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FEDERICO FELLINI

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

GAUMONT and RAI RADIOTELEVISIONE ITALIANA

present

FELLINI

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

a GAUMONT S.A. (Paris)/SACIS (Rome)

release

a DAIMO CINEMATOGRAFICA S.p.A. (Rome)

ALBATROS PRODUKTION G.m.b.H. (Munich)

production

Music by

NINO ROTA

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THE DANGER LIES WITHIN US

... I think that this film has an emotional potential which can appear in the spectator as shock, fear, uneasiness, shame ; and I maintain that the spectator must be left alone to face these contrasting and confused feelings.

I didn't want to make a political film but an ethical fable, I simply wanted that some people, seeing these images, would feel a bit ashamed, as of a sickness.

I didn't want to do an historical essay, nor even a political or sociological essay. I didn't want to issue a condemnation of the unions. What we have here is an orchestra rehearsal, not the history of Italy. An orchestra rehearsal presented in a unity of space. The film is also the expression of an unknown part of me meeting the spectator's subconscious mind. And the impact, communication, beneficial emotion are born of this meeting.

I don't know what can be done to change society, what I say always concerns the individual. So, instead of transmitting "political" news, let's transmit news from our subconscious. My film speaks of just these consequences of repressing the subconscious on behalf of the super collective conscience which is politics, and now they want to confine it to exactly the direction it refuses to take.

... The danger is within us, not outside. To tell the truth, I would have preferred that "Prova d'Orchestra" not be discussed, so as not to defuse its peculiarities and the sacrosanct emotional impact on each spectator, to whom, in my opinion, the film should communicate a sort of dread and emotion, a kind of shame, the anguish of daily terror.

FEDERICO FELLINI

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

CAST

Balduin BAAS
Clara COLOSIMO
Elisabeth LABI
Ronaldo BONACCHI
Ferdinando VILLELLA
Giovanni JAVARONE
David MAUHSELL
Francesco ALUIGI
Andy MILLER
Sibyl MOSTERT
Franco MAZZIERI
Daniele PAGANI
Luigi UZZO
Cesare MARTIGNONI
Umberto ZUANELLI
Filippo TRINCIA
Claudio CIOCCA
Angelica HANSEN
Heinz KREUGER

CONDUCTOR
HARP
PIANO
CONTRABASSON
CELLO
TUBA
FIRST VIOLIN
SECOND VIOLIN
OBOE
FLUTE
TRUMPET
TROMBONE
VIOLIN
CLARINET
COPYIST
MANAGER
TRADE-UNIONIST
VIOLIN
VIOLIN

The voice of FEDERICO FELLINI

INTERVIEWER

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

CREDITS

DIRECTION	FEDERICO FELLINI
MUSIC	NINO ROTA
Directed by	CARLO SAVINA
Editions	CAM
IDEA and SCREENPLAY	FEDERICO FELLINI
SCREENPLAY COLLABORATION	BRUNELLO RONTI
SET DESIGN	DANTE FERRETTI
COSTUMES	GABRIELLA PESCUCCI
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	GIUSEPPE ROTUNNO
EDITOR	RUGGERO MASTROIANNI
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	MAURIZIO MEIN
MUSICAL ADVISOR	CARLO SAVINA
INTERIOR DESIGN	NAZZARENO PIANA
SPECIAL EFFECTS	ADRIANO PISCINTTA

A co-production by
DAIMO CINEMATOGRAFICA S.P.A. (Rome)
ALBATROS Produktion G.M.B.H. (Munich)

A GAUMONT S.A. (Paris) SACIS (Rome) exclusivity

Filmed Entirely at 'CINECITTA STUDIOS'
Color by 'CINECITTA' Laboratories
Duration : 1 hour, 10 minutes

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THE MIRACLE OF THE ORCHESTRA

Nino Rota composed the music for all my films. His themes and my images are, henceforth, inextricably bound together. In this new film, "Prova d'orchestra", the music is also Nino's. And now, you ask me why I made this film. Well, I know that for a long time I had thought about telling the story of an orchestra rehearsal. Because, in fact, every time I attended one in the course of my work, that is to say when we recorded the sound track, I was always invaded by a confused feeling of emotion, of disbelief, of distrust, and of joyous amazement. What I mean is that witnessing this possibility of fusing into such a unique harmonious and abstract structure as that of music - the disorder, the confusion, the moods, the indifference, and even the cantankerousness of the most dissimilar individuals who arrive trailing not only their instruments but also their faults, their preoccupations, their problems ... (sometimes they just sit there, not really hostile, but often almost indifferent, like disorderly schoolchildren ...) I was saying, then, that witnessing this little precise miracle, which renews itself punctually each time in such a way that this collectivity manages to implicate itself in the achievement of a common goal, all together, but individually, witnessing the event inspired me, always inspires me with a feeling of astonishment ... a sort of vague perception that within this situation lies hidden the ideal archetype of a society which can live, which can express itself in harmony.

There. I wanted to make a film which could communicate this impression of revival, this emotion ...

FEDERICO FELLINI

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

Beyond that which the film intended to say, those who see it, will find themselves confronting the inevitable necessity of answering each question asked by Fellini's images. Each of us will find himself referring back to his own sense of responsibility.

For me, this is the greatest result that can be obtained by a work whose intention is to bear witness to its time.

FRANCESCO ROSI
Director of "EBOLI"

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

INTERVIEW WITH FEDERICO FELLINI

by Michel Ciment

Along with Kubrick, Fellini is the greatest showman in contemporary cinema. He is also, with Rosi and Ferreri, of all the Italian directors the one who unceasingly works with methodical doubt, the one who refuses the comfort of habits and ideologies. PROVA D'ORCHESTRA (Orchestra rehearsal) dazzlingly confirms this double approach. The controversies the film provokes shouldn't surprise us. No matter what Fellini himself says, it is not surprising that such a sombre work, so deeply involved in its time, so prodigiously creative, should arouse reactions in return. Fellini's work is one of the most brilliant illustrations of the conflict which, since the Romantics, has been expressed by numerous artists. The disagreement between Man and the world is coupled with a foreboding of an historical tragedy and an inquiry into the death of Art. And in the same dialectical movement, the creative artist seeks a lost unity, firm footing - childhood or the world of representation. What confuses us in Fellini's path is its flexibility, going from THE CLOWNS to ROMA, then from CASANOVA to PROVA D'ORCHESTRA, from the sketchbook to the vast panorama and back again. Another salient feature : the capacity to renew himself within a personal universe so familiar to all of us that it has become mythological. Difference within repetition which simultaneously arouses the spectator's surprise and his recognition. Fellini entertains himself and us with current debate on the significations of his pamphleteering poem, alternates between Italian, French and English, handling the latter two with ease and fluency, regardless of what he himself may say. He is more relaxed with English, which he learned directly from the American troops in the streets of Rome in 1945, while French reminds him of school benches, mistakes made and rulers rapping on knuckles. Amarcord ...

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- *Where did the idea for "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" come from ?*

- I got the idea a long time ago. When I went to hear the music recorded for my films, I was always struck by a feeling of surprise and incredulity and I was also moved to see the miracle happen again each time. Individuals very different from one another arrived in the recording studio with their various instruments but also with their personal problems, their bad humor, their illnesses, their portable radios to hear the sports scores. And I was amazed to note that in this context of disorder and approximation, with these rebellious schoolchildren, after repeated attempts, this heterogeneous mass could be melted down into a unique, even abstract, form which is that of music. This operation of making order out of disorder stirred up strong feelings in me. It seemed to me that this situation contained, in an emblematic way, the image of a life in society where group and individual expression were compatible, each instrument keeping its own identity, its purpose and at the same time joining in a harmonious discourse which concerns each and every one. That's all very trite but what I mean is that for a long time I've wanted to do a little documentary which would give the spectator the comforting suspicion that it is possible to do something together and yet stay yourself. That's the ideology, the philosophy, the sentimental aspect of my project. When I speak of documentary, I'm not thinking of something journalistic, point-by-point, but rather of a lyrical documentary which would recreate the impressions I've mentioned by choosing form among two thousand exemplary anecdotes gathered from orchestra rehearsals. So I proposed this special program to Italian television and it became the expression of all the anguish, all the despair of today's Italian who lives in his country. Almost unconsciously this rehearsal crept into my imagination in a sinister and apocalyptic light.

- *You had written, after "THE CLOWNS", that you weren't satisfied with the film as a televised film. How did you approach "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" after your previous experiences with T. V. ?*

- For me, television has nothing to do with cinema. It reduces, mortifies films. What's more, I don't believe there is such a thing as a televisual style, I don't believe a real author can find a means of expression in television. For me, television is a household appliance, it can't restore the images of a true cineaste. There are several reasons for this : first the spectator must be able

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to live in an artist's imaginary world, and he can only do it in a movie theater where he is placed in a situation of inferiority with respect to the size of the screen, the ritual of choosing his film, going to the movies, sometimes in a group, entering the darkness. Even if the cinema has lost a great deal of its sacredness, one must always play out a series of conditionings and force the spectator into humility. On the contrary, facing a television, you're in a position of authority, you don't have to look at it with subconscious respect, you turn it off and on at will. Although I don't believe in a televisual style, I thought that "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" was better-adapted to television than "THE CLOWNS" for example, that it risked less damage, that it would come across stronger on T.V. The interview, the close-ups of artists speaking, the auditorium, the only space used, and even the overall view of an orchestra are all images that television viewers are used to. So I could play on this familiarity which sometimes gets exaggerated, as in the ceaseless interviews where stupid remarks are spewed out during entire programs, because everyone has something to say about everything.

- *I was surprised to read in several Italian newspapers that Fellini, in "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA", was finally dealing with contemporary society, making a political commentary. These have been your constant preoccupations from "LA DOLCE VITA" to "ROMA". How do you explain such reactions ?*

- By a kind of intellectual limitation, by a taste for mental categories. In this film, it's possible to see a fable, so everyone says : Fellini's changing his universe, his style, he's concerned with the world of today. And yet, to go a little further, you could say that I spoke only of an orchestra and that this film has nothing to do with the political situation !

- *What made you choose this place, this former crypt ?*

- I wanted to recreate an archeological, mystical atmosphere. I needed a decor that would be both very conceivable and very symbolic. So I thought of a secularized church with the remains of a stall, which is perfectly acceptable since many concerts are held in secularized chapels or monasteries.

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- *Are you a music-lover ?*

- My relationship with music is a defensive one. I have to protect myself from music. I agree to listen to it when I'm working on a film, my collaboration with Nino Rota is intense, our collusion is total and I read the score note by note. But I'm not someone who goes to concerts or the opera. Music makes me sort of distrustful. I'm afraid of being invaded, conditioned and I close myself off from it. When I'm working, on the other hand, I can face it because work makes me feel invulnerable. I feel much stronger then. I'm my true self, my most authentic state-of-being. This gives me strength and good health which protect me from music, fever, colds, taxes. Otherwise I'm almost pathologically sensitive to music. If I go into a restaurant or an apartment where a record is being played, I have to ask that it be turned off. I don't understand how people can eat, drink, talk, drive, read to music. As for me, I have the feeling that music establishes a mysterious kind of communication which can totally possess you. So to assert my autonomy I refuse it. Well, I'm exaggerating a bit, but I must confess that in general I prefer not to listen to music. For the film, Nino Rota composed five pieces especially for me, "TWINS IN THE MIRROR", "NAUGHTY LITTLE LAUGHS", "LITTLE WALTZ", "WAITING", and "GALLOP".

- *Why did you think of a German conductor ?*

- Above all because the actor I chose was from Northern Europe. And this wasn't intentional. I have photographic archives composed of perhaps twenty thousand portraits of actors or actresses with their address, but also of people I met in the street. And each time I start a film, I consult this file. This man who's Dutch but lives in Berlin had sent me his photo around two years ago. While preparing "CASANOVA" I looked for him through a sort of Interpol. He was then living in Stockholm, leading a hippie life since he's not a professional actor, although he's had small roles on Dutch television. I was thinking of him for the role of the Duke of Wurtemberg, but when I saw him I found his face too modern and I took an English actor in his place. But while preparing "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" I remembered this Balduin Baas and I had him come to Rome. I picked him because he's the least musical guy in the world. It's total immobility. If I had chosen an olive tree instead of him, it would have moved more. But his face had an extraordinary authority, and even the obtuse look that a calling gives, the cursed

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innocence of certain artists who exert power and identify with a mission, with all the neurotic deformations such fanaticism provokes.

The big difficulty was getting him to conduct the musicians. I was helped by a real conductor and I must say that at the last moment he identified very mysteriously with his character and played it with a sort of rage, violence, and a great power of suggestion. He only spoke German or Dutch and I had to go through an interpreter. Being forced each time to speak with this embodiment of fantasy who is the actor, through someone else, sometimes creates a very positive psychological tension. An actor is indeed the materialization of a mental image. I have written scripts which are disembodied dreams. When you choose an actor to play in your dreams, he becomes a very mysterious creation because he suddenly materializes an unreal dimension of yourself. If, in addition, he doesn't speak your language, his "foreign" status is confirmed. This sometimes creates a kind of wonder and amazement in me. I preferred to make the extraordinary effort of communicating my feelings, going so far as rage and insults, through the mediator/interpreter because this distance always gave me the impression of dealing with a real conductor, someone completely unknown to me since I know nothing about music. This strangeness kept me in the spectator's position which is the right point of view for a creative artist - to be both inside and out.

- Was the film completely written before shooting started ?

- Before writing the film, I interviewed many musicians, a hundred perhaps. I met the greatest Italian soloists. I would invite them to lunch, I would ask them questions but not very convincingly because I'm a very bad journalist. I don't know how to ask a question and the answer doesn't interest me ! Despite this major deficiency, I managed to capture in each one a bit of the madness which comes from their identifying with their instruments. They have this very likeable Italian side which is the love of their profession. But this aspect may disappear. And the first part shows how attached they are to their instruments which they speak about with rhetoric, amusement, ignorance and even madness. After doing these interviews, I started writing the film. At first, I thought I'd use a real orchestra by choosing the musicians' faces from different orchestras using a typology. But I had to abandon the idea because of the price it cost. To shoot a film in four weeks with two weeks' preparation using the greatest Italian musicians would have cost more than the moon landing. For that

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reason and also because I wanted expressive faces as always, I left for Naples and began to look for people who, of course, had a certain familiarity with a musical instrument, but also had a well-defined look about them. I assembled sixty people in this way, fifteen or so of whom are real musicians. The others had to learn every day how to hold an instrument.

- *Your attitude towards the orchestra conductor is ambiguous. At a certain point one can see that a conductor is necessary to organize and direct, and then you show how he aspires to oppression.*

- That's true. I show both the necessity of order and the potential danger it conceals. But ambiguity is life. I felt the need not to finish the film with a comforting happy end. We can't build something collectively without individually considering the need for an interior guide. If we dump the responsibility of our own lives onto someone else, there's always the danger of falling into undifferentiated collectivism. And then the risk is that this collectivism will once again project the authoritarian father fantasy. My opinion is that you must try to be a father yourself. Maybe this is street-corner philosophy, but that's what I wanted to express. I refuse the happy ending because it absolves the spectator of all responsibility. On the contrary, if I end with a question mark, it's up to the spectator to finish my story. In all my films I've been faithful to these points of suspension in conclusion and I've never written the words THE END on the screen.

- *The film has raised numerous controversies in Italy.*

- Usually - you know my legend - I try to forget a film as soon as I've finished it. This time, it's more difficult since "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" isn't out yet (1) and already there's not a polemic, but a lot of talk. Everyone is trying to pigeonhole.

(1) Since this interview, the film has been released in Rome, (February 22, 1979).

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the film. For some, it's a film of the historic compromise, for others a mystical film, for still others an extra-parliamentary film, and finally for others a conservative film, reactionary, where the Hitlerian voice at the end isn't threatening, but hopeful ! People say the most unbelievable things. As far as possible, I have tried to avoid political interpretation of the film which I consider dangerous, because it will sap its strength, make it die. Politics is the reduction, the impoverishment of life. Aside from the professionals of politics - politicians, journalists, etc.. - the majority of people distrust politics, think it's something that doesn't concern them. To give my film a political label is to run the risk of alienating these people from it. Thus I wanted more than anything to discourage those who wanted to categorize it and I said it was simply an orchestra rehearsal.

- *But you can't stop people from interpreting it politically.*

- Yes, but when you speak exclusively from a political standpoint, you place a screen between the film and the audience, you prevent an emotional and individual impact. Already the audience-to-be knows that the orchestra is Italy, the conductor is Authority ; you begin to discover key characters. They'll tell you that the little clarinet-player is Fanfani. And since the trade-unionist has a Sardinian accent, well, he's Berlinguer. On my part this was a very innocent choice. As you know, there is no such thing as pure Italian, so I dubbed the characters in all possible Italian dialects and I had almost exhausted the list when I got to the trade-unionist. I asked him where he was from and he answered Sardinia and since I recorded his voice, everyone now says he represents Berlinguer ! (2) This game, which consists in recognizing in the film all the political tendencies, all the Italian situations, is going to kill the film's innocence. For me, it's an ethical, not a political, fable.

- *But on the other hand, we see it every day, around the world, too much disorder leads without fail to even greater conservatism and repression than before.*

(2) Since this interview, Fellini has dubbed the trade-unionist with another voice to avoid any possible allusions.

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- That's the truth. The President of the Republic, Pertini, who saw it at the Quirinal, said the wisest and least-prejudiced thing : "This film is neither progressive nor reactionary, it's true !". And it was courageous for a president to speak in this way of a film which shows such a disaster !

- But by showing the film, before it premiered, at the Quirinal, you were asking for a hell of a political interpretation !

- That was completely unintentional and I must explain it to you. One night last summer, I was walking across a square in Rome and Pertini, who wasn't yet President of the Republic, spoke to me. He wanted to congratulate me for "LA DOLCE VITA" which he had just seen again on television in Paris. And he told me he would like to see my next film. I told him I'd let him know. A few months later the head of the Presidential press bureau telephoned me to remind me of my promise !

- You made "THE CLOWNS" after "SATYRICON" and now "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" after "CASANOVA". Is this relaxing for you, a sort of breathing space after a vast panorama ?

- I like to make movies continuously. What I detest is having to stay idle because the huge mechanisms of the co-production machine are slow and complicated. What I'd like to do is work all the time, even take photos for "Positif" ! You know, I'd like to do more little films, but if I go to a producer with a very low-budget story, I see the lack of interest, the humiliation on his face. For him, Fellini should shoot a ten-million-dollar film. The film doesn't count at all, what counts is to build a business on me, the Fellini affair, and then to construct an immense financial edifice. And there I am, rooted in my film, with all the problems it poses for me and next to me is growing this huge labyrinthine construction to satisfy producers' appetites, piranha-distributors who hope to make the deal of their lives. I shot "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" in sixteen days, and edited it in two weeks, that's to say in eight days of actual work. The dubbing took me the longest, four weeks. Concerning the dialogue, I wanted it to give the

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impression of something unforeseen, like in daily life, but not like "cinéma-vérité", on the contrary - very organized. I tried to create phonetic chaos by mixing different languages, dialects, approximate expressions. You know that dialects are humiliated in the Italian media. There is a conventional way of using dialects in the movies, on the radio, on television. You hear the vulgar side of dialect in shows. So I wanted to find the real pathological meaning of each region's expressions and I looked for actors who would be capable of giving a dialect its original sense and feeling. This took much effort because even the dialect actors have forgotten their origins, for example they speak Neapolitan as people from the North are prepared to hear it. I think the film has a real emotional impact, in any case that's what I felt after one of the first showings I did for Cinecittà workers. That's why, I repeat, I tried to ward off political generalizations which repress the film's meaning. If you go see the film with ideologically-tinted glasses, you don't see it. But what I want is to make everyone find an answer that can't be put off any longer. But an individual answer and not a general, abstract answer, which doesn't mean anything. I haven't succeeded in preventing that since, on the contrary, "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" is presented everywhere as Fellini's first political film. So...

(Interview conducted at Cinecittà, December 21st, 1978.
Published in POSITIF no. 217, April 1979)

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FEDERICO FELLINI : IF THIS ORCHESTRA WERE ITALY ...

INTERVIEW WITH FELLINI BY G.L. RONDÌ

A great poem, an impassioned plea for help, a staggering and dramatic meditation which will leave a deep mark on contemporary Italian culture and society ... An apparently simple representation of an orchestra rehearsal in an old auditorium, the film has already been given interpretations of all kinds, always enthusiastic, but often contradictory.

- To begin, would you give me your own definition of the film ? Is it a philosophical tale, a fable ?

- I would prefer not give a definition of this film, just as I would prefer not to talk about it. My journalist friends have finally persuaded me and we've arrived at a compromise. I'll talk about it but I'll only give the reasons why I shouldn't talk about it. Why can't a work, in this case a film, be left alone with the spectator ? Why can't it communicate with him directly, saying the few things it has to say ? Is it because the author didn't completely believe in the story, the characterizations and the feelings he expressed when making his film ? Once the film is finished, why should he change his mind ? Why can't he leave it alone ? Why should he no longer have confidence in his ability to express himself and so, introduce it with talk and explanation as though he were justifying the film's existence ? Of all means of expression possible, the image is the most direct, the most rich, the most communicable. The image should be, then, the most easily interpreted message, since it is the most emblematic.

A film is basically made up of images. It doesn't make sense to superimpose interpretations conditioned by a rationalist construction that run the risk of limiting and reducing the film, that betray the film's nature. Why should the author put himself, impose himself, between that which is seen and those who see ?

Nonetheless, there are already many interpretations of " Prova D'Orchestra ". There are even those who don't hesitate to describe it as your first " political " film .

- I refuse to talk about " PROVA D'ORCHESTRA " because I don't want to suggest a specific interpretation, a specific reading. It's a debt I feel I have to the film. I feel obligated to discourage interpretations which might limit it or even change it. Among all these interpretations, I find that the worst, the most limiting, is the strictly political or para-political interpretation. To see this film as a political fable is to destroy the little life

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it might have. I think that my film has a power of its own, to move people -- to anguish, bewilderment, malaise, shame. I continue to think that the spectator should be left alone with these confused feelings. I want the individual to think about himself and the necessity for individual commitment without which it is impossible, even dangerous, to refer to the social, the collective. And, that's what my film is trying to say.

- One of the most staggering moments in the film is when the trade-unionists interrupt the orchestra rehearsal forcing the conductor to take a break. The musicians, especially the younger ones, cover the walls with graffiti and slogans, full of exasperation and revolt. Is this your personal representation of " 68 " ?

- We may as well get rid of this ambiguity right away. I never wanted to depict May " 68 ", nor any sort of judgement on youth or trade-unionism. If I had wanted to do so, the need for masks and camouflage would be incomprehensible. If those topics had interested me, I would have tried to deal with them using an appropriate methodology -- like sociology or political science, just as they are dealt with by the newspapers and other mass media, every day. There is no reason to see the film as a sociological study. On the contrary, one is immediately struck by the representation of confusion and bewilderment; a sociological "non-response". Wanting to enter a film, at any price, into a practical order, conforming to a program, "useful" to an idea, an ideology, is an attitude which limits and mortifies art. I feel that expression should never be sharpened and finalized in way which is foreign to its nature. This attitude is an aggression against the spectator who wants to see the film in peace, without being part of this or that interpretive structure. The hypotheses, suppositions, analyses, and explanations invade, surround, commit, seduce and terrorize him, even before he sits down in his seat in the dark, and freely enjoys his images -- the images, alone, -- which the author gives him and wants him to understand. Everything else is only excess weight, a superstructure that, nonetheless, requires, on the part of the artist, a clarity and lucidity that have nothing to do with the creative moment. This critical and analytic superstructure is added after the fact, the product of a heterogeneous and schizophrenic sensibility. Furthermore, the spectator must play a breathless game of hide and seek with signification -- hidden or obvious symbolism coded messages (one may ask why), "latent discourses", "internal content", all those things that trouble his vision, the serenity of his pleasure, and that finally - with reason-repulsion, and alienate him. To the disadvantage of both author and spectator and their encounter, the dialogue between them has been interrupted, mutilated,

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and deformed from birth. This is why I have always, more or less, rejected these *a priori* clarifications. I've always been suspicious of the terrifying habit of the mass-media that consists of preparing signposts, judicious reflections, interpretive guides, little glossaries, symbolic codes, analytical and biographical indexes... and above all, then attributing them to the author or director. This critical apparatus is only a marginal concern of the author. It belongs to the domain (when the following think it worth their while after seeing the work) of the critic, the exegete and the art historian, motivated by a desire, to study, research, investigate, systematize and teach, or merely by ennui. The artist has nothing to do with it. What he had to say, he said in his film, his book, or his painting using exclusively the precise and particular instruments of his trade. This is my essential point.

- Let's not talk about "political" symbolism. You can't deny that "Prova D'Orchestra" is a "social" film. It is the first film in which, freed from your memories, you seem concerned only with a present that causes your considerable anguish. What inspired you to cry out so decisively 'To arms! I, too, will fight and I, too, will fall' ?

- Do you think that until now I've simply amused myself by telling fables or transferring my emotions and complexes to others ? Were "LA STRADA", and "NIGHTS OF CABIRIA" only the stories of pathetic beings frightened by life ? Couldn't they also be considered emblematic images of poverty and exploitation ? Wasn't the ubiquitous pimp also the expression of a society that continues to produce disoriented beings ? Does "THE SWINDLE", full of petty intrigue, have nothing to say about that moral Mafia which characterizes the public and private mores of our country ? Don't "LA DOLCE VITA" and "AMARCORD" denounce the political, economic, and religious fanfare of today and yesterday -- the unhappy fate of an appalling and impoverished society, constrained burn its instincts in the flames of illusion, never spontaneously, never beyond the dream or fear ? "AMARCORD" and "THE LOAFERS" are apologues of provincial life, an ethical reflection on human collectivity. If "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" has a more immediate and violent impact, it's because its structure has its roots in the moral vacuum which is our common lot. "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" is, in its own way, a fable in the form of an apologue. It represents Italy as well as any world in which we must all live together. In this sense, the situations and characters must be seen, not in terms of the clothes they wear and the things they say, but in terms of what they express. Anonymous silhouettes of a violence that takes one's breath away, stereotypes of an irrationalism which leaves nothing behind but the signs of death... A phenomena whose reflection we see every day in the newspapers full of battles, accusations, assassinations on a back-drop of poli-

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tical and moral impotence... Instinctively, we are reminded of an orchestra without a conductor whose euphoric impetuosity is leading it down the road to ruin. If this orchestra is Italy, then, those that live there are so affected by their internal fears and anguish that they must cry out. They demand not armed revolt but the recuperation of an equilibrium which would arrest the total disintegration that the film neither announces nor denounces but fears. This is the dimension in which "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" unfolds, an ethical rather than political dimension or, if you prefer, emotional ideas into politics of ethics.

- Let's talk about the style, if you like. I have a tendency to see it as a fascinating personal interpretation of Kafka's realism. With symbols, but this time only one which is explicitly visionary : the abnormally large ball of steel used to demolish buildings somewhat on the order of the "monster" on the beach at the end of "La Dolce Vita" ?

- Why think of cinematographic images as symbols that must mean the same thing for everyone ? The spectators' unconscious reactions should be free, as their conscious reactions. The important thing is to recognize in and through the images those most urgent and mysterious pressures inside ourselves, which vary according to our personal development, our interests, our individual dramas. A symbol is a symbol to the extent that it means something different to each of us. We must discover what catastrophe threatens us, which walls are about to fall in upon us. The "monster" in "LA DOLCE VITA" had, perhaps, a more precise and objective meaning, a more openly unified signification. The disintegration and ruins in "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA" are internal disasters, of a very different individual resonance.

The individualism of each reaction is part of the ambiguity of the non-univocal in so-called artistic expression, a sort of public dream from which each takes and keeps those echos which are his own, for which the artist served as a sound-box. Otherwise, art would never speak to anyone and would become like politics, a decadent form of communication because, stripped of all symbols, it is no longer expression but information (as enigmatic, tortuous, and deceitful as it may be).

- The language and technique ... it would seem that you tend to simplify, to be less "magic". A renovation in your cinematic style ... or is it because the film will also be shown on television ?

- I don't think that an artist is able to recognize change in his own language. He only knows (as I have frequently said) that he does not choose or impose his own style. This comes only from the way that the subject matter and the

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sentiment, which this last inspires, demand expression. The author then attempts to render these with the techniques at his disposal (in my case, the cinema). The recognizable coincidences and deformations in my other works, in my other films, are nothing but different aspects of the way in which a theme takes form from one instant to another, in my imagination, always equivalent and always different. Of course, in order to reveal the numerous and varied personalities of the musicians in their relationship with their work and the conductor, I concentrated on their faces, their gestures, their secrets, silent or shouted out at the top of their lungs. But I don't think this is because I adapted my style to television, whose esthetique hinges (I don't know why) on the close-up. In this short film, the depiction of decor is less obvious, because I want to give an impression of closed-in spaces, a sort of enormous cell, which renders insane those locked inside it.

- The finale. Once the revolt is over, the conductor partially re-establishes order. He takes the orchestra in hand, which seems to find a certain harmony again. But the image darkens and the German conductor's commands take on a dictatorial and imperial tone. Here, the key seems, if not political, at least moral : harmony yes (individuals), but free ...

- Before responding to you, let me ask you a question which I don't know how to answer. Why does it happen that a film, and thus its author, are expected through some charismatic power to solve problems that have nothing to do with the work? Why are films expected to give clear, precise and definitive answers to life, the world and their great problems ? A film, if it is a piece of art, has no right to indicate the path the world should take. When this has been attempted, the film has always been a failure. Why is this expected of cinema, and not of painting, literature, or music ? Certainly, film, visually represents life in movement, life which lives. Cinema resembles life. Maybe the emotional response of the film-viewer is that, if life is really like this, then he would like to know more, he would like to know how to live his life. I will explain myself more clearly another time. For the moment, let's not talk about it anymore. Or rather, let me add this : films resemble dreams which harbor the deepest truths of our soul, of our human essence. The dream tells a story, photographs space, atmosphere, the moments of that part of us which is most mysterious. Films, then, resemble everyday life and, at the same time, the dreams of night. They show simultaneously, external and internal behaviour. Films would seem to be, then, the most complete and profound representation of reality.

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Let's return to your question. The world of today is upset by collective reaction, by the rupture of organized structure and the breaking forth of the unconscious. My little film represents, precisely, this situation of collective confusion. For this reason, everyone reacts according to his own fears and desires, thinking he interprets what he sees on the screen. Evoking the image of the tyrant as the solution to disorder, and accepting with fatalistic resignation the incarnation of a new dictator, the archetype of the strong father who provides and resolves everything with violent authority, results in an anguish inspired by the film images. But this anguish is also an expression of individual fears in a language which has become habitual today, that is to say, the language of politics. The film communicates an instance of insanity. This insanity is frightening. In response, we have collective insanity, a dictator.

(appeared in IL TEMPO -
November 5th, 1978)

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

Federico Fellini talks about Nino Rota, the composer who wrote all the music for his films, from "WHITE SHEIK" to "PROVA D'ORCHESTRA".

They were to meet to study the themes for "CITY OF WOMEN" but a few moments before the appointment, the master passed away.

THE MAGIC FRIEND

by

FEDERICO FELLINI

I wish that I were talking about Nino Rota upon another occasion, under less sad circumstances, without this malaise that I feel when I think that he no longer exists, beyond the emotion and the tenderness that his disappearance inspire in me and in all those who knew him, as a musician and as a man...

It may be hard to believe, but it is truly difficult to say when I met him. Our relationship was unlike other relationships which develop, increase and diminish. It was a relationship which never changed or oscillated. The first time we looked into each other's eyes, we felt as if we had found ourselves. I often met him in the Lux, via Po. I saw this gentle, unassuming little man go by, always smiling, who would try to leave by doors that didn't exist, and who could actually leave by a window, like a butterfly, so magic and unreal was his aura. He fascinated everyone, by his simultaneous total availability and his total absence. Wherever or whenever you met him, for whatever reason, he always gave the impression that he had arrived there by accident, but at the same time, he communicated a sense that you could count on him, that he would accompany you a bit along your way.

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And this is exactly what happened between him and me. We met each other at the entrance of the Lux and since I was about to leave, he walked along with me by my side. Together, on foot, we walked along the whole of Via Po. When we came to the red light, I said with a gesture of good-bye : "Where are you going?" And he answered : "I'm going to the Lux, I must go to the Lux".

And yet, even in the vagueness of his relationships, his way of appearing and disappearing, in his elusiveness that gave the impression that he was a child that would have crossed the Piazza del Tritone in heavy traffic, he was the most precise, the most punctual, the most present and the most available of men. It was as though he were "aided" by some imperceptible entity. He slid through difficulties and dangers as though protected by a magic envelope, an invisible diaphragm. I don't think he ever experienced a contretemps, though he never had a watch, nor knew the day or even the month. He thought that 8 o'clock in the evening was 10 o'clock in the morning. One day, he had a plane to catch at 8 o'clock in the evening. It was late and I was pushing him to leave. He went to the airport, but, of course, without realizing it, he missed his plane. He asked the stewardess at what time the plane left. She answered that it had already left. "But it's 10:30 in the morning", he replied. "It's 8:30 in the evening" said the hostess, in turn. I think that it was the only time that reality caught him "on the wrong side", so to speak, that time rebelled against him. The rest of the time, not even the least contretemps. He might arrive at the last minute, but he always arrived.

He communicated an air of enchantment, which surrounded him, as though he vaguely expected a miracle. When he was there, one had the feeling that things could never go wrong, become menacing, betray one. He was a being that possessed a rare and precious quality akin to intuition. This is what kept him so innocent, so full of grace, so joyous. But I don't want to be misunderstood. He was not some sort of petty magician. No, far from it. When the occasion arose, even when it didn't, he would make very profound remarks. He judged men and things with an impressive precision. Like children, simple beings, certain sensitive souls, certain innocent and candid persons, he would suddenly say something overwhelming.

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We understood each other completely and totally from the first film we made together, "WHITE SHEIK". Our understanding needed no refinement, it was already there. I had decided to make films and Nino was a premise that permitted me to do so. He had no need to see my films. In fact, he often fell asleep during projections. He would awaken suddenly from a deep sleep and tell me "How beautiful that tree is !". Then, he had to watch the film ten or twenty times on a moviola to study the tempos, and rhythms, but it was as though he didn't see the images. He had a geometrical imagination, a celestial vision of music, so he didn't need to see the images of my films. When I asked what themes he had in mind for such and such a scene, I clearly felt that he was not concerned with the images. His was an interior world into which reality had little chance of entering. At the same time, as well as being a great musician, he was also a great orchestrator, capable of organizing a perfect score.

I would sit down next to him at his piano and I would tell him about my film. I would explain what I had wanted to say with such and such an image, or such and such a sequence. I would suggest what sort of musical commentary would go with such and such an image. But he never followed. He was abstracted even when he appeared to agree. Actually, he was establishing contact with himself, with his interior world, with the musical themes he already had inside himself. The times of day when he was most creative were those that occurred just after darkness begins to fall, from five or six o'clock to nine o'clock. He was extraordinarily creative during those hours, so favorable to his talent, his vigour, his vocation. All of a sudden, in the middle of a conversation, he would sit down at the piano and take off, like a medium, like a true artist. There was a sort of rupture and one felt that he no longer followed, no longer listened, as though concepts, explanations, and suggestions hindered his creative processes. When he returned to reality, I would say, "That's beautiful !". But he would answer "I've already forgotten it". We later averted this type of catastrophe by using a tape-recorder. But it had to be turned on without him knowing it, otherwise contact with the celestial spheres would be broken.

It was a true joy to work with him. His creativity was so close that it communicated a sort of inebriation, to the point that you, too, felt as if you were making music. He entered so fully into the moods, the characters and the colors of my films that they became totally impregnated with his music. For me, Nino was one of only three or four contemporary musicians. He was a total musician. I've read ridiculous reviews of his work that minimize his talent. He lived in his music with the freedom and happiness of a being living spontaneously in his

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own element. Our understanding was such that though we risked the tightest schedules and heaviest deadlines, we would always finish with joyous confidence. We knew that everything would finish for the best. I will never forget a certain incident. We were recording. The musicians and the conductor were in a big room, behind glass doors, surrounded by microphones, blinding lights, and mechanical things. And, all of a sudden, Nino tiptoed in like a ghost. He went over to an oboe and, with the tip of his pencil, added, a few notes to the score.

That was one of Nino's "miracles".

I have not yet thought about the fact that he is gone and that I am starting a film without him. For the moment, I don't want to think about it. I cannot efface his presence, the way he would arrive to do the music for my film. He would arrive near the end, when tension was at its maximum (focus, editing, dubbing). But as soon as he arrived, the tension disappeared and everything became a celebration. The film entered into a new phase, joyous, serene, and fantastic, a new atmosphere which gave it new life. It was always a surprise when, after imbuing the film with so much feeling, emotion and light, Nino would turn to me and ask, speaking of the main character, "Who's he?". "He's the main character", I would answer. "And what does he do?", he would reply, and then add, "You never tell me anything!". It's hard for me to imagine my films without music. Yesterday morning at the funeral, I thought that I would re-use his music, not just for "CITY OF WOMEN", but also for all the other films which follow. But that was perhaps due to the circumstances.

What can I add? I could say so many things, after twenty years of working together. What I remember most about him, as his most characteristic quality, was a lightness, a sort of presence/absence. I also felt that lightness, that sensation of presence/absence at the Rosaire Clinic. For the first time I felt as if a man had disappeared. He was not dead. He had disappeared, as he disappeared when alive. A strange, ineffable sensation, the same sensation that he had always inspired when he was alive.

FEDERICO FELLINI

(Appeared in IL MESSAGGERO - April 15, 1979)

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NINO ROTA

Born in Milan on December 3rd, 1911, died in Rome on April 10th, 1979. From the age of twelve, Nino Rota never stopped composing. In addition to his remarkable activity, in the field of cinema, he is the composer of innumerable scores for the theater (the works of, among others, Metastasio, Aristophanes, Labiche, Shakespeare, Betti, Molnar, Goldoni, Testori, Ford, etc...) also, operas, ballets, oratorios, religious music, symphonies and chamber music. Starting in 1950, he directed the Conservatory of Music in Bari, where he taught composition. He composed the music for all the films of Fellini and his name is associated with this last.

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FELLINI

HIS LIFE AND FILMS

1920

FELLINI was born on January 20, 1920, in Rimini, of a Roman mother, housewife, and a Romagnese father, traveling clothes salesman.

Federico (a very fanciful child, his mother reminds us) was the eldest of three children.

This is how he recalls his childhood :

" I remember very well the house where I lived in Rimini, except for the place I was born, Via Fumagalli. When I was very little, we used to go riding in the carriage on Sunday afternoons. In winter time, the carriage stayed closed. There were six of us inside : my parents, my brother, my sister and the maid squeezed together in the dark, because the windows had to be kept shut so the rain wouldn't get in. I couldn't see anything. One Sunday afternoon, the carriage took a different avenue from the one usually taken : a row of houses all stuck together. Papa said : " You were born here ", and the carriage continued on its way...

Another of the houses in which we lived was near the train station. It was a little villa with a garden in front. The big vegetable garden, behind the house, stood close to a huge building on which was written, in a semi-circle of white letters : "Poli.. ama riminese ".

Two letters were missing, fallen or lost.

" One morning, when I was in the vegetable garden making a bow out of a cane, I suddenly heard a terrible racket : it was the shutters of the theater, which I had never noticed, that were being taken down.

All the way inside appeared a huge gaping hole... I entered the dark cave : there I discovered gilded balconies, a locomotive with its middle wide open, hanging from ropes, shaking, red in the middle, with strips of yellow and white celluloid : this was theater...

" This house near the station was that of my first friendship.

" The house at number 9 Clementina Street was that of my first love :

" In the building across the street lived a little brunette, Bianchina Soriani. I could see her from my bedroom. The first time I saw her she was standing behind a closed window, dressed like a little Italian girl. She had heavy breasts and was already a mother... "

1925

Federico is sent to the kindergarden run by the Sisters of Saint Vincent.

" The ones with the big coif ".

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" One day, during a procession, holding a candle, one of these nuns, who wore glasses and looked like Harold Lloyd, pointed at my candle and said peremptorily : " Don't let it go out, because Jesus wouldn't like that ". A strong wind was blowing. As a little child, I was overwhelmed by this heavy responsibility. It was the wind that shouldn't blow out the candle. What what would Jesus do to me ? Meanwhile the procession had started moving, haltingly. A few steps, halt. A few more, halt. Out of the midst of this crowd of monks, priests, nuns in long robes, suddenly sprung a melancholy and monotoned chant. All that frightened me. I broke out sobbing. "

1927

He goes to primary school, at the Teatini School. Federico remembers being a mediocre student in arithmetic and Italian, but having a definite taste for drawing.

1930-1933

He goes to a secondary school in Fano run by the " Padri Carissimi ".

"It was a small provincial school, dirty and dull. The food was very bad and we were severely punished. When I got a zero, which happened, they stood me up in all the classrooms with my paper stuck on my chest".

These years are recalled in the memories shown by flashbacks in "OTTO E MEZZO" (Eight and a Half), the stories of Saraghina, the discovery of sexuality, the punishments and fears, but also the happy vacations spent at his paternal grandmother's in Gambettola, between Cesena and Savignano. He "runs away" for the first time to follow an equestrian circus. Some small details can be found in "LA STRADA".

1934-1935

He enters high school in Rimini.

" I came back to Rimini, to the High School on Malatestiano Temple Street, where the municipal library and art gallery now stand.

" The High School building seemed very big to me. Going up and down those steps meant an adventure every time. There was no end to the steps.

" The principal, nicknamed Zeus, a sort of puppeteer, had feet as big as a Fiat 600 which he used to " kill " the kids. He kicked you from behind. He pretended to stay calm, then suddenly sent you a kick that would have crushed you like a hammer. "

1936-1938

Fellini goes to high school in Rimini. He uses his drawing skill to make caricatures of the actors in a film showing at the "Fulgor" movie house.

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He exhibits them in local shops, to advertise the film, which gets him free tickets to the movie theater.

Yet Fellini and his friends are more than a bit rowdy. Several of them are represented in "VITELLONI" and "AMARCORD".

"We were 14 wild boys, who wouldn't take any orders from our teachers... We made sarcastic remarks to workers; we went to a monastery at dawn to wake up the monks by hosing down the doors of their cells; at night, we tormented the young couples who hid behind the boats on the beach; we spit on old peoples' heads in a public park. Once we even stole the Hotel Kursaal's clock."

(This episode was used for the theft of the angel in "VITELLONI".)

In autumn of 1938, having narrowly obtained his high school diploma, Fellini leaves Rimini. His first stop is Florence, where he finds a job with a satirical newspaper as proof reader, messenger and cartoonist. He collaborates on science fiction stories for "L'Aventuroso". Here he begins to make himself known in the literary and journalistic world.

1939-1942

In the spring, he leaves Florence and arrives in Rome where he enrolls in the University's Law School, but only to avoid his military service.

"I really didn't know what I wanted to do. But having seen numerous American films in which the journalistic world was shown as the most fascinating one, I decided to become a journalist myself."

The fact is that he manages to get on the staff of the daily "Il Popolo di Roma", but three weeks later, depressed, gets fired.

"What did I do in Rome in the beginning? I would go from bars to restaurants, doing cartoons and decorating fashionable shop windows with horrible models. I was even an insurance agent for a few days."

He leaves Rome and journalism and joins a variety show traveling around Italy. There he gets to know the stages of almost every theater and movie house in the South.

"A charming period in my life about which I could have made ten films. I think I can say with certainty that my characters, my fantasy, everything about me, were definitively formed during these trips from town to town in 3rd class."

"LUCI DEL VARIETA" (Variety Lights) was born of this experience - as well as other episodes of certain other films.

The illusionist episode in "NOTTI DI CABIRIA", the one with the conjurer in "OTTO E MEZZO", the actor's reward in "TRE PASSI NEL DELIRIO", as well as the Little Theater of Barrafondà in "ROMA".

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At the end of the workday, he writes for " Marc Aurelio ", a weekly humor magazine. He writes gags for the radio and for Macario's first film : " IL PIRATA SONO IO", "LO VEDI COME SEI", directed by Mattoli. This is how Fellini enters the world of cinema. He writes scene adaptations for some of Aldo Fabrizi's films : "CAMPO DEI FIORI", "L'ULTIMA CARROZZELLA", etc.

1943-1944

In June of 1943, Fellini meets Giulietta Masina, a young woman from the University of Bologna, who had done an archeology thesis. She was acting in the Gulf Dramatic Company and playing in his sketches on the radio. They were married four months later.

When the Allied troops arrive in Rome, Fellini goes back to being a cartoonist.

" When the Americans got here, some friends from " Marc Aurelio " and I opened a shop called " The Funny Face Shop ". In this little space, we did cartoons, portraits, made records, took photos and lots of other things for soldiers passing through town. Business was going well, so well that we opened a second, then a third and a fourth shop. "

1945

This is the year he meets Rossellini, in the cartoon shop.

" One day Rossellini appeared on the other side of the shop window. He beckoned to me to step outside, because he wanted to speak to me. It was about adapting a documentary on the life of Don Morosini, killed by the fascists. I accepted without conviction. This documentary became "ROME OPEN CITY". I signed a single contract for the adaptation of Rossellini's film and an animated cartoon about the adventures of a jeep, for a total of 10,000 lire. "

1946

Fellini is assistant director and co-scriptwriter on Rossellini's "PAISA".

When the film is presented in September at the Venice Film Festival, its success is enough to convince Fellini that cinema is what he is meant to do.

" Taking into account my laziness, my ignorance, my curiosity, my lack of discipline and my inability to face real sacrifices, I convinced myself that the cinema would be my " home " .

After " PAISA ", he agrees to adapt " IL DELITTO DI GIOVANNI EPISCOPO " for Lattuada, taken from a Gabriele D'Annunzio short story.

1947

He works on the adaptation of Lattuada's " SENZA PIETA ", the film in which Giulietta Masina makes her first appearance, and, in collaboration with Tullio Pinelli, on the adaptation of Duilio Coletti's " IL PASSATORE ".

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1948

He collaborates on Rossellini's " AMORE ", a film in two parts. The first is drawn from Jean Cocteau's " La Voix Humaine ", the second from " Il Miracolo " written by Fellini. In this film, Fellini is the author of the script, the assistant director and, for the first time, an actor. He adapts "IL CAMMINO DELLA SPERANZA" (1950), " LA CITTA SI DIFENDE " and " IL BRIGANTE DI TACCA DEL LUPO " (1951-1952) for Pietro Germi.

1950 *LUCI DEL VARIETA (Variety Lights)*

1950 is the year of his first film : " LUCI DEL VARIETA " co-directed with Lattuada, from a script entirely written by himself and adapted with Flajano, Pinelli and Lattuada. This film is drawn from certain episodes and memories of his life which introduce variety numbers. Despite the sensational financial fiasco, the critics praise it highly.

1952 *LO SCEICCO BIANCO (The White Sheik)*

For the first time, Fellini directs a film alone : " LO SCEICCO BIANCO ", co-adapters Tullio Pinelli and Michelangelo Antonioni.

The film, shown in Venice, is not very successful. However critics today consider it as evidence of Fellini's talent.

The main actor is Alberto Sordi and Giuletta Masina gets an important role as Cabiria (a recurring character in Fellini films).

" The film, remembers Angelo Solmi, was distributed with great difficulty by a little company and was continually refused in certain places, for the most part because of the presence of Alberto Sordi. Shown in Milan, in a big theater, in the beginning of the winter, it ran for exactly three days. Public reaction was negative, or rather there was none at all. Things went a bit better in Rome, but the film was quickly removed from circulation. The distribution company went bankrupt and the " SCIECCO BIANCO " was seized by the the official liquidator.

There was even question of destroying it when, after remaining in storage several years while awaiting an agreement between various creditors, the copy was bought in 1960, by Cineriz, after "LA DOLCE VITA" 's huge success.

In this same year, 1952, Fellini proposes ' LA STRADA " to various producers but meets only with refusals.

1953 *I VITELLONI (The Loafers)*

" I VITELLONI " is the first of Fellini's films which really clicks with critics and audiences alike. He has it shown abroad. At the 14th Venice Film Festival, it wins the Second " Leone d'Argento " (Silver Lion) (at the same time when the " Golden Lion " wasn't yet awarded).

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It wins, among other prizes, three " Nastri d'Argento " (Silver Ribbons) as well as several international awards. Its success with audiences is exceptional and immediate.

" I VITELLONI " marks the end of the first cycle of Fellini's work.

Next follows the trilogy which brings Fellini world fame : " LA STRADA ", " IL BIDONE ", " LE NOTTI DI CABIRIA ". But first Fellini directs a sketch: " UNA AGENZIA MATRIMONIALE " for the episodic film " L'AMORE IN CITTA " (Love in the City), shown publically at the end of 1953.

1954 LA STRADA

With " LA STRADA ", the " Fellini phenomenon " explodes. Collaborators on the script are Ennio Flaiano, Tullio Pinelli and Fellini himself. Cinematography by Otello Martelli. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Giulietta Masina, Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, Aldo Silvani, Marcella Rovena.

The producers are distrustful of the film's direction.

" They treated me like a poor lost orphan ", recalls Fellini.

On the evening of September 7th, 1954, it is presented at the 15th Venice Film Festival, gets much applause, receives the "Leone d'Argento" (the "Leone d'Oro" being awarded to Castellani's "Romeo and Juliet"). It was also awarded three "Nastri d'Argento" for Best Film, Best Director, Best Script. Abroad, among numerous awards, it wins an "Oscar" for Best Foreign Film and Giulietta Masina is named Best Actress. Everywhere it is acclaimed by the public. For Fellini "LA STRADA" will always remain the culminating point of his life.

" I don't wish to sum things up. I think I've already said that in this film I put everything that can make me cry or laugh, suffer or hope.

" Every aim is fulfilled ".

A few years later, Fellini would say :

" With LA STRADA, I made at least thirty people all around the world rich. I myself earned little or nothing materially. Still I acquired a certain peace of mind and was able to satisfy my need for artistic freedom ".

In New York, " LA STRADA " is warmly received and runs for the three years.

1955 IL BIDONE (The Swindle)

Shooting on " IL BIDONE " begins in May. Script by Pinelli and Fellini. Music by Nino Rota. Cinematography by Otello Martelli. Sets by Dario Cecchi. Cast : Broderick Crawford, Giulietta Masina, Richard Basehart, Franco Fabrizi.

Shooting is finished on July 16th. This rush is due to the Venice Festival schedule. It is presented at the Venice Film Festival September 10th, without the expected success. And yet it is one of Fellini's most beautiful films.

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1956-1957 *LE NOTTI DI CABIRIA (Nights of Cabiria)*

During the filming of " IL BIDONE " Fellini conceives the project of another film to be made right away : " LE LIBERE DONNE DE MAGLIANO ", taken from a Mario Tobino short story. He wants Montgomery Clift for the role, but the project is put aside when the producers come into conflict.

During the summer of 1956, Fellini films " LE NOTTI DI CABIRIA ", and finishes it in the winter of the same year. The scriptwriters are the same as on the previous films : Flajano, Pinelli and Fellini; the Roman dialects are by Pier Paolo Pasolini; Sets by Piero Gherardi; Music by Nino Rota; Cast : Giulietta Masina, François Périer, Franco Marzi, Dorian Gray, Amedeo Nazzari, Aldo Silvani.

Completed in March 1957, it is presented at the Cannes Film Festival where it achieves great success and wins the Best Actress Award for Giulietta Masina. Within a few weeks, it triumphs throughout Europe and America. The enthusiasm aroused by " LA STRADA " is renewed. At the end of the year, it takes the " Oscar " for Best Film and the Hollywood Award for direction.

1958-1960 *LA DOLCE VITA*

After the success of " LE NOTTI DI CABIRIA ", Fellini has many projects : " DON QUIXOTE ", " IL DECAMERON " and for the first time, he considers " CASANOVA " as well. But " LA DOLCE VITA " comes first.

Brunello Rondi joins the usual scriptwriters. Sets by Piero Gherardi; Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Marcello Mastroianni, Anouk Aimée, Anita Ekberg, Magali Noël, Alain Cuny, Nadia Gray, Annibale Ninchi, Yvonne Furneaux, Lex Barker, Walter Santese, Valeria Cingottini, Polidor.

Shooting starts on March 16th, 1959 and ends on August 27th. Around 100,000 meters of film are used, 800 actors and actresses participate as well as a thousand " bit players "; it costs 700 million lire.

Its release brings scandal. Accusers and defenders clash " with no holds barred ". Fellini is accused of " defiling the nation ", of corrupting public morals, etc. Speeches in Parliament against the film. But it wins an unprecedented success at the Cannes Festival where it receives the First Prize ex-aequo with Antonioni's " L'Avventura ".

1961-1962 *LE TENTAZIONI DEL DOTTOR ANTONIO (The Temptations of Doctor Anthony)*

" BOCCACIO 70 " is a four-part film conceived by Cesare Zavattini. Fellini accepts one part, the others are directed by De Sica, Monicelli and Visconti. Cast : Anita Ekberg and Peppino Di Filippo.

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

1963-1964 OTTO E MEZZO (*Eight and a Half*)

"Something vague, a melancholy, almost funereal film, but intentionally comical. I'm always doing my autobiography, even if I'm telling the life story of a fish. This film is a work of fantasy, and among my films, the one which refers least to personal experiences. I told an unbelievable tale in which there's nothing to understand but what you see. Perhaps it's fundamentally the story of a film I couldn't make".

The script is written by his faithful disciples : Flajano, Pinelli, Rondi and himself. Sets by Piero Gherardi. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Marcello Mastroianni, Claudia Cardinale, Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, Jean Rougeul, Rossella Falk, Barbara Steele, Caterina Boratto, Guido Alberti.

The film comes out in 1963 and triumphs with critics and audiences.

It wins the "Oscar" for Best Foreign Film, First Prize at the Moscow Film Festival and seven "Nastri d'Argento" (Silver Ribbons).

1965-1966 GIULIETTA DEGLI SPIRITI (*Juliet of the Spirits*)

For "GIULIETTA DEGLI SPIRITI", Fellini uses his same script collaborators: Flajano, Rondi. Cinematography by Gianni di Venanzo. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Giulietta Masina, Sandra Milo, Sylva Koscina, Mario Pisu, Valentina Cortese, Caterina Boratto, José-Luis de Villalonga.

The film is released in 1965.

1967-1969 SATYRICON (*Fellini Satyricon*) and TOBY DAMMIT

Fellini conceives the idea of "IL VIAGGIO DI G. MASTORNA", but is prevented from making it for several reasons. The second of his "abortive projects" is perhaps only put aside. In 1967, he films "TOBY DAMMIT", an episode of "TRE PASSI NEL DELIRIO"; the two other episodes are directed by Vadim and Malle (French title : "Histoires Extraordinaires").

A case of pleurisy forces Fellini to stay six months in a clinic where he rereads Petronio and, once he is cured, his project is ready.

His next film will be "SATYRICON", made during the summer of 1968 and presented in 1969. Script by Fellini and Zapponi. Sets by Danilo Donati. Cinematography by Giuseppe Rotunno. Music by Nino Rota, Ilhan Mimaroglu, Tod Dockstader, and Andrew Rudi. Cast : Martin Potter, Hiram Keller, Max Born, Salvo Randone, Fanfulla, Mario Romagnoli, Alain Cuny, Lucia Bose, Joseph Wheler, Donyale Luna and Capucine.

"I insist on the dreamlike character of the film, affirms Fellini. Everything is disconnected, fragmented, but at the same time there's a mysterious consistency. I wanted to do something other than the "historical". That's why the atmosphere is comic."

PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

1970 I CLOWNS (The Clowns)

The first Fellini television special is born.

Script by Fellini and Zapponi. Sets by Danilo Donati. Cinematography by Dario di Palma. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Fellini, Maja Morin, Lina Alberti, Alvaro Vitali, Gasparino, Anita Ekberg, The Orfeis, clowns including the Barrios, Père Lorient, Charlie Rivel, Annie and Victor Fratellini, Baptiste, Tristan Remy, Billi, Scotti, Fanfulla, Valentini and Pierre Etaix.

1971 ROMA (Fellini Roma)

"I'm making a film about Rome, because I live in Rome and love the city. But beneath this first reason lies another, deeper one. After "LA DOLCE VITA", Italian films showing exotic trips became fashionable. I maintain, maybe by love of contradiction, that you don't need to travel to find the unusual, the strange, the unexpected ; sometimes the things nearest to you can appear to you in a way you never suspected."

Fellini chooses the following places in Rome to shoot the film : Via Albalonga, the peripheral expressway, Villa Borghese, the Little Theater of Barrafronda, the subway, the bordellos, the "parade" and Trastevere.

The Script of "ROMA" is by Fellini and Zapponi. Sets by Danilo Donati. Cinematography by Giuseppe Rotunno. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Peter Gonzales, Fiona Florence, Britta Barnes, Pia de Doses, Marne Maitland, Renato Giovannelli, Elisa Mainardi, Raut Paule, Galliano Sbarra, and Anna Magnani.

1973 AMARCORD

This title, in Romagnese dialect, means "I remember", but Fellini says :

"It's an intriguing kind of sound, a seductive word, the appetizing name of a cocktail... I was hoping to get a taste of a certain province, an authentic Italian province. That's all I can say."

For the first time, the poet Tonino Guerra, also from the Romagna, collaborates with Fellini on the script. Sets by Danilo Donati. Cinematography by Giuseppe Rotunno. Music by Nino Rota. Cast : Bruno Zanin, Pupella Maggio, Armando Francia, Ciccio Ingrassia and Magali Noël.

"AMARCORD" wins five "Nastri d'Argento" in 1974, the "Grolla d'Oro" of Saint Vincent, the "David de Donatello" and, in the United States, the "Oscar" for Best Foreign Film (Fellini's 4th Oscar) and the New York Critics' Award.

1976 IL CASANOVA DI FELLINI (Fellini Casanova)

1978 PROVA D'ORCHESTRA

1979 LA CITTA DELLE DONNE with Marcello Mastroianni.