



PHOTO: GIOVANNI UMICINI

Holy Tongue - a surreal Italian comedy

La lingua del Santo, or Holy Tongue, is the fifth film Italian Director Carlo Mazzacurati and DP Alessandro Pesci have made together. It is a touching comedy set in Padua, featuring two famous Italian actors, Antonio Albanese and Fabrizio Bentivoglio. They play likeable small-time losers who impulsively steal a jewel-encrusted holy relic containing the tongue of local Saint Antonio, patron of the humble and needy. It is, they believe, their key to untold wealth and happiness.

Alessandro Pesci used Super35,

blown up to CinemaScope format. He explained, "We chose CinemaScope because we wanted to give our audiences a wider cinematic experience. Originally, CinemaScope was only used for 'scenic' spectaculars, historical epics or war movies. But I believe the widescreen format is perfect for any

"Vision Premier film was the ideal choice at print stage for this movie..."



Captions to come

dramatic big screen experience, whatever the genre.

"Director Carlo Mazzacurati and I have always got along well. We share a common view of filmmaking: we both consider simplicity and 'good taste' as continuous references in our works, and that intuition and creativity should take precedence over the technicalities of filmmaking.

"I aimed for robust colourful photography to mimic the surrealistic story. It had to look real, but at the same time, a little surreal. Because we were going from Super35 to CinemaScope, I knew we needed a 'full' and bold negative to get our final vigorous look. So I slightly overexposed when shooting. Incidentally, we got the quality we needed in our 'CinemaScope' print thanks largely to huge advances in film technology in recent years. Advances that gave us the superb negative stocks we use today. A few years ago - with the older negative films - our 'route' from Super35 to CinemaScope would not have been practical.

"Vision Premier film was the ideal choice at print stage for this movie - since it has an outstanding brightness - and it also helped a lot in getting the colourful glossy image we were aiming at."



news in brief

Film (Italy) La Lingua del Santo

Alessandro used Vision 200T, 500T and 800T as originating stocks. "I used Vision 200T for day exteriors and Vision 500T for all interiors and night exteriors. The Vision 800T was my 'power reserve' for critical lighting sets."

There is a dream sequence in the movie where Saint Antonio asks one of the thieves to return his stolen tongue. Alessandro gave the scene a completely different look. "I shot with Vision 500T through a Fog-3 filter and overexposed the actors' faces by 2 T-stops. I then asked the lab (Technicolor Rome) to overdevelop by 1 T-stop. It gave the sequence a more saturated and grainy image, perfect for making it stand out from the rest of the film and giving it a 'dreamy' moody style."

Alessandro has clear ideas about

"It had to look real, but at the same time, a little surreal"

the future of cinematography and the role of digital technology: "An impressive 40 minutes of **La lingua del Santo** footage was enhanced digitally with special effects and recorded back onto film with an almost seamless quality.

Digitisation means we now have an extra creative tool to help define the final look of the movie. We can get the 'look' in camera - or digitally at the post-production stage. Digitisation increasingly influences the way we shoot films by allowing us to choose the most efficient route to special effects. The wise DP will quickly learn how to exploit the new digital tool but his role won't change. His 'creative eye' will always be needed behind the camera to interpret the director's vision". 

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Data File

La lingua del Santo

Producer	Marco Valsania and Marco Poccioni
Director	Carlo Mazzacurati
Director of Photography	Alessandro Pesci
Screenwriters	Franco Bernini, Umberto Contarello, Carlo Mazzacurati, Marco Pettenello
Associate Producer	Francesca Di Donna
Editor	Paolo Cottignola
Camera Operator	Fabrizio Vicari
Camera Operator	Enrico Umetelli
Focus-Puller	Andrea Legnani
Chief Electrician	Federico Conte
Grip	Riccardo Serravalli

Previous works from the Carlo Mazzacurati and Alessandro Pesci partnership include **Il Toro (The Bull)** and **Un'altra vita (Another life)**.