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Venice, Sept. 20.

Le Amiche (The Girl Friends) (ITALIAN). Titanus release of Trionfaleine production. Stars Eleonora Rossi Drago, Valentina Cortese, Gabriele Ferzetti, Franco Fabrizi, Yvonne Fourneaux, Madeleine Fischer, Anna Maria Pancani. Directed by Michelangelo Antonioni. Screenplay, Suso Cecchi D'Amico, Alba De Cespedes, Antonioni; camera, Gianni de Venanzio; music, Giovanni Fusco. At Film Festival. Running time, 105 MINS.

Pic, a social document done in semi-clinical analytical style, is one of those major but common paradoxes—a major prizewinner which has only modest b.o. potentialities. In this case, much of the limitations are in the intimately local dialogue and styling of the action, which hamper its export possibilities. Names will help, along with offbeat aspects and the fest kudo.

Film weaves the tales of several women and their men, generally spun about the framework of the opening of a dress shop in Turin. Marital and extra-marital relationships are revealed as the assorted groups of males and females are formed. Frustrated love drives one girl to suicide, another back to her hometown while another returns to her husband. Dialogue is sharp and action picks up after a slow, introductory series of sequences.

The acting is fine, with newcomers Madeleine Fischer and Anna Maria Pancani often stealing the show from such vets as Eleonora Rossi Drago and Valentina Cortese. Maria Gambarelli, ex-Met prima ballerina, does a fine job as head of the dressmaking establishment, in her first serious thesping assignment. Technical credits are fine, topped by a truly standout musical accompaniment by Giovanni Fusco.

Hawk.