



Big Screen Classics

Call Me by Your Name

Call Me by Your Name

Directed by: Luca Guadagnino

©: Frenesy, La Cinéfacture

Co-production: Frenesy Film, La Cinéfacture

In association with: Morato Pane S.p.A.,

Faram 1957 S.p.A., Armando De Angelis S.r.l.,

Cinefinance Italia S.r.l., Water's End Productions

Produced with the financial support of:

Directorate General for Cinema,

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Production Company: Regione Lombardia

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Fund for Cinema and Audiovisual Sector

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Presented by: Memento Films International,

RT Features, M.Y.R.A. Entertainment

Executive Producers: Derek Simonds, Tom Dolby,

Margarethe Baillou, Francesco Melzi D'Eril,

Naima Abed, Nicholas Kaiser, Sophie Mas,

Lourenço Sant'Anna

Produced by: James Ivory, Howard Rosenman,

Rodrigo Teixeira, Marco Morabito, Peter Spears,

Luca Guadagnino, Emilie Georges

Line Producer: Stella Savino

Associate Producers: Allan Neuwirth,

Kim Surowicz, Susanne Filkins, Abdi Nazemian

Post-production Supervisor: Sacha Guttentstein

2nd Unit Director: Ferdinando Cito Filomarino

1st Assistant Director: Dominique Delany

Script Supervisor: Rachel Griffiths

Casting by: Stella Savino

Screenplay by: James Ivory

Based on the novel by: André Aciman

Cinematography: Sayombhu Mukdeeprom

1st Assistant Camera: Gaia Ferme

Visual Effects: Metaphyx

Editor: Walter Fasano

Production Designer: Samuel Deshors

Art Director: Roberta Federico

Landscape Designer: Gaia Chaillet Giusti

Set Decorator: Violante Visconti

Costume Designer: Giulia Piersanti

Make-up: Fernanda Perez

Hair Stylist: Manolo Garcia

Main Titles Designed by: Chen Li

Colour: White Light

'Mystery of Love'/'Visions of Gideon'

Written/Performed by: Sufjan Stevens

Music Supervisor: Robin Urdang

Music Consultant: Gerry Gershman

Production Sound Mixer: Yves-Marie Omnes

Re-recording Mixer: Jean-Pierre Laforce

Cultural Anthropologists: Carlo Antonelli,

Roberto Solci

In loving memory of: Bill Paxton

The producers wish to thank:

Bernardo Bertolucci, Dakota Johnson,

Tilda Swinton, Louis Garrel, Grace Coddington

Cast:

Armie Hammer (*Oliver*)

Timothée Chalamet (*Elio Perlman*)

Michael Stuhlbarg (*Mr Perlman*)

Amira Casar (*Annella Perlman*)

Esther Garrel (*Marzia*)

Victoire Du Bois (*Chiara*)

Vanda Capriolo (*Mafalda*)

Antonio Rimoldi (*Anchise*)

Elena Bucci (*Bambi*)

Marco Sgroso (*Nico*)

André Aciman (*Mounir*)

Peter Spears (*Isaac*)

Italy-France-USA-Brazil 2017©

132 mins Digital

SPOILER WARNING The following notes give away some of the plot.

Many critics were enamoured of Luca Guadagnino's last two features, *I Am Love* (2009) and *A Bigger Splash* (2015), both of which set Tilda Swinton's uniquely self-enclosed sensuality against striking Italian backdrops (Milan and San Remo in the former, the Sicilian coast in the latter). I found them beautiful yet bloodless, lacking a certain warmth.

Call Me by Your Name, on the other hand, radiates heat. It is a lush, lusty affair, all pounding hearts and blazing loins. Guadagnino has shown a fondness for imbuing the gastronomic with metaphorical significance; in his fifth feature he gives us splattered egg yolks and blood dripping on to lamb chops, and a repeated motif of ripening fruit, culminating in a sex scene involving peaches that will no doubt become notorious. Not since *American Pie* (1999) has fruit been so thoroughly defiled.

The peach scene is lifted almost exactly from the 2007 novel by André Aciman, an American scholar specialising in the work of Proust. It is a story of adolescent sexual awakening set in the well-appointed home of an academic in mid-1980s Italy.

Elio is the 17-year-old only child of American professor Perlman (Michael Stuhlbarg) and his beautiful, cosmopolitan wife (Amira Casar). Until now he has been mostly heterosexual and has an ongoing flirtation with childhood friend Marzia. But when 24-year-old Oliver, the latest in a series of visiting postdocs to spend a summer at the villa, usurps Elio's bedroom, he also seizes Marzia's place in Elio's sexual fantasies. We first glimpse Oliver with Elio from an upper window; as he mounts the staircase, Marzia casually kisses him, as if passing on the mantle.

Oliver (Armie Hammer, perfectly cast) is the aggressively handsome embodiment of all things American: an academic who speaks in abbreviations though he is clearly extremely articulate, as demonstrated by a grandstanding monologue on the etymology of the word 'apricot'. Elio is puppyish, wiry rather than chiselled, more naive than the older man but also sensitive and reckless. Timothée Chalamet is sensational in the role: fierce and articulate, his hooded eyes flickering with secret thoughts. He looks a little like Melvil Poupaud or Louis Garrel (whose sister Esther coincidentally stars as Marzia), but he has a purposefulness they lack.

For much of the film little happens, and we watch Elio and Oliver move in circles while seemingly no closer to making a move. One feels the influence of Eric Rohmer (Aciman is an admirer) and James Ivory (the film's screenwriter), that great chronicler of repressed desire. The tone is languorous but the pace restless. Scenes are short and cuts abrupt. It's not clear whether Elio wants to be Oliver – borrowing his swimsuits, copying the Star of David he wears around his neck – or have him. Despite their physical differences, the would-be lovers seem strangely fungible as they trade bedrooms, clothes and names.

Of course, *Call Me by Your Name* is a queer film, albeit one that has more in common with the work of André Téchiné than Barry Jenkins: the milieu is so middle-class it's almost fantastic, packed with references to antiquity, to Liszt and Bach, Heidegger and Heraclitus. In this regard and in others, Guadagnino

Big Screen Classics

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid

Mon 1 Jun 14:30; Sat 6 Jun 18:00; Fri 26 Jun 20:50

Late Spring Banshun

Tue 2 Jun 14:30; Sun 14 Jun 13:00;
Tue 16 Jun 20:45; Sun 21 Jun 12:10

Jour de fête The Big Day

Wed 3 Jun 18:15 (+ intro by Diana Cipriano,
BFI Programme and Research Coordinator);
Fri 12 Jun 20:55

Une femme est une femme A Woman is a Woman

Thu 4 Jun 20:55; Mon 8 Jun 18:20;
Wed 17 Jun 21:05

Hiroshima mon amour

Fri 5 Jun 20:50; Sat 13 Jun 15:10; Thu 25 Jun 20:45

Bicycle Thieves Ladri di biciclette

Fri 5 Jun 21:00; Mon 29 Jun 18:15

Call Me by Your Name

Sun 7 Jun 18:00; Thu 18 Jun 12:15;
Sat 20 Jun 20:20

Barbara

Tue 9 Jun 20:45; Thu 25 Jun 18:10 (+ intro by
Diana Cipriano, BFI Programme and Research
Coordinator)

Breaking Away

Wed 10 Jun 18:00 (+ intro by Philip Dobson,
founder of upCYCLE LDN); Fri 19 Jun 20:50;
Sun 28 Jun 12:30

E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial

Thu 11 Jun 20:45; Sat 13 Jun 12:15

The Kid with a Bike Le gamin au vélo

Mon 15 Jun 18:00; Mon 22 Jun 20:45

Wadjda

Wed 17 Jun 18:10 (+ intro by Sarah Agha,
The Arab Film Club curator); Tue 30 Jun 20:50

is remarkably faithful to Aciman's text, though he transposes the action from the Italian Riviera to the Lombardy countryside and streamlines the narrative by culling certain characters. He also – intriguingly – does away with a framing device that casts the main narrative as a flashback (the book has the men meet in middle age, while Guadagnino's film finishes six months after the events of the summer).

Still, the film retains a certain Proustian sensibility. The camera pays an almost hyperreal attention to detail, poring over certain words and touches with the obsessiveness of an infatuated teenager. Apichatpong Weerasethakul's regular DP Sayombhu Mukdeeprom's images are precise, saturated with cerulean blues, limoncello yellows, cherry reds and blushing apricots, but at the same time slightly worn and fuzzy, like a well-washed shirt. The world beyond Elio and Oliver's immediate sphere is somehow faded (women, in particular, seem to hover out of focus in the background). Even the sound edit seems to over-amplify their voices.

The 1980s period setting heightens this effect. *Call Me by Your Name* is awash with details such as a Robert Mapplethorpe print, a Talking Heads T-shirt, a Penguin Classic. At an outdoor discotheque, Elio and Oliver dance to The Psychedelic Furs. It's a backdrop that will raise a fond smile for many viewers. But Guadagnino's setting is in a sense a platonic ideal of the 1980s. How many of us were ever so lithe and gorgeous, so intelligent and self-possessed? How many of us once knew the longing, and how many, really, the having? As Professor Perlman tells his son in an extraordinarily moving scene, a love like Elio and Oliver's is rare indeed, and before we even know it, our best days are behind us. On the strength of this film, let's hope that Guadagnino's are not.

Catherine Wheatley, *Sight and Sound*, November 2017

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