

## Document Citation

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**Teorema**  
(Theorem)  
(ITALIAN—COLOR)

Venice, Sept. 6. '68

Franco Rossellini production for Aetos Film and Euro International release in Italy. Stars Silvana Mangano, Terence Stamp; features Massimo Girotti, Anne Wiasemsky, Laura Betti, Jose Cruz, Ninetto Davoli. Directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini from his original story and screenplay. Camera (color), Giuseppe Ruzzolini; music, Ennio Morricone. No other credits. Reviewed at Venice Film Festival. Running Time, 100 MINS.

Lucia	.....	Silvana Mangano
Visitor	.....	Terence Stamp
Paolo	.....	Massimo Girotti
Odette	.....	Anne Wiasemsky
Emilia	.....	Laura Betti
Pietro	.....	Jose Cruz
Messenger	.....	Ninetto Davoli

"Teorema" is an allegory in two acts which merges eros and religion in an up-to-date context. Pier Paolo Pasolini, ever sensitive to religion, eroticism, homosexuality and social forces, employs all these elements to detail his premise that a sudden revelation of possible human self-fulfillment can permanently mar the upper strata of society and exalt its sub-strata.

With a simple, mathematical design, he systematically pursues this proposition with the device of guesting an unknown in an upper bourgeois household. The visitor (Terence Stamp) is a university student with a heavenly divining rod enabling him to offer fulfillment and authenticity through physical love.

For the provincial maid Emilia (Laura Betti) the sexual experience becomes a holy illumination. The deviate son, Pietro (Jose Cruz), is solaced. His mother, (Silvana Mangano), disrobes on the country estate to partake of the visitor's magic. Teenage daughter Odette (Anne Wiasemsky) invites him to her room for her first connubial fling. The father, Paolo (Massimo Girotti), a captain of industry, discovers his true and radically different personality in the arms of his supernatural guest. What emerges is homosexuality.

With the visitor's departure, the second half repeats the step-by-step disintegration of the family with the inserted development of maid Emilia to regional sainthood.

Having bathed in a fleeting moment of grace with sufficient clarity to question and reject past moral values, each member of the family takes a solitary path to his/her own void. The son goes off to paint but only to despair in creative impotency. The mother tries male pickups for sexual release and continued liberation but is shamed back to her past mold of conventional mediocrity. The daughter's stunted awakening causes a mental breakdown. The head of the household cedes his factory to the workers to become a lonely sexual outlaw in the grim intolerant desert of civilization.

The narrative, almost silent in the first half, is unusually clear for a film by Pasolini. The film author, however, leaves plenty of terrain for spectators to equate the premises of his theorem for themselves. No one need be over-familiar with Pasolini's thinking. It is this elbow room for individual judgment that makes "Teorema" a captivating film for art houses and specialized audiences.

In setting up the equation, the director can be taxed with moments of frigid, crude and shock footage incompatible with film's main lyric, mystical current. On the whole, "Teorema" can be paired with "The Gospel According to St. Matthew" as among the most creatively unified films to his credit.

Performance by all members of the cast are praiseworthy, though Terence Stamp dominates the first half and Laura Betti, the second. Guiseppe Ruzzolini's color and photographic effects are excellent. Music neatly balances reality and allegory. All other departments contribute effectively as well. **Verb.**