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news September 6, 2008

Venice 2008 – Venice Days/Italy

Rezza and Mastrella turn the table on critics

Under the pretence of collecting extra material for their first DVD compilation, of short films made in the 1990s, Antonio Rezza and Flavia Mastrella interviewed some of Italy's most well-known film critics, asking them to expound upon their eclectic films. The interviews instead were for the documentary *The Past is My Stick*, which screened yesterday to an audience made up some of the critics, who saw the work for the first time.

In the film, excerpts of the aforementioned films are intertwined with often philosophical monologues from the critics. The filmmakers admitted that while editing the material, in just 20 days in order to be ready for Venice, they had tears in their eyes – from laughter.

(The article continues below - Commercial information)



When Venice Days Delegate General Fabio Ferzetti commented that the critics, himself included, were placed in precarious positions, performing acrobatics to describe the duo's experimental works, Mastrella quipped that "the critics needed to be as precarious" as filmmakers are in general.

Rezza added their intention was never to mock their subjects, because "we owe our existence to critics." Considered enfant terribles in Italy, they have nevertheless accumulated a solid following throughout their over 20-year career in film and theatre.

The documentary further reflected Rezza and Mastrella's own creative and very physical approach. "We have no idea what we'll do when we arrive on set so we wanted the critics to make their own free, analytical associations. We impeded most of the critics from sitting because a tired body relies less on rhetoric."

The film was produced by Rezzamastrella and Federico Carra's Kiwido. After vowing for years that they would never put together a collection of their short films from the 1990s, they succumbed to requests from numerous fans. *Ottimismo Democratico* ("Democratic Optimism") will be released in November by Kiwido and will include *The Past is My Stick*.

Natasha Senjanovic

Venice 2008 – Awards

Blanc becomes 11th French actress to scoop Volpi Cup

Venice 2008 – Awards

Golden Lion goes to US title but Best Actors are European

Venice 2008 – Horizons/USA-Italy

Rosi goes *Below Sea Level*

Venice 2008 – Horizons/Awards

Gianfranco Rosi's *Below Sea Level* crowned top doc

Venice 2008 – Corto

Cortissimo/Awards

Armella, Perlmann and Van Ginkel pick up prizes

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