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Amarcord (ITALIAN - FRENCH - COLOR)

Rome, Jan. 4.

A Warner Bros. release of a Franco Cristaldi production. Coproduced by F.C. (Rome). P.E.C.F. (Paris). Features entire cast. Directed by Federico Fellini. Screenplay, by Fellini. Tonino Guerra; camera (Technicolor). Giuseppe Rotunno; production design. Danilo Donati; editor. Ruggiero Mastroianni; music. Nino Rota. Reviewed at Fiamma Cinema, Rome, Dec. 28, '73. Running Time: 125 MINS.

Titta's Mother	Pupella Maggio
Gradisca	Magali Noel
Titta's Father	Armando Brancia
Crazy Uncle	Ciccio Ingrassia
Pataca	Nandino Orfei
Lawyer	Luigi Rossi
Titta	Bruno Zanin

"Amarcord" is probably the first time an established film director went before cameras with one conception in mind and then created an almost entirely different picture. Instead of lensing a nostalgic look at the past to recapture the happy simplicity of existence before mechanisation, the maestro did just the opposite. With a loose reference to his boyhood years in the very Italian province of Romagna (Fellini was born in Rimini), he has looked back as much in anger as in sorrow and has recreated provincial life in the early 1930s with unsparing emphasis on the inadequacies of man and existence.

In production almost a year and costly by today's standard (around \$3,500,000), the latest Fellini opus is his most accessible to mass audiences since "La Dolce Vita." Elements of earthiness and sentiment are relevant to his purpose. Fellini's traditionally generous dosage of fantasy and poetry are subordinated to the grotesque, the macabre, the sentimental.

In many markets, particularly Italy, his name is tantamount to star power and WB can expect healthy returns. In the U.S. where WB has first option to release, "Amarcord" could again disappoint Fellini's hope to line them up. The unknown cast and only the slightest

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narrative structure diminish chances.

"Amarcord" unrolls in a four-season span — opening and closing in a skyfull of thistledown (harbinger of spring). From spring to midsummer, the provincial town (symbolic of all small towns everywhere) is the throbbing caldron of human activity.

The cast is all trotted out in initial sequence.

Principals return individually for further caricature in a series of miniature and prolonged sequences poking caustic fun at various institutions — hidebound education, local clergy, the aristocracy, the Vitellonis, small-town sexpots and semi-outcasts.

The young adolescent schoolboy, Titta (Bruno Zanin), and his family constitute the script thread in the screenplay. Titta is both victim and rebel. Death of his mother in final sequences suggests only positive note that the young man will mature and transcend.

A long insert in Act Two on pic's natural exterior staged in the countryside, is crowned by Ciccio Ingrassia's pathetic cameo as a mental case on leave from the asylum in the care of his family. Thereafter, "Amarcord" is sad and sentimental, culminating in the marriage of the town belle, Gradisca (Magali Noel), to a Carabinieri.

Staging at Cinecitta Studios (except for the Ingrassia scenes), is an achievement in itself, but made possible with inveterate staffers such as production designer Danilo Donati, and cinematographer Giuseppe Rotunno. Ruggiero Mastroianni's editing cannot be flawed for the Italian version but length can be lightened for export versions. Nino Rota's theme music is melodic and mocking. — *Werb.*