

The iguana

a film by
CATHERINE MCGILVRAY

produced by
CESARE LANDRICINA

ANDREA RENZI
AMANDO PINHEIRO
CLAUDIA TEIXEIRA

"Journeys are dreams and iguanas are warnings..."

SYNOPSIS

Based on the novel, *The Iguana*, by Anna Maria Ortese (published by Adelphi), the film narrates the adventures of Aleardo, a rich, dreamy Italian architect who, while travelling for pleasure and work in a sailing boat, lands on the remote island of Ocana. Here three impoverished Portuguese aristocrats are living in dire poverty, cut off from the world and thrown back to the nineteenth century. There is the melancholy, tormented Ilario and his sinister half-brothers, Hipolito and Felipe, together with a female servant they treat like an animal and mysteriously call “Iguana”. Fascinated by the extravagance of his hosts and troubled by the suffering and charm of the young Iguana, Aleardo stays on the island for a night and a day, during which time he is slowly drawn into an intrigue with disturbing implications. Is Iguana really the latest transformation of the devil (as the inhabitants of the island believe) or is she merely a victim, an innocent creature to be saved and protected at any cost? Aleardo’s journey becomes a hallucinating descent into hell.

DECLARATION BY THE DIRECTOR

“Journeys are dreams and iguanas are warnings...”

“The Iguana” is a symbolic film, a disturbing fable about the corrupting power of money and the suffering of poor, simple creatures. It is a response to a challenge: to explain the inexplicable. It is a translation into images of the experimental, mannerist novel by Ortese. The writing is highly imaginative in the abstract sense of literary figuration. The challenge led me to search for a stylisation, an ellipse, a fable -- the *off screen*. While I was filming, I had in mind a fantastic, visionary cinema and certain dreamlike atmospheres of Polanski, De Oliveira and Raul Ruiz. There was also another challenge: The Iguana of the novel is at the same time a green animal, an enchanting young girl and a poor, decrepit slave. I chose to depict her as a wild girl through the enchanted gaze of Aleardo, as a reptile with an evil perspective who had been corrupted by the other characters. It is both things and “there is nothing wrong with this”, to use the line of a character in the novel and in the film: evil – like goodness – is in the eye of the beholder.

I *stole* my Iguana from the ingenious João César Monteiro: Claudia Teixeira, the little Joaniña of “A Comedia de Deus”.

CAST

Andrea Renzi (*Aleardo*)
Amândio Pinheiro (*Ilario*)
Claudia Teixeira (*Estrellita*)
Tommaso Ragno (*Don Fidenzio*)
Rosario Minardi (*Hipolito*)
Franz Cantalupo (*Felipe*)
Marco Basile (*Salvato*)
Alberto Rossatti (*Giudice-man in shadow*)
Sabrina Petix (*Aleardo's moother*)
Francesco Alderuccio (*Friar at Court*)
with Francesco Siciliano (*Max Adelchi*)
and a special appearance of
Lucia Sardo (*senhora Gomez*)

A NOTE ON THE ACTORS

Andrea Renzi

Renzi is a theatre director and film actor. Since he was very young, he has worked in the most interesting avant-garde Italian theatre together with Mario Martone. He became a favourite actor both in the theatre (*Tango Glaciale*, *Ritorno ad Alphaville*, *Riccardo II*, *I sette contro Tebe*) and in films (*Morte di un matematico napoletano*, *Teatro di guerra*).

In films and television he has worked with directors such as Ferzan Ozpetek (*Le fate ignoranti*), Francesca Archibugi (*I promessi sposi*) and Isabella Sandri (*Animali che attraversano la strada*).

He was recently the protagonist of "*L'uomo in più*" by Paolo Sorrentino and "*La spettatrice*" by Paolo Franchi.

Amândio Pinheiro

Pinheiro is a Portuguese theatre and film actor.

In the theatre, he has worked with Eimuntas Nekrosius (*Il gabbiano*) and he appeared in the film "*L'homme des foules*" by Lvoff and "*Capitani d'aprile*" by Maria de Medeiros. He has also worked with Edgar Pêra, the director.

Claudia Teixeira

Teixeira is a Portuguese actress and musician. She appeared in "*A comedia de deus*" di João Cesar Monteiro in the role of the little Joanina.

She recently worked in the still unfinished film by the Portuguese director, Margarida Gil.

Tommaso Ragno

Ragno is a theatre and film actor. He has worked in shows directed by Mario Martone, Carlo Cecchi and Emma Dante.

He recently appeared in the film, "*Chimera*" by Pappi Corsicato and "*Il consiglio d'Egitto*" by Emidio Greco

Catherine McGilvray

Bio-filmography

Catherine McGilvray was born in Rome in 1965 of an Australian father and a French mother. She received a degree in History of the Theatre at the Sapienza University in Rome. She later obtained a diploma in Directing from the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia and did further study in film and television writing at the A.F.T.R.S. in Sydney, Australia.

She worked for several years with the Barberio Corsetti theatrical company before becoming a translator of literary works and was the author and hostess of feature shows for Rai Radio3.

She wrote and directed the shorts:

“**Voci di pietra**” (Voices of Stone) (1991- Media Save Art; Luci della Città prize)

“**L'Ospite**” (The Guest) (1991)

“**Il Cavaliere e la morte**” (The Knight and the Death) (1993 - mention Efebo d'oro di Agrigento)

“**Parigi cambia**” (Paris Changes) (1994 - Best Film festival Capalbiocinema)

“**Aspettando il treno**” (Waiting for the train) (35mm -B/W- 10' ©2004)

Already at the following film festivals : *Torino Filmfestival, competition • Prix David di Donatello, finalist • Capalbio Cinema 11ma ed., best Italian Film • Grand Prix du Court Metrage de Montpellier, Jury special mention • Prix Cinécinécourt Cinemas, Montpellier • Mediterranean Festival of New Film-Makers competition • Festival Cinéma Méditerranéen de Tetuan, competition • Festival du Court Mètrage de Bruxelles, competition • Cortopote (Bergamo), prix Artistic Commitee • Maremetraggio (Trieste), competition • Corto Dorico 2005, Jury award • Med Film Festival, Kodak award •*

She has written and directed the documentaries:

“**La strada dei mobili stanchi**” (The Street of Tired Furniture) (1991)

“**Templum gentis flaviae**” (1994)

“**Descrizione di una battaglia**” (Description of a Battle) (1993 - Sole Blu Prize at the Festival Riccione)

“**Renata Scotti: l'île Opéra**” (2000)

“**Il treno per l'Opera**” (The Train for the Opera) (2000)

Feature films:

“L'Iguana” (35mm color, 95', ©2004) first feature film.

Already at the following film festivals: • *Torino Film festival, competition* • *Sguardi altrove (Milano), competition* • *BAFilmFestival (Varese), best production design* • *LAI Film Festival (Los Angeles), competition* • *Bellaria Film Festival, as special guest* • *Shanghai International Film Festival, Focus Italy* • *Napoli Film Festival, competition* • *Foreign Film Festival 2005 (Ischia), best director* • *Il vento del cinema (Procida) special guest* • *Maremetraggio (Trieste) competition* • *Alexandria Int. Film Festival* • *Italian Film Festival in Stockholm* •

The artistic motivation of

CESARE LANDRICINA

Screenwriter and producer of “The Iguana”

I read “The Iguana” by Anna Maria Ortese many years ago when it was first published by Adelphi and the author was still writing. I was struck, moved and amused by the interweaving of reality, dreams, magic and daily absurdities that the novel – dramatic but with a persistent, subtle irony – put into play like a continual opening of a Chinese box where one situation develops into another with surprising *coups de théâtre*.

At that time I wrote an initial treatment but for various reasons I abandoned the project. When, at the end of the 1990s, I again thought seriously of bringing “The Iguana” to the screen, I was urged by various professional, practical and financial motivations, although the real reason was another.

Although I am not a real *cinéphile*, I follow the events of Italian cinema, especially the so-called “authored” films. While appreciating and admiring the work of many young directors, I noted with impatience that in most cases their films explored exclusively the sphere of daily reality.

For my part, I aspired to a film that was set between heaven and earth, or at least two palms above the asphalt of the city.

That is what I wanted to realize, perhaps with a pinch of presumption, by adapting and producing “The Iguana”: a film that bucked the trend, one that was difficult, allusive, symbolic and magical. It was a film that restored to the spectator what for me was the *leitmotiv* of the novel by Ortese: a tormenting tenderness and nostalgia for a “non-place”, a parallel world that is distant but also near. It was a world where it was possible, to quote a the writer Adalbert Stifter, to pay attention to the “infinitely small”, to the pauses, the silences and the interior reflections.

Cesare Landricina

Bio-filmography

Born in Modena the 6th september 1941. From 1955 until 1958 first theatre experiences as assistant director. From 1959 until 1963 first experiences in the Film industry as production assistant and assistant director for a series of mythological films in "Cinecittà". From 1965 until 1969 culture trips to Denmark, West Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, France, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Spain, Portugal, Maroc, Greece. Language in order of knowledge: German, English, French.

Short list of productions on which he worked as:

Assis' t Director:

" *Trio* " , Episodes Film , Directed by G.Mingozzi - IDI Cinematografica, Rome 1964/65
" *La vita in gioco* " , Fiction , directed by G.Mingozzi, Cineprintemps, Rome 1972

As line Producer and Executive producer

" *La Ferdinanda* " , Art Film, written & directed by Rebecca Horn,1980
" *La Vela Incantata* " , Fiction ,written & directed by G.Mingozzi, 1981
" *Haus im Süden* " , Tv- movie, written & directed by Sebastian Schroeder,1983
" *Davide & Sara* " , Fiction ,written & directed by I.B.Micheli,, 1984
" *Francesca degli Angeli* " , Art Film , written & directed by Verena Rudolph, 1985
" *Der Feuerberg* " , Tv-movie, written & directed by Herbert Broedel,1988
" *La Maschera* " , written & directed by F. Infascelli 1989
" *The young Indiana Jones Chronicles* " Series II,
" *Northern Italy 1918* " Directed by Billy August
" *Florence 1908* " Directed by Mike Newl
Lucas Film Ltd U.K. London -1992 - Media Land Srl, Roma

As Producer:

" *Momenti di silenzio* " , short fiction film,by Marcantonio Graffeo,1995
" *Once upon the Danube* " Docu-fiction, by Ivo Barnabò Micheli, 1997
" *L' ultima libertà* " , culture Tv Film , by Gianfranco Mingozzi,2000
" *Waiting for the train* " , short Fiction Film, by Catherine McGilvray,2004
" *L'Iguana* " , 95' fiction, a film by *Catherine McGilvray*
written and produced by *Cesare Landricina*, 2004

L'iguana

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supported by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage – Division Cinema*

35mm color - 95' Dolby Digital
©Media Land Srl, 2004

Producer: Cesare Landricina
Director: Catherine McGilvray
Screenplay: Cesare Landricina
*based on a novel "L'Iguana" of Anna Maria Ortese,
printed by McPherson & Company , NY 1987*

Prod.designer: Marianna Sciveres
Costumes: Ilaria Albanese
Sound: François Waledisch
Photographer: Massimo Zeri
Editor: Nicole Sérés-Giovanni Ballantini
Artistic cooperato: Bruno Roberti
Music: Roberto Caravella for
“ *Edizioni Musicali III Millennio* ”

Laboratory: TECHNICOLOR-THOMPSON, Rome
Sound post production: SOUND ON LINE
Mixage : CINECITTA' STUDIOS

*Part of the scenes has been shoot in Lisbon, Portugal
and particularly at
Marzamemi, Ispica, Vendicari, Noto, Palazzolo, Fontane Bianche
by the province of Siracusa, Sicily*

contacts

Media Land srl
vicolo di S.Agata 15 - 00199 Roma
ph&/fax 06.5803962

medialandsrl@virgilio.it
<http://xoomer.virgilio.it/medialandsrl>

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