

Segue/English

E poi ci sono andata per ricevere il Gucci Award for Women's Achievement in Filmmaking per "Hugo Cabret", che mi ha fatto molto piacere perché Gucci dà un contributo davvero importante al restauro dei film». Premio di Gucci a parte, le interessa la moda? «Onestamente? No: bado a come mi vesto solo per andare alle premiazioni». C'è qualcos'altro che la appassionava quanto il cinema? «I musei, è la prima cosa che visito quando vado in un posto».

FREDERICK WISEMAN. GOLDEN LION FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
by Roberto Croci

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la palestra e così via. Filmare all'interno di un luogo è per me molto utile perché stabilisce un confine non solo fisico ma anche mentale. Tutto ciò che accade in quel determinato spazio è importante per il mio film, quello che succede fuori riguarda un altro film. Dal 1966 fino alla metà degli Anni 90 ho girato un film all'anno. Nel '95 ho avuto l'occasione di fare un film sulla Comédie-Française: fu un'esperienza incredibile, impossibile da realizzare negli Stati Uniti. Giro senza script, anche perché se mi aspettassi qualcosa farei un film che supporti la mia tesi, limitando così le mie scelte. Il risultato dei miei lavori sono le risposte a quello che ho imparato su vari argomenti e che cesello durante le riprese e il montaggio». Il suo prossimo progetto sarà un documentario sulla Casa Bianca. Intanto ama ricordare che tra i suoi registi preferiti c'è un italiano, Federico Fellini. «Fellini aveva un senso dell'umorismo eccezionale: l'analisi del mondo visto attraverso i suoi occhi è semplicemente brillante, tragica proprio perché divertente. Aveva una vasta conoscenza della natura umana. Ma amo anche W.C. Fields, e in particolare il suo capolavoro del 1932 "The dentist", secondo me il film più pornografico che sia mai stato realizzato. Non mi piacciono le pellicole politiche, non amo essere indottrinato dalle idee altrui, preferisco scoprire la mia strada, fare le mie scelte. Tra i documentaristi che rispetto meno c'è Michael Moore, non lo ritengo un regista ma uno straordinario propagandista, in tutti i suoi film parla solo di se stesso». Come diceva Samuel Goldwyn: "Se hai un messaggio da recapitare, spedisci un telegramma".

WILLEM DAFOE
by Roberto Croci

"Ciao Roberto, sorry for the mess, we are doing some work in the New York office, and unfortunately, as a handyman, I am useless. And yes, I do speak Italian but I'd rather conduct our interview in English, just to be more professional". Exactly what you would expect from Willem J. Dafoe, a pro, a seasoned powerhouse at every level of the Hollywood scale: first as a young hopeful joining the experimental Theater X company in Milwaukee (1972-1977), then as a virtuoso actor and producer – two Oscars' nods ("Platoon" 1986; "Shadow of a Vampire" 2000), and a Golden Globe ("Shadow of a Vampire") – always a bona fide professional in all his films: from "Platoon" to "Mississippi Burning"; from "The Last Temptation of Christ" to "The Aviator", "Antichrist", "Go Go Tales", the "Spider-Man trilogy", "til his most recent works like "The Grand Budapest Hotel" and "Nymphomaniac", always going after his most essential basic rules of acting: simplicity, curiosity, creativity and vision, qualities that brought him to work with some of the most important and creative directors of our time, from Oliver Stone to Scorsese, Cronenberg, Wes Anderson and Lars Von Trier (just to mention a few). Next he will play the title role in "Pasolini" directed by Abel Ferrara about the final day of Italian film director Pier Paolo Pasolini, selected to compete at the 71st Venice International Film Festival with Riccardo Scamarcio, Ninetto Davoli and Adriana Asti, as his mother. «I remember when I was doing "The Last Temptation of Christ", one of the few things that Martin Scorsese said that I should do, preparing for the role, was to watch "The Gospel According To Matthew", which was the first Pasolini

film I saw, where I discovered him as a great artist as well as an intellectual and a revolutionary. Then I saw some other (stuff) thanks to my wife Giada Colagrande, she is the one who introduced me to his poetry and also his novels and the films that I hadn't seen... what can I say? I fell in love with him. I love everything he did and wrote. I mean, I think the most impressive thing for me is that Pier Paolo saw what was going to happen (politics-wise), before it happened, not only to Italian society, but to the Western world in general. And I think he had an incredible, special intelligence, extremely rare. The movie is not a biopic, but rather an intimate portrait of what we (Abel Ferrara and Dafoe, *editor's note*) thought of Pier Paolo Pasolini, a man who, in order to be understood, had to unravel his thoughts to us first. We really tried to create some sort of impression of what we thought he was doing and thinking about on any particular time of his final day. I am an actor that has a great interest in Pasolini, and I did a lot of preparation for this, to inhabit this role and this movie we made called "Pasolini". Now, that doesn't make me a Pasolini expert. What it does do, is that it makes me passionate about the guy and because he had such an incredibly well documented life (socially and culturally) and because he was so prolific, there's so many ways you can talk about him, so much to say. We shot the movie entirely in Rome, and the main focus is on the last 24 hours of his life, of a man who was considered one of the biggest intellectual forces of Italian culture of the 20th century. It's impossible to do a movie on Pasolini without talking about politics, and while we deal with his murder, that's not the central focus of the movie. And so we basically followed all of the events of that day and played those out, we included events and subjects that allowed us to have that kind of a film within a film, where you saw little pieces of "Petrolio" (his novel) and Pelosi (his murderer), which is important because it gives you an idea of which direction he was going in, and also you see him doing the French dubbing for "Salò", and we also include a couple of interviews he did that last day of his life, his lunch with his mother and also dinner with Ninetto Davoli and his friends. We shot, as much as possible, in all the places where he lived and hung out, with the exception of Pasolini's house. We also shot where he was actually killed, where now stands a monument where you can pay homage to him. "Pasolini" is Dafoe's fourth movie with Abel Ferrara, a collaboration which goes beyond the cinematographic landscape. «So we have a short hand, we know each other very well. He is one director that I truly feel like a collaborator with. I mean, he's a very strong director and I like attaching myself to him to be a creature to his ideas and to help him explore those ideas. Abel has a special relationship to Pasolini, but he has greater passion for his political ideas and also for his position in society, because I think Abel is always looking at the outside in. And clearly while Pasolini was accepted and also greatly revered for his being "out sexually", he was also quite despised by some people clearly, back then probably more than now, but I sure that you can say the same about Abel, they are both quite unique characters, often controversial». Willem consider himself a cosmopolitan, a world traveler, even if he lives between New York and Italy. «I wake up every morning and I think about what I am going to eat. So I gotta be Italian right? (laughs). I have chosen to live in Italy and like I said, I have family and friends there and it's a very dear part of my life. And since I have traveled all my life, everywhere in the world (professionally) Italy is really the only place I could call home, besides New York City. So I think that says it all. I am an immigrant, but I am an immigrant everywhere I go. And the only place where I am not an immigrant, is Appleton, Wisconsin. And I don't choose to go back there. There's no family, I have no connection, it's a perfectly fine place, but I don't have a sentimental pool there. Going back to Pasolini, even if I live in Italy and I am married to an Italian woman, I know I am not Italian, so I have a different relationship to a huge cultural icon like Pasolini, and the same with

Abel. But it's a case of where we are attracted to it and maybe the distance helps us to approach the subject from our terms». One of his last creative effort is "A Most Wanted Man" – in Italy at the end of October – based on a John Le Carré's novel with the late Philip Seymour Hoffman, Rachel McAdams and Robin Wright. A movie directed by another one of his favorite directors, Anton Corbijn. "Anton is interesting as a person. I love his work as well, the fact that he was a photographer, I think it really affects how he works. Besides obvious ideas about beautiful framing and priority given to a kind of tone and visual effect, he's very intuitive, and he's very patient, and once he gets the scene, you move on and concentrate on finding and adjusting little details, whereas a lot of people now would shoot a scene and they would generate material, basically for themselves and the editor, in post-production. It very much reminded me of the first time I shot with him, when he was a photographer, and he shot very quick, and once he knew exactly he got the shot he wanted... we just stopped. I thought that was just interesting because he is very sensitive and waits for the subject to reveal itself, and once it does, he knows how to work it, he captures it, and then he moves on. Which is interesting because the nature of the film being so collaborative, (it) has to bring together lots of people who work with the same language, who then apply their language to problem solving, and who finally tell a story. But with Anton, you see something in his story telling that is slightly more magical and mysterious in his approach. A huge part of my job is getting there and serving the director. As Michel Piccoli said, "be the perfect marionette". I like that!».

AL PACINO. IN THE HUMBLING
BY BARRY LEVINSON
by Arturo Zampaglione

The character's name is Simon Axler. He was a very famous theatre actor, but all of a sudden, almost inexplicably, he loses the gift of acting and above all that magic passion for life that drives a person to do things, to get to know things, to push their limits and to accept challenges. Like many in their sixties, Axler is at an existential crossroads: his story, dotted with suicidal thoughts and erotic-sentimental adventures is told in a novel, and now in a film that will be given in preview at the 71st Venice Film Festival by three men who have certainly not lost their thirst for life, despite the passing years. In 2009 "The Humbling" was published by Philip Roth, 81, one of the most loved and prolific America writers, the author of Portnoy's Complaint, a winner of prestigious prizes (but never the Nobel Prize for Literature despite repeated rumours), Al Pacino, 74, the lead role in "The Godfather" and "Scent of a Woman", for which he won an Oscar in 1993, read Roth's novel and fell in love with it and immediately bought the rights. He then proposed the film project to his friend Barry Levinson. It was not difficult to convince him: «I too had been enchanted by this different way of telling a human story», explains Levinson. At 72 he has no need to show his worth to the world of cinema – after an Oscar for "Rain Man", and other successful films such as "Good Morning Vietnam", "Disclosure", "Wag the Dog", and "Sleepers", which was also presented at the Venice Film Festival. Nonetheless, the director wanted to take up the challenge of the "The Humbling". «Yes it was a challenge», Levinson insists – he has just finished shooting "Rock the Kasbah" in Morocco, a film about the war in Afghanistan with Bill Murray – «not only because "The Humbling" tells a human story that is both fascinating and difficult – emotionally it is dark – but because we wanted it to be an essential film and low cost». It was shot in only twenty days, for the most part in Connecticut and with a few scenes in New York. It cost just 2 million dollars: of course, without the cachet for the leading actor and the director. The cast includes Greta Gerwig ("Lola Versus"), "To Rome with Love" in the role of a young lesbian who has an often transgressive relationship with the no longer young Simon Axler.

«Gerwig was very good. And working with Al Pacino was again a fantastic experience», says Levinson smiling, recalling their recent collaboration in "You Don't Know Jack", the television film made in 2010 in which Pacino plays Jack Kevorkian (the famous pro-euthanasia doctor), as well as much earlier in "...And Justice for All" (for which Levinson wrote the script). «Al Pacino is always ready to experiment», the director continues, «to ask himself how best to get inside his role, to ask how to improve the visual impact. And he never loses his actor's passion. His manner of approaching his mission is, paradoxically, in contrast with the desperate approach of Axler, the central character in the novel and the film». When it was published "The Humbling" did not meet with favourable critics. William Skidelsky of The Guardian accused Philip Roth of «giving free rein to senile fantasies and masking them as literature». Certainly the story is full of erotic matter: lesbian love stories, threesomes, sex-toys. How does Levinson reply? «I know well that the book did not receive unanimous praise», he says, «but I'm not worried, there is a distance between the novel and the film: they are two different worlds, two different forms of storytelling. The film is not a blue movie, we are not interested in Simon Axler's sex life, we are interested in his pain and his desperate struggle». A struggle that both Al Pacino and Barry Levinson have seen many of their friends in Hollywood engaged in (and lose): they often spoke about this during takes. To be sure, neither of them wants to lose the "magic", and the film that will be shown in Venice is proof of this.

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/ALEXANDRE DESPLAT
by Maria Grazia Meda

Regarding the role of the soundtrack there are two schools of thought: for some, the music should disappear at the service of the images, for others it should be audible and present. «The music has to accompany the spirit of the film, not the images», maintains Desplat, President of the jury, author of the soundtrack to "Harry Potter", "Twilight", "Zero Dark Thirty", "Lust, Caution", "The Grand Budapest Hotel", "The Queen", "Monuments Men", "The Tree of Life", "Syriana" and many others. He knew since childhood that this was his calling in life. But what motivated him to choose a profession that by definition remains a relatively anonymous role? «The desire to compose was stronger than the desire to perform on stage», he responds, simply. He was born in 1961 in Paris to a French father and a Greek mother, and he grew up in California listening to Ravel, Debussy, Gigli, Caruso, Parker and Coltrane. No Jefferson Airplane or Pink Floyd, despite living on the West Coast? «I listened to them with my friends. But at home there was also a lot of traditional music, before it became popular as so-called world music. Any genre is interesting if you learn to listen and to exchange. I initiated my friends to jazz, and in turn I discovered some of Mahler's symphonies that I hadn't known». If his spirit is that of a musician, his heart belongs to film: «When you have to compose a soundtrack, your brain taps into a completely new and different imagination, which I associate with improvisation in jazz. Film opens you up to infinite creative possibilities». Within a few years, Desplat became one of the most prolific and highly requested composers, succeeding in the not-so-easy task of pleasing both Hollywood as well as the European film industry, with the ability to move easily between teenage blockbusters and art films. What is his secret? «I have an almost instinctive relationship with images; as soon as I see the first scenes of a film, I immediately project myself into the story. In fact, it all begins with the screenplay: if I don't find it convincing, I don't take the job. I could not imagine composing music exclusively for dramas or comedies or thrillers. Well, the first rule is that I will never do two consecutive films by the same director, in order to avoid repetition. Another rule that is equally important: I will never work on two films at the same time». Just like some of the greats before him – Rota, Morricone, Herrmann – Desplat has also developed a strong relationship with directors that are very dif-

ferent from one another – Audiard, Wes Anderson, Polanski, Frears, Clooney. «The relationship of friendship and respect does not make my work easier from a creative perspective, but it guarantees a level of affective comfort and complicity that is particularly pleasant». A true workaholic («I work an average of 18 hours a day»), with over a hundred soundtracks to his name, is he ever able to step away? Or does he compose in the shower, too? «Well, I do tend to sing there: a Puccini aria, some jazz, Mahler».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/SANDY POWELL
by Nicola Seevola

Nine Academy Award nominations, beginning with "Orlando" by Sally Potter, winner of three Oscars (for "Shakespeare in Love", "The Aviator" and "The Young Victoria") and a regular collaborator with Martin Scorsese ever since "Gangs of New York". But there's more. After serving as Derek Jarman and Neil Jordan's "accomplice" and maintaining a close collaboration with Todd Haynes, she began to design costumes at the end of the 1970s for a dance-theatre company. Even traversing a wide range of epochs, from the Elizabethan to the Post-Revolution to the Glam Rock of "Velvet Goldmine", her costumes often have a common matrix: a photographic book on Gypsies that she first used as a reference in creating the "Caravaggio" style of Jarman. «I like these garments so much that some reference to them always seems to jump out. The subjects are timeless and they adapt themselves to any epoch». The most difficult part of her job? Satisfying the directors without spending a fortune and designing costumes in poor taste, convincing the actors to wear them. «You only need to look around you to understand that it would be unrealistic if everyone were impeccably dressed».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/JHUMPA LAHIRI
by Stefania Cubello

Born in London, to Bengalese immigrants and raised in the United States, Jhumpa Lahiri is not only a woman of exceptional beauty, but according to Forbes, she is also one of the most powerful writers in the world. She debuted in 1999 with a collection of stories, "Interpreter of Maladies", which won her the Pulitzer Prize. She went on to write novels and articles for the New Yorker, she collaborated on the television series, "In Treatment", and now she is one of the judges at the Venice Film Festival. Just like the characters in her lucky stories, "The Namesake", "Unaccustomed Earth" and "The Lowland" (published in Italy by Guanda), she travels a great deal. «It is a fundamental experience in my life. From a metaphorical perspective, I could say that every book I write is a journey: at a certain point I find myself in the middle of nothing, a sublime sensation. And when I reach the landing place, I am at once satisfied and frustrated because I never want to stop moving, going to other places». She has been living in Rome for a couple of years now. «The first time was in 1993: the city won me over immediately, I felt at home, and I knew that I would soon move here. I find that Rome, a bit like Calcutta, is a city that is full of contradictions, but full of extraordinary cultural richness and a beauty that is both moving and decadent; and still, both cities have a provincial dimension, intimate, human, despite all of the confusion that surrounds them».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/ELIA SULEIMAN
by Michele Fossi

His style, able to casually shift from a television series director to a comedian, with a particular flare for nonsense and an element of the grotesque, has been compared to that of Buster Keaton and Tati. Honoured in 1994 in Venice with the Best First Film Prize for "Chronicle of a Disappearance", author of films set in occupied Palestine, such as "Divine Intervention", Jury Prize at Cannes in 2002, and "The Time That Remains", Suleiman, however, makes it clear that, «if you see only Palestine in my films, then that means I

made a mistake somewhere, and that I am no more than a provincial director. In my films, I use Palestine as a microcosm of the world, but come to think of it, perhaps it is the world that is a microcosm of Palestine. My identification with this region of the world has a universal value that goes far beyond the territorial dispute: it signifies taking a strong position against all forms of injustice».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/PHILIP GRÖNING
by Michele Fossi

«If we think of the first virgin frames of a film, we can say that cinema is the only form of art that originates from darkness and silence. Like a prehistoric artist who traces pictograms in the tenebrous silence of a cavern, the great cinematographer gives us images that are capable of evoking other worlds». This is Gröning's ambitious idea of film, best known for "Into Great Silence", "Love, Money, Love" and "The Terrorist". After the success of "The Police Officer's Wife", presented at the last edition of the Venice Film Festival, Special Jury Prize, Gröning returns to the lagoon this year. «I hope to be able to award films that are truly innovative, both in terms of their content as well as in terms of their form. Films like "The Mirror" by Tarkovskij, or "Hunger" by Steve McQueen, which, thanks to an unconventional narration, are able to perform the miracle of plucking strings within the spectator and changing his way of seeing the world. Who knows, maybe this year it will be a film by a South American or African director – at least I hope so – that will open our eyes to new, powerful forms of narration». Gröning is currently busy with the editing of that which he does not hesitate to describe as «the most ambitious cinematographic project of my career, half-way between a Western, a fable and a philosophical discourse. It will be called "Mein Bruder Robert" ["My Brother Robert"], and it represents a reflection on the passage of time as seen through the lens of two twins, for whom time follows an unusual rhythm, kept by an internal clock that only the pair may know, different from that of the rest of the world».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/TIM ROTH
by Francesco Spampinato

In "Selma" (slated for release next year), he will play George Wallace, governor of Alabama in the 1960s, who did everything in his power to maintain the segregation of blacks and whites. In his more than thirty-year career, the 53-year-old English actor has been directed by Robert Altman, Francis Ford Coppola, Quentin Tarantino, Michel Haneke, Woody Allen and Tim Burton. Director of "The War Zone" (1999) and producer of the lucky television series "Lie to Me" (2010-11), he has already been to the Venice Film Festival five times, the first of which as the co-star of "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" by Tom Stoppard, which won the Golden Lion in 1990. This year, as a judge, he says that he does not want to know anything about the films ahead of time; «I want to sit down and be transported by the adventure». In his next appearance on the big screen, we will see him in the much anticipated "The Hateful Eight" by Tarantino, who narrates the adventures of a group of ruthless bounty hunters in post-Civil War Wyoming. Among the cast of the film, whose release has been delayed by the unauthorized online distribution of the screenplay, are Samuel L. Jackson, Kurt Russell and Michael Madsen.

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/JESSICA HAUSNER
by Francesco Spampinato

Known for "Lovely Rita", "Hotel" and "Lourdes", the Austrian director is happy to be a judge this year. «I like seeing original works, films that try to irritate and discover unusual perspectives on reality. To be a member of the jury is a great opportunity to gain a new perspective on the possibilities of film, both in aesthetic as well as dramaturgical terms». An empha-