

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Bellissima</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>San Francisco International Film Festival</i>
Date	1995 Apr 23
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	37
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Bellissima, Visconti, Luchino, 1951

S. F. I. F. F., 1993, p. 37



4/23  
12:15 CAS 423L

4/25  
4:15 KAB 425E

## Bellissima

ITALY 1951, 113 min.

DIR Luchino Visconti

PROD Salvo d'Angelo SCR Suso Cecchi d'Amico,  
Francesco Rosi, Visconti CAM Piero Portalupi, Paul Ronald  
ED Mario Serandrei CAST Anna Magnani, Alessandro  
Blasetti, Walter Chiari, Tina Apicella

### SUSO CECCHI D'AMICO TRIBUTE

See article on page 27.

*Presented with the gracious support of  
the Istituto Italiana di Cultura,  
San Francisco and Los Angeles.*

On a casting call for a child actress, so the legend goes, director Luchino Visconti was besieged by stage mothers, each trying to attract his attention with shouts of "Bellissima!" ("Mine is the most beautiful!") He turned this unnerving experience into art with **Bellissima**, a sly, satiric look at the motivations and machinations behind the scenes at Cinecittà. It's a film about filmmaking shot with both warmth and wit. Anna Magnani (in one of her firecracker performances) plays Maddalena, a screenstruck mother with a less-than-bellissima five-year-old daughter (ugly duckling Tina Apicella). But after an emotionally devastating moment in which she overhears the mocking laughter that greets her daughter's screen test, Maddalena turns her back on this world of illusions. Its brittle glamour is more corrosive than the hard-scrabble tenement life and working-class marriage she had dreamed of escaping. Standing in for Visconti in this satire with a social subtext is Alessandro Blasetti, himself a respected neorealist director. Shot in an unusually—for Visconti—realistic and spare style, **Bellissima** has a wry, tolerant approach to the foibles of filmmaking, but a real sense of where the heart belongs.