar winner, Bosniac director Danis Tanovi; 9 official prizes; 18 represented nationalities; 15 world wide previews, 8 concerts, 5 exhibitions. And the Italian superstar Sophia Loren, as the godmother.

Among the international titles are: *Into the Wild* by Sean Penn, *Things We Lost in Fire* with Benicio Del Toro and Halle Berry, *Silk* by François Girard (taken from the best seller by the Italian writer Alessandro Baricco), *Elizabeth - The Golden Age* with Cate Blanchett and Samantha Morton, and *Youth Without Youth*, Francis Ford Coppola's comeback after ten years. There are two more important returns to art direction: Robert Redford and Sydney Lumet. The first one with *Lions for Lambs* with Tom Cruise as actor and producer, the second one with *Before the Devil Knows You Are Dead*.

Every day the red carpet at the Auditorium della Musica hosts parades of international stars: the first day lots of people waited for hours the arrival of Monica Bellucci and the Italian diva did not delude them, appearing in a very elegant black dress with a breathtaking neckline and arising an enthusiasm typical of the final match in the World Cup! ("Anvedi quanta robba là davanti!"... "Monica evvai!!!").

In the very same moment, at the Teatro Sistina, an incredibly thrilled Sophia Loren, escorted by the mayor Walter Veltroni, received the Acting Award. The evening continued with a great concert dedicated to the cinema at the Teatro Sistina where the Maestro Lü Jia directed the National Orchestra of Santa Cecilia, with the contribution of the unique voice of Andrea Bocelli and the evergreen music by Ennio Morricone, a milestone in the history of world soundtracks. Maestro Morricone will conduct the orchestra during the prizegiving ceremony, the last day of the Fest.

The evening ended with an exclusive party in honor of the magnificent Sophia at the roofgarden of the Bernini Bristol Hotel.

Nine days full of cinema, cultural events, but also dinners from places that offer a panorama unique in the world. There was the special dinner reserved to 500 exclusive guests at Castel Sant'Angelo in honor of Cate Blanchett: the perfect scenario for the actress playing Queen Elizabeth I in *The Golden Age*.

Another glamorous event was the dinner on the charming Terrazza Caffarelli, the most panoramic part of the Campidoglio offering an unforgettable vista on the Roman Foro: the guest star was Francis Ford Coppola, whose special gift created the most appropriate atmosphere and a perfect match with the tasty food offered by mayor Veltroni: 96 bottles of the wine from his land in California, the Francis Ford Coppola's Director's Cut.

More events are planned for the next days: the red carpet at the Auditorium della Musica is ready to an ideal twinning with Hollywood, the tickets to some of the most interesting previews are already sold and, in these frantic cinema days, the main sports here in Rome have become "vip-watching" and "chase to the exclusive invitation"...



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