

Document Citation

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| Title | Il piatto piange |
| Author(s) | Hank Werba |
| Source | <i>Variety</i> |
| Date | 1975 Feb 12 |
| Type | review |
| Language | English |
| Pagination | |
| No. of Pages | 1 |
| Subjects | |
| Film Subjects | Il piatto piange (Ante up), Nuzzi, Paolo, 1975 |

Il Piatto Piange

(Ante Up)

(ITALIAN-COLOR)

Rome, Feb. 4.

Euro Int'l release. Produced by Leo Pescarolo for Clodio Cinematografico. Stars Aldo Maccione. Directed by Paolo Nuzzi. Screenplay, Piero Chiara, Paolo Nuzzi, Maria Pia Sollima; camera (Eastman-color), Arturo Zavattini; art director, Mario Ambrosino; editor, Antonio Siciliano; music, Franco Micalizzi. Reviewed at Cinema Vigna Clara. Rome, Dec. 29, '74. 109 MINS.

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| Camola | Aldo Maccione |
| Ines | Agostina Belli |
| Aurelia | Andrea Ferreol |
| Brovelli | Macario |
| Priest | Bernard Blier |

Aldo Maccioni comes across in this mood comedy of provincial life in northern Italy as thesp promise in Italian cinema and Paolo Nuzzi earns his chevrons as film director with a first work intelligently and competently inspired by films of Federico Fellini and Pietro Germi. With names like Agostina Belli, Andrea Ferreol and Bernard Blier in cast, low-budgeted "Ante Up" will at least get its foot in the door at home and in Mediterranean markets. Latin America also looms as a good bet. As a Fellini-school successor to "Amarcord," it could register more than curio merit in the US and other markets.

Underscoring bleak limitations of provincial life under Mussolini at a time just before the Ethiopian War, Nuzzi handles his clan of chemin-de-fer card-playing addicts in gentle ballet fashion contrasting with sharp earthy dialogue of participants. Chemin de fer is a clandestine thrill of an impoverished existence but not the only one. The sex scent is just as strong — normal or homo and Nuzzi fabricates a number of irrepressable pas de deux — all ending on a hilarious note and mostly involving local Don Juan Camola (Aldo Maccione) who tracks his prey with beguiling determination. Between cards and women, plus the non-conformist sense of independence in a tight society, he keeps the clan intact and ribaldry in bountiful supply.

Young filmmaker's characterizations end up as heart-warming

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cameos including Mamma Rosa played by Fellini's giant-bosomed tobacco shopkeeper in "Amarcord"). Andrea Ferreol is in briefly but effectively in a nympho sequence, but Agostina Belli brightens the screen throughout the film as a model of surface morality biding her time for the big sexcapade. But Maccione suavely knits it all together as the local vitellone who gives the Clodio pic its mood and malice, its joie de vivre at a place and time of cramped existence. Surprising amount of nudity and coupling by all in low key and tastefully spread through the reels.

—Werb.