

Sorrentino Presents his First-Ever TV Series at the Venice Film Festival

Federico Ghelli (September 09, 2016)



The Oscar-winning director presented the first two episodes of *The Young Pope*, the fictional account on the first American pope.

Obscure, deceptive and impenetrable. This is *The Young Pope*, the new TV series by [Paolo Sorrentino](#) [2] presented at the 73rd Edition of the Venice Film Festival.

The Oscar-winning director ([The Great Beauty](#) [3]) returned to Venice with his first TV series, produced by Sky Atlantic in collaboration with HBO and premiering in the United States in February 2017.

Starring [Jude Law](#) [4], Pius XIII is the first American pope. Unpredictable and fearsome, the young pontiff is a mix of cigarettes, curse words and Coca-Cola. The result is a character which confirms Sorrentino's style: disruptive, with extreme care for every shot and line, and a refined aesthetics that aspires to a grotesque beauty.

"More than a TV series, it's a 10-hour long movie," says Sorrentino. "Working on a wider timeframe allowed deepening the reflections that would be censored in a movie. I think I've taken more into account the narration with this series."



The Young Pope alternates scenes now magnificent, now bizarre, often comical. They include kangaroos in the garden, cardinals grappling with gossip, and nuns playing soccer. "I'm a contradiction. Like God, as three in one. Like Mary, virgin and mother." is how Pope Lenny Belardo defines himself.

"For me it was an opportunity to work with Paolo [Sorrentino], depicting a character that has some contradictions," says Law. "It scared me a first to impersonate a pope, but Paul reminded me that this is the story of a man, who happens to be the pope."

Sorrentino is not afraid of the reaction of the Vatican to The Young Pope. He said that they will need to see it to truly understand the purpose of the series.

"It's a Vatican problem how they take it. In fact, it's not even an issue," says Sorrentino. "If they have the patience to watch it, they will see that it's a work that fairly explores the contradictions, difficulties and fascinating matters of the clergy."

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