

## **The New Pope by Paolo Sorrentino Comes to the US**

Monica Straniero (January 08, 2020)



The Sky original series by Academy Award Winner Paolo Sorrentino will premiere in the US on January 15, 2020. In this second season of the provocative "The Young Pope," which stars Jude Law and John Malkovich, Pius XIII is in a coma and the Vatican decides to elect a new pope.

Presented during the 75th Venice Film Festival, the new Sky original series "The New Pope," created and directed by Paolo Sorrentino as a sequel to "The Young Pope," is coming to the US on HBO starting January 15.

The first season followed the anxieties of a young pope, Pius XIII (Jude Law), who despite his age, imposes a conservative and radical religious approach, which simultaneously places great attention and compassion on the weakest members of society. In "The New Pope," we find him in a coma and witness the rise to the papal throne of Sir John Brannox (John Paul III), a cultured and loquacious



British aristocrat.

Two-time Oscar nominee John Malkovich's Pope is very different from Jude Law's Lenny Belardo. While Lenny was a disruptive and profoundly religious leader, Brannox is an introspective and reluctant Pope. Behind his aura of perfection lies a secret and a certain fragility that make him vulnerable to the role that he is undertaking, making people forget the charisma and work of his predecessor, who in the meantime has been declared a saint.

Malkovich stated that playing this character provided him with the opportunity to immerse himself in Sorrentino's unique, ironic, beautiful and grandiose universe. "I'm a convinced atheist," the American actor declared during several interviews. "But I don't judge believers, humanity has always needed gods, someone to blame, to invoke, someone who can cure illnesses, bring an end to poverty, and, in general, to give hope to the hopeless."

Like in the first season, we find once more the Neapolitan director's baroque touch, his notes of pop, his studied compositions, and overwhelming lighting. The costumes, the colossal reconstructions and the imposing set designs evoke the power of the Church. However, this season has a unique opening: a group of young people dancing to the beat of club music inside the Vatican. The use of nudity and music become an expressive tool to accentuate the differences between two men who are profoundly imperfect, unhappy and weighed down by the responsibility of their position.

Amidst terror threats, irony, and genius narrative schemes, "The New Pope" clearly and visibly proposes an all but flattering image of the Papacy with the intent to explore our relationship with faith and with God and to understand the theatre that takes place within the Church.

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