

Joe Capalbo Brings Lucania to the US

Monica Straniero, Paola Medori (May 16, 2019)



Interview with lead actor and producer of “Lucania terra sangue e magia” (Lucania earth blood and magic), directed by Gigi Roccati. The film won three Grand Jury Remi Awards at the 52nd WorldFest Houston International Film Festival: Best Foreign Film, Best Actress (Angela Fontana) and Best Editing (Annalisa Forgione.)

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We interviewed actor and producer Giovanni Capalbo, who chose Gigi Roccati to tell this story. This is Roccati’s second feature film after Babylon Sisters, which came out in 2017.



Where did the idea for this film come from?

It came from the desire to tell of an ancient world that exists within the contemporary one, my native land: Lucania. The first draft of the story dates back to October 2014, since then we've been searching for funds. The choice of on-site locations and casting took two years, because we felt it was necessary to select emblematic places and faces to fit the narrative about an ancestral land.

The film is a tribute to a land that is dying but that can still survive

The rural world as we remember it has disappeared but a mystical atmosphere still lingers in those territories hidden between the mountains, whose memory we are starting to forget. A rural society swept away by unkept promises of industrialization. The film therefore is intended as an homage to a land that Ernesto De Martino used to call "the magic triangle" and which has been cut out from metropolitan routes. It speaks of a defeated people fighting to survive, guided by a spark of hope, embodied by Lucia, a wild girl searching for herself.

Ancestral landscapes: magical places but also victims of environmental destruction and pollution

Lucania is also the story of an abused land. We have to change our perspective on this suffering Earth. We need people to voice the injustice suffered by that part of Lucania living and dying in the oil regions. There are ecological bombs that remain buried for years. These are socially relevant themes that we didn't want to approach as a documentary but rather by highlighting that magical atmosphere that enables these lands to resist in today's society. And not only that, we wanted to give a voice to those who still live in those lands to carry on their traditions and preserve their memories.

A conflict between ancient and modern that is also revealed in the relationship between father and daughter

The ancient and modern world collide also through the generational clash between the father, Rocco, a man tied to his land like a tree, and his daughter Lucia, mute since the death of her mother Argenzia. Rocco believes she is crazy and therefore submits her to the healing rites of a country witch. As he tries to defend his land from people offering him money to dump toxic waste into it, he kills someone and has to flee across the mountains on foot to save his daughter. From this moment, Rocco's redeeming journey begins as does Lucia's formative journey. A long walk through the beauty of nature and then the harshness of a dying land.

It was well received at the Houston Festival, the oldest in the United States

The film will come out on May 30 in Italy and at the end of the year in the US. The recognition of



WorldFest Houston International Film Festival is a great achievement for independent Italian cinema. The goal is to bring international awareness to a wild territory, whose ancient stories persist to this day, echoed by the folk sounds of Antonio Infantino, who recently left us after having gifted us with an unforgettable sequence that gives sound to history, like the old man who helps Lucia regain her voice.

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