



Stony Brook University's 13th Italian Film Festival

Alex Catti (October 31, 2016)



This past weekend Stony Brook University hosted its 13th Annual Center for Italian Studies Festival of New Italian Cinema. The festival was held in the theater of the Charles B. Wang Center. This year's festival was organized in collaboration with the Associazione Culturale ArtMedia (Rome, Italy). The event presented "Italy on Screen Today/Wind of Europe," which is a project that aims to promote Italian contemporary cinema. The festival associate, Giacomo Rocchini, introduced the films and highlighted cultural anecdotes and important themes of each.

Saturday afternoon the audience was treated to [Veloce come il vento](#) [2] and [Il racconto dei racconti](#) [3]. Director of the [Center for Italian Studies](#) [4], [Mario Mignone](#) [5], introduced the first film and gave the audience a bit of background about the film festival and the Center for Italian Studies at the University. *Veloce come il vento*, directed by [Matteo Rovere](#) [6], focuses on protagonist Giulia De Martino ([Matilda De Angelis](#) [7]) who comes from a family of racing champions. De Martino is only



seventeen years old but an extremely talented driver who participates in the GT Championship under the guidance of her father. A tragedy strikes, and Giulia has to face both the racetrack and life on her own. Her brother Loris ([Stefano Accorsi](#) [8]) - an ex-driver - returns home, and the two of them need to manage life together alongside their younger brother.

Between the two films, festival associate and Italian actor [Giacomo Rocchini](#) [9] spoke to the audience about what they had just seen in the first movie and what they were about to see in the second. Il racconto dei racconti is a fantasy film directed by [Matteo Garrone](#) [10]. As its name suggests, the film is actually a collection of three different stories that follow the royal families within each of their different kingdoms. It is a liberal interpretation of the fables of [Giambattista Basile](#) [11], a Neapolitan storyteller from the 17th century. In the first kingdom lives the Queen of Longtrelis ([Salma Hayek](#) [12]) who bears a child named Elias ([Christian Lees](#) [13]) thanks to magic. The child has a brother Jonah ([Jonah Lees](#) [14]), also born from magic, and the story follows lives of both children. In the second kingdom Princess Violet ([Bebe Cave](#) [15]) lives with her father, the King of Highhills ([Toby Jones](#) [16]). The king raises a giant flea as a pet. The flea dies; he skins it and then holds a tournament for suitors. Whoever is able to guess what animal the hide is from gets to marry the princess. Many suitors try, and fail, but a most unlikely suitor ([Guillaume Delaunay](#) [17]) answers correctly and wins the hand of the princess. In the third kingdom the King of Strongcliff ([Vincent Cassel](#) [18]) falls in love with the voice of a woman named Imma ([Shirley Henderson](#) [19]), but he has never actually seen to whom the voice belongs. Imma - an elderly woman - lives with her sister Dora ([Hayley Carmichael](#) [20]), and the sisters attempt to trick the king into thinking Imma is younger than she actually is.

Sunday's films included Gli Ultimi Saranno Ultimi and Le Confessioni. Gli Ultimi Saranno Ultimi, written and directed by Massimiliano Bruno, follows a woman named Luciana ([Paola Cortellesi](#) [21]) as she struggles to make a dignified life for both herself and her husband Stefano ([Alessandro Gassmann](#) [22]). Everything is going well, and Luciana learns that is going to have a baby. However, almost immediately after hearing this news, everything begins to fall apart. Luciana is forced to defend her rights in order to save her job and protect the life that she so desires.

Finally, Le Confessioni, directed by [Roberto Andò](#) [23], centers around a G8 meeting of economic ministers who are about to adopt a plan that will have severe consequences for several countries. Before tragedy strikes, a member of the group Daniel Roché ([Daniel Auteuil](#) [24]) confesses his sins to a monk, Roberto Salus ([Toni Servillo](#) [25]). The other powerful leaders of the group are afraid of what Roché revealed to Salus and pressure him to state what he knows. However, Salus will not renounce his vow of silence.

Italian cinema has a prominent world presence, but many Italian films are screened only as limited releases. Events such as this one provide a place for fans of cinema and of Italian culture to see the best that Italy has to offer.

External Source: ['Italy on Screen Today' at Stony Brook University](#) [26]

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- [4] <http://www.stonybrook.edu/italianstudies>
- [5] http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/eurolangs/people/Mignone_Mario.html
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