



NEW RELEASES

There's Still Tomorrow (C'è ancora domani)

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Directed by: Paola Cortellesi

©: Wildside S.R.L., Vision Distribution S.P.A.,
Be Production S.R.L.

Production Companies: Wildside,
Vision Distribution

Produced in association with: Be Production

Executive Producers: Ludovica Rapisarda,

Saverio Guarascio, Mandella Quilici, Gianluca Mizzi

Produced by: Mario Gianani, Lorenzo Gangarossa

Unit Production Manager: Roberto Leone

Production Manager: Giorgia Passarelli

Production Accountant: Teresa Di Serio

Location Manager: Diego Morina

Post-production Supervisor: Brando Taccini

1st Assistant Director: Francesca Polic Greco

Casting: Laura Muccino, Sara Casani

Story and Screenplay by: Furio Andreotti,

Giulia Calenda, Paola Cortellesi

Director of Photography: Davide Leone

Camera Operator: Andrea Beck Peccoz

Steadicam Operator: Pierluigi Presutti

Special Effects Supervisor: Ermanno Spera

Editing: Valentina Mariani

Art Direction: Paola Comencini

Art Director: Marcoantonio Brandolini

Set Designer: Lorenzo Lasi

Set Decorator: Fiorella Cicolini

Costume Designer: Alberto Moretti

Music by: Lele Marchitelli

Programming, Synth, Guitar, Piano: Lele Marchitelli

Orchestra: Czech National Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Marek Stilec

Music Arranger: Lele Marchitelli

Orchestral Arrangements: Marcello Sirignano

Music Consultant: Giorgia Benedetti

Choreographer: Roberta Mastromichele

Production Sound Mixers: Filippo Porcari,

Federica Ripani

Re-recording Mixer: Paolo Segat

Supervising Sound Editor: Alessandro Feletti

Sound Effects: Luca Anzellotti

Stunt Co-ordinator: Paolo Antonini

Historical Adviser: Teresa Bertilotti

Cast:

Paola Cortellesi (*Delia*)

Valerio Mastandrea (*Ivano*)

Romana Maggiora Vergano (*Marcella*)

Giorgio Colangeli (*Ottorino*)

Emanuela Fanelli (*Marisa*)

Vinicio Marchioni (*Nino*)

Paola Tiziana Cruciani (*Signora Franca*)

Yonv Joseph (*William*)

Lele Vannoli (*Alvaro*)

Francesca Centorame (*Giulio*)

Alessia Barela (*Orietta*)

Federico Tocchi (*Mario*)

Priscilla Micol Marino (*Signora Giovana*)

Maria Chiara Orti (*Signora Rosa*)

Silvia Salvatori (*Signora Elvira*)

Mattia Baldo (*Sergio*)

Gianmarco Filippini (*Franchino*)

Barbara Chiesa (*Sister Ada*)

Gabriele Paoloca (*Peppè*)

Italy 2023©

118 mins

Digital

A Vue International release

It is more than a little ironic that it took a highly commercial feminist film to outdo *Barbie*. Paola Cortellesi's *There's Still Tomorrow* was the No. 1 attraction in Italian cinemas last year, grossing more than €36 million (£30 million) at the domestic box office following its release in October and chalking up 5.4 million admissions – which is especially impressive for a film in black and white that imitates the style of post-World War II Italian neorealism.

Esoteric as this might sound, *There's Still Tomorrow* has all the ingredients for domestic multiplex appeal. It struck a chord with audiences not just because of its distinctive bravura style and its first-time director's established popularity as a TV comedian, star and co-writer of domestic comedy hits, including *Don't Stop Me Now* (2019) and the two *Like a Cat on a Highway* films (2017, 2019). The film's success is also very much to do with its accessible, emotionally involving and surprisingly entertaining treatment of tough subjects – domestic violence and traditional gender roles. Written by the director with regular collaborators Furio Andreotti and Giulia Calenda, Cortellesi's comedy-drama is set in Rome in 1946, the year that women were first given the vote in Italy. The director herself plays Delia, a woman who copes with the demands of family life while enduring brutal treatment from her domineering, violent husband Ivano (Valerio Mastandrea) by secretly dreaming of possible escape.

The film was shot partly on set at Cinecittà, partly on location in Rome's Testaccio district, resulting in a vivid recreation of a working-class community centred around a courtyard. Speaking in a video call, Cortellesi says, 'What every single region in Italy had is that shared way of life – people living in tenements around an internal courtyard, people shouting across balconies, children playing outside, with all the good and bad aspects of that. Because obviously there was no privacy, gossip was rife, everybody knew about everybody else's lives. In the location where we shot, those houses are occupied, so they're a sort of time capsule of people still living that type of life.' With its period detail, local dialect (some of it archaic, specifically of the period) and Davide Leone's evocative cinematography, *There's Still Tomorrow* feels in many ways uncannily close to the golden age of Italian neorealist cinema, as practised by Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica and Luchino Visconti. But Cortellesi insists, 'I didn't want to ape a neorealist film – they're masterpieces, why do that? I wanted to adopt a certain type of language to treat a very contemporary subject and make a contemporary film.' Even so, she says, 'Neorealism is part of our DNA as Italians – that language is ingrained in our collective culture, it's the way we see the past. So when I heard the stories [about the past] from my grandparents, I would translate them in my mind into the visual language of neorealism.'

In fact, *There's Still Tomorrow* is neither strictly a forgery of neorealism nor a parody, and nor is it quite the kind of revisionist reappropriation of the sort that Todd Haynes performed on Douglas Sirk in his *Far from Heaven* (2002). It's perhaps closer to Michel Hazanavicius's use of silent cinema in *The Artist* (2011), an irreverent emulation of a certain film language.

In Cortellesi's case, the approach is precise but also flexible, able to accommodate melodrama, broad comedy and anachronism (as in the opening credits, set to a number by US indie veterans The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion). Cortellesi also uses hyper-stylisation, as in the elegant but deeply unsettling scene in which Ivano assaults Delia, played out as a balletic dance duet.

In fact, the director points out, her film's funny moments owe more to a slightly different cycle of films, the *commedia all'italiana* associated with directors such as Mario Monicelli, Dino Risi and De Sica in his lighter mode. '*Commedia all'italiana* is

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not the comedy genre per se – it is a way of treating subjects which can be very hard and very serious in a cynical, humorous register,' she says. 'Humour is the ideal vehicle to usher the audience into a really tough subject without antagonising them. For instance, as in that scene of violence as choreography, which gives this sense of not witnessing just one moment, but conveying the idea of something happening cyclically.'

Neorealism famously made an impact – in Italy and internationally – because of its emphasis on ordinary people and stories from the street. Cortellesi says that it marked a decisive break both with the propaganda films of the Mussolini era and the glossy lifestyle escapism of the 'Telefoni Bianchi' ('white telephone') films of the 30s and 40s. 'Neorealism was a slap in the face. All of a sudden, stories were about real people that the audiences could recognise and identify with,' she says.

As *There's Still Tomorrow* reminds us, many of those stories were about women. 'When we see [Rossellini's] *Rome, Open City* [1945], and Anna Magnani just breaking through that screen, we see a relatable woman and a real woman: she belongs to that strange [Italian] matriarchy, where women were very strong and could deal with the outside world in a very competent way. But then in Visconti's *Bellissima* [1951], she plays an exceedingly strong woman who still gets slapped around by her husband. Nevertheless, she is the protagonist of her story. So women are not restricted to being chambermaids or secondary characters, but can hold the screen and be the real protagonist of the movie.'

Delia – played by Cortellesi with a poignant, tender, comic touch – is, the director admits, the exact opposite of Magnani's toughness. But Magnani remains Cortellesi's reference point for women in the Italian cinema of the period, along with Giulietta Masina, who co-starred with her in Renato Castellani's 1959 prison drama *Caged* (aka ... *And the Wild, Wild Women*). She also mentions Monica Vitti, comedy star Franca Valeri and Sophia Loren; for Cortellesi, Loren represents, among other things, a breakthrough for screen actresses in terms of being able to be both glamorous and comic. A favourite scene of Cortellesi's comes in *Pane, amore e...* (Dino Risi, 1955), which starred Loren and De Sica. 'She's this perfect goddess, he smells her scent and asks, "What sort of perfume do you use?" And in a perfect Neapolitan working-class accent, she goes, "It's Lavanda Cannavale" – a really cheap brand. She owns up to the fact that it is exactly what it is. Without giving up on being beautiful and glamorous, she's able to deliver the punchline and steals the scene completely.' While Cortellesi's film is set in a working-class milieu, the oppression faced by Delia was not only a phenomenon in Italy. 'It was all-pervasive that women were not supposed to voice their opinions. At the time, women belonging to the bourgeoisie, or even the nobility, had a subordinate role with respect to the men in the family.'

At the moment, the director says, the topic is very much in the spotlight, following the death last November of a young woman named Giulia Cecchetti, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend – an event that galvanised national protests and discussions.

Recent reports have estimated that in Italy a femicide happens every 72 hours: by the time her film was released in October, Cortellesi notes, 100 women had already been killed in the country that year. Because of the Cecchetti case, she says, Italians are currently very aware of the issue of gender-based violence; but her film 'is also paying witness to all of the women that went before, and who were never acknowledged for what they went through'. A film that plays with the past, says Cortellesi, was the ideal way to do that. 'I wanted to cast a light on what has changed and what has remained the same – and what has remained the same is the toxic mentality that, unfortunately, forces us to still be talking about these subjects.'

Jonathan Romney, *Sight and Sound*, June 2024