



#### The Country Doctor

Director: Lorenza Mazzetti  
UK 1953  
10 mins

#### Together with Lorenza Mazzetti

Director: Brigid Lowe  
Co-director: Gilly Booth  
©: Brigid Lowe  
Editor: Gintè Regina  
Interviewer: Henry K. Miller  
UK 2023©  
54 mins  
Digital

### TOGETHER: THE LONDON FILMS OF LORENZA MAZZETTI

**Together with Lorenza Mazzetti + discussion with Brigid Lowe and Henry K. Miller, hosted by Carol Morley + The Country Doctor**

Wed 13 Sep 18:30

**K + intro by Brigid Lowe and Henry K. Miller, hosted by William Fowler + Together**

Wed 13 Sep 20:45

**Vali, the Witch of Positano**

Sun 24 Sep 13:20

**Twilight City + intro by BFI National Archive Curator, William Fowler**

Tue 3 Oct 18:30

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**SIGHT AND SOUND**

### TOGETHER: THE LONDON FILMS OF LORENZA MAZZETTI

# Together with Lorenza Mazzetti + discussion

**SPOILER WARNING** The following content may reveal plot details

*Together with Lorenza Mazzetti was directed by Brigid Lowe. Interviews with Lorenza Mazzetti were filmed in London (2013) and Rome (2018). Filming in Rome was co-directed by Gilly Booth and Brigid Lowe, with Henry K. Miller acting as the main interviewer. The editor was Gintè Regina.*

On Friday, 3 January 2020, Gintè and I ended a day of editing at the section where Henry asks Lorenza: 'If the two men in *Together* represent you and Paola, which one are you?' *Together* (1956) is a deceptively complex film, but it can be read as the fear of two being reduced to one. Made when Lorenza was living in London, *Together* is marked by the separation from her twin sister Paola, who had remained in Italy and was getting married. It was on Saturday, late in the evening, that I received the news that Lorenza had died in Rome. The twins were now truly apart.

On Monday we resumed work on the film, at precisely the point where we had left our edit – on Lorenza's answer: 'The one who died.'

It was an eerie and moving moment for both of us, and would cement the film's emotional undercurrent; Gintè wrote that it was 'an event that was never going to happen. Using reason, you knew of course it would, but you simply could not feel it. That's what it's like when someone old and wise dies – someone who has lived for nearly a century and has a wealth of cultural and spiritual riches trailing behind them.'

In 2018 Lorenza Mazzetti was 90 years old. Over those 90 years, she had won a prize at Cannes, took the Premio Viareggio (Italy's equivalent of the Booker) for her first novel, and been the sole female signatory of the Free Cinema manifesto. During her time in London, while she was studying at the Slade School of Fine Art, she enticed the artists Eduardo Paolozzi, Michael Andrews, and Victor Willing, as well as the Left Bank icon Vali Myers to appear in her films. In ways that even Lorenza may not have fully comprehended, a bomb-damaged London became a kind of proxy for her buried trauma, while art school would liberate her instinct for survival and experimentation. So much of Lorenza's extraordinary life is unknown, and her maverick legacy has not been sufficiently understood or recognised. I hope that *Together with Lorenza Mazzetti* will help to change this.

On a hot April day in 2018, arriving at the Campo de' Fiori in Rome to interview her, we went through one door only to be met by two more: the right door took you into Lorenza's apartment, the left one took you into Paola's. The two apartments were invisibly connected, and at any moment unknown people would appear alongside or behind us, the doorbell and phone never stopped ringing, and in the evenings the sisters would have parties, or Paola would be leading group psychotherapy sessions. We were all exhausted by the late afternoon, but it seemed that the nonagenarian sisters were only just warming up. There was also a huge seagull which Lorenza had been illicitly feeding and a cat called Baby to contend with.

Lorenza was a well-practised and artful story-teller. Our aim was to prompt her to reveal unknown details, so we brought copies of Lorenza's correspondence with Lindsay Anderson, from the Anderson archive at the University of Stirling, to remind her of their friendship. On a whim, I decided to invite one of my students at the Slade School of Fine Art, Pietro Moretti, who had seen and loved Lorenza's film *K*, and whose home was in Rome, to meet Lorenza. Pietro's resemblance to Lorenza's one-time boyfriend Michael Andrews, did not go unnoticed by her. Gilly was particularly interested in the twins' relationship and it was her gentle persistence that got Paola in front of the camera, which was to become a key moment in the final film. Somehow, over four days, amid all this chaos, noise and eccentricity, we tried to capture Lorenza's mischievous charm on film. We had no solid plan beyond that, and the interviews were often incomplete in some way, so it might simply have remained as oral history, had it not been for the discovery of a missing Mazzetti film.

## LOVE, PAIN & CINEMA: THE FILMS OF JEAN EUSTACHE

**The Pig (Le Cochon) + Job Offer (Offre d'emploi) + Alix's Pictures (Les Photos d'Alix)**

Sun 3 Sep 18:30; Wed 20 Sep 20:50

**Robinson's Place (Du côté de Robinson)**

**+ Santa Claus Has Blue Eyes (Le Père Noël a les yeux bleus)**

Tue 5 Sep 20:40; Thu 14 Sep 18:00

**Numéro zéro**

Fri 8 Sep 17:55; Sat 23 Sep 11:30

**The Mother and the Whore (La Maman et la putain)**

Sun 10 Sep 14:15; Sat 23 Sep 14:10

**My Little Loves (Mes petites amoureuses)**

Mon 11 Sep 18:05; Mon 25 Sep 20:30

**A Dirty Story (Une Sale histoire) + Hieronymous Bosch's Garden of Delights (Le jardin des délices de Jérôme Bosch)**

Fri 15 Sep 18:20; Wed 27 Sep 20:40

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Lorenza had not seen *The Country Doctor* for over sixty years. In fact, even her family did not know of its existence, and it does not appear in any filmography, but Henry had seen a couple of elusive references to it in archive material. Under Henry's tactical questioning, Lorenza described *The Country Doctor* to us in startling detail, crucially revealing the name of the man she had sent it to: Amos Vogel, co-founder of the New York Film Festival, although she could not remember the name of 'another young man of Slade' who played 'the doctor'.

Our 2018 interview became a platform for further archival research, helping us to locate *The Country Doctor*. By filming some of the documents and photographs that Henry and I discovered as objects, such as the photo that confirmed 'the doctor' as the painter Victor Willing, husband of the artist Paula Rego, I aimed to embody our evidence. The sequencing or laying out of images and books in installations or as sculptures is a characteristic of my work as an artist, and I employed it in the film as a motif and as a method of visually 'speaking'.

Both Lorenza and I studied at art school, not film school: Lorenza revealed to us that (without permission) she had entered a class at Rome's Centro Sperimentale film school, but she rejected it as an option, branding the teacher as an 'idiot' and his rules of filmmaking as 'ridiculous'. Instead, she chose to study in London and to make films at the Slade School of Fine Art, which is where I also studied and where I teach. We both worked with Slade staff and students to make our films, we both had to improvise: Lorenza describes editing 'using my bed as a table'; when I was unable to access Slade facilities because of Covid, Ginté and I had to balance a camera rig on empty paint cans and the four packets of yeast I had purchased in a lockdown panic. This historical lineage is gratifying: Lorenza's filmmaking was a catalyst, and in 1960 the Slade became home to Britain's first university film department, a unique centre of research and filmmaking. Under the director Thorold Dickinson, it pioneered teaching that involved close analysis of films, shot by shot on an editing machine, and ran packed screenings of many of the European films that influenced Lorenza.

Editing my film to create a fluent narrative was very difficult: I had to stitch fragments together to bring some coherence to Lorenza's stories of tragedies, men, love and monsters. The editing was about finding resonances: hearing something she said and then trying to find passages from her films which responded in some way, or that revealed the undercurrent of trauma. I always tried to be truthful to Lorenza, to avoid editorial imposition, and include extended passages from her films, so that her work could be encountered with greater intensity and understanding.

On our last day in Rome, she told us 'Why everybody's dying? ... now it's my moment ... you are just lucky that you see me!' and on the flight back to London, perhaps because my own mother, an artist of a similar generation, had very recently died, I kept returning to her words. When editing the film, I conceived it as a kind of elegy for the 20th century and the post-war collision of darkness and opportunity: for the East End and its workers; for the local pubs and their communities; for directors of art schools who were able to follow their instinct rather than the rules; for its artists and their collaborators and specifically for a unique woman who defied the restrictions of the time.

Brigid Lowe, *Noise and Silence* from BFI booklet for *Lorenza Mazzetti Collection* Blu-ray boxset

## Speakers

**Brigid Lowe** is an artist and Associate Professor at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. In addition to her art practice, she collaborates on the Slade Film Project with Henry K. Miller, researching the Slade School's pioneering relationship to film as an art-form. *Together with Lorenza Mazzetti* is her first film.

**Henry K. Miller** is the author of *The First True Hitchcock*, published by University of California Press. His other books are *The Essential Raymond Durnat* (as editor) and *DWOSKINO: the Gaze of Stephen Dwoskin* (as co-editor with Rachel Garfield), shortlisted for the 2023 Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards. He is a reviewer for *Sight and Sound*.

**Host: Carol Morley** is a writer/director. Her new film *Typist Artist Pirate King* will be released on 27th October by Modern Films.