

sis on silences rather than dialogues, on the introspection of the characters, make her work representative of a new genre of art films. But «a film functions quite differently from a novel or a painting. The editing and the rhythm are that which constitute the film. The way in which you cut a scene determines what the scene will convey». Her last film, "Amour fou", tells the love story of the Romantic poet Heinrich von Kleist and Henriette Vogel. «The film follows a strange inversion of that which is normally expected; instead of living with someone, Heinrich wants to die with someone», tells Hausner. «But his pretext is searching for someone to live with. This is where the absurd humour of the film lies: in the suggestion that the idea of dying is as natural as the idea of living».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/JOAN CHEN by Nicola Scevola

In the West, many will recall her from "Twin Peaks" or "The Last Emperor". In the East, she is the actress who won the Oscar of Chinese Cinema when she was just 19 years old, a feat that has earned her the nickname "Elizabeth Taylor of the Heavenly Dynasty" for the precocious fame that it brought her. Born in Shanghai and a naturalized United States citizen, Joan Chen is one of the few actresses who has been able to create a bridge between the two cultures, continuing to work for the Hollywood studios as well as those of Shanghai. And it is precisely because of her international experience that the Biennial has asked Chen to be a member of the jury this year. «Being part of such an important and elite committee is a responsibility that fills me with pride», she says. She continues to work between the East and the West because «going back and forth between China and America recharges me with energy». But whereas in her native country her talent was immediately recognized, in the United States it has taken the 53-year-old actress some time to make her breakthrough (with the film by Bertolucci), cutting her teeth in television series such as "Knight Rider", "MacGyver" and "Miami Vice". Chen is not a woman who is easily satisfied, and after conquering Hollywood with complex roles that transcend her beauty, she also wanted to establish herself as a director (with "Shanghai Strangers", 2012), revealing her talent on the other side of the lens as well. «I took a hiatus because directing is much more demanding than acting. But as soon as my children have grown, I intend to take it up again».

VENEZIA 71. THE JURY/CARLO VERDONE by Margherita Ferrandino

After 20 years he returns to Venice as a judge, and he still remembers the endless meetings of '94. «It was a unique experience, with a most prestigious jury presided by David Lynch. There was Uma Thurman, Vargas Llosa, Assayas. Long discussions and hard debates in defence of the preferred films: Vargas Llosa seemed a public minister; it was impossible to contradict him. This time I don't have any desire to fight». He used to go to the shore as a child, following his father Mario, who was a film critic and selecting official of the Festival. «On the strand we would meet Sordi, Cardinale, Loren, Lolobrigida, and father had many foreign friends whom he brought to our umbrella. I was about seven years old, and I remember this fascinating, discrete, silent atmosphere that was so different from the confusion of today; everything was muted, except for the occasional rumour that would circulate on the beach, like the time Vittorio De Sica lost almost 100 million at the casino, or when Carmelo Bene got drunk and took his clothes off in the hall of the Excelsior. Then there was this sort of galleon called Todaro, out on the open sea. It was a restaurant you had to take a motorboat to, and that is where the VIPs had lunch. In those days, it was required to wear a jacket to the screenings; until that all changed in '68. The ceremony was gone, and the Festival was on the brink of cancellation. Over the years everything has changed, beginning with the communication. Today there are hundreds of

journalists at the shore; everyone wants to interview you, and they flock around everywhere. A nightmare».

MICHAEL KEATON. THE STRUGGLING SUPERHERO by Roberto Croci

The next Venice Film Festival will open with Birdman, the latest film by Alejandro González Iñárritu ("Amores Perros", "21 Grams", "Babel" and "Biutiful"), he was also the first Mexican director to receive two Oscar nominations and a Golden Globe, and to win at the BAFTA and Cannes). The lead actor in this long-awaited film is Michael Keaton – youngest of seven brothers, a blue-collar actor from Pittsburgh and a leading figure in Hollywood during the 80s and 90s, particularly successful in films such as "Night shift", "Mr. Mom", "Gung Ho", "Beetlejuice", "Clean and Sober", "Batman" and "Jackie Brown". He plays the role of an actor (Riggan Thompson) who has passed his prime, driven by egotism, manic obsession and self-destructive impulses, he attempts to revive his career by adapting a short story by Raymond Carver "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" as a Broadway play. «It is the story of an actor, but it could be anyone, a dentist, a plumber, an insurance broker. The film's subtitle – "The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance" – can have several meanings, and if ignorance can sometimes be useful, or even save your life or make you happy, in other cases it is destructive and self-destructive. In Riggan's case, his ambition is detestable and reprehensible. I enjoyed myself very much interpreting him, because he is pathetic, beautiful in his sadness; he is perhaps the character I have identified least with in the almost 40 years of my career. In his case a little ignorance would have helped». A fundamental question that haunts the collective imagination, found in Carver's novel, and in the film, is: «Did you get what you wanted from this life, in spite of everything? And what did you want from life?». «Most people never ask themselves this question», continues Keaton, «we all have moments of confusion, when we get lost. The important thing for me, and it's what I've tried to teach my son, is when you lose your way you have to get back to base, find your camp, your tent and ask yourself: "What do I want from life?". It's a philosophy in itself that would be important for the whole of humanity, but it's an even more pressing question for anyone in show-business, because unlike other professions this one is basically founded on the fragility of a moment, on the fear of not making it, of not being up to it, of failure. In Hollywood, what you want does not always lead you to make the most intelligent choices. I was lucky to understand this at the beginning of my career, I realised that after success the lean days would come. It's important not to be a victim of the system, not to be enchanted by all the glitter. We are human beings, there will always be difficult, uncertain times, you have to accept that, especially we actors for whom this feeling of helplessness is magnified a thousand times. In this case Riggan takes the bait, he catches on but he gets fucked. "Birdman" should be seen two or three times because there is a lot to learn, it's very deep. I have to say that in making this film Alejandro challenged both technique and narrative, he wanted to be innovative and courageous, and I admire him a lot for this. I believe courage is one of the most important virtues. As an actor, I realise that I have lacked talent many times, but I have always been courageous, I've never been afraid of making different choices, of trying new things, of losing my self esteem before the public. It's wonderful to work with someone like Alejandro, because he makes acting much more exciting». Keaton's admiration for the Mexican director is unconditional, above all he admires his focus on accurately x-raying human nature. «We are both interested in getting in touch with human feelings, and with their daily lives. I find that Alejandro is a passionate, entertaining and emotional man endowed with infectious curiosity and very demanding. I appreciate these qualities because very often I do not find them in myself, and although I am in this game I do not like to lose. He is

hungry for life, enjoys laughing, joking, he is very intelligent. Alongside José Padilha – the Brazilian director of RoboCop – he is the most amazing person I've ever worked with, an extraordinary intellect. Tim Burton and Tarantino have other visual and cinematographic talents. When you work with directors whose standards are very high, you appreciate your job, you give your best, creatively speaking you become insatiable. Alejandro is a true artist». So, did Michael Keaton get what he wanted out of life? «I lead a quiet life with my family on a ranch in Montana... but I do think that I'm actively contributing to the happiness of others gives meaning to one's own life. In 1993 I made "My Life", the story of a future father diagnosed with cancer. After that film people stopped me on the street and thanked me for giving them hope, a moment of relief, comfort. The fact that I was actually able to help someone, at least once, puts me at peace with the world».

ALBERTO BARBERA. THE DIRECTOR by Margherita Ferrandino

«I'm wrapping up the final details. It was exhausting work, and we did it all in less than eight weeks. We've seen 1,600 films, not to mention the shorts, an infinite number. I don't have a clear-cut sense of what the trends may be for this new edition, but I can say that it will be a very diverse and deliberately unsettling festival, like last year's edition that took a lot of risks but gave great results». Alberto Barbera seems serene, his Piedmontese aplomb masks neither worry nor tension, the job is nearly done. All that's left to do is wait until August 27th for the premiere of the 71st Venice International Film Festival which, as always, is a big gamble for its curator. «I don't like to meet the most obvious and mundane expectations. I have nothing against the big names and I do everything to get them, but I don't always succeed because by now the laws of marketing take precedence over any other consideration, so it becomes difficult to get films that you might like to showcase in a large and prestigious festival like Venice. What interests me most is continuing to look for films that are surprising, to offer competition entries that are unexpected, that perhaps go against the dominant taste, against the flatness which lately, unfortunately, seems to be the common denominator in much artistic production. Today's cinema is actually much richer than we may think, by which I mean that there are many directors and films that deserve to be known and appreciated, and are often better than those that an increasingly suffocating and rigid market lets through the cracks». Alberto Barbera has clear ideas and, true to his desire for innovation against the current, he has decided to deliver not one, but two Golden Lions for Lifetime Achievement, and to extend the exception, to give them to two maverick artists: Thelma Schoonmaker, lifelong editor for Martin Scorsese, and Frederick Wiseman, «one of the greatest documentary filmmakers in the world, who unfortunately has not yet reached the Italian theaters and is not yet known to our audience. These are two great craftsmen of cinema, unjustly neglected figures on whom we want to bring to more people's attention». The choice of the president of the jury of the official competition is also true to Barbera's style, entrusting the job for the first time to a composer of film music, Frenchman Alexandre Desplat. It's also the first time for Roberto Minervini on the jury of the "Horizons" section, an Italian director who has never filmed in Italy but represents, Barbera assures us, «that minority tendency that is becoming and will become increasingly important to the internationalization of Italian cinema». Another debutante is Alice Rohrwacher, president of the "First Work" jury. «Alice is now more than just a promise, she's a pioneer of the new Italian cinema with a very clear personality. Even though she's only made two films, she has broad shoulders and is so original and strong as to already qualify as a sure thing. To those who turn up their noses because she's been given this responsibility, I answer why not?». It's not, however, the first time for Carlo Verdone, who returns to the jury of the official competition after twenty years. «It's not as obvious a

choice as it might appear. Carlo began as an actor and became a director who is now also appreciated abroad. He's also a great cinephile, which doesn't hurt». Deliberately populist is his choice of Luisa Raineri as godmother of the 71st edition. «An Italian beauty capable not only of embodying the qualities that made Italian singers so great in the past, but also of being extremely intelligent and active in different fields. She's amiable, cheerful, real, and has all the tools necessary for handling a job that is seemingly simple but is actually very complicated». Now that we've talked about some of the more important institutional presences at the festival, it's time to move on to the competition, the films, the content and the stars who will walk the red carpet of the Lido. «I want to stress that it's not a question of a competition with "Horizons" as a collateral event, as a B-side. That's not the idea. We're making an effort to help people understand that there are two competitions, and I can say this confidently because I invented the parallel section. There are two competitions, with two distinct and strong identities, equally important; they represent the two different souls of the festival and are perfectly complementary. On August 27th we will have two premieres: one in the Sala Grande with the film "Birdman" by Alejandro González Iñárritu, and the other in the Sala Darsena, renovated specially for the event, with the red carpet film that opens the "Horizons" section, "The President" by Mohsen Makhmalbaf, an Iranian director who, after a long and difficult personal crisis, is back behind the camera to tell an extraordinary parable about contemporary life». The official competition features 20 films, three of them Italian: "Il giovane favoloso" by Mario Martone, the story of Giacomo Leopardi; "Anime nere" by Francesco Munzi, a modern western set among the Calabrian clans; and "Hungry Hearts" by Xavier Costanzo, shot in New York with Alba Rohrwacher and Adam Driver. «There's Abel Ferrara with "Pasolini", Xavier Beauvois, Benoit Jacquot, as well as a debut film by a Turkish director; there are two unknown French directors, some films that heed the market and others that present young talents like David Gordon Green's "Manglehorn", which will bring Al Pacino to the Lido, while "Horizons" goes in search of experimentation and the return of the greats to international cinema, who can only increase the prestige of this section». Among these returns is Francesco Maresco, who resurfaces after seven years of silence with "Belluscone, una storia siciliana". «An amazing movie that will make a lot of waves». But the surprises don't end here, continuing with the non-competition films where find Sabina Guzzanti with "La trattativa", which investigates the relationship between the state and the mafia, while Davide Ferrario's "La zuppa del diavolo" uses material from the National Archive of Industrial Film in Ivrea to recount the industrialization of Italy from the early 20th century to the '70s. «I'm very happy with this selection, which covers a lot of territory and includes several special projects such as Gabriele Salvatores' "Italy in a Day", in the wake of the project launched two years ago by Ridley Scott, which collects more than 44 thousand videos shot with every imaginable means (cameras, smartphones...) over the course of the 24 hours of 26 October 2014. The result is an 80-minute documentary that is the comical, dramatic and moving diary of our country». And on the red carpet? «Not many women, it just so happens, but we sure of Catherine Deneuve, Chiara Mastroianni, Emma Stone and Naomi Watts. Then there's Edward Norton, Ethan Hawke and other surprises». And lastly? «Lastly, a real gem from HBO, a miniseries inspired by "Olive Kitteridge", the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Elizabeth Strout, starring Frances McDormand. What more can I say?». We'll just have to wait for August 27th and the start of the festival.

THELMA SCHOONMAKER. GOLDEN LION FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT. by Fabia Di Drucco

Over the telephone, Thelma Schoonmaker's voice is that of an enthusiastic child. «When Barbera called me

to tell me that she wanted to award me the Golden Lion for my career, I couldn't believe it. It is a recognition that I thought was reserved for directors. My husband (Michael Powell, author's note) was awarded one. When I said that from my point of view, if they really wanted to give the award to an editor, then Scorsese was their man, since he taught me everything I know about this job, they replied that he had already received one, and this was a way to recognize the professionalism of all of the figures involved in making a film». Thelma Schoonmaker, with three Oscars (for "Raging Bull", "The Aviator" and "The Departed"), four more nominations (for "Woodstock", "Goodfellas", "Gangs of New York", "Hugo") took up editing by chance. «Even though my parents are American, I spent my whole childhood and adolescence abroad. And although I love New York, I wanted to spend my life in a cosmopolitan environment working for the Department of Foreign Affairs. So I took up studies in Political Science, and I learned Russian. Everyone told me that I would be terribly disappointed in the world of diplomacy – that I was too idealistic; that the years of my first-hand involvement in and manifestations for Vietnam had nothing to do with the field I was aspiring to enter. One day I read an extremely vague ad looking for someone interested in working in film. Seeing as I loved watching films, I replied, and I found myself working for this guy who did his own personal editing of scenes from Antonioni and Fellini films. In response to my shock at his arbitrary working methods, he said that he was working for television programmes that would air at 2 AM and wouldn't be watched by anyone». Deontological perplexities aside, what little technique she learned came to her service some time later, while, as a student of a six-week course in film («that I really couldn't afford»), she heard her professor ask in the classroom if there was anyone who would be able to help Martin Scorsese – at the time unknown – as someone had done a bad job cutting his negatives and he needed help fixing them as quickly as possible. «I volunteered. I am convinced that if I had not met Martin at that moment in my life, I would have probably ended up doing something completely different». The pair worked together on a few projects, including "Woodstock", the documentary on the legendary concert, for which Thelma was nominated for an Oscar («an immense job, which took a great many editors; but since they were under my supervision, they nominated me. Not that it counted or made any difference at all in my field. No one gets famous»). Then Scorsese moved to Los Angeles, where Thelma was not allowed to work, because of the extremely strict film union regulations. Ten years go by, and then he calls her back for "Raging Bull". «I was terrorized. At the time I still considered myself someone who was learning. But as soon as I saw the early footage, I was completely electrified. Everything was so exceptional, the directing, the acting, the music... I am attached to all the films I have made, but if I had to choose one, it would be this – pure gold». Schoonmaker and Scorsese worked extremely efficiently, their method based on a total affinity of taste and vision. Thelma would never visit the set («I like being on set, and I love watching Martin direct, but I don't go because we decided that it is best if my eye stays cold when I approach the dailies, absolutely uninfluenced by the atmosphere and dynamics of the set»), but she and Scorsese would watch the dailies together, exchanging ideas, and Thelma would edit them day by day. Only after the filming was completed would the director come into the editing room and give his input on the final editing of the film. Naturally, they developed this working equilibrium over years, with Scorsese much more present in all phases in the earlier years and Thelma's autonomy growing progressively. Is it possible that their visions coincide completely? «He trained me; my way of working is truly an emanation of his own, and it is extremely rare that we have contrasting opinions. When it does occur, we each edit our own version and then share it with a very limited number of friends. Scorsese is absolutely impartial – very open. He is not one who needs to be right at all costs». Perhaps the reason she has worked almost ex-

clusively with him... «In reality, he asked me to collaborate in many films that he produces. And now, as I await my departure for Taiwan in November, where Martin will be filming "Silence" (the story of two Jesuits, Liam Neeson and Andrew Garfield, set in Japan in the 1600s, author's note), I am editing a small, low-budget film, "Learning to Drive", with Ben Kingsley». When asked which one of Scorsese's preferred actors has affected her the most, she replies without hesitation: «I have a great relationship and the highest respect for Daniel Day-Lewis and Leonardo DiCaprio. But working with De Niro has been simply incredible. While I was editing "Raging Bull" I was literally unable to take my eyes off him». Schoonmaker owes not only her career to Scorsese, but also her husband. «Scorsese was a great admirer of Michael Powell, who had directed important films, which he adored, such as "The Red Shoes" and "Black Narcissus". His work was highly influenced by Powell's films, and he wanted to meet him at all costs, perplexed that such a talented director was not achieving the recognition he deserved. I went to England to meet him and discovered that his lack of recognition was due to the fact that during the war the negatives of his films had been lost. I invited him to New York and introduced them at a dinner at Scorsese's house. Michael was much older than me (by 35 years, author's note), but it was love at first sight. We were married for ten splendid years. Scorsese was fundamental in raising funds to restore his films, a complex and extremely expensive operation, which to date has brought about the complete reconstruction of three of them». Thelma travels throughout the world to spread awareness of her husband's films. «Whenever I can, I like to go to Cotswolds, in England, where my husband had a cottage. I spend my time reading his diaries, which I would like to publish. To me, Cotswolds is a paradise, even though I adore New York – I've lived there for 50 years, but I still love it as if it were my first day». Does she teach? «I try to satisfy the requests of all the schools that call upon me to hold lessons, but I don't have time to teach, and anyway, the person who should really be doing that is Scorsese, not me». A memory that stands out from the many years of collaboration with Scorsese? «I have travelled a lot with Martin, but the place I loved most was Rome. While we were filming "Gangs of New York" at Cinecittà, we were all completely enchanted – we didn't even go home for Christmas. I stayed in Piazza del Popolo, and I remember everything, the florist's, the two churches, the shops. I also have beautiful memories of Venice, where I have been many times. For "The Last Temptation of Christ", for "The Age of Innocence"; but the most rewarding experience was when we went for "Raging Bull", with Scorsese's mother, who yelled at the paparazzi in a completely incomprehensible Sicilian dialect to leave her son alone, because that was her language from childhood, and she was almost 70... and then I went to receive the Gucci award for women's achievement in filmmaking for "Hugo Cabret", which I really enjoyed, because Gucci is really an instrumental player in film restoration». The Gucci Award aside, are you interested in fashion? «Honestly? No, I only care about how I dress for award ceremonies». Is there anything else that you are as passionate about as film? «Museums – they are the first places I visit when I travel somewhere».

FREDERICK WISEMAN. GOLDEN LION FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT. by Roberto Croci

Preparing myself for my interview with Frederick Wiseman, the next Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement winner at the 71st Venice Film Festival, I discovered two definitions that explain the word and the concept of the documentary. According to some, it is a film genre with the main objective of analyzing or studying a theme or aspect of culture, nature, science or society. According to others, it is an audiovisual product of a cultural, informative, social, political or scientific nature considered a creative act or simply made to divulge information about different aspects of society and human knowledge. According to Wiseman, a pur-