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Film Subjects

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Besieged, Bertolucci, Bernardo, 1998

BESIEGED

(Synopsis)

An old house in the centre of Rome - a refuge for two lonely people. He's a withdrawn and eccentric Englishman, while she's a young African woman in her early 20's, burdened with worries about the past yet full of hope for the future.

Kinsky (David Thewlis) hides behind his piano, with music as his only companion: Bach, Mozart, Grieg. Shandurai (Thandie Newton) comes from far away, and finds refuge in Kinsky's house - which she cleans in exchange for a room while she studies to be a doctor. Their lives interlink in a game of attractions and refusals, of secrets and allusions, while on the spiral staircase Mozart collides with Papa Wemba.

An old house, a man, a woman, and a piano. And through the window, a glimpse of a stormy springtime at the end of the century.

PRODUCTION AND CAST LIST

DIRECTOR SCREENPLAY

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Bernardo Bertolucci Bernardo Bertolucci

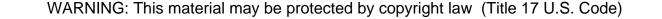
BASED ON A STORY BY DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR ORIGINAL MUSIC BY: ARRANGED AND PERFROMED BY PRODUCTION DESIGNER SET DRESSER COSTUME DESIGNER ASSOCIATE PRODUCER PRODUCER PRODUCER PRODUCTION COMPANY

CAST

SHANDURAI Mr. KINSKY AGOSTINO

Clare Peploe James Lasdun Fabio Cianchetti Jacopo Quadri Alessio Vlad Stefano Arnaldi Gianni Silvestri Cinzia Sleiter Metka Kosak Clare Peploe Massimo Cortesi Fiction Films & Navert Film, in association with Mediaset.

Thandie Newton David Thewlis Claudio Santamaria



BIOGRAPHIES

BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI (Director and Screenplay)

Born in Parma in 1941, and originally inspired to work as a poet, Bertolucci was introduced to the film maker Pier Paolo Pasolini and in 1961 abandoned his studies at Rome University to become Pasolini's assistant on 'Accattone'. The following year he wrote the screenplay for his own first film 'The Grim Reaper' ('La Commare Secca'), which was acclaimed at the Venice Film Festival and which was followed in 1964 by 'Before the Revolution'.

In 1967 Bertloucci was asked by Segio Leone to write the storyline for 'Once Upon a Time in the West'. In 1969 he directed 'The Spider's Stratagem', and then 'The Conformist' -- an adaptation of the Alberto Moravia novel. In 1973 he encountered enormous international critical and commercial success with the release of the controversial 'Last Tango in Paris', starring Marlon Brando and Maria Schneider, which was for a time banned in his native Italy. In 1976 he directed the modern epic '1900', exploring the battle between the left and the Fascist movement over two generations, which starred Robert de Niro and Gerard Depardieu. This was followed by 'La Luna' and 'Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man'.

In 1985, after four years of laborious preparation, Bertolucci embarked on his most ambitious project, directing 'The Last Emperor' -- the true story of Pu Yi, China's last emperor -- on location in Beijing's Forbidden City. The film went on to become a worldwide hit, and won nine Academy Awards, including Best Director and Best Film. In 1990 Bertolucci went on to adapt Paul Bowles' celebrated bohemian novel 'The Sheltering Sky', which was filmed in the Sahara Desert, starring Debra Winger and John Malkovich. In 1992 Bertolucci returned to the East to film 'Little Buddha', on location in Nepal and in the monasteries of the remote Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. Three years later, he returned to Italy to shoot 'Stealing Beauty', starring Jeremy Irons, Liv Tyler, Donal McCann, and Sinead Cusack.

Berolucci's latest film 'Besieged', which he describes as 'a piece of chamber music for the cinema', was filmed on location in Rome and Kenya during the spring of 1998.



Filmography

LA TELEFERICA 1955

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- 1956 MORTE DE UN MAIALE
- 1962 THE GRIM REAPER
- **BEFORE THE REVOLUTION** 1964
- LA VIA DEL PETROLIO (TV Documentary) 1966

IL CANALE (short documentary)

- 1967 AGONIA (episode of Amore e Rabbia)
- PARTNER 1968
- THE SPIDER'S STRATEGEM 1970

THE CONFORMIST

- 1971 LA SALUTE E MALATA
- LAST TANGO IN PARIS 1972
- 1976 1900
- 1979 LA LUNA
- 1981 TRAGEDY OF A RIDICULOUS MAN
- THE LAST EMPEROR 1987
- 1990 THE SHELTERING SKY
- 1993 LITTLE BUDDHA
- 1995 STEALING BEAUTY
- 1998 BESIEGED



CLARE PEPLOE (Co-Writer and Associate Producer)

Clare Peploe, who was born in Tanzania and studied French and Italian at the Sorbonne and Perugia Universities, got her first break in feature films with the legendary Italian director Michaelangelo Antonioni on "Zabriskie Point". Following that she worked with Bernardo Bertolucci as assistant director on "1900" and "La Luna".

Peploe's first film as director was the short "Couples and Robbers", which she also wrote, and which received both Oscar and British Academy nominations. Peploe's feature film debut came with the romantic drama "High Season" which won a Silver Shell at the San Sebastian Film Festival. Her thriller "Sauce for the Goose", based on the Patricia Highsmith novel, won the Prix du Public at the Festival de Cognac.

More recently, Peploe directed her third film, "Rough Magic", starring Bridget Fonda and Russell Crowe.

JAMES LASDUN (Author)

James Lasdun, the author of the haunting story from which 'Besieged' is drawn, was born in London in 1958, and has lived for many years in the USA, teaching creative writing courses at Columbia, Princeton, and New York universities. He has published two collections of short stories (The Silver Age, and Three Evenings) and two books of poetry, as well as coediting the anthology After Ovid: New Metamorphoses. With his wife Pia Davis he also wrote Walking and Eating in Tuscany and Umbria.

Lasdun has been awarded numerous prizes for his writing, including the Dylan Thomas Award and a Guggenheim Award for poetry, and his work has appeared in publications as diverse as the New Yorker, Grand Street, and the Los Angeles Times. Most recently he co-scripted the film 'Sunday', adapted from his own short story and directed by Jonathan Nossiter, which won the Best Film and Best Screenplay prizes at the Sundance Festival in 1997, as well as Best Film and Critics' Prize at the Deauville Film Festival.

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BIOGRAPHIES -- CAST

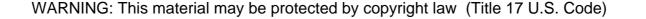
<u>THANDIE NEWTON</u> ('Shandurai')

In 'Besieged', Thandie Newton plays a determined but bewildered young African woman, working her way through medical school while keeping house for the eccentric Mr Kinsky. Born to a Zimbabwean mother and English father, Thandie spent her youth in Zambia and then in Britain, where she studied dance for seven years, before a back injury put a premature end to her budding career as a dancer. While still an undergraduate at Cambridge University, she achieved international acclaim for her first film performance in John Duigan's 'Flirting'. After graduating in anthroplogy, she went on to play opposite Brad Pitt in 'Interview with the Vampire', and to co-star in James Ivory's 'Jefferson in Paris'. Most recently she starred in Jonathan Demme's \$60m adaptation of Toni Morrisson's celebrated novel about American slavery, 'Beloved'.

- 1998 -- 'Beloved', dir. Jonathan Demme
- 1997 -- 'Gridlock'd', dir. Vondie Curtis Hall
- 1996 -- 'The Leading Man', dir. John Duigan
- 1995 -- 'The Journey of August King', dir. John Duigan
- 1995 -- 'Jefferson in Paris', dir. James Ivory
- 1994 -- 'Interview with the Vampire', dir. Neil Jordan
- 1994 -- 'Loaded', dir. Anna Campion
- 1993 -- 'The Young Americans', dir. Danny Cannon
- 1991 -- 'Flirting', dir. John Duigan

<u>DAVID THEWLIS</u> ('Mr Kinsky')

In 'Besieged', David Thewlis plays the reclusive Mr Kinsky, a pianist who leads a life of shy abstraction, until he falls in love with the young African woman who works as his housekeeper. Born in Blackpool, David moved to London at the age of 18 to study at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He worked extensively in television and theatre, and went on to appear in 'Vroom' and 'Life is Sweet', before achieving international acclaim for his extraordinary performance as the neurotic bully in Mike Leigh's 'Naked', which won him the Best Actor prize in Cannes. Since then he has starred in films for the Cohen Brothers, Jean-Jacques Annaud, and Agnieszka Holland (playing the poet Verlaine opposite



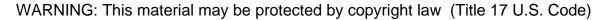
Leonardo DiCaprio's Rimbaud in 'Total Eclipse'). Later this year he will direct his first feature film, 'Cheeky', from his own screenplay, and he is currently completing his first novel, to be published by Picador Books.

- 1998 -- 'Divorcing Jack', dir. David Caffery
- 1998 -- 'The Big Lebowski', dir. Cohen brothers
- 1997 -- 'Seven Years in Tibet', dir. Jean-Jacques Annaud
- 1997 -- 'The Island of Doctor Moreau', dir. John Frankenheimer
- 1996 -- 'Dragon heart', dir. Rob Cohen
- 1995 -- 'Total Eclipse', dir. Agnieszka Holland
- 1995 -- 'Restoration', dir Mike Hoffman
- 1994 -- 'Black Beauty', dir. Caroline Thompson
- 1993 -- 'Naked', dir. Mike Leigh
- 1993 -- 'The Trial', dir. David Jones
- 1990 -- 'Life is Sweet', dir, Mike Leigh
- 1989 -- 'Little Dorrit', dir. Christine Edzard
- 1988 -- 'Vroom', dir. Beeban Kidron

CLAUDIO SANTAMARIA ('Agostino')

In 'Besieged', Claudio Santamaria plays Agostino, a fellow medical student, who befriends Shandurai (Thandie Newton) as she agonises over the fate of her husband, a political prisoner in Africa, and over the attentions of Mr Kinsky (David Thewlis), her employer and landlord. Born in Rome, Claudio studied at Beatrice Bracco's acting school before appearing in his first professional role, the stage production of 'Herod's Ring', directed by Furio Andreotti, in 1996.

- 1997 -- 'L'Ultimo Capodanno', dir. Marco Risi
- 1997 -- 'Fuochi d'Artificio', dir. Leonardo Pieraccioni
- 1997 -- 'Dead Train', dir. Davide Marengo
- 1997 -- 'Ama il Tuo Nemico', dir. Damiano Damiani
- 1997 -- 'Ecco Fatto', dir. Gabriele Muccion



BIOGRAPHIES -- CREW

FABIO CIANCHETTI

(Cinematographer)

Filmography

- 1997 -- 'Viola Bacia Tutti', dir. Egidio Eronico
- 1997 -- 'Nel Profondo Paese Straniero', dir. F. Carpi
- 1996 -- 'L'Amore Necessario', dir. F. Carpi

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- 1994 -- 'Troppo Sole', dir. Giuseppe Bertolucci
- 1992 -- 'Sabbato Italiano', dir. L. Manuzzi
- 1991 -- 'La Domenica Specialmente', dir. Giuseppe Bertolucci
- 1990 -- 'I Divertimenti della Vita Privata', dir. Christina Comencini
- 1989 -- 'Amori in Corso', dir. Giuseppe Bertolucci
- 1988 -- 'I Cammelli', dir. Giuseppe Bertolucci
- 1987 -- 'A Fior di Pelle', dir. Gianlucca Fumagalli
- 1983 -- 'Come Dire', dir Gianluca Fumagalli

GIANNI SILVESTRI

(Production Designer)

Production designer Gianni Silvestri has worked with Bertolucci on several of his films inlcuding 'La Luna', 'Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man', 'Sheltering Sky', and 'Stealing Beauty'. For many years Silvestri worked with the legendary Fernando Scarfiotti, whose production design credits include 'The Last Emperor'. Among his other credits Gianni Silvestri was production designer for 'Troppo Sole', directed by Giuseppe Bertolucci, and 'Pasolini, Un Delitto Italiano', directed by Marco Tullio Giordana.

METKA KOSAK (Costume Designer)

Metka Kosak started her training in design as a child, while playing in the studio of her mother, the well-known Slovenian artist Boza Kosak. She went on to work as assistant costume designer for Roberto Rossellini on his trilogy 'Lotta per la Sopravvivenza' ('Battle for the Afterlife'). Subsequently she has worked for directors as diverse as Glauber Rocha, Paolo Cesar Saraceni, Giuseppe Patroni Griffi, Gianni Amico, Marco

Tullio Giordana, Roberto Benigni, and Clare Peploe. She has been working with Bertolucci since 1989.

<u>CINZIA SLEITER</u> (Set Dresser)

Born in Edinburgh, Cinzia Sleiter went on to to study at the Fine Arts Academy in Rome, before graduating in architecture. Early in her career she worked as an assistant to Giantito Burchiellaro and Fernando Scarfiotti, and has worked on several of Bertolucci's films including 'The Last Emperor', 'Sheltering Sky', and 'Stealing Beauty', as well as art directing the Paris and Venice segments of Woody Allen's 'Everybody Says I Love You'.

ALESSIO VLAD (Composer)

Alessio Vlad was for many years the assistant to Leonard Bernstein, and has conducted with many of Europe's leading orchestras including the Saint Cecilia Chamber Orchestra, the RAI Turin Orchestra, the Schleswig-Holstein Philharmonia, the Dresden Philharmonic, and the Capitol Orcestra of Toulouse. His output includes numerous recordings of the classics (from Puccini to Bach and Vivaldi) with the Chamber Orchestra of Saint Cecilia. As a stage and cinema composer Vlad has worked with many directors, including Andrea Barzini, Cristina Comencini, Maurizio Zaccaro, and Franco Zefirelli.

JACOPO QUADRI (Editor)

Jacopo Quadri edited three films for Mario Mortone ('Morte di un matematico Napoletano', 'l'Amore molesto', and most recently 'Teatro di Guerra'). He also directed the short film 'Statici', and in association with Antonietta de Lillo and Patrizio Esposito' co-directed 'Voci distanti del Mare'.

Source Music

W.A. Mozart Fantasy in D minor K 397	Perfomed by Stefano Arnaldi
E.G. Grieg Sonata second movement from op. 7 in E minor	Performed by Stefano Arnaldi
J.S. Bach Prelude in E flat minor	Performed by Stefano Arnaldi
A. Scriabine Study op.8 n. 12 in D sharp major	Performed by Stefano Arnaldi
L. Van Beethoven 32 variations in C minor	Performed by Stefano Arnaldi
F. Chopin Waltz in E major	Performed by Andrea Quercia
"Africa" (J.C. Ojwang)	Performed by J.C. Ojwang

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"Maria Valencia" (P. Wemba-S. Mutela-C.Polloni) Edition Cobalt Sarl

Performed by Papa Wemba

"Le Voyageur" (P.Wemba-M.Munan) **Edition Cobalt**

"Sina" (Salif Keita) Edition Polygram Italia S.r.l. For Island Music Ltd.

"Mambote na nje" (Coro Bondeko)

Performed by Papa Wemba

Performed by Salif Keita

Performed by Coro Bondeko

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"My favorite things" (R.Rodgers- O. Hammerstein) EMI Publishing Italia

"Diaraby" (Ali Farka Toure, Ry Cooder) Produced by Ry Cooder Courtesy of World Circuit Ltd.

"Africa II" (J.C. Ojwang)

"Full option" (Pepe Kalle) Ediction Baby Production

"Cuore matto" (A.Ambrosino-G. Savino) Ediction Chappel s.r.l Performed by J. Coltrane Courtesy of Atlantic Recording Corp. By arrangement with Warner Special Production

Performed by RY Cooder and Ali Farka Toure

Performed by J.C. Ojwang

Performed by Empire Bakuba

Performed by Little Tony

Music Ediction Turkana Melody Organized and coordinated by EMI Music Publishing Italy S.r.l.

