

Panorama Europe Opens with Anna

Natasha Lardera (May 17, 2016)



The fourth annual “European Month of Culture” takes place this year throughout the month of May at various venues in New York and Washington, DC, including EU Embassies, and EU Cultural Institutes. The diverse cultures of the 28 European Union Member States are highlighted through musical performances, art exhibits, dance, film screenings, book readings, lectures, and workshops. Among these cultural events there is Panorama Europe 2016 (May 6-22), a European film festival at its the eighth edition, curated by David Schwartz, co-presented by the Museum of the Moving Image and the members of EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture).

Featuring a selection of nineteen exceptional new feature films from countries such as Italy, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Spain among others, Panorama Europe 2016 is one of the best opportunities to have access to the most exciting new international filmmakers.

“Italy believes in participating in these events together with the other European countries,” Italy's



Consul General in New York, Hon. Francesco Genuardi said on opening night, before the screening of Anna (Per Amor Vostro), "It's great to be at the Museum of the Moving Image here in Queens, a neighborhood that has a strong history of migration and co-habitation between cultures. We need joint cultural initiatives like this one. I'm here to represent Italian cinema and this film proves that our cinema is still alive and kicking and not a thing of the past."

Anna, a film by Giuseppe Gaudino, stars Valeria Golino who won the Coppa Volpi at the Mostra Internazionale di Cinema di Venezia for her interpretation in the titular character. "The Italian movie star was at opening night and introduced the film as "a very strange object. I hope you stay until the end."

Set in Naples, Anna tells the story of a woman who tries really hard to stay afloat. She's just landed a new job in TV as a "prompter," replacing the man who has taught her all the tricks but is now destitute and drowning in debt; she has to help her elderly parents and cannot count on the help of her elder brother, who is responsible for her spending years in juvie; she has three kids to support and has to deal with common teenager issues such as sex at an early age but also living with disability, the boy being deaf mute; she also has to deal with a violent husband who brings money home but from unknown resources.

Anna keeps going no matter what, and although she tries to blend into her black and white world she's often shaken by haunting memories in color, such as her as a child dressed as a flying angel, and nightmarish visions, a bus filled with water and souls in pain.

"Anna is so full of contradictions," Valeria Golino said about her character, "I had to deal with what was happening to her trying to survive her reality. We human beings never are only happy or only sad, but there is a lot going on in us. We all are complex beings, and Anna is very complex. Playing her has been hard and Beppe, the director, really throws you in the midst of things with no safety net."

"I wanted to portray a woman that has lived without taking a stand all her life. She's always done what others wanted her to do, but she finally is aware of what's happening and finds the courage to break loose."

What makes her open her eyes? The murmurs of her neighbors gossiping about her crook of a husband? Or a charming actor who seduces her during work hours? Or is it the stability of a job? The questions are many and the beauty of this film is that the viewer can come up with his/her answer, depending on their personal experience. Indeed, although visionary and oneiric, the film really becomes personal.

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