

Cultural Italian Springtime in NYC

Natasha Lardera (April 07, 2015)



As the city awaits sunshine and warmth, its cultural institutions welcome numerous Italian flavored events. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts celebrates the life of Italian-American legend Frank Sinatra, while the Tribeca Film Festival brings to the US four Italian films, including the Taviani's latest masterpiece Wondrous Boccaccio.

As winter is having a hard time leaving the city, the Big Apple is ready to have an Italian flavored springtime. There are plenty of cultural events that celebrate our culture.

- The multimedia presentation "Sinatra, An American Icon," now through September 4, 2015, at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center. The exhibition is curated by the GRAMMY Museum in Los Angeles in collaboration with The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and the Sinatra Family.



"Sinatra, An American Icon" comprises mementos of one hundred years of the Italian-American superstar's legacy. Never-before-seen photos, family heirlooms, personal items, private correspondence, original art, and unique music are showcased for the enjoyment of fans coming from all corners of the world. The majority of the pieces come directly from the Sinatra family and have never been displayed in public. The general idea a viewer gets is that "The Voice," was more than just that. Sinatra, a native of Hoboken, NJ, with humble Italian-American roots, was in constant search of artistic excellence, not only by singing and performing but also by painting and acting. Visitors can experience the exhibition but also attend screenings and participate in a Interactive Sinatra Walking Tour of NYC, a city that was special for the city (which also inspired one of his greatest songs). During the tour people can see some of Sinatra's favorite hangouts or venues where he performed. Until May 26, fans can also visit The Morrison Hotel and Gallery (116 Prince Street), where numerous family photos, including some portraits by photographer Terry O'Neill, are displayed.

- April 15th marks the beginning of the Tribeca Film Festival. Founded by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal, and Craig Hatkoff in 2001 to bring crowds back to Tribeca in the aftermath of September 11th, the festival always welcomes Italian Cinema. Istituto Luce-Cinecittà, an institution which works to support the development and promotion of Italian cinema in Italy and abroad, is bringing four contemporary Italian films: *Hungry Hearts*, directed by Saverio Costanzo, *Maraviglioso Boccaccio* (Wondrous Boccaccio), directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, the documentary *Palio*, directed by Cosima Spender, and *Vergine Giurata* (Sworn Virgin), directed by Laura Bispuri.

- Set in New York, *Hungry Hearts*, tells the story a couple, Jude (Adam Driver) and Mina (Alba Rohrwacher) and their possibly "Indigo baby," a child with special powers and needs.
- *Wondrous Boccaccio* is loosely based on stories from *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio. In the thirteenth century, while the Black Death is killing people everywhere, ten kids hide in the countryside and, just to kill time, they each start telling a story.
- *Palio* captures the atmosphere of Siena's legendary horse race, known as *Il Palio di Siena*. The madness of the event starts four days prior to the race, when horses are assigned to each district and bribery and corruption ensue.
- Set in Albania, *Sworn Virgin* is the epic tale of Hana Doda, who escapes from her destiny of being a wife and a servant.
- But this is not all, the festival is also going to celebrate the 25th anniversary of an Italian-American classic, "*GoodFellas*" by Martin Scorsese. The screening, which will close the 2015 edition of the festival, on the 26th, is scheduled to be followed by a conversation moderated by Jon Stewart, between the film's cast and creators. Overseen by Scorsese, the special edition "*GoodFellas*" remaster is derived from a 4k scan of the original camera negative.
- More Boccaccio! KIT- Kairos Italy Theater, the first bilingual Italian theater company in New York, presents three novels of the *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio and *The Mandragola* (The Mandrake root) by Niccolò Machiavelli in repertory at Bernie Wohl Center (647 Columbus Avenue) from April 9 to April 12. Featuring Francesco Andolfi, Giulia Bisinella, Carlotta Brentan, Francesco Meola, Jacopo Rampini and Irene Turri, star in these classics directed by Laura Caparrotti. The Mandrake Root is a satirical play in five acts written in 1524 which is seen as critique of the House of Medici. The *Decameron* is a collection of 100 stories that all have one aspect in common: love.
- And for theater aficionados, Italian actor Massimiliano Finazzer Flory will star, on April 21st at the Morgan Library, in "*Being Leonardo da Vinci*." Written by Finazzer Flory himself, the play depicts the life of Leonardo da Vinci and answers one main question: who really was Leonardo? Partly in English, partly in Renaissance Italian and part dance, "*Being Leonardo da Vinci*" is a unique interview, where Leonardo himself answers 52-questions asked by a special interviewer.

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