

Giornate degli Autori: The Venice International Film Festival

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By

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The 15th edition of the Giornate degli Autori is running in tandem with the Venice Film Festival, from August 29 to September 8. Thanks to the support of the Italian filmmakers' associations (ANAC and 100autori), the impetus of Giornate president Roberto Barzanti, the collaboration of players both public (first among them, MiBACT and SIAE) and private (from main sponsor BNL – Gruppo BNP Paribas to our creative partner Miu Miu), and the efforts of a marvelous team of professionals that has stayed on the cutting edge from year to year. Giornate degli Autori is a thriving showcase that brings to the Venice Film Festival the courage of creativity, the voices of filmmakers from the world over, and a diverse, independent model for reinventing the idea of the festival itself.

“When we started out in 2004, with Citto Maselli, Emidio Greco, and Roberto Barzanti,” recalls General Delegate Giorgio Gosetti, “we had three months to do it all, a non-existent budget, ideas galore and a shared challenge to meet; we were on the same wavelength as the Biennale. Today, we believe we offer a program that goes well beyond that of a mere showcase of films from the official lineup. We provide a fascinating window into the careers of our filmmakers their own challenges and needs, and the future prospects for an industry undergoing a major transformation.”

With eleven films in competition, a sparkling array of special events including a tribute to Golden Lion winner Alexander Kluge and the unique program Women's Tales, in collaboration with our creative partner Miu Miu, Giornate also features a packed evening lineup of talks and screenings at the Villa degli Autori, an award for women filmmakers at Giornate, presented by the Hearst Italia Group; the Europa Cinemas

Label award, and the SIAE award for an Italian filmmaker (Mario Martone), just part of a collaboration with SIAE running the duration of the festival. Then there's the BNL Audience Award and the Giornate degli Autori Award created thanks to the support of the European Parliament (the "28 Times Cinema" project, for the LUX Prize). This year an Italian director, Jonas Carpignano, will be heading our splendid jury of young cinephiles.

The opening event of Giornate degli Autori was devoted to a major filmmaker such as Rithy Panh, who has made memory and meditation on the past the key to reading the present, in the conviction that Panh's vision fully coincides with our own view of the value of cinema in society. And we have selected a comedy for our closing event, in the grand tradition of the Giornate, ever open to different genres and provocative, intelligent entertainment. First films appear on our lineup (and second films even more so), but didn't orient the programming this year, which focused on courage and reinvention, as seen in the superb new film by Joachim Lafosse, a modern female western, with a title that speaks volumes: Continuer.

Indeed, women enjoy an astonishing high profile on Giornate degli Autori's lineup this year. Six out of twelve films (including the closing event on September 8) are by women directors, and female characters play crucial roles in all Giornate films in 2018. It's another sign of the times, when the original nucleus of society is at the heart of a film, albeit a family that may be broken, dysfunctional, or recomposed, its function challenged by the role a woman intrinsically plays. And this female-oriented focus was the result of a scouting effort free of impositions and prejudices. The number of nationalities represented (over fifteen) only proves how far afield Giornate ranges in its search for films from around the world, and if any constants exist, they do not fly flags or impose other boundaries.

Italian films are a different matter entirely. They consist of a film in competition at Giornate this year (Ricordi? by Valerio Mieli) along with a special event of the caliber of My Own Good by Pippo Mezzapesa. After being represented in greater numbers last year, this might look like a step backwards, due in part to the challenging conditions in which directors and producers have been operating over the last twelve months. However, we'd rather stress the fact that what impressed us was the variety of film formats and conceptions of film that have been incentivized by a tough market. So the program features many windows on Italian firms dedicating space to different formats (with more than one short film this time around, even though our picks in this area always depend on specific stylistic criteria). Special attention has been paid to the documentary genre that dominates the "Venetian nights" at the Villa degli Autori.

Once again, therefore, the Villa degli Autori will have pride of place in our 'festival in a festival' project. As always, it will be the venue par excellence for socializing and dialogue. It will also serve as a venue for pondering the future, reflecting on the industry and comparing notes, thanks to the talks we are planning with the Hdrà Group. This is why the poster for this edition of GdA features a double image (a man and a woman), cheerful and rearing for a fight, like the boxing gloves that we wish all our

guests could wear, starting with our pre-opening event devoted to new talent under the aegis of Bookciak, Azione! It's just our way of recalling an earlier season, half a century ago, when the world's youth monopolized the ring and were dubbed champions; it's a way of reminding ourselves that talent, imagination and determination can break down the walls of convention and the impossible.

On this occasion the Venice Biennale, with which Giornate degli Autori has always cultivated a relationship based on collaboration and mutual loyalty, stands as a model for all professionals working in the arts in Italy today.

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