

Catinari paints a cold and distant vision of Rome for *Luce dei miei occhi*

Young international cinematographer Arnaldo Catinari, AIC, AEC, has already shot 28 pictures in his relatively short career. But his approach to cinematography has changed significantly since he first started. He explained why, when describing his filming of ***Luce dei miei occhi*** (**Apple of my eye**), directed by Giuseppe Piccioni.

"On my first films I used loads of lights to impress the audience. But today I always light as simply and naturally as possible, inspired by that poet of light, Nestor Almendros.

"Similarly, I would use many Kodak stocks in the same picture, like a chef choosing ingredients to create astounding dishes. Now I keep it simple, just one stock for each picture.

"For ***Luce dei miei occhi*** I used Vision 500T exposed at 1000 ASA and overdeveloped by one stop to compensate. I like contrast, and deep blacks, and that way I get a sharper image and better colours."

DP Arnaldo also operated the camera until he met Marco Pieroni.

"We met when filming ***Ecco Fatto*** and discovered we have common ideas about cinematography. We both like a moving camera, either on a dolly or through a Steadicam. I soon realised that when working with a brilliant cameraman like Marco, I could concentrate on orchestrating the lighting to interpret the director's vision. That's what we've done on our last five or six films. I leave Marco to worry about the camera!

"We shot ***Luce dei miei occhi*** in

Rome, an unusual Rome, with many night shots and interiors of small apartments. The story, framed in Super 35, is about two lonely people, 'outsiders', living in Rome. The man, a taxi-driver, seems detached from reality. He falls for a strange unresponsive woman, who can't easily express her inner feelings.

"To suggest the loneliness of the woman, we show her alone in her house, in a long steady shot varying the frames per second from 24 to 30 to suggest a slightly surreal floating state.

"American artist Edward Hopper, is famous for his dark, contrasty, harshly lit paintings of US Diners at night, seen from the street. Giuseppe wanted a similar look for the 'cold Rome nights' the man sees from his taxi.

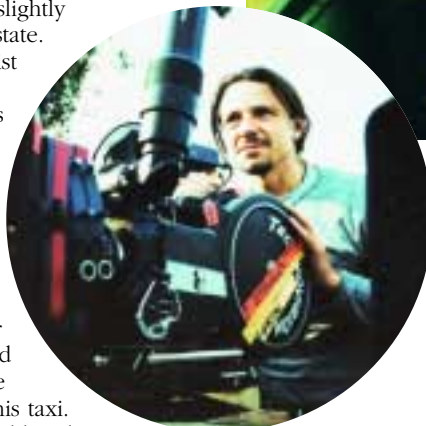
So I painted a cold and distant Rome outside, strikingly different from the more usual warm 'picture postcard' views.

"There are many shots where the camera is 'outside', looking 'in'. We see the characters through a window. We kept the camera still for those scenes, and mixed these 'still' images in with the normal sequences to give a sense of 'floating' in outer space, like the taxi-driver in his car.

"It was a big challenge. The



▲ Director Giuseppe Piccioni (left) and Arnaldo Catinari (right).



▲ Cinematographer Arnaldo Catinari

Director wanted the cold, contrasty overall 'look', while, at the same time, enhancing the beauty of the woman throughout the picture.

"I achieved the latter with softer lighting, especially on close-ups, and reducing the contrast, on her shots only, by rating the Vision 500T normally, instead of underexposing and over-processing.

"Giuseppe Piccioni is the extraordinary author of many beautiful films, shot mainly from static camera positions. But he chose me for my style, knowing that I couldn't make a static film and that, for me, the camera must be constantly moving.

"After we talked things over Giuseppe knew we were on the same wavelength and fully embraced my cinematographic style. He was happy to concentrate more and more on the actors, leaving the cinematography to my crew and me.

"Together we made a beautiful film by keeping it simple.

"Simple – but far from easy!"



◀ Marco Pieroni (Steadicam Operator) filming main actress Sandra Ceccarelli on a Steadicam shot

Data File

Luce dei miei occhi

Director
Director of Photography
Camera Operator
Camera Assistant/Loader
Focus-Puller
Focus Puller
(Second Camera)
Head Grip
Gaffer
Grader (Cinecittà)

Giuseppe Piccioni
Arnaldo Catinari AEC, AIC
Marco Pieroni
Daniilo Caruso
Armando Barberi

Alberto Torrecilla
Luciano Mastropietro
Fabio Capozzi
Stefano Giovannini