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AUTUMN

(ITALY)

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A BIM Distribuzione release (in Italy) of a Dodici Dicembre production in association with RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana, Telepiu. Produced by Giorgio Magliulo.

Directed, written by Nina di Majo. Camera (color), Cesare Accetta; editor, Giogio Franchini; music, Giulio di Majo, Davide Mastropaolo, Leandro Sorrentino, Stefano Ulisse; art directors, Nina di Majo, Mario di Pace; costume designer, Antonello Della Mura. Reviewed at Nuovo Olimpia Cinema, Rome, Aug. 26, 1999. (In Venice Film Festival — Cinema of the Present.) Original title: *Autunno*. Running time: 95 MIN.

With: Giovanni Bruno, Francesca Caracciolo, Marco Mario De Notaris, Nina di Majo, Pietro Alessio di Majo, Angelica di Majo, Sonia Gessner, Adele Nunziante Cesaro, Marino Mase, Moni Ovadia, Elisabetta Piccolomini, Daniele Rossi Doria, Paolo Pisacane.

Former assistant to fellow Neapolitan director Mario Martone, Nina di Majo takes self-indulgence to exasperating extremes in her feature debut, "Autumn." Cast with family and friends and centered on a disagreeable neurotic — played by the writer-director — who's unable to connect with people or the world around her, this plotless, humorless stream of ungratifying talk and ponderous characters epitomizes the kind of thematically and physically confined cinema from which young Italian filmmakers have been trying to break away. As such, it looks unlikely to find an audience.

Set in an uncharacteristic Naples of well-heeled middle-class intellectuals, the film observes three generations equally bereft of values and communication skills. These are represented by Costanza (di Majo), lingering over her college degree and an uncertain professional future; her 40-year-old aunt (Elisabetta Piccolomini), struggling to put a broken relationship behind her; and troubled, brooding teen Matteo (Pietro Alessio di Majo). Despite the obvious influence of Nanni Moretti and Woody Allen, and an attempt to lighten the tone with a jazzy score, the material is turgid and uninteresting, and the mainly non-pro cast frequently embarrassing.

— David Rooney