

Talking New Italian Cinema with Viviana del Bianco

Natasha Lardera (November 17, 2013)



N.I.C.E. - New Italian Cinema Events - is back in the USA and its director discusses with i-Italy the difficulties of making cinema in a moment of economic and political crisis, the role of comedy, the new directors that are coming out and more.

Now that [Paolo Sorrentino](#) [2]'s film [The Great Beauty](#) [3] has opened to great reviews in American cinemas, the filmmaker from Naples is, at the moment, on everybody's radar. His films first made it to the USA back in 1998, when he participated, with a short, written and directed by him, titled L'Amore Non Ha Confini (Love Knows No Boundaries) to [N.I.C.E.](#) [4] - New Italian Cinema Events - one of the most prominent Italian film events organized outside of Italy.

His story of a Neapolitan killer who is hired to kill one of the faithful collaborators of a big mafia boss, captured the attention of [Viviana del Bianco](#) [5], the festival's founder and artistic



director. She is responsible for discovering new talents and supporting them... The festival, now its 23rd edition, showcases each year, around the world Italian films made by young directors at their first or second experience. This is an important opportunity for new Italian promising directors to have their talent recognized outside the borders of their home country.

With screenings and events held in locations such as New York, San Francisco and Philadelphia, N.I.C.E. is an important cinematic event for the Italian community abroad but mostly for American distributors in search of new material. We were able to catch Viviana del Bianco in New York before her departure for San Francisco, the second city hosting the event.

Viviana, tell us about this year's edition.

This year we are presenting a limited edition... we only had one screening in New York City of the latest work of [Silvio Soldini](#) [6] *Garibaldi's Lovers*, in nomination for the [Donatello Award](#) [7] and [Nastri d'Argento](#) [8]. It went really well, it was almost sold out, and we had invited [Alba Rohrwacher](#) [9], the film's main actress.

Our 23rd festival in San Francisco, which we had hoped it could be stronger than usual to celebrate the Year of the Italian Culture in the United States, is also reduced in the number of days of programming and screenings. The quality of our selection, however, is unchanged, therefore none of the films presented should be missed! We promise that next year we will be back stronger than ever with more films. Still, we are proud to be here and not having had to cancel.

What happened? Is this because of the economic crisis that is afflicting Italy?

Definitely. We don't want to complain but everybody is having issues with financing... from the film makers themselves to the film festival directors. Making film has never been easy and it is getting tougher. Italy is suffering from political instability, financial doom, serious unemployment, illegal immigration and should I continue? The few films that are indeed made reflect this thoroughly. *Acciaio* (Steel) by Stefano Mordini, is one of the films we are presenting in this edition.

Set in Piombino, Tuscany, tells the story of two inseparable friends, yet in the background you get glimpses of the steel factories, workings, their problems and bleak future. These are the children of generations of steelworkers, whose dreams have long been forgotten and whose destiny could not be any different.

In your presentation to the festival you said "Coincidentally, not only dramas, but also bright and lightweight comedies have nowadays the tendency to highlight our country's social, family and political struggle, by offering our audiences an opportunity for a deeper knowledge of our reality and for reflection, in addition to pure entertainment..."

I think comedy is definitely the best way to portray reality, however bleak that is. Comedy is often more effective than drama in communicating what is going on, it does it in a light or sarcastic tone but it presents the facts. If what surrounds you is all negative you don't want to be in a cinema watching an even more depressing film. You want to see something that will make you laugh and many of our directors have understood that this is the right formula to capture what is going on but with a smile on your face.

What do you think of today's directors?

They are themselves. This what I admire about them. The directors coming out years ago copied the great masters. There was who wanted to be like Fellini, or De Sica, Rossellini... Now they have found their own voice and style. I have seen so many of them grow through the years. At N.I.C.E. We have had the opportunity to discover and introduce so many of them. I am talking of Sorrentino, Garrone, Martone, Corsicato, Lo Cascio... I particularly admire Neapolitan cinema... and in fact we have a special event, in San Francisco, dedicated to it. We organized it in collaboration with Teatri Uniti. We are presenting work by Paolo Sorrentino, Stefano Incerti, [Mario Martone](#) [10] and the collective [Film Napoli24](#) [11], all testifying the continued vitality of Neapolitan cinema. It is a documentary, a small miracle, a gem with precious stones popping out where you



least expect it, a work that manages to excite for the truth that it conveys. **The truth being?** The truth is that Italian cinema is also a victim of the economic crisis, but in a way or another, we are always able to make something good. The truth is that there is always an interest in Italian cinema, and N.I.C.E., limited edition or not, helps bring it abroad. The truth is we will be back next year stronger than ever.

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