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Lowery & Kline
Travels With Anita
(ITALIAN-COLOR)

Variety ——— 2-14-79
Rome, Feb. 3.

A United Artists release of a PEA production. Stars Goldie Hawn, Giancarlo Giannini. Directed by Mario Monicelli. Screenplay, Leo Benvenuti, Piero De Bernardi, Tullio Pinelli, Paul Zimmerman and Mario Monicelli; camera (Eastmancolor), Tonino Delli Colli; editor, Ruggero Mastroianni; art director, Lorenzo Baraldi; music, Ennio Morricone. Reviewed at Fono Roma, Feb. 2, '79. Running time: 125 MINS.

Anita	Goldie Hawn
Guido	Giancarlo Giannini
Elisa	Claudine Auger
Cora	Aurore Clement
Omero	Renzo Montagnani

Mario Monicelli has never fully dominated the American elements in his pictures. He was at a loss in "Mortadella" in a story bringing Sophia Loren from the deli factory in Bologna to New York and now still finds himself on unfamiliar ground with Goldie Hawn as Anita. With a weak, improbable story teaming Hawn and Giancarlo Giannini, the UA Europa release will have hard sledding in foreign markets including the U.S., but skilled re-editing for Yank audiences could improve chances to some extent.

"Travels With Anita" is the type of film hand-fashioned for Monicelli. Conceived as a black comedy — a Monicelli specialty — both the comedy and irony are subverted for most of the film to give Giannini and Hawn at least a full hour in which to develop and untie a hot romance. But even here, Giannini's character as a loutish bank exec and his partner's bewildered naivete take the bloom off the rose — leaving a pair of caricatures — one of a lame Latin lover; the other an incomplete portrait of an autonomous young 'Americana' who takes a long time to see the light.

Heart of the Monicelli pic is the basis for the Rome-Pisa journey—death in a Tuscan working-class family. Giannini could have reached his father's bedside before the old man passed away, but flesh-dabbling with Anita delays him until after rigor mortis. Death re-unites family and family scenes are skillfully filmed to (expose) each and everyone's skeletons. After Anita finally opens her eyes and leaves, black comedy takes over as the family components, lined up in funeral procession, hurl family scandals back and forth ad nauseam.

Sidebar components, such as the last goodbye by the father's longtime mistress, as the family prepares for burial rites, is sarcastically heart-warming. Several others like it indicate hope for a doctored version re-scrambling the choice cuts and hacking away at the unlikely romantic escapade that throws the film out of focus.

All of the technical departments combine to give the PEA production a rich look in sight and sound. — *Verb.*