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AT THE RIGHT

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MOMENT

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(ITALY)

A Cecchi Gori Distribuzione release of a Mario & Vittorio Cecchi Gori presentation of a Cecchi Gori Group production. Pro-

duced by Vittorio Cecchi Gori.

Directed by Giorgio Panariello, Gaia Gorrini. Screenplay, Panariello, Andrea Dal Monte, Carlo Pistarino. Camera (color), Paolo Carnera; editor, Antonio Siciliano; music, Paolo Belli; art director, Maurizio Marchitelli; costume designer, Tatiana Romanoff. Reviewed at Cecchi Gori screening room, Rome, Oct. 26, 2000. Original title: *Al momento giusto*. Running time: 96 MIN.

With: Giorgio Panariello, Kasia Smutniak, Luisa Corna, Giovanni Cacioppo, Carlo Pistarino, Evelina Gori, Athina Cenci, Riccardo Garrone.

Popular Tuscan cabaret and TV comic Giorgio Panariello, who scored a local hit with his 1999 debut "Bagnomaria," largely abandons his multi-character, sketch-based style for a more story-driven vehicle in "At the Right Moment." Visually sharper than its predecessor thanks to an experienced co-director and able d.p., this sluggishly edited comedy about a TV reporter who achieves fame by concocting a scoop is too short on energy, rhythm or infectious humor to figure commercially beyond home turf.

Elementary story has Panariello saved from local network oblivion by being the only reporter on the spot when the Leaning Tower of Pisa collapses. Landing a top job at pubcaster RAI, he fabricates an immigration scandal that makes waves in Parliament. Meanwhile, he drools over a scheming photographer (Luisa Corna) while his loyal assistant (Kasia Smutniak) quietly pines for him. With frequent Italian headlines about questionable journalistic practices on national newscasts, the opportunity exists for a cutting satirical comedy with current events relevance. But this is no "Broadcast News." Lame script offers few surprises and too few genuine laughs.

— David Rooney