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European Film Festival

Ana

(PORTUGUESE-COLOR-16m)

Rimini, Sept. 24.

An Antonio Reis/Margarida Cordeiro production; world rights, Instituto Portugues de Cinema, Lisbon. Directed by Antonio Reis and Margarida Martins Cordeiro. Screenplay, Reis, Cordeiro; camera (color, 16m), Acacio de Almeida, Elmo Roque; sound, Carlos Pinto, Joaquim Pinto, Pedro Caldas. Reviewed at European Film Fest, Rimini, Italy, Sept. 24, 1985. Running time: 120 MINS.

With: Ana Maria Martins Guerra, Octavio Lixa Filgueiras, Manuel Ramalho Eanes, Aurora Alfonso, Mariana Margarido.

Written and directed by a psychiatrist and a poet, "Ana" is a portrait of a simple, selfless grandmother, filtered through the memory of her now grown granddaughter. The extremely slow, static, almost liturgical film is often breathtakingly beautiful, yet its rejection of conventional acting, plot, and character is cold and distancing.

Everyone is waiting for a young girl to come home in the midst of a storm. She returns, soaked to the skin. Her silent grandmother dries and tends her. The girl is wrapped in a blue cloak and an infant is put into her arms. All kneel and gaze at her in a Madonna and Child tableau.

In a series of memories from childhood, we feel the eternity of nature and the senses in a timeless, peasant present. An historian gives a long, technical explanation of some prehistoric rafts used in the area, and the impossibility of knowing the truth about the past.

In an especially beautiful, strange scene, the grandmother walks through a snowless winter landscape — the valley of death — to a sparkling lake, where she sees blood on her hands. She walks home and lies down. The children she has tended now tend her. She dies.

"Ana" is performed stiffly and the filmmakers reject conventional editing for extended master shots. The 16m photography is full of the pleasures of thick, richly colored fabrics.—*Brom.*