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Two men come from Italy, a lubricious pilot, Marcello Mastroianni, a sanguine cook, Ugo Tognazzi, and two from France, a tv personality with culinary shows, Michel Piccoli, and a judge, Philippe Noiret. They are picked up on their way to the event with some characteristics deftly blocked out.

Once installed in an unusual villa hidden in a garden right in Paris, they begin to sort out the food and get down to the business of eating. But Mastrolanni wants some girls and has also found an old Bugatti car to tinker with.

Some call girls show up, as well as a teacher who had been showing her pupils the site. She is hefty and likes to eat as attested by Tognazzi, the cook for this Herculean feast, letting her sample some goodies.

Then it starts. But it is not slobbery, orgiastic or stuffing. It is a constant eating of extraordinary dishes served up by Tognazzi in his chef costume. The advent of the girls starts some sideline divertissements with Mastroianni even using part of his beloved Bugatti while coupling with one of the girls. Sometimes a mention is made of a sort of death pact in re the gourmet gymnastics.

The girls finally get frightened and sick and leave with only the fat teacher remaining. She has them all sexually, but Noiret, the proper judge and owner of the house, with a fixation on his mother's breasts, decides to marry her.

With all the eating, sex and the beginnings of deterioration in the men, the film is never vulgar, porno or erotic for that matter. It may be a matter of the directorial grace of Italo director Marco Ferreri. He has made films in France before and has a knack for black comedy but also contestation.

Here the affluent society and ecology, may be involved as well as racist attitudes. But the pic does not explain or force these issues and remains entertaining as well as sharply and rugged shattering at times in its hewing to the eating, wenching and final deaths of the feasting four.

Each dies in a way that is part of his life, as Tognazzi on the kitchen table being fed his great pate, Piccoli in an explosion of windy noises, Mastroianni in the Bugatti he gets to run and Noiret eating two enormous puddings shaped as femme breasts.

The film is so full of allusions and inventiveness that it is hard to pin all of it down. Critics will either turn up noses or display adhesion to an explosively unusual anarchic film that attacks certain aspects of society and yet keeps an instinctive feel for human behavior.

The acting is exemplary with Mastrolanni adroit as the more unpredictable one, Noiret reassuring as the more settled, Piccoli as the self-sufficient man, and Tognazzi unruffled as the maestro of this heroic culinary affair.

A nod is due Andrea Ferreol as the heavy but pretty teacher whose appetites exceed that of the men.

La Grande Bouffe (The Great Feed) (FRENCH-COLOR)

Cannes, May 15.

NPF release of Mara Film-Capitolina production. Stars Marcello Mastroianni, Michel Piccoli, Ugo Tognazzi, Philippe Noiret; features Andrea Ferreol. Directed by Marco Ferreri. Screenplay, Ferreri, Rafael Ascona; camera (Eastmancolor), Mario Vulpiani; editor, Claudine Merlin; art director, Michel De Broin; music, Philippe Sarde. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fest (competing), May 13, '73. Running Time 130 MINS.

Marcello	.....	Marcello Mastroianni
Ugo	.....	Ugo Tognazzi
Michel	.....	Michel Piccoli
Philippe	.....	Philippe Noiret
Andrea	.....	Andrea Ferreol

An extremely provocative film that will enrage some, delight others and create interest no matter what the attitudes it engenders. It thus makes a film that could well have both specialized and highly exploitable interest everywhere. On the surface it is about four men who inexplicably decide to hole up in a villa in Paris and eat themselves to death, not to forget sex.

It is a pic to be savored or carped at but one not to be ignored. Fine technical aspects, good editing and a catchy musical theme. Mosk.