

Document Citation

Title	La dolce vita
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Catholic University of America. Fine Arts Council</i>
Date	1966 Oct 09
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	2
Subjects	Fellini, Federico (1920-1993), Rimini, Emilia-Romagna, Italy
Film Subjects	La dolce vita (The sweet life), Fellini, Federico, 1960

LA DOLCE VITA

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October 9, 1966

Story: Federico Fellini, Tullio Pinelli, Ennio Flaiano

Screenplay: Federico Fellini, Tullio Pinelli, Ennio Flaiano,
Brunello Rondi

Director: Federico Fellini

Producers: Giuseppe Amato and Angelo Rizzoli for Riama Films

The Cast:

Marcello Rubini.....Marcello Mastroianni
Paparazzo, newspaper photographer.....Walter Santesso
Maddalena.....Anouk Aimee
The prostitute.....Adriana Moneta
Emma, Marcello's mistress.....Yvonne Furneaux
Sylvia, a Hollywood star.....Anita Ekberg
Robert, Sylvia's fiance.....Lex Barker
Frankie Stout.....Alain Dijon
Steiner.....Alain Cluny
Paola.....Valeria Ciangottini
Marcello's father.....Annibale Ninchi
Fanny, a chorus girl.....Magali Noel
Nadia Gray.....Nadia Gray
Jacques Sernas, matinee idol.....Jacques Sernas

With: Polidor, Mino Doro, Riccardo Garrone, Harriet White,
Giulio Girola, Nico Otzak, Audrey McDonald, Renee
Longarini, Giulio Paradisi, Enzo Cerusico, Enzo
Doria, Carlo Di Maggio, Adriana Moneta, Sandra Lee,
Henry Thody, Donatella Della Nora, Maite Morand,
Donato Castellaneta, John Francis Lane, Iris Tree,
Tito Buzzo, Leo Coleman

Photography: Otello Martelli

Art Director: Piero Gheradi

Editing: Leo Gattozzo

Music: Nino Rota

La Dolce Vita lasts three hours.

Federico Fellini

Federico Fellini was born in 1920 in the provincial Italian town of Rimini, which he left at the age of 12 to join a traveling circus. Later he went to Rome where he was a reporter and cartoonist. In the late thirties and early forties he collaborated on numerous scripts (many of which are best left forgotten), which gave him an introduction to Roberto Rosellini and a hand in the production of Open City (1945), the stunning tour-de-force of the Neo-Realist school. His career in film-making was firmly established with an assistant directorship in Paisan (1946) and as writer and actor in the controversial Miracle (1948). He was responsible for the writing and direction of Variety Lights (1950), recalling his early circus experiences.

His first independently-directed film was The White Sheik (1951) followed by a semi-autobiographical study of a group of young provincials in I Vitelloni (1953). His next three films brought him to world-wide attention, with La Strada (1954), starring his wife, Giulietta Masina (whom he had married before the war), Il Bidone (1955), with Broderick Crawford, and Nights of Cabiria (1956), also with his wife. His most recent works have placed him firmly in the ranks of the foremost directors of today: La Dolce Vita (1960), 8½ (1963) and Juliet of the Spirits (1965).

All of his films, to a great extent, have been somewhat autobiographical, culminating in 8½, which has been characterized as "a wildly exciting encephalogram down Fellini's stream of consciousness." Fellini's themes recur from film to film: the seamy world of show-business; the deserted village square, in which may come self-realization - or despair; the sea - perhaps a reminder of impossible dreams or of unrealized possibilities. But over all this is Fellini's predominant interest: "man himself - his metaphysical, psychological, and total structure."

Excerpts from TIME's Review of La Dolce Vita (April 21, 1961)

L'Osservatore Romano damned La Dolce Vita as "indecent" and "sacrilegious"; Communists have hailed it as "an unmasking of corrupt bourgeois society."

In fundamental intention, La Dolce Vita is an attempted apocalypse, a vast evocation of the Second Coming of Christ. But for those who do not care to be edified by spiritual symbolism, Director Federico Fellini has supplied plenty of earthy realism by clothing his allegory in the robes of a modern Roman saturnalia, stained by spiritual depravity and sexual excess.

Like Dante's Inferno, Fellini's apocalypse is infested with contemporary incidents and actual people. Every episode of the film was suggested by a Roman scandal of the last ten years, and Fellini has somehow persuaded hundreds of Roman whores, faggots, screen queens, pressagents, newsmen, artists, lawyers and even some asthenic aristocrats, to play themselves - or revolting caricatures of themselves...

Out of a clear sky, as the film begins, a helicopter appears over Rome. Beneath it, on a cable, dangles a heroic gilded Christ, his arms outstretched. Just another adman's bright idea? Or is it "The Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven...the sign...of the end of the world?" With that striking scene begin the days of wrath, the seven nights of destruction prefigured in the Revelation of St. John the Divine.

In those seven nights, Fellini guides the hero, a reporter (Marcello Mastroianni) who stands for Everyman, through successive stages of degradation...He is passive throughout the picture, largely unconscious of the awful fate that is overtaking him. He therefore puts up no moral struggle against his fate...