

## Document Citation

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RoGoPaG, Rossellini, Roberto, 1963

Amore e rabbia (Love and anger), Lizzani, Carlo, 1969

Il vangelo secondo Matteo (The gospel according to St. Matthew), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1964

Edipo Re (Oedipus Rex), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1967

The last interview, , 1975

The unreleased sequences, Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1974

Class 3-B roll call, , 1971

Senatus populusque Romanus, , 1971

Accattone, Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1961

La rabbia (Anger), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1963

Set of Sana'a, , 1968

Appunti per un film sull'India (Notes for a film about India), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1968

Conversation, , 1969

In the heart of reality, , 1974

The face of a city, , 1974

Culture and society, , 1967

Confessions of a poet, , 1967

Ezra Pound, , 1968

Pasolini directing Maria Callas on the set of Medea, , 1969

Le streghe (The witches), Bolognini, Mauro, 1966

Il fiore delle mille e una notte (Arabian nights), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1974

Appunti per un Orestide Africana (Notes for an African Oresteia), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1976

Pier Paolo and Totò, , 1966

Il Decameron (The Decameron), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1970

Pasolini's rage, , 1966

Sopralluoghi in Palestina per Il vangelo secondo Matteo (Seeking locations in Palestine for the film 'The gospel according to St. Matthew'), Pasolini, Pier Pao



## Conference

### Pier Paolo Pasolini: Heretical Imperatives

June 8 and 9, 1990

Innis College, University of Toronto

2 Sussex Avenue, Toronto

Registration Fee: \$15 (\$10 for students). Includes reception and coffee.

For more information, phone (416) 978-8574 or 978-5809.

### Friday, June 8, 7 pm

#### Introductory Session

Welcoming Remarks: Massimo Ciavolella, Chair, Department of Italian Studies, University of Toronto

Lecture: Nico Naldini, author and biographer

Film: *Whoever Says the Truth Shall Die* (Netherlands, 1981, 60 min., col., dir: Philo Bregstein)

This film is a wonderful introduction to Pasolini (many clips from his films are included) – from his troubled childhood through his stormy career. Actress Laura Betti and director Bernardo Bertolucci help tell the story.

### Saturday, June 9, 10 am – 12 noon

#### Panel One: Pasolini, Poetry and Poetics

Jennifer Stone, University of Massachusetts, “Pasolini, Zanzotto and the Question of Pedagogy”

Peter Carravetta, Queen’s College, New York, “Pasolini: Between Poetry and Criticism”

Antonino Mazza, translator, “The Prophetic vs. the Mnemonic as Poetic Strategy”

Chair: Bart Testa, University of Toronto

12 noon – 2 pm Lunch

### 2 pm – 4 pm

#### Panel Two: Pasolini: Theory and Heresy

Zygmunt Baranski, University of Reading, “Pasolini’s Theorems”

Wallace Sillanpoa, University of Rhode Island, “Pasolini’s Gramsci”

Joseph Francese, University of Connecticut, “Pasolini and the Events of ’56”

Michael Silverman, Brown University, “Pasolini and Cultural Production”

Chair: Marguerite Waller, Amherst College

### 4 pm – 6 pm

#### Panel Three: Pasolini: The Films and Film Criticism

Ben Lawton, Purdue University, “The Flowering of Narrative in the *Trilogy of Life*”

Patrick Rumble, University of Toronto, “A Cinema of Contamination”

Naomi Green, University of California, “*Salò*: The Refusal to Consume”

Chair: Rachele Lavorato, University of Toronto

### 6:30 pm

**Reception** at the Italian Cultural Institute, 496 Huron Street, Toronto

Front Cover: Film still from *Accattone* courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive.

Back cover: Pier Paolo Pasolini; photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art/Film Stills Archive. Pasolini self-portrait courtesy of Graziella Chiarcossi.

# Pier Paolo Pasolini



June 1–26, 1990

**Film Retrospective, Art Gallery of Ontario  
Conference, Innis College**



## Pier Paolo Pasolini

Italian director Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975) was one of the most important and controversial figures in the intellectual life of postwar Europe. His prodigious contribution to both the theory and practice of cinema is examined in a month-long retrospective of his films, which includes all of his features and shorts in recently struck prints, adjoined by a series of videotaped interviews with the director and by a two-day seminar at Innis College, University of Toronto, which examines various aspects of his work.

**"The first duty of an artist is not to fear unpopularity."**  
—Pasolini

The art of Pier Paolo Pasolini confronts us with a phalanx of irresolvable contradictions. His career as filmmaker, novelist, theoretician, critic, playwright, painter and poet frustrates critical scrutiny with its sheer multifariousness, its welter of conflicting ideologies, inconsistent styles, and incompatible influences and allusions. This is further compounded by the unfamiliarity of his social and cultural determinants, and by the controversy surrounding his life and violent death. It is not surprising that in the fifteen years since Pasolini was bludgeoned to death by a male prostitute on a desolate beach near Ostia, he has come to be regarded by many commentators as an avatar of Italian postmodernism, his life and art a massive "open text" whose paradoxes are more easily catalogued than explicated.

Pasolini began as a poet, writing in the Friulan

dialect, which he said he learned "as a sort of mystic act of love." The contradictions that were to characterize his entire career rapidly became apparent: his obsessive love for and identification with his mother, and his "total and unmitigated" rejection of her language (Venetian) and her class (the bourgeoisie; "a member of which, whatever he does," Pasolini asserted, "is always wrong"); his (elitist) interest in linguistics and literary hermeticism, and his (demotic) dedication to the peasant nationalism and agrarian culture of the Friuli region; the anachronistic romanticism and traditional forms of his early poetry, and his commitment to modernist art; his belief in the sacred as "the only essential reality" and in religion "as a direct rapport with God," and his insistent characterization of himself as a nonbeliever (and by others as a blaspheming atheist); his nostalgia for a primitive, precapitalist society, and his devotion to the progressive ideals of the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci. As Pasolini was to confess in a poem marking Gramsci's death, he was torn by this "obscure scandal of consciousness": "The scandal of contradicting myself, of being / with you and against you; with you in my heart, / in the light, against you in the darkness of my bowels..." ("The Ashes of Gramsci").

In his seemingly irreconcilable allegiances to Marx, Freud and Jesus Christ, to both the peasant past and the urban subproletarian present, Pasolini transcended all orthodoxies and affiliations, his "divided self" embodying the tensions and fissures in postwar Italian culture. Expelled from the Communist party and vilified by the right; arrested for insulting the church (*La Ricotta*) and then dedicating his next feature film (the reverential *Gospel According to St. Matthew*) to "the dear, familiar memory of John xxiii"; championed by leftist university students whom he turned against in a notorious poem about the 1968 youth revolts, siding

with the police as sons of the proletariat fighting against the bourgeoisie; embraced by feminists who saw in his work an understanding of the oppression of women, and applauded by conservatives for his views on abortion and sexual equality; alienated from the dominant culture by his homosexuality, which imbued all of his art but which he considered "something outside me... my enemy," Pasolini was simultaneously a revolutionary and a reactionary, the incoherence of his vision less a sign of confusion than of ambivalence, naïveté and anarchic refusal.

These qualities manifest themselves in the stylistic experiments of Pasolini's cinema. The director described himself as a *pasticheur* who, rejecting the rationality and artificial organicism that he associated with bourgeois culture, selected "items, objects and even styles from here and there" to reproduce the richness and clamour of the world. Pasolini characterized his use of pastiche with a customary provocative statement: "I work under the sign of contamination." The artist, he suggested, "contaminates" his work by appropriating and combining styles, icons and ideologies from other periods and works of art, producing not a "random mixture... [but] an amalgam with a stylistic unity." For example, Pasolini's first film, *Accattone* (1961), based on one of his best-selling novels from the 1950s, falls into the tradition of Italian neorealism in its setting (the slums of Rome), its casting of nonprofessionals in central roles, and its concern with the down-trodden. But Pasolini insisted that this story of a doomed beggar and pimp marked the end of neorealism, and his contention is borne out by the film's influences and allusions: Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (Pasolini counted Dreyer, Mizoguchi and Chaplin as his three major cinematic influences, to which must be added Rossellini); Bach's "St. Matthew's Passion"; and the art of Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, Caravaggio, Rouault and, Pasolini

claimed, "perhaps deep down Giotto and Romanesque sculpture as well."

*Accattone's* odd combination of vestigial neorealism and sublimity established the stylistic eclecticism which was to distinguish Pasolini's cinema. Cast with everyone from street boys and prostitutes to the comedian Totò, Maria Callas (a stunning Medea) and his own mother (the Virgin Mary in *The Gospel*), his films range from the austere *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964) through the surrealistic *The Earth Seen from the Moon* (1966); from the epic *Oedipus Rex* (1967) and *Medea* (1969–70), which stress the classics's mythic, pagan qualities, through the political fables *Teorema* (1968) and *Pigpen* (1968–69), influenced by Pirandello and Brecht respectively; from the Rabelasian *Trilogy of Life* series of the early 1970s, based on the three most famous works of omnibus fiction: *The Decameron* (1970–71), *The Canterbury Tales* (1971–72) and *The Arabian Nights* (1974); through to *Salò* (1975), Pasolini's harrowing update of Sade's *120 Nights of Sodom*. Throughout, the director "contaminated" his art by drawing on numerous and disparate artistic traditions. The music track of *Mamma Roma* employs Vivaldi in much the same way as *Accattone* uses Bach; *La Ricotta* a mélange of Scarlatti, Gregorian chant and "the twist"; and *The Gospel* what Pasolini called an "ecumenical" combination of Mozart's masonic mass, Prokofiev, Bach, Russian popular songs, Weber, a Congolese mass and Negro spirituals.

Pasolini similarly drew on divergent traditions of visual art for his compositions in both film and drama, predominant among them the frescoes of Giotto and the paintings of such Renaissance masters as Duccio, Masaccio, Mantegna and Pontormo.

Indeed, the *Trilogy of Life* seems drunk on its own visual splendour. Its celebration of sex as the direct, vivifying conduit to the sacred finds its vis-



ual correlative in the mirrored palaces, labyrinthine streets, and the cloisters and bazaars of Yemen and Nepal (*The Arabian Nights*), in the lush pastoralism of England (*Canterbury Tales*), and in the Renaissance architecture of northern Italy (*The Decameron*) in which Pasolini set his “peasant utopias.” The increasingly pessimistic Pasolini soon disowned the trilogy in an article that proclaimed that “the reality of innocent bodies has now also been stained, manipulated and destroyed by the power of the consumer society.” In what was to be his last film and an adumbration of his own violent end, Pasolini found a metaphor for this consumerist corruption: he updated Sade’s *120 Days of Sodom* and set it in the fascist republic of Salò. The spontaneity of the trilogy was eschewed in favour of a repressively static visual style, appropriate for the film’s clinical examination of fascism. *Salò*’s unflinching tableaux of degradation and humiliation seem not to derive from any visual tradition other than the Nazi pornography which was then flooding Italy. That, too, seems appropriate for a film which, as Roland Barthes wrote at the time of its release, “prevents us from redeeming ourselves.”

James Quandt is the film programmer at Cinematheque Ontario.

This series is a co-presentation of the **Art Gallery of Ontario** and **Cinematheque Ontario**.

## General Information

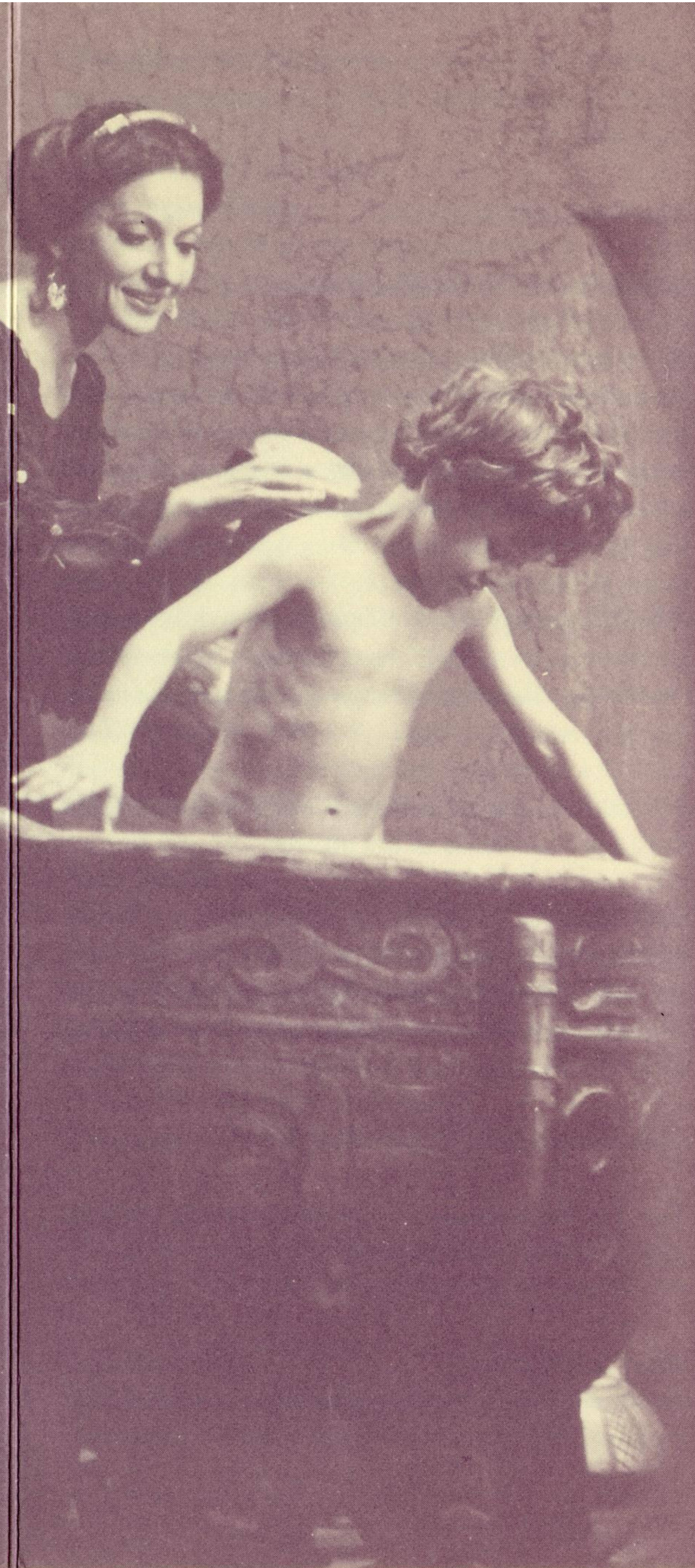
All films are at the Art Gallery of Ontario, 317 Dundas Street West. Entrance to each film program is \$5 or \$40 for 10 programs. Each ticket provides admission to the Art Gallery of Ontario at the time of the screening. Tickets may be purchased one hour before each screening outside the Jackman Hall or, beginning May 29, at the Film Department of the Art Gallery of Ontario, Tuesday through Friday, 11 am to 4:30 pm. Tickets may also be purchased over the telephone with VISA, MasterCard or American Express. Entrance to the films is through the McCaul Street doors. For further information, please call 977-0414, ext. 260.

The *Pier Paolo Pasolini* series was made possible through the Fondo Pier Paolo Pasolini with the assistance of the Italian Cultural Institute; Francesca Valente, director. We particularly appreciate the involvement of Laura Betti of the Fondo Pier Paolo Pasolini. The conference is sponsored by the Harold Innis Foundation in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute, the Cinema Studies Program and the Department of Italian Studies, both of the University of Toronto, the Art Gallery of Ontario and Cinematheque Ontario.

We would like to thank Alitalia for assistance in presenting both the film series and the conference.

The Art Gallery of Ontario is generously funded by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications. Additional financial support is received from the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Cultural Affairs Division), Communications Canada, and the Canada Council. Cinematheque Ontario receives core funding from Ontario Film Development Corporation, an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications, and additional financial support from Communications Canada. The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto—Cultural Affairs Division—provides project funding for Cinematheque Ontario screenings.

Film still from *Medea* courtesy of Cinematheque Ontario.



## Film Screenings

**Friday, June 1, 7 pm**

### **Accattone (The Scrounger)**

(1961, 116 min., b/w)

Cast: Franco Citti

Pasolini’s directorial debut concerns the life and mores of a young pimp (Accattone) from the slums of Rome who loses his source of income when the prostitute who works for him is jailed. Averse to working himself, Accattone tries several schemes to make money and is finally convinced to steal. Accattone’s “moral and material misery, his ferocious and wasted sense of irony, ... his scornful idleness, his sensuality devoid of ideals and his pagan atavic [*sic*], and superstitious Catholicism” (Pasolini) are part of the director’s fascination with the sub-proletariat.

**Friday, June 1, 9 pm**

### **Mamma Roma**

(1962, 105 min., b/w)

Cast: Anna Magnani, Ettore Garofolo, Franco Citti  
Magnani is Mamma Roma, a prostitute who brings her teenage son to live with her in Rome. Her desire to provide a respectable bourgeois home conflicts with her experience as a prostitute, and her new life with her son ends tragically. Although Mamma Roma shares with Accattone a “deadly anxiety” and “primitive joy,” she has an ideology, a petit-bourgeois ideal that, however mistaken and confused, is beyond anything Accattone experiences by way of moral conscience.



Tuesday, June 5, 7 pm

**La Ricotta (Cream Cheese)**

(1962–63, 36 min., col. & b/w)

Cast: Orson Welles, Laura Betti

(*La Ricotta* is the fourth episode from the film *Rogopag*. Other episodes are by Godard, Rossellini and Gregoretti)

The peasant Stracci plays the good thief in a film about the Passion. Circumstances contrive to make him ravenously hungry and when given the opportunity to eat, he gorges himself. When “nailed” on the cross and summoned by the director to speak, he is mute. He has died of indigestion. Pasolini states emphatically that Orson Welles does not represent him in *La Ricotta*; however, Pasolini does note that this is the film in which “I deal most with my own problems.”

**Seeking Locations in Palestine for the film “The Gospel According to St. Matthew” (Sopralvagli in Palestina)**

(1964, 52 min., b/w)

A look at the original sites of the Gospel—Lake Tiberias, the Jordan River and Jerusalem—with commentary by Pasolini that reflects his impressions and disappointments with Christ’s world. “*La Ricotta* is a film about filming the Gospel the wrong way; *Seeking Locations in Palestine* is about rationalizing a decision not to shoot it in the wrong place” (Oswald Stack).

Tuesday, June 5, 9 pm

**The Gospel According to St. Matthew (Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo)**

(1964, 137 min., b/w)

Cast: Susanna Pasolini (mother of director)

Disconcerted by the experience of modern Israel,

Pasolini chose to shoot *The Gospel* in southern Italy and to construct the film “in the spirit” of the Gospel as opposed to focusing on strict historical fact. Pasolini’s interpretation deals with Jesus the man, his parables and teachings, and equally important, the experience of the disenfranchised of Israel. Pasolini developed a new editing style in this film based on rapid cutting and unusual juxtapositions which he called “a sacred technique.”

Thursday, June 7, 7 pm

**Hawks and Sparrows (Uccellacci e Uccellini)**

(1965–66, 86 min., b/w)

Cast: Totò, Ninetto Davoli

In Pasolini’s first film with the celebrated Italian comic actor Totò, a father and son walk the roads in the company of a talking crow who recounts the parable of Brothers Cecillo and Ninetto, proselytizers of birds seven centuries ago. In this “parable within a parable,” the Marxist intellectual rhetoric of the crow raises many ideological and moral concerns, but the bird finally exasperates the annoyed father and hungry son who eat him for dinner. A turning point in Pasolini’s career, *Hawks and Sparrows* is considered by many to be Pasolini’s masterpiece.

**Totò at the Circus**

(1965–66, 8 min., b/w)

Cast: Totò, Ninetto Davoli

The original first episode from *Hawks and Sparrows* that was cut from the film in the final edit.

**Pier Paolo and Totò (Totò’ al Circo)**

(1966, 6 min., video interview)

Pasolini interviewed for RAI on the set of *Hawks and Sparrows*.

Thursday, June 7, 9 pm

**Comizi d’Amore (Love Meetings)**

(1965, 92 min., b/w)

Participants: Alberto Moravia, Cesare Musatti

A documentary enquiry into the response of Italians to questions of sexuality. “The image of Italy and its people which emerges is appalling; and echoes Orson Welles comment on Italy in *La Ricotta*: ‘The most illiterate population, the most ignorant bourgeoisie in Europe’ ” (Lino Micciché).

Tuesday, June 12, 7 pm

**Pasolini’s Rage**

(1966, 97 min., video interview)

Pasolini interviewed for French television series *Cinematographers of Our Time*.

Tuesday, June 12, 9 pm

**The Earth Seen from the Moon (La Terra Vista dalla Luna)**

(1966, 31 min., col.)

Cast: Totò, Ninetto Davoli, Silvana Mangano

(Third episode from the film *Le Streghe* [*The Witches*]. Other episodes by Rosi, Bolognini, Visconti, de Sica) “Pasolini’s most perfect film” (J. Hoberman). A surrealist comedy again with Totò and Davoli as father and son. “I felt as if I hadn’t exhausted my comic vein with *Hawks and Sparrows*. Perhaps ideology weighed a little heavy in that film, so I made another, more openly humorous and more poetically comic” (Pasolini).

**What are Clouds? (Che Cosa Sono le Nuvole?)**

(1967–68, 22 min., col.)

Cast: Totò, Ninetto Davoli, Laura Betti

(Third episode from the film *Capriccio all’italiana*

[*Italian Caprice*]. Other episodes by Steno, Bolognini, Zac, Monicelli)

Made quickly, *What are Clouds?* is a story about puppets in a small-town theatre putting on Shakespeare’s *Othello*. While initially amused, the audience becomes angry at Iago and Othello and kills them before Desdemona can be murdered. The two puppets are then consigned to the garbage dump, where they see with astonishment, for the first time, the marvel of clouds.

**The Paper Flower Sequence (La Sequenze del Fiore di Carta)**

(1968–69, 10 min., col. & b/w)

(Third episode of *Amore e Rabbia* [*Love and Rage*]. Other episodes by Lizzani, Bertolucci, Godard and Bellocchio)

Scenes of a young man walking along the road are intercut with contemporary images of war. Although followed by an offscreen voice (that of God) vainly trying to attract his attention, the young man continues in his careless, happy way. He ends alone and dead, the last in a series of black and white images of corpses.

Thursday, June 14, 7 pm

**Oedipus Rex (Edipo Re)**

(1967, 104 min., col.)

Cast: Silvana Mangano, Franco Citti, Pasolini

“Pasolini takes great liberties with the Sophoclean plays, recreating the protagonist to suit his own personal sensibilities: Oedipus becomes less a tragic figure destroyed by a mysterious fate than an individual whose ruin derives from a consciously willed refusal to examine himself rationally” (Peter Bondanella). “The most autobiographical of my films” (Pasolini).





Thursday, June 14, 9 pm

**Medea**

(1969–70, 110 min., col.)

Cast: Maria Callas

Although based on the play by Euripedes (and not the opera by Cherubini), *Medea* draws equally on modern works of anthropology and ethnology to present the tragic clash between a rational, pragmatic world and the metaphysical world of the spirit represented by Medea. Callas is superb as the woman who kills her father and brother, then later goes on to murder her children, ostensibly for the love of a man.

**Pasolini Directing Maria Callas on the Set of Medea**

(1969, 4 min., video interview)

A BBC production documenting Pasolini on the set of *Medea*.

Friday, June 15, 12:15 pm

**Ezra Pound**

(1968, 24 min., video interview)

Pasolini interviews Ezra Pound and reads his poetry. (RAI production, original running time 50 min.)

**Confessions of a Poet**

(1967, 45 min., video interview)

Produced by Radio Télévision Suisse Italienne.

**Culture and Society**

(1967, 19 min., video interview)

Produced by Unitelefilm.

**Conversation**

(1969, 6 min., video interview)

Produced by Radio Télévision Suisse Italienne.

**The Face of a City**

(1974, 15 min., video interview)

Produced by Raidue.

**In the Heart of Reality**

(1974, 55 min., video interview)

With Morando Morandini, Giorgio Bassani, Vittorio Sermonti

Friday, June 15, 7 pm

**Teorema (Theorem)**

(1968, 98 min., b/w & col.)

Cast: Silvana Mangano, Terence Stamp

A demanding film written “in a moment of total existential desperation,” *Teorema* concerns a bourgeois family in Milan whose lives are thrown into complete disorder by the arrival of a “divine” visitor. The guest has come to destroy. Each member of the family including their servant enters into a personal relationship with the visitor and find themselves in crisis when he leaves. Pasolini suggested that *Teorema* illustrates the vendetta of the sacred against the bourgeois society, which has replaced it with a religion of comfort and safety.

Friday, June 15, 9 pm

**Porcile (Pigpen)**

(1968–69, 98 min., col.)

Cast: Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, Jean-Pierre Léaud

Two completely separate stories in which Pasolini portrays the middle class as a completely “corrupt and transgressive” society ready to devour its own offspring if they stray from convention. It has been suggested that the bleak vision of *Salò* has its roots in *Porcile*. “*Teorema* and *Porcile* are free, experimental films. They propose no outcome nor solu-



tion. They are poems in the form of a desperate cry” (Pasolini).

Tuesday, June 19, 7 pm

**La Rabbia (Rage)**

(1962, 53 min., b/w)

“Made immediately after *La Ricotta*, *La Rabbia* was defined by Pasolini as more a work of journalism than a creative story” (Lino Micciché). It employed newsreel sequences of the Algerian War, the reign of Pope John, etc., and stands “as an act of protest against the unreality of the bourgeois world.” Pasolini considered the best part of the film to be the sequence devoted to the death of Marilyn Monroe.

**Walls of Sana’a (Le Mura di Sana’a)**

(1970–71, 13 min., col.)

A documentary on the city of Sana’a, the capital of North Yemen that Pasolini fell in love with while shooting *The Decameron*.

Tuesday, June 19, 8:30 pm (Note time)

**Notes for a Film about India (Apponti per un film sull’India)**

(1968, 34 min., b/w)

The film explores the possibility of making a film from a play that Pasolini based on a mythical Indian legend. Hunger and religion dominate as the main themes. Shot in Ganges Springs, Bombay, Jaipur, New Delhi, Bawani.

**Notes for an African Oresteia**

(1969–70, 63 min., b/w)

Shot during the same period as *Medea*, *Notes for an African Oresteia* is edited footage for a film that was never made (*Apponti per un Orestiadè Africana*). Though three themes are introduced, it is the feel-

ing for Africa as a place of “regained peasant purity” which predominates. Shot in Tanganyika, Uganda, Tanzania.

Thursday, June 21, 7 pm

**Il Decameron (The Decameron)**

(1970–71, 110 min., col.)

Cast: Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, Pasolini

This first work of the celebrated *Trilogy of Life* series (1970–74) demonstrates Pasolini’s desire to make films about a world that is “vivid, cheerful, full of the joy of living, of making love.” Although generally based on eight stories from Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, Pasolini adds characters (himself as Giotto, for example) to these medieval tales and restructures dialogue so that the narration originates from the lower class as opposed to Boccaccio’s more erudite merchant class. The film, however, maintains the ideological sophistication of its source and proved to be a huge success in Italy, largely because of the sexual nature of the stories.

**Set of Sana’a**

(1968, 34 min., col.)

An unreleased special by Mario Livadiotti on the “Alibech” episode from *Il Decameron*. Shot in Sana’a and then omitted from the film.

Thursday, June 21, 9 pm

**Senatus Populusque Romanus**

(1971, 32 min., video interview)

Produced by SDR, Stuttgart.

**Class 3-B Roll-Call**

(1971, 60 min., video interview)

Produced by RAI-TV.

Friday, June 22, 7 pm

**The Canterbury Tales (I Racconti di Canterbury)**

(1971–72, 110 min., col.)

Cast: Laura Betti, Ninetto Davoli, Franco Citti, Pasolini

The second film in the *Trilogy of Life* series, based on Chaucer’s medieval text of the same name, *The Canterbury Tales* deals with numerous tales of sexual adventure with Pasolini in Chaucer’s role of narrator. While as engaging and sophisticated as *The Decameron*, *The Canterbury Tales* evinces a darker view of sexuality as it proceeds from the pure Édenic vision found in the opening story to the Bosch-like character of the closing tale.

Friday, June 22, 9 pm

**The Arabian Nights (Il Fiore Delle Mille e una Notte)**

(1974, 129 min., col.)

Cast: Ninetto Davoli, Franco Citti

The last of the *Trilogy of Life*, *The Arabian Nights* is a remarkably beautiful film that explores the “idyllic sexuality” Pasolini sought in the Third World. Shot in Nepal, Yemen, Iran and Ethiopia, the film employs a “Chinese-box” narrative technique (stories set within stories set within stories) with tales of ambiguous and exquisite encounters from *Thousand and One Nights*. It was to be Pasolini’s “final elegiac tribute to a force he then considered, along with the redeeming power of art, to be a vital civilizing presence in the modern world” (Peter Bondanella).

**The Unreleased Sequences**

(1974, 21 min., silent with subtitles, col.)

Two sequences for *The Arabian Nights* that were filmed and edited by Pasolini, then later omitted from the final release.

Monday, June 25, 7 pm and 9 pm

Tuesday, June 26, 7 pm and 9 pm

**Salò or 120 Days of Sodom (Salò o le 120 Giornate di Sodoma)**

(1975, 116 min., col.)

Cast: Paolo Bonacelli, Giorgio Cataldi

The darkening attitude to sexuality noted in *The Canterbury Tales* prefigured the harrowing vision of *Salò* in which sex is no longer connected with the sacred but with the brutal abuse of power. Updating Sade’s notorious *120 Days of Sodom* to the fascist republic of Salò in 1944, *Salò* focuses on four powerful men (a banker, duke, judge and a monsignor), who retire to a chateau to “satisfy their perversities for lust, cruelty and power” by assembling sixteen young victims and reducing them to “things” in rituals of degradation and humiliation. Pasolini incorporates the Sadean tale in a structure derived from Dante, a sort of mystery play presided over by four “bitch narrators.” Although the film’s tableaux of sadism (the young victims are forced to eat human excrement, tortured and slaughtered) were intended as metaphoric representations of a consumer society, which Pasolini despised, their unflinching realism makes *Salò* a difficult film for audiences. Pasolini himself considered it such a cruel film that he pronounced that he had to “distance” himself from it by “pretending not to believe in it.”

**10.31.75: The Last Interview**

(1975, 7 min., video interview)

Produced by the ORTF for Antenne 2’s *Dix de der*.