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ENTERTAINMENT WHAT'S ON

Discover award-winning Italian cinema at the 24th Italian Film Focus in South Africa

Written by
Entertainment
Writer



'Vermiglio' tells a story where the characters and landscape come together in a timeless way. Picture: X/@erickohn

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The Italian Film Focus (IFF) is back, bringing South African audiences a selection of this year's best Italian cinema. This year's showcase features six acclaimed films fresh from Europe's biggest festivals, with appearances from celebrated directors and [actors](#).

One of the highlights is "Sicilian Letters", presented by Antonio Piazza and Fabio Grassadonia.



This [film](#), which competed at the 2024 Venice Film Festival, explores the underbelly of the mafia through “pizzini” — coded messages used by fugitive mob bosses. Starring Toni Servillo and Elio Germano, a gripping and metaphorical take on a complex topic.

Another must-see is “Vermiglio”, Italy’s official submission for the upcoming Oscars and winner of the Venice Film Festival’s Special Jury Prize.

With Giuseppe De Domenico leading the presentation, the film blends stunning landscapes and timeless narratives into a poetic cinematic experience.

Two films from the Rome Film Festival will also be screened: “Eternal Visionary”, directed by Michele Placido, offers an intimate look into the world of writer Luigi Pirandello, while “The Opera! Arias for an Eclipse” is an inventive reimagining of the Orpheus and Eurydice myth.

Co-directed by David Livermore and Paolo Gep Cucco, and co-produced by Dolce & Gabbana, the film features performances by Fanny Ardant, Vincent Cassel, and an ensemble of remarkable opera singers.

Audiences can also enjoy the latest works of celebrated directors Marco Tullio Giordana and Gianni Amelio. Giordana’s “The Life Apart” examines how music intertwines with family dramas, while Amelio’s “Battleground” offers a perspective on war and the personal cost of resistance.

Since the co-production agreement between Italy and South Africa was signed in 2006, the partnership has led to five feature films and numerous documentaries.

This year’s IFF continues to foster collaboration through master-classes with [local film](#) schools and meetings with South African filmmakers to explore future projects.

The event is made possible through the support of the Italian Consulate General in Johannesburg, the Consulate of Italy in Cape Town and the Italian Cultural Institute in Pretoria.

The Italian Film Focus started on Wednesday, November 27, in Johannesburg, and runs until Monday, December 2 at Ster-Kinekor “The Zone” in Rosebank.

The Cape Town run is from Friday, November 29, to Sunday, December 1, at Cinema Labia. Entry is free, with tickets available one hour before each screening.



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SCREEN ARTHOUSE FILM

EXTRAORDINARY MOVIES AT ITALIAN FILM FOCUS 2024

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Vermiglio, by Giuseppe De Domenico, is Italy's candidate for the upcoming Oscars.

The Italian Film Focus in South Africa IFF presents the best of this year's Italian cinema, featuring six films from the most important and recent European festivals, with the presence of some prestigious directors and actors.

Where, when

Johannesburg, 27 November – 2 December: At Ster-Kinekor "The Zone" Rosebank, 81 Oxford Service Road, Rosebank. Free entry, tickets are available one hour before the event.

Cape Town, 29 November – 1 December: At Cinema Labia on Orange, 68 Orange Street, Gardens. Free entry, tickets are available one hour before the event.

Italian Film Focus 2024 Copy link

Italian Film FOCUS

24th EDITION

Cape Town - Johannesburg, 27 November - 2 December 2024

Watch on YouTube

Italian Film Focus 2024 movies

Antonio Piazza and Fabio Grassadonia will present their film **SICILIAN LETTERS**, which was in competition at the 2024 Venice Film Festival. It offers a striking vision of the mafia soul, told through the metaphorical device of “pizzini”, coded messages left by the fugitive mafia boss. The cast includes two extraordinary leading actors, Toni Servillo and Elio Germano. The magnificent **VERMIGLIO** will also be showcased. It received the jury's special prize at the Venice Film Festival 2024 and is Italy's candidate for the upcoming Oscars, a film where the landscape and characters merge into a single ancient narrative rhythm. It will be presented by rising Italian actor Giuseppe De Domenico.

Additionally, there are two films recently shown at the Rome Film Festival: **ETERNAL VISIONARY**, where Michele Placido explores the creative and personal world of Luigi Pirandello, and **THE OPERA! ARIAS FOR AN ECLIPSE**, the directorial debut of renowned Italian opera and theatre director David Livermore, co-signed with Paolo Gep Cucco and co-produced by Dolce & Gabbana. This film courageously, inventively, and originally represents the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, integrating the prose of two great actors, Fanny Ardant and Vincent Cassel, with the voices of various spectacular singers.

Also on the bill is the latest works by two established Italian directors: **THE LIFE APART** by Marco Tullio Giordana, where music and the lives of two musicians intersect with family dramas, and **BATTLEGROUND** by Gianni Amelio, an original and engaging reflection on war, the individual's right to refuse it, and the tragic consequences that follow.

There will be a series of master classes with local film schools and meetings with South African authors and producers to develop new co-productions. The organisers highlight the commitment of the IFF, the co-production agreement between Italy and South Africa was signed in 2006, leading to the production of five feature films and several documentaries.

The festival is organized in collaboration with Consulate General of Italy in Johannesburg, the Consulate of Italy in Cape Town, and the Italian Cultural Institute in Pretoria.

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Educational activity at local film schools

The presence in Cape Town of a delegation of filmmakers will offer the opportunity to participate in an important educational activity that has developed over the years at local film schools. This relationship has seen our younger audience grow.

What: Italian Film Focus 2024 South Africa

Info: [Here](#), and [here](#)

WS



Sicilian Letters, featuring Toni Servillo and Elio Germano, screens at Italian Film Focus 2024.