

# 28 TFF

## TORINO FILM FESTIVAL

**Tuesday November the 30th, 5:00 pm, Massimo 3**

### **Sons and Lovers**

**Saverio Costanzo presents *The Exterminating Angel* by Luis Buñuel, with Roberto Nepoti and Emanuela Martini**

**Saverio Costanzo:** Among all the important movies of my life I chose this one by Buñuel because, when I watched it for the first time I understood what I was doing. Moreover I believe this movie fulfills completely what, to my opinion, is the commitment of film, namely to reveal image in mystery. It's a movie that doesn't want to finish and doesn't want to explain itself, still it's topical nowadays.

**Roberto Nepoti:** Regarding what Saverio just said, I'll quote Roland Barthes who said this movie was meant to be mostly sense and little significance. Keep the unspoken; if everything were to be translated into equivalence you'd lose the aura. The movie reveals Buñuel's hate for the ritual feeding bourgeois class: here the characters can't leave the house party, while in *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* – its twin film – they never get to eat.

**Saverio Costanzo:** I must say I watched the movie when I was already a grown-up, more or less when I was twenty five, when I'd already filmed a few documentaries in indoor environments, therefore it was useful to decode some of the things I'd done in my works. Buñuel hides on set a great naïve consciousness arising from the most basic questions the spectator asks himself, why can't the characters get out, why, after all, can't they be free? This thing about the indoor is rather important to me because I learned I have a problem with doors, boundaries between captivity and freedom which sometimes I can't get over. I realize this is a totally personal approach and documentary film has to do with reality, but film is so sincere it puts you in front of things about yourself you maybe don't want to see.

**Emanuela Martini:** If we had, as often happens to who, like us, writes about film, to force it to relate your choice to your former movies, could indoor be the key?

**Saverio Costanzo:** I've only made three movies, yet all three have in common indoor locations, seen as a constraint, often despite my will, since they're things you can't foresee. In *Private* it was a principle to keep the family inside the house, while *In Memory of Me* is about the need to lose personal freedom because the freedom of the world is unbearable. In *The Solitude of Prime Numbers* instead loneliness concurs to the inability to emancipate from oneself. Nowadays what isn't explained isn't accepted and this takes away power from film, which gathers its strength right from the unspoken and the mystery I was talking about before. The question "Why don't they get out?" would assume a capital answer in human life, that the movie intentionally doesn't give. Also *Belle de Jour* contains a lot of unspoken. Anyway *The Exterminating Angel* is fascinating above all for its extreme

modernity that makes it contemporary, even though there are elements proper to the Sixties, like the waiters' strike.

**Roberto Nepoti:** Also Buñuel's atheist disposition is strong; there's something lay used almost as a religious symbol that's put up in a provoking way.

**Saverio Costanzo:** The final scene, with the clergymen locked up in church is a true apocalypse, the one the bourgeois thought they avoided escaping from the villa.

**Roberto Nepoti:** There are also purely funny elements, for example the bear. Buñuel always plays on imperfection and repetition to create alienation. We could go on for hours looking for the meaning all the movie elements have, from lambs to hand – a typically surrealist element – to the role of Leticia who, after having sex for the first time, can see better and free all the others. However I believe the most extraordinary thing in the movie are all those unsolved situations which, like open spaces, make the audience question.

**Saverio Costanzo:** I believe this movie is very rich, and it holds within all the power of film. Naturally many movies have been fundamental to my life, often more on a personal level than for my profession as director. For example, another possible choice for this section of the Festival could've been *Amore Tossico* (Claudio Cagliari, 1983). I remember I watched it for the first time when I was fourteen, VHS, together with a friend: I was shocked by it, even more than by watching *The Exorcist* (William Friedkin, 1973). I could've chosen *8 1/2* (1963) too, or *2001: A Space Odyssey by Kubrik*(1968), or also *Eraserhead*, Lynch(1976), a movie on fatherhood, even if Lynch, all so committed and not wanting to upset family in any way, doesn't want to admit it.

**Roberto Nepoti:** Not randomly all the movies quoted leave many openings, without giving answers. This was characteristic of film a couple of decades ago, in the Seventies and Eighties for example, when not even genre movies were closed, they'd stay unsolved, while today we went back being used to sense. Therefore movies like *Inception* by Christopher Nolan (2010) all look for a meaning, an answer film isn't asked to give.