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Addio, Fratello Crudele
(Tis Pity She's A Whore)
(ITALIAN—COLOR)

Variety

2-23-72
Rome, Feb. 4.

Euro International release of Silvio Clementelli production for Clesi Cinematografica. Directed by Giuseppe Patroni Griffi. Screenplay, Patroni Griffi, Alfio Valdarnini, Carlo Carunchio; based on John Ford play; camera (Technicolor), Vittorio Storaro; art director, Mario Ceroli; editor, Kim Arcalli; music, Ennio Morricone. Reviewed at Cinema Fiammetta, Rome, Feb. 3, '72. Running Time: **102 MINS.**

Annabella Charlotte Rampling
Giovanni Oliver Tobias
Soranzo Fabio Testi
Bonaventura Antonio Falsi

In a very free adaptation of John Ford's Renaissance play, "Tis Pity She's A Whore," Giuseppe Patroni Griffi stripped the original work and reduced adaptation to four principal characters—representing feudal power, hapless womankind, social outlaws and the all powerful church. Story emphasis, however, is on youthful incestuous relationship of beautiful young noble Annabella (Charlotte Rampling) and her brother Giovanni (Oliver Tobias), as a long prelude to an equally long finale sequence of tragedy bathed in blood.

Ambitious project, slightly over-theatrical in staging and excessively grand guignol in its sanguinary finale, should find its way to all markets on the strength of unusually incisive performances by the four young principals and especially on the strength of its rare visual beauty. Seldom has a period picture disclosed so creative a production design and superb lensing.

Contrast of Patroni Griffi's mannered shock staging of incest and cruelty with the imaginative decor and consistently balanced performances, upsets a cohesive balance, yet the discord generates a fascination of its own as performances and visual beauty clash with the emphasis, however, is on youth-elements of romantically illicit passion and blood-soaked vendetta.

Young lovers are trapped when Annabella becomes pregnant. She accepts church edict to dissolve the infernal relationship and find

a husband to legitimize her offspring. She marries royal suitor Soranzo (Fabio Testi) but evades his four-poster until they achieve marital union during a visit to his Venetian palazzo. Climax of a brilliantly-staged love duet is discovery of her enceinte state.

Soranzo's revenge is to slaughter his wife and her entire family at an invitational dinner in Parma his chateau. Before the massacre takes place, Giovanni joins his imprisoned sister, mercifully takes her life and then presents Soranzo with his confession and her heart.

Patroni Griffi liberally allows contemporary allusions to surface. Giovanni, the incestuous brother, appears as much a modern myth-smasher as he is a victim of an indeterrable destiny. Young lover also expresses film author's abstract belief in total liberty. Beneath the idealism, however, Patroni Griffi discloses his continuing obsession with abnormal relationships and, now, his penchant for macabre, almost grotesque, blood-letting.

Charlotte Rampling is marvelous as the yielding sister and tormented wife. Her strange beauty blends strikingly with the rich winter settings. Her strong performance dominates the tragic story. The three male principals, Fabio Testi, Oliver Tobias, and Antonio Falsi as the young monk perform with surprising measure and intensity in excellent portrayals.

On the technical side, Mario Ceroli's production design and Vittorio Storaro's color lensing easily deserve award consideration. Ennio Morricone's score has an accurate Renaissance sound as well as an apt lyrical quality.

"Tis Pity She's A Whore" (or literally, "Farewell, Cruel Brother") falls short of a cinematic thing of beauty in a few banal lines of dialog and in self-indulgence of final bleed reel. Both defects can be considerably mitigated to enhance marketing for the Silvio Clementelli production. *Verb.*