



**MORRICONE**

# Salò or The 120 Days of Sodom

## Morricone and Pasolini

One of the first CDs I ever bought was a 1993 compilation of film themes by Ennio Morricone. I remember the cover being pretty uninspiring – five film reels seen through a purple and pink filter – plus there was no picture of the man himself, not even a still from one of the films. The album included memorable themes from lesser-known pictures such as *La califfa* (Alberto Bevilacqua, 1970) and *Maddalena* (Jerzy Kawalerowicz, 1971) but most came from Sergio Leone: *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966), *Once upon a Time in the West* (1968), *A Fistful of Dynamite* (1971) and *Once Upon a Time in America* (1984). Thirty years after their final work together, the Leone-Morricone collaboration is rightly seen as one of the most symbiotic of all director-composer partnerships. However, since his very first forays into film, Morricone has enjoyed long-term collaborations with a variety of filmmakers: Mauro Bolognini, Luciano Salce, Giuliano Montaldo, Aldo Lado, Roberto Faenza and Giuseppe Tornatore to name only a few. Apart from Tornatore, whose *Cinema Paradiso* (1988) features one of the composer's most popular scores, you rarely see any of the above names on a Morricone greatest-hits compilation. The same is true of another important collaborator of Morricone's, the great Italian poet and filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Morricone and Pasolini first worked together in 1966 when both were at important junctures in their respective careers. The composer was fresh from injecting new life into the western score with his themes for Leone's *Dollars* trilogy: out had gone lush, syrupy strings, in had come Duane Eddy-style electric guitar, the whistles of Alessandro Alessandroni and the ethereal wordless vocals of Edda Dell'Orso together with bells, whipcracks, Jew's harp and harmonica. 1966 was the year of the final and most ambitious instalment of Leone's trilogy, *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, but Morricone – already conspicuously prolific – also squeezed in several other scores, including westerns such as Carlo Lizzani's *The Hills Run Red* and Sergio Sollima's *The Big Gundown* as well as comedies, political thrillers and historical dramas.

By 1966, Pasolini had three features under his belt – *Accattone* (1961), *Mamma Roma* (1962) and *The Gospel According to Matthew* (1964) – in addition to various short films including *La ricotta*, his contribution to anthology film *RoGoPaG* (1963). With each successive project, he was becoming more and more interested in formal experimentation, in irony and allegory. In terms of music for his films, he had worked with composers Carlo Rustichelli and Luis Bacalov, although neither had been called upon to provide a full score in the traditional sense. Any original themes ended up being just one element of the films' soundscapes, with Pasolini relying on an eclectic range of pre-existing music, from classical to folk, jazz to blues. While his approach didn't radically change upon meeting Morricone, he certainly gave his new composer more leeway. When they met to discuss *Hawks and Sparrows* (1966), their first film together, Pasolini presented Morricone with a

list of pieces he wanted to use. Morricone insisted that he preferred writing his own music and to his surprise, Pasolini gave him the green light.

Pasolini described *Hawks and Sparrows* as an 'ideo-comic fable'; it follows father and son Totò and Ninetto (Totò and Ninetto Davoli) as they make their way through the outskirts of Rome. They encounter a talking crow (voiced by poet Francesco Leonetti) whose pronouncements reflect some of Pasolini's own political views in the post-war period. The director's previous three features had opened with credits in black text on an off-white background; the credits for *Hawks and Sparrows* take a different shape. They appear in white against a shot of the night sky... and are sung at the same time. A jaunty violin melody builds into a full-bodied, unmistakeably Morriconian sound accompanying singer Domenico Modugno (of 'Volare' fame) as he makes his way through cast and crew. 'Sergio Citti helped out as a philosopher' he sings, producer Alfredo Bini 'risked his position' while Pasolini 'risked his reputation'. Many films had featured spoken titles before – Orson Welles's *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942), Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris* (1963) – but very few had actually been sung (two years after *Hawks and Sparrows*, Otto Preminger would have Harry Nilsson sing the end credits to his 1968 counter-culture satire *Skidoo*). Another of Morricone's stand-out pieces for *Hawks and Sparrows* is 'Dance School in the Sun', a joyous theme whose shuffling drums, bells and twangy electric guitar wouldn't seem out of place on one of his spaghetti western scores.

The Pasolini-Morricone collaboration continued into *The Earth Seen from the Moon*, an episode for the 1967 anthology film *The Witches*. Totò and Ninetto are reunited and this time play ginger-haired father and son Ciancicato and Baciù Miao, who, after mourning the death of wife and mother Crisantema, decide to set off in search of a new family matriarch. Morricone's themes in this film – whether wistful or comic – are built around beautiful melodies on the mandolin.

Pasolini took his composer into different territory again with *Theorem* (1968), the tale of a mysterious young man (Terence Stamp) who seduces all the members of a bourgeois family. There's very little of the lightness of *Hawks and Sparrows* and *The Earth Seen from the Moon* here. On the whole, Morricone's themes for *Theorem* are coolly enigmatic, more dissonant, mixed in with existing pieces such as the mournful jazz trumpet of Ted Curson's 'Tears for Dolphy'. In a 2013 entry for his blog *The Blue Moment*, Richard Williams describes Morricone's work on *Theorem* as 'jagged [and] post-serialist' but suggests it's 'Curson's piece that carries the greatest emotional weight, its spare contours providing the perfect evocation of the discontents that accompanied Italy's post-war reconstruction.'

Morricone had not been called upon for 1967's *Oedipus Rex* and his music was also absent from *Pigsty* (1969) and *Medea* (1970). He returned, albeit in a largely consultative role, for Pasolini's final four films: *The Decameron* (1971), *The Canterbury Tales* (1972), *Arabian Nights* (1974) and *Salò or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975). For all four, Pasolini took a similar approach to his early work with Rustichelli and Bacalov and constructed a soundscape of mostly pre-existing music; only with *Arabian Nights* did he give Morricone a freer hand to compose new pieces (including the gorgeous 'Dunja's Theme'). Having insisted on composing original material since the beginning of his working relationship with Pasolini, Morricone accepted the director's wishes this time around.

Looking over the pair’s near decade-long working relationship, it’s clear – as Antonella Sisto points out in *Film Sound in Italy* (2014) – that ‘Pasolini’s ideological consciousness... finds play in the stylistic dissonant experimentation of bringing together radically different musical and linguistic texts in the soundtrack... He experiments with dissonance as dissent, to voice difference against homologation and sameness.’

Pasquale Iannone, *Sight & Sound*, January 2015

**SALÒ OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM**  
**(SALÒ O LE 120 GIORNATE DI SODOMA)**  
*Director:* Pier Paolo Pasolini  
*Production Company:* P.E.A. – Produzioni Europee Associate, Les Productions Artistes Associés  
*Producer:* Alberto Grimaldi  
*Unit Managers:* Alessandro Mattei, Renzo David, Angelo Zemella  
*Production Manager:* Antonio Girasante  
*Production Supervisor:* Alberto De Stefanis  
*Post-production Supervisor:* Enzo Ocone  
*1st Assistant Director:* Umberto Angelucci  
*2nd Assistant Director:* Fiorella Infascelli  
*Continuity:* Beatrice Banfi  
*Screenplay:* Pier Paolo Pasolini  
*Script Collaborator:* Sergio Citti  
*Based on the novel by:* Donatien Alphonse François de Sade  
*Director of Photography:* Tonino Delli Colli  
*Camera Operators:* Carlo Tafani, Emilio Bestetti  
*1st Assistant Cameraman:* Sandro Battaglia  
*2nd Assistant Cameraman:* Giancarlo Granatelli  
*Editor:* Nino Baragli  
*1st Assistant Editor:* Ugo De Rossi  
*2nd Assistant Editor:* Alfredo Menchini  
*Art Director:* Dante Ferretti  
*Set Dresser:* Osvaldo Desideri  
*Costumes:* Danilo Donati  
*Assistant Costumes:* Vanni Castellani  
*Costumes Created by:* Farani  
*Make-up:* Alfredo Tiberi  
*Special Make-up Effects:* Rocchetti-Carboni  
*Hair:* Giuseppina Bovino  
*Wigs:* Rocchetti-Carboni  
*Music played on the pianoforte by:* Arnaldo Graziosi  
*Music Publisher:* Eureka  
*Music Consultant:* Ennio Morricone

*Sound:* Domenico Pasquadisceglie, Giorgio Loviscek  
*Boom Operator:* Giuseppina Sagliano  
*Mixer:* Fausto Ancillai  
*Sound Effects:* Luciano Anzellotti  
*Post-synchronisation:* International Recording Studios (Rome)  
*Set Furnishings/Drapes:* D’Angelo  
*Crystal:* D.O.M.  
*Porcelain:* Richard – Ginori  
*Unit Publicity:* Nico Naldini

**Cast**  
Paolo Bonacelli (*the duke*)  
Giorgio Cataldi (*the bishop*)  
Uberto P. Quintavalle (*chief magistrate*)  
Aldo Valletti (*the president*)  
Caterina Boratto (*Signora Castelli*)  
Elsa De Giorgi (*Signora Maggi*)  
Hélène Surgère (*Signora Vaccari*)  
Sonia Saviane (*the piano virtuoso*)  
Sergio Fascetti, Bruno Musso, Antonio Orlando, Claudio Cicchetti, Franco Merli, Umberto Chessari, Lamberto Book, Gaspare Di Jenno (*masked victims*)  
Giuliana Melis, Faridah Malik, Graziella Aniceto, Renata Moar, Dorit Henke, Antinisca Nemour, Benedetta Gaetani, Olga Andreis (*female victims*)  
Tatiana Mogilansky, Susanna Radaelli, Giuliana Orlandi, Liana Acquaviva (*young women*)  
Rinaldo Missaglia, Giuseppe Patruno, Guido Galletti, Efisio Etzi (*young soldiers*)  
Claudio Troccoli, Fabrizio Menichini, Maurizio Valaguzza, Ezio Manni (*collaborators*)  
Paola Pieracci, Carla Terlizzi, Anna Maria Dossena, Anna Recchimuzzi, Ines Pellegrini (*procuresses/servants*)  
Marco Bellocchio (*dubbed voice of the president*) \*  
Laura Betti (*dubbed voice of Signora Vaccari*) \*  
Michel Piccoli (*voice of the duke, French version*) \*

Italy/France 1975  
117 mins

\* Uncredited

MORRICONE

**The Battle of Algiers (La battaglia di Algeri)**  
Sun 1 Aug 15:10; Wed 25 Aug 14:30  
**The Sounds of Ennio Morricone**  
Mon 2 Aug 18:10  
**A Fistful of Dollars (Per un pugno di dollari)**  
Mon 2 Aug 20:45; Sat 7 Aug 11:30; Tue 10 Aug 20:50; Mon 30 12:20  
**Two Mules for Sister Sara**  
Wed 4 Aug 18:00; Sat 21 Aug 20:30  
**Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom (Salò o Le 120 giornate di Sodoma)**  
Thu 5 Aug 20:45; Tue 10 Aug 17:45; Wed 25 Aug 17:50  
**The Untouchables**  
Fri 6 Aug 17:45; Tue 24 Aug 14:30  
**The Thing**  
Fri 6 Aug 20:50; Tue 24 Aug 20:50  
**For a Few Dollars More (Per qualche dollaro in più)**  
Sat 7 Aug 14:00; Sun 22 Aug 12:10; Mon 30 Aug 15:00  
**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Il buono, il brutto, il cattivo)**  
Sat 7 Aug 17:10; Sun 29 Aug 18:20; Mon 30 Aug 18:15  
**White Dog**  
Sat 7 Aug 20:50; Fri 20 Aug 18:10; Fri 27 Aug 20:45

**Once upon a Time in the West (C’era una volta il west)**  
Sun 8 Aug 12:00; Fri 27 Aug 14:00; Tue 31 Aug 14:00  
**The Mission**  
Sun 8 Aug 15:10; Thu 12 Aug 20:30; Thu 26 Aug 18:00  
**Days of Heaven**  
Mon 9 Aug 21:00; Tue 31 Aug 17:50  
**Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down (Atame!)**  
Wed 11 Aug 20:50; Thu 19 Aug 14:15; Mon 23 Aug 21:00;  
Tue 31 Aug 20:45  
**The Hateful Eight**  
Sun 15 Aug 15:00; Sun 22 Aug 18:00  
**Once upon a Time in America**  
Tue 17 Aug 17:40; Sat 28 Aug 11:20  
**The Legend of 1900 (La leggenda del pianista sull’oceano)**  
Sat 21 Aug 11:50; Sun 29 Aug 15:10  
**Cinema Paradiso (Nuovo Cinema Paradiso)**  
Sat 21 Aug 14:30; Thu 26 Aug 14:30

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