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## **Il Momento Della Verita**

(The Moment of Truth)

(SPANISH-ITALIAN—COLOR)

Rome, March 23.

Cineriz release of Federiz (Rome)—A. S. Film (Madrid) coproduction. Features Miguel Mateo Miguelin, Jose Gomez Sevillano, Padro Basauri Pedrucho, Linda Christian. Directed by Francesco Rosi. Story and screenplay, Rosi, Pedro Portabella, Ricardo Munoz Suay, Pedro Beltran; camera (Technicolor), Gianni di Venanzo, Ajace Parolin, Pasquale de Santis; editor, Mario Serandrei; music, Piero Piccioni. At Adriano, Rome. Running time, 110 MINS.

With his latest film, director Francesco Rosi has managed a bright, colorful, dramatic and terrifying fresco of Spain today to serve as backdrop to a socially-

keyed tale of a bullfighter's career. Pic looms a good money-earner here on word-of-mouth and content, with offshore slotting aimed at a more specialized clientele both in art and general circles.

Plot is straightforward, showing the wanderings of a Spanish village youth in an increasingly desperate search for a job in the big city, his turning to a bullfighting career as a way to a fast peseta, and the eventual breakdown under pressure. There is his ultimate, absurd death in an out-of-the-way hinterland corrida. But around this basic skein, Rosi has spun a vivid and frightening picture of exploitation and greed, of the seeming timelessness of an unchanging social structure persisting in Spain where—says Rosi by symbolic implication—a youth is forced into a dangerous profession if he desires to break out of a pattern of conformity. But even by doing so, he risks death daily, and eventually succumbs.

The director is in control all the way, eliciting positive performances from non-pros, pros and semi-pros alike. Mateo Miguelin, a bullfighter in real life, registers as the villager who becomes the celebrated matador. Linda Christian effectively limns a brief bit as a society gal who plays the corrida circuit.

Others in the vast, colorful cast lend bright backing. Special nods go to Gianni di Venanzo for his outstanding Technicolor-Techniscope lensing, often using shoulder-held cameras in documentary fashion, with telling effect and realistic impact. Piero Piccioni's music is similarly well-keyed to assist the picture's final effect.

Soundtrack with equal effect registers the sounds and echoes of the Spanish scene, the only jarring note being the Italian dubbing of principals, which disturbs otherwise uniform note of realism.

But in the final resume, it's director Rosi's hardhitting if not always smooth cinematic technique which makes this one of the outstanding films of the Italian year so far. His transposition into cinematic and entertaining terms of the age-old problems of Spanish traditionalisms, conformisms, and silent abeyance to century-old dominance of Church and State, provoke thought without resorting to the easier rabble-raising tactics of less talented filmmakers.

Above all, from the spectator point-of-view, he manages ably to blend his polemics with his dramatic, entertainment values.

*Hawk.*