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Salvatore Giuliano (ITALIAN)

Rome, Dec. 19.

Lux Film release of a Lux Video-Galatea (Franco Cristaldi) production. Features Salvo Randone, Frank Wolff. Directed by Francesco Rosi. Screenplay, Rosi, Suso Cecchi D'Amico, Enzo Provenzale, Franco Solinas; camera, Gianni di Venanzo; music, Piero Piccioni; editor, Mario Serandrei. Previewed in Rome. Running time, 125 MINS.

Court President Salvo Randone
Pisciotta Frank Wolff

An outstanding film, sure to rank among the best of the season, has been fashioned by Francesco Rosi using the story of Sicilian bandit Giuliano as a pretext for a historical, political, and social document of its times (the late 40's and early 50's); and of the island setting (Sicily) which made it possible.

Though the pic has many moments of suspense and excitement as it tells the Giuliano story and all that went with it, it is by no means the usual bandit-gendarme yarn. In fact, one rarely if ever catches a closeup of the notorious outlaw who made national and international headlines in the post-war years. But we brilliantly get the feeling of Sicily—and Italy—of those days, of how the bandits, the police, the army, the gendarmes, the Mafia and the local politicians operated in knots, in an almost inextricable confusion of ideas, ideals and exploits.

Tale is told in flashback, beginning with a graphic reenactment of Giuliano's death (shot by his best friend, then again by the police, who claimed credit for the deed), and the ending when still another gang member, who betrayed, is shot during a recent Sicilian night. The flashback technique used by Rosi (it is his best film) is at times confusing to the non-Italian viewer, and this had best be kept in mind when pic is adapted for export. What is crystal-clear, in all its implications, to one who has lived through the era, is not as clear, at least on all levels, to non-initiates.

The director's handling of non-pro and pro players, as well as his cinematic and dramatic sense, make this a visually exciting picture above and beyond other considerations and values. Of the name players, Salvo Randone does an outstanding job as the judge charged with the impossible job of seeking clear-cut justice for those involved, gang members and not. Frank Wolff, an American, is standout as Gaspare Pisciotta, Giuliano's righthand man. Others, in ward and act, are the image of Sicily.

Gianni di Venanzo's camera work is uniformly outstanding. All of the pic was shot on location in Giuliano's home territory. An extra nod must go also to Piero Piccioni's fine musical scoring, and outstanding asset of pic, which, if it can solve certain local censorship difficulties, should prove a truly heavyweight boxoffice contender. It has proportionately good export chances dependent on an adroit "foreign" adaptation. **Harve**