

Dogman Dominates the David di Donatello Italian Film Awards

Roberta Cutillo (March 28, 2019)



The 64th edition of the David di Donatello, Italy's Academy Awards, saw the triumph of Matteo Garrone's "Dogman", which took home 9 awards. The Netflix film "Sulla Mia Pelle", a documentary about Stefano Cucchi, the young roman man who died under custody in 2009, likely as a consequence of police brutality, also fared well, winning 4 prizes including Best Male Actor for Alessandro Borghi.

The award ceremony for the 2019 David di Donatello, referred to as the "Italian Oscar's", was held last night in Rome's Studios and live-broadcasted by [RAI](#) [2]. Piera Detassis, the first female president and artistic director of the Italian Film Academy, gave the awards a makeover this year, trimming down the number of Academy members from 2,148 members to 1,559 in an attempt to filter out some of the eldest amongst them, who no longer work in the industry.

A new category was also introduced, the David of The Spectator, recognizing the biggest box office success. This year the prize went to "A Casa Tutti Bene" ("There Is No Place Like Home"), a dramedy by [Gabriele Muccino](#) [3] about a family that gets stranded on a desert island where they were meant to celebrate the grandparents' 50th Wedding Anniversary.



Most of the awards went to [Matteo Garrone](#) [4]'s gritty crime drama about a mild-mannered Neapolitan dog breeder: "[Dogman](#) [5]." The film had been nominated for 15 awards and took home 9, including Best Film, Best Direction, and Best Original Screenplay. To the surprise of many, its lead actor [Marcello Fonte](#) [6], who won Best Actor at the [Cannes Film Festival](#) [7], lost that award to [Alessandro Borghi](#) [8], who interpreted [Stefano Cucchi](#) [9] in [Alessio Cremonini](#) [10]'s "[Sulla Mia Pelle](#) [11]" ("On My Skin.")

This moving Netflix-produced true-crime film about the last days of Stefano Cucchi, the young man from Rome who died under police custody in 2009 after having been severely beaten up, garnered 4 awards in total, a success that came as somewhat of a surprise since [Netflix](#) [12] films are quite controversial amongst Italian exhibitors.

Another Netflix film, [Alfonso Cuarón](#) [13]'s [Roma](#) [14], won Best Foreign Film beating "Bohemian Rhapsody", "Phantom Thread", "Cold War" and "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." The Mexican director was there to accept the award in person.

Other illustrious international figures awarded were [Tim Burton](#) [15], who received the David for Cinematic Excellence, as well as [Dario Argento](#) [16], [Francesca Lo Schiavo](#) [17] and [Uma Thurman](#) [18], who won special Davids. In her acceptance speech, Thurman recalled working on Terry Gilliam's "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen" (1988) in Rome's very own Cinecittà Studios at the very start of her career.

[Luca Guadagnino](#) [19]'s acclaimed 2017 "Chiamami Col Tuo Nome" ("Call Me By Your Name") re-emerged, winning a couple of awards for Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Original Song: "Mystery of Love," by Sufjan Stevens.

For the first time in the show's history, two women were nominated for Best Director: [Alice Rohrwacher](#) [20] for "Lazzaro Felice" ("Happy as Lazarus") and [Valeria Golino](#) [21] for "Euphoria." A good sign that maybe things are starting to change within the industry, despite the fact that neither of them won.

Detassis, in fact, declared that she sees the awards as an "educational tool and a driver for promoting our cinema and our production." For this very reason, some consider the ceremony to have been very "political" or safe, a point which is tied to the ongoing debate of whether these type of award shows should concern themselves with sending social messages or if they should focus exclusively on artistic and technical merits.

What do you think?

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[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcello_Fonte

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[8] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alessandro_Borghi_\(actor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alessandro_Borghi_(actor))

[9] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/an-agonising-death-in-custody-that-shames-italy-9839430.html>

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- [11] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_My_Skin_\(2018_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_My_Skin_(2018_film))
- [12] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netflix>
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