



**Istituto
Italiano
di
Cultura**
Sydney

Film Society

150 YEARS OF ITALIAN REUNIFICATION SPECIAL SCREENINGS

The 150th anniversary of Italian reunification (il 150° anniversario dell'Unità d'Italia) was celebrated on 17 March 2011. It was on 17 March 1861 that the Italian Parliament proclaimed Victor Emmanuel II as King of the new nation of Italy. The celebration continues throughout this sesquicentennial year. A series of significant films about the Risorgimento (the Italian movement leading to reunification) and what happened after has been made available free of charge by the Italian Cultural Institute (Istituto Italiano di Cultura) for screening by Australian film societies.

Garibaldi (pictured above), the man seen as the chief instrument of Italian reunification, captured the imagination of the nineteenth-century. As Christopher Hibbert wrote in the preface to his *Garibaldi and His Enemies* (first published in 1965, now reissued in paperback as *Garibaldi: Hero of Italian Reunification*): “A hundred years ago, Garibaldi was, perhaps, the best-known name in the world. There were streets and squares named after him in a hundred different towns from Naples to Montevideo; statuettes of him, busts, medallions, china figurines were almost as common in Manchester as in Milan, in Boston as in Bologna; postcards garishly depicting his messianic features were sold in their millions; you could drink a Garibaldi wine, wear a Garibaldi blouse, see a Garibaldi musical, eat a Garibaldi biscuit.”

Christopher Hibbert continues: “When the legendary figure came to New York in 1850 he was, as the *New York Tribune* declared, already ‘world-famed’. And in London in 1864 *The Times* reported that such a welcome as he received had never before been known; everyone flocked to him from the Prince of Wales to the Archbishop of Canterbury; workingmen cheered him until they were hoarse; ladies fainted at the sight of him.”

Many English-speaking children may have first encountered the name “Garibaldi” in the children’s literary classic *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame. In the fifth chapter of his book first published in 1908, Grahame describes the forecourt to Badger’s home: “On the walls hung wire baskets with ferns in them, alternating with plaster statuary—Garibaldi, and the infant Samuel, and Queen Victoria, and other heroes of modern Italy.”

More than a century after Garibaldi, his name is no longer as well known outside Italy. Italy as a nation is taken for granted as though it had always existed. The 150th anniversary of the reunification of Italy offers the occasion to re-explore a turbulent history.

WEA Sydney Film Society with the support of the **Istituto Italiano di Cultura Sydney** is proud to present a series of four film programs celebrating Garibaldi, the Risorgimento, and 150 years of Italian reunification.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 AT NOON HISTORICAL OVERVIEW DOCUMENTARY & PRE-1960 FILMS

La presa di Roma (The Capture of Rome) 1905 – Drama, 6 mins, b&w. Dir. Filoteo Alberini

Rome 1870: a large-scale black-and-white reenactment of the historical events of the breach near the Porta Pia by “bersaglieri” soldiers on 20 September 1870. This film recorded a crucial moment in Italy’s history: the capture by the newly-formed Italian army of the nation’s intended capital city, Rome. General Carchidio is escorted under blindfold from Ponte Milvio to meet with General Ermanno Kanzler of the Papal Army. Carchidio issues an ultimatum to Kanzler to surrender, but Kanzler refuses. Italian troops breach the city walls and take possession of the city. The complete original film comprised seven scenes and ran approximately fifteen minutes. It was one of the first films with a complex plot. It was produced with the co-operation of Italy’s Ministry of War. The first official screening was held on the anniversary of the breach in 1905.

Il piccolo garibaldino (The Garibaldi Boy) 1909 – Drama, 9 mins, b&w. Prod. Filoteo Alberini

This is a short drama released in 1909 about a young volunteer’s fate during the Spedizione dei Mille, the military campaign led by revolutionary Giuseppe Garibaldi in 1860 to defeat the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, part of the campaign to unify Italy. Both silent films were restored by the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia and its Cineteca Nazionale division as part of a joint project between those organisations and the Grand Orient of Italy to mark the bicentennial celebrations of the birth of Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882).



Ma che Storia... (But What a History...) 2010 – Documentary film, 77 mins, b&w & colour. Directed by Gianfranco Pannone

A tragicomic journey through the last 150 years of history, from Garibaldi to Aldo Moro, from brigands to emigrants, told through documentary footage, newsreels, Italian folk songs (selected by ethnomusicologist Ambrogio Sparagna), literature, and popular music. Uses the resources of the Istituto Luce’s Historical Film and Photo Archive. Pannone considers this film to be “a synthesis of my documentary work over the past 20 years: Italian stories as told by ordinary people. Although Italy promotes great libertarian ideals, it is also a country that has mistreated its own citizens by first sending them to war and then forcing the consumerist logic upon them. The result is that most Italians have decided to forget about their past.”



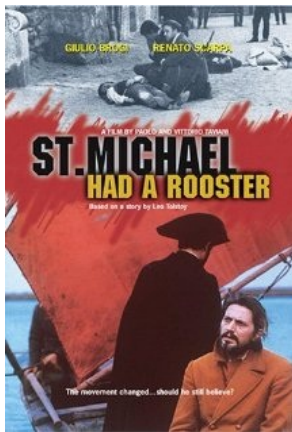
Piccolo mondo antico (Little Old-Fashioned World) 1941 – Drama, 106 mins, b&w. Directed by Mario Soldati, produced by Carlo Ponti. Starring Alida Valli and Massimo Serato

Based on the 1895 novel by Antonio Fogazzaro, the action takes place during the Italian Risorgimento in Austrian-occupied Lombardy. Franco Maironi (Massimo Serato) is a young aristocrat in love with Luisa (Alida Valli), a humble clerk’s daughter, and decides to marry her against the wishes of his titled grandmother. For his pains he is disinherited. He eventually volunteers as a soldier in the struggle to free Italy from Austria. In *Passion and Defiance: Film in Italy from 1942 to the Present* (1986), Mira Liehm wrote: “*Little Old-Fashioned World* became a legend and was considered by some as a direct forerunner of neorealism... After forty years [it] remains a cultured and well-made film, cool, distant, and full

of intellectual arabesques.... Its images of the habits and manners of nineteenth-century Lombardy, occupied by the Austrians, are the backdrop of a certain social world inhabited by withdrawn, suffering women, by heroic strong men, and by model children. The camera seeks out the most unusual angles, polishing the surfaces of all the shots.” The film was made during World War II, so while it may have been popular in Italy, it did not reach a world audience.

Alida Valli, whose most memorable roles include Anna Schmidt, the girlfriend of Harry Lime (played by Orson Welles) in *The Third Man* (1949), won a special prize for best actress at the 1941 Venice Film Festival for her role in *Piccolo mondo antico*. Valli returned to the Risorgimento for Luchino Visconti in *Senso* (1954). Suso Cecchi d’Amico collaborated with Visconti and others on the screenplay for *Senso*; her father Emilio Cecchi collaborated with Soldati and others on the screenplay for *Piccolo mondo antico*. Future directors Alberto Lattuada and Dino Risi were assistant directors on *Piccolo mondo antico*.

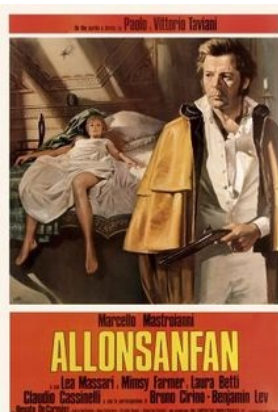
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16 AT NOON THE RISORGIMENTO & THE TAVIANI BROTHERS



San Michele aveva un gallo (St Michael Had a Rooster) 1972 – Drama, 90 mins, Eastmancolor. Directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani. Starring Giulio Brogi

Set in 19th century Italy. We first meet anarchist Giulio Manieri sticking to his political ideals and creating an imaginary world in the loneliness of his prison cell. How would he cope with freedom and how would he be received by his former political colleagues? Michael Atkinson in *Village Voice* (10 May 2005) writes: “A distinctive and restless force in European cinema for nearly five decades, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani achieved from their first films an eloquent stylistic bridge between Rossellinian stringency and Fellinian braggadocio. No European filmmaker has ever been as dedicated to their nation’s peasant legacy,

and no one on the continent since the ’70s has made such potent and revealing use of native landscape. Their 1982 masterpiece *The Night of the Shooting Stars* is essential and well hailed, but their other films shouldn’t be sidelined, particularly the earlier, politically eloquent films like *St. Michael Had a Rooster* (1972). A bitter, Tolstoy-derived farce, the film centers on an over-earnest anarchist (an uproarious performance by Giulio Brogi) whose ‘armed expeditions’ land him in prison.”



Allonsanfàn 1974– Drama, 110 mins, Eastmancolor. Directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani. Starring Marcello Mastroianni, Lea Massari and Mimsy Farmer

“1816. In Italy, as in the whole of Europe, which has been ravaged by twenty years of war, dethroned monarchs return to power. The last achievements of the French Revolution are annulled, the last revolutionaries scattered throughout the world.” This historical introduction in the original script sets the scene for *Allonsanfàn*, the title of which derives from an Italian mispronunciation of the first two words of *La Marsellaise*. Allonsanfàn is also the name of the youngest and most rational member of a secret revolutionary sect, the Sublime

Brethren. Lombard aristocrat Fulvio Imbriani (Marcello Mastroianni) seeks to distance himself from his former involvement with the Brethren, but his lover and former associates entice him

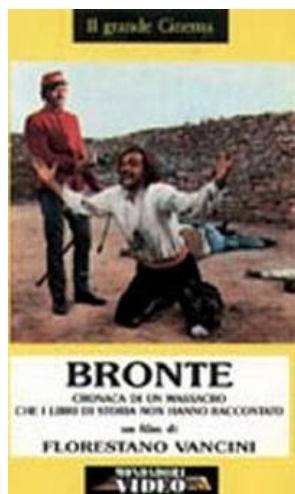
into a mission to free the south of Italy. Sect plans envisage that peasants will spontaneously join their revolt. Fulvio will discover that even if he betrays the sect, paradoxically his betrayal will lead him into deeper engagement with it. The sect's members wear red shirts or coats in action (later to be the uniform for Garibaldi's Risorgimento forces), but the time may not be ripe for the revolution that the activists and idealists of the sect seek to spark. *Allonsanfàn* features one of Ennio Morricone's best music scores, including the militant "Rabbia e tarantella" (anger and tarantella), one of several Morricone numbers reused in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009). The Tavianis' pair of colourful, provocative films about revolutionary action and illusion depict the world of the Risorgimento, but as intended by the directors, the films are also a critique of revolutionary ideals and modes of operation of the contemporary Italian Left.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20 AT NOON

CARLO PISACANE AND GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI

Quanto é bello morire acciso (How Wonderful to Die Assassinated) 1975 – Drama, 85 mins, colour. Directed by Ennio Lorenzini. Starring Stefano Satta Flores as Carlo Pisacane, Giulio Brogi, Alessandro Haber and Angela Goodwin

The story of Carlo Pisacane, Baron of San Giovanni (1818–1857), Italian patriot and one of the first Italian socialist thinkers. When politician, journalist, and activist for Italian reunification Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872), undeterred by the failure of the abortive Milan rising on 6 February 1853, determined to organize an expedition to provoke a rising in the Neapolitan kingdom, Pisacane offered himself for the task. The title of the film derives from a folk song as reworked by Roberto De Simone which is considered to be the forerunner of the Neapolitan folk revival of the seventies. In 1976 this film was awarded a Special David for direction at the David di Donatello Awards, and the Italian National Syndicate of Film Journalists awarded Ennio Lorenzini a Silver Ribbon for best new director.



Bronte: cronaca di un massacro che i libri di storia non hanno raccontato (Bronte: Chronicle of a Massacre That History Books Have Not Told) 1972 – Drama, 109 mins, Eastmancolor. Directed by Florestano Vancini. Starring Ivo Garrani as Nicolò Lombardo, Mariano Rigillo as Nino Bixio, with Ilija Dzuvaljekovski. International English title: **Liberty**

The film *Bronte* (aka *Liberty*) and Giovanni Verga's short story *Libertà* (1883) are based on what happened in Bronte, a town on the western slopes of Mount Etna, after Garibaldi's liberation of Sicily in 1860. But peasant expectations of relief from oppression by landowners went unfulfilled. Some peasants took matters into their own hands. Riots in Bronte led to the killing of 16 local dignitaries. Garibaldi sent his trusted general and friend Nino Bixio to restore public order. The justice administered by Bixio was swift, summary and brutal. Liberal lawyer and reformist Nicolò Lombardo was one of those tragically caught up in the events. When it was shown in cinemas in 1972, the film's revisionist historical perspective was attacked both from the Right (for "speaking ill of Garibaldi") and from the Left. It inspired much debate among Italian historians, intellectuals and politicians. This Italian-Yugoslavian co-production was originally intended as a three-part television miniseries. However, it has never been released in that format. Ten million people saw the feature film when RAI televised it in 1974. A restored version of the single-part *Bronte* with 16 additional minutes was released on DVD in 2002.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2012 AT NOON

STORY OF GARIBALDI & THE TRAGICOMIC CAPTURE OF ROME



Viva l'Italia! (Long Live Italy!) 1961 – Historical docudrama, 106 mins, Eastmancolor. Directed by Roberto Rossellini. Starring Renzo Ricci as Giuseppe Garibaldi, Paolo Stoppa as Nino Bixio, with Franco Interlenghi, Giovanna Ralli and Tina Louise.

Roberto Rossellini's *Viva l'Italia!* follows the progress of Giuseppe Garibaldi (Renzo Ricci) as he liberates Sicily and Naples. It was commissioned by the Italian Government 50 years ago to mark the centenary of the Italian nation.

“Of all my films, I’m proudest of *Viva l'Italia!* I consider it important as a work of research, as the most carefully done of all my films, and then because I feel it to be intimately true. I must confess, at the risk of sounding ridiculous, that when I watch *Viva l'Italia!*—and it’s the only one of my films that I have seen two or three times—my hair stands on end and tears come to my eyes.” So said Rossellini in an interview in the February 1964 issue of *Bianco e Nero*. The film was praised by critics. Maurizio Liverani in *Paesa Sera* (28 January 1961) wrote: “*Viva l'Italia* conquered the public by its constantly interesting action, animated storytelling, and the beauty of the memories that our Risorgimento’s glorious and sad drama evokes in us.” But there were some dissenting critical voices. Tommaso Chiaretti in the Communist *Il Paese* (28 January 1961) wrote: “Frankly, the film is little more than nothing. Except for Luciano Trasatti’s beautiful photography, it is on an inferior level formally and technically, in ideology, story and spectacle.”

This is a film by the director of the acclaimed War Trilogy: *Roma, città aperta* (*Rome, Open City*, the film that heralded Italian Neo-Realism, 1945), *Paisà* (*Paisan*, 1946) and *Germania anno zero* (*Germany Year Zero*, 1948). His later films include *Striomboli* (1950), *Viaggio in Italia* (*Journey to Italy*, 1954) and *La prise de pouvoir par Louis XIV* (*The Rise of Louis XIV*, 1966).



Arrivano i bersaglieri (Here Come the Riflemen) 1980 – Comedy/Drama, 120 mins, colour. Directed by Luigi Magni. Starring Ugo Tognazzi, Giovanna Ralli, Vittorio Mezzogiorno, Enrico Papa, with Carlo Bagno as Pope Pius IX.

The final event in the long process of Italian reunification, the Risorgimento, was the capture of Rome on 20 September 1870. Artillery breached the Aurelian Walls of Rome near the Porta Pia and Italian bersaglieri (riflemen) entered the city. During the capture, 49 Italian soldiers and 19 Papal Zouaves died. Proud Roman nobleman Don Prospero (played by Ugo Tognazzi) has been defending his city. He takes in a wounded Bourbon officer allied to the papal cause, Don Alfonso (played by Vittorio Mezzogiorno). Don Prospero’s wife Costanza and daughter Olimpia appear very taken with Don Alfonso. Gustavo Martini (played by Enrico Papa), an Italian nationalist with whom Olimpia is secretly in love, is a later arrival in the house. Gustavo knows that Don Alfonso has killed a bersagliere and that the dead man is Urbano, Don Prospero’s son. Servant Nunziatina (played by Giovanna Ralli) serves as a chorus and a repository of the traditional popular virtues. Director Luigi Magni exploits the plot complications which arise in the shadow of momentous events by alternating between laughter and tears, farce and melodrama.



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All screenings will take place in the David Stewart Room, ground floor, WEA House, 72 Bathurst Street, Sydney. We are located a two-minute walk from Town Hall Station. You can walk through Town Hall Arcade, cross Kent Street, and we are on the right-hand side of Bathurst Street past Paddy Pallin.

You can join WEA Sydney Film Society at any screening. Membership costs \$25 a quarter, \$50 for a half-year, and \$100 for a year. Concession memberships are available for full-time students, pensioners, unemployed people and Seniors Card holders (\$20 a quarter, \$40 for a half-year, and \$80 for a year). Note: The membership of a new member joining for a quarter any time in September will run until 31 January 2012.

Members enjoy free admission to all our screenings (at least two double-bill programs per month). (Note: Italian reunification screenings during 2011 are additional to our other screenings.) Optional informal discussion after each film is screened is a feature of our programming. Members receive detailed film notes before each screening.

Once each year, our members are requested to pay \$10 to join our parent organisation, WEA Sydney. Among other benefits of WEA

Sydney membership, members may borrow from the WEA Lending Library. WEA Lending Library card holders can also borrow from the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts Library, the oldest lending library in Australia with 30,000 volumes, specialising in popular fiction and mystery novels.

Further information: Contact John Burke (phone: 9280 3376; email: jonbevburke@gmail.com) or Leth Maitland (phone: 9476 4770; mobile: 0434 955 113; email: leth_maitland@hotmail.com).

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First Name

Surname
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Address
(including
postcode)

Email address

I enclose \$ for 3 MONTH/6 MONTH/ONE YEAR/CONCESSION membership (delete items not applicable). I have added \$10 for annual membership of WEA Sydney (delete if you have already paid to join WEA in the current year).

Total payment is \$

Signature

Date