

Document Citation

Title	Canterbury tales
Author(s)	Robert F. Hawkins
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	1972 Jul 12
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	racconti di Canterbury (The Canterbury tales), Pasolini, Pier Paolo, 1971

Canterbury Tales (ITALIAN-COLOR-SONGS)

Berlin, July 3.

United Artists release of Produzioni Europee Associate (PEA) production. Produced by Alberto Grimaldi. Features Hugh Griffith, Ninetto Davoli, Franco Citti, Laura Betti, Josephine Chaplin. Written and directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, based on Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales." Camera (Technicolor), Tonino Delli Colli; art director, Dante Ferretti; costumes, Danilo Donati; no other credits provided. Reviewed at Berlin Film Festival, July 2, '72. Running Time; 111 Mins.

Italo director Pier Paolo Pasolini has come up with a somewhat disappointing followup to his artistically and commercially successful "Decameron" in this Alberto Grimaldi (PEA) production for UA release. The generally enjoyable earthy bawdiness of his Boccaccio tale (which grabbed a local honor last year) has too often, in "Canterbury Tales," been replaced by episodes bordering on vulgarity and, despite worldwide censorship relaxation, there's bound to be trouble here and there over some segs as displayed here.

Sales overview, despite these reservations, should however be optimistic for, in addition to male and female frontals galore and an abundance of sexual and excretive humor there are, notably in the early episodes of this 8-parter, some saucily amusing reminders of the Chaucerian era covered — and of Pasolini's skill in mirroring it.

One final technical note, for the record: despite a shared origin in the works of Chaucer, there is no direct connection between pic and the still-current London West End (musical) stage presentation by the same name; also, this review is based on original Italo version of pic as screened at the Berlin fest; understood an English-language one also exists which, to Anglo-Saxon ears at least, should prove less of a distractive hybrid than this one, in which English town and country folk, though at times

n Festival

om page 17)

chanting period folk songs, otherwise mouth an incongruous meld of (north) Italian accents.

Episodes, most bridged by glimpses of Pasolini (as Chaucer) bemusedly penning his tales, vary in length and impact, some winding with an amusing twist finale, others making their bitterly ironic points in more straightforward fashion. Extreme approach allowed (or taken by?) writer-director is perhaps best evidenced by his set piece: an imagined apocalyptic sequence in which priests are literally excreted by gigantic devils in a Pasolini vision of hell which takes the graphic work of Hieronymus Bosch a few (questionable) steps further.

few (questionable) steps further.

Skimpy UA press material gives only five featured names, though an abundance of acting credits flash by on screen. Of those cited three (Ninetto Davoli, Franco Citti and Laura Betti) are Pasolini regulars, and fill their niches well; elsewhere, Hugh Griffith's acting exuberance fits hand-in-glove into director's all-stops-out style; while still another Chaplin, (Josephine) makes an attractive appearance in and out of the buff. A vast cast of thesps and nonpros colorfully populates rest of pic.

On the physical side, film is a stunning evocative achievement which stresses the earthiness of life in the Middle Ages against skilfully chosen location backdrops of England. Tonino Delli Colli's lensing and other visual credits all contribute to a sometimes hilarious, often amusing, frequently tut-tut but also occasionally hum fresco of Chaucerian bawdry.

Hawk.