



COME UNDONE

Directed by Silvio Soldini

“Silvio Soldini again crafts a handsome, well-considered relationship drama”

-Jay Weissberg, *Variety*



Italy | 2010 | Erotic Drama
Italian with English subtitles | 121 min. | 2.35 : 1 | Dolby Digital

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SYNOPSIS

Anna has everything she thought she could ever need: a respectable career, a caring family, and a loving partner, Alessio. But when she meets Domenico, a handsome, married waiter, her neatly ordered world begins to fall apart. They quickly fall into a heated affair, based on secret meetings, stolen caresses, cell phone fights, and endless lies. Anna's increasingly distant behavior goes unnoticed by Alessio, while Domenico's wife becomes steadily more suspicious of her husband. As the two lovers begin to fall deeper under the spell of passion, they are faced with a life-changing choice which neither is entirely prepared to make.

FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

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INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

Silvio Soldini

How did the idea for this film come about?

It was inspired by two different things. The desire to take a look at the reality of our moment in time, as in *Days and Clouds*, and to relate it "from the inside", from the angle of ordinary people. And then the desire to tackle the story of a passionate love affair in the most direct way possible, following the characters on their emotional journey, sticking closely to the truth of each moment. It all began when a friend of mine, who works as a secretary, told me about what she was going through: for the first time, real life events gave me the idea for a film.

What were you interested in exploring through this story of this love affair?

My friend's experience seemed to be marked by frustration concerning a number of things: time, places to meet, money... That's what I wanted to show. A couple falling in love, intense passion, but in a highly specific family, social and cultural context, with all the conditioning that results from that. In the movies, this kind of story is often detached from everything around it. The characters are basically free, they don't have any major obstacles, they talk only about falling in love and betrayal. But with my screenwriters I wanted to show very real characters, with problems that we all have, as if they were people that we know, in situations that we all experience. I remember being particularly

struck by the film *Falling In Love*, in which two stars like De Niro and Meryl Streep seem like ordinary people.

Anna and Domenico are souls split in two...

Yes. On the one hand, there's the desire to throw themselves into this and live their passion and love to the full; on the other, there's fear, the sense of responsibility, the awareness of what they have invested to get the lives they lead, their families...

The audience will inevitably be split too...

The film shows the wealth of human possibilities, the various ways of reacting to events but it doesn't take sides. The audience will be able to identify with all the characters. Being necessarily opposed to what the two main characters want doesn't make Alessio, Anna's partner, and Miriam, Domenico's wife, negative characters. They're just human.

Did the sex scenes frighten you?

I like each film to be a new challenge, the chance to enter realms that I have never explored before. Once, I would have found it hard dealing with the scene of the family Sunday lunch too, with all these actors around a table... Basically, you could say that the time had come and that, with the serenity and experience I have acquired, I felt ready. I thought a lot of *Intimacy* and *Late Marriage*, in which sexuality is treated in a very direct, almost crude yet also playful manner, but never with a voyeuristic gaze. In ***Come Undone***, sex is shown like all the other moments in the story, in a very natural manner. It's necessary to explain how the relationship between Anna and Domenico gradually changes. We aim for empathy, not eroticism. Alba and Pierfrancesco put themselves on the line with a great deal of generosity and professionalism. Often in films, these scenes are not rehearsed, to put off the moment of awkwardness, but if you start shooting without exactly knowing what should happen, the results can be disappointing. We rehearsed these scenes just like the others and we shot them in single takes, without a break. True, there were very few of us on the set, and I had to push the dolly myself!

Why did you choose these two actors?

After completing the screenplay with Doriana Leondeff and Angelo Carbone - whose contribution was fundamental in relating a generation that is no longer mine - I had fairly confused ideas about the two main characters. Anna needed to be a woman in her early thirties with a strength and sensuality of her own, capable of taking the initiative, because she is the driving force that sets everything in motion. In short, a woman with an image fairly distant from the one that Alba Rohrwacher had in my mind. I like her a lot as an actress and had already worked with her on *Days and Clouds*, in which she played the twenty-year-old daughter... If I chose her in the end, it's all to her credit. She was so keen to play this part, to test her limits with a character so far from the ones that she has been given until now, that after five screen tests I realized that I had my Anna, that Alba could do it. I didn't know Pierfrancesco Favino, but we got along well right away. I made him do a screen test and when my casting director, Jorgelina Depetris, and I saw him with Alba, we realized right away that they were Anna and Domenico. I had already worked with Teresa Saponangelo on *The Acrobat*, I had seen her in various other films, and the role of Miriam seemed ideal for her. Giuseppe Battiston, on the other hand, is the only actor that I had in mind while I was writing. We go back a long way now with a

bond that runs through all my films, except for the first one, and I always want to offer him new characters, different from the ones that he has played before, to take our work to a higher level. I enjoy working with him a lot.

After two films set in Genoa, you've returned to Milan where you hadn't made a movie since 1993. How did the place seem after so long?

A story like this could only be set in Milan. Anna lives in the hinterland and to get to work each day she comes into the city by train. Her parents and her aunt live on the outskirts where they have a laundry. Domenico lives in a sort of suburban skyscraper... I liked the idea of investigating the relationship between the city center and its outskirts, which has changed a lot recently, both from a sociological and from a pictorial point of view. I was interested in filming a modified urban landscape, the shopping malls, the work in progress, the construction sites...

In *Come Undone* you continue in the documentary style first adopted for *Days and Clouds*. Has the story imposed the directing style this time too?

Yes, the idea is that the direction should be invisible and unremarkable. The sensation should be that of capturing reality in motion, to the extent that everything seems to happen just as we are filming it. As if we had gone down into the street with the camera, among real people. Ramiro Civita, the director of photography, worked with a very natural style of lighting that allowed us to move the actors around as much as possible. On top of that, he works brilliantly with a hand-held camera, which you could say is a fundamental instrument for a film with such preconditions. When it is used well, with its tiny imperfections, it can only add truth to what is being told. And, above all, of course, the director must always ask himself if what he sees happening in front of his lens rings true.

How does this directing style influence the actors' work?

The camera follows the characters, it is always level with them, collusive and involved, and it often frames them from behind to be with them, without judging them. More and more often, I arrive on the set knowing what I want to tell, but not how to do it exactly. I first need to work with the actors in a given setting. Then I send them to get made up and I rehearse the scene, even for just fifteen minutes, the scene that we have already rehearsed before shooting started, to figure out how to move around the set. Initially, in my first films, my starting point was the camera movement or the frame. Now I take my lead from the actors, using single takes as much as I can. I have to see to understand. Sometimes, it's only once you start filming a scene that you discover that there's a better way of shooting it and a lot of ideas also come from the actors in motion. And then there's something that no one ever mentions: editing. That's where the scenes really come to life and rewrite themselves sometimes. *Come Undone* is a film in which Carlotta Cristiani's editing was fundamental in finding the film's music with very raw cuts at times, out of synch, but always with the idea of telling the story more skillfully, of capturing the emotion in every little moment given by the actors.

Your films always pay a great deal of attention to the so-called minor roles...

That's one of the things that I learned from American movies, which frequently create supporting characters that are more memorable than the main ones. I do screen tests for even the shortest scenes and I like to build up minor characters even if we only see them for a few seconds. I really don't like the term "supporting role". A role can be supporting or minor in terms of the time spent on the screen, but often not in its importance to the story.

Giovanni Venosta's score is a lot more rock-influenced this time...

Yes, it's a new adventure each time with Giovanni. The thing that both of us hate more than anything are films with music that you have already heard before... and there are a lot of them! And so we always try to find a very specific starting point. For *Bread and Tulips*, it was a tango, the one that he had written for the final scene; for *Days and Clouds* it was the sound of the bouzouki, which brought us a Mediterranean atmosphere. This time, however, we immediately talked about a rock sound and everything started with a piece by Giovanni that was inspired by the music in a David Lynch film. I immediately placed it over the scene in which Anna drives to the motel.

You've been working with Lionello Cerri since *Burning in the Wind*. An association that has grown stronger over time...

We now know our mutual qualities and shortcomings, we can even fight without calling our relationship into question! With a producer, it's not always easy to understand one another, the points of view don't always coincide. But the important thing is to trust one another and believe in mutual honesty. That's how it is with Lionello.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY & FILMOGRAPHY

Born in Milan in 1958, Soldini lived in New York from 1980 to 1982, where he took a film course at NYU. In 1983, he shot his first 16mm medium-length film, PAESAGGIO CON FIGURE which, along with GIULIA IN OTTOBRE, won awards in various national and international festivals. In 1984, with his closest collaborators, he founded the Monogatari production company and, in 1985, with VOICI CELATE, started his work in the documentary field. His first feature, L'ARIA SERENA DELL'OVEST, screened in competition at the Locarno Festival in 1990, won various prizes in international festivals and was a significant hit with audiences. In 1993, he made UN'ANIMA DIVISA IN DUE, screened in competition at the Venice Festival, where Fabrizio Bentivoglio was awarded the Best Actor prize.

In 1997, he directed LE ACROBATE, selected in competition at the Locarno Festival and at the San Francisco International Film Festival, and an award winner at the Rencontres Internationales de Cinéma in Paris and in Saint-Vincent with the Best Actress Grolla d'Oro for Valeria Golino.

In 2000, he directed BREAD AND TULIPS, his first comedy, a film that brought him fame thanks to its success with critics and audiences, both in Italy and abroad. The film won 9 David di Donatello, 5 Nastri d'Argento and 9 Ciak d'oro awards, also obtaining 3 nominations for the European Academy Awards. The film was a big hit in Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, Brazil and the USA. BRUCIO NEL VENTO, 2002, was a drama based on Agota Kristof's novel "Yesterday", shot in Switzerland and the Czech Republic. Screened in competition at the Berlin Festival, the film obtained 8 David di Donatello nominations and won the Best Film prize at the International Festival Film by the Sea in Vlissingen, Netherlands. In 2004, he directed AGATA AND THE STORM, his second comedy, with a more surreal tone this time. And in 2007 DAYS AND CLOUDS, with Margherita Buy and Antonio Albanese, a realist film that tackles the highly topical theme of being out of work. The film won 2 David di Donatello awards and was distributed in over 20 countries worldwide.

FILMOGRAPHY

Features

2007 DAYS AND CLOUDS (*Giorni E Nuvole*)
2004 AGATA AND THE STORM (*Agata E La Tempesta*)
2002 BURNING IN THE WIND (*Brucio Nel Vento*)
2000 BREAD AND TULIPS (*Pane E Tulipani*)
1997 THE ACROBAT (*Le Acrobate*)
1993 A SOUL SPLIT IN TWO (*Un'anima Divisa In Due*)
1990 THE PEACEFUL AIR OF THE WEST (*L'aria Serena Dell'ovest*)

Medium-length and short films

2005 DELIRIO AMOROSO (recording of a show starring Licia Maglietta)
1997 DIMENTICARE BIASCA
1994 FATE IN BLU DIESIS D'ESTATE (in the "Miracoli" series of short films)
1992 FEMMINE, FOLLE E POLVERE D'ARCHIVIO

1987 ANTONIO E CLEO (episode in "Provvisorio Quasi d'amore")
1985 GIULIA IN OTTOBRE
1983 PAESAGGIO CON FIGURE
1982 DRIMAGE

Documentaries

2008 QUATTRO GIORNI CON VIVIAN UN PAESE DIVERSO
2007 UN PIEDE IN TERRA, L'ALTRO IN MARE
1999 ROM TOUR
1998 IL FUTURO ALLE SPALLE – Voci da un'età inquieta
1997 CASE COSE CITTÀ (in the Italian Alphabet series)
1996 MADE IN LOMBARDIA
1995 FRAMMENTI DI UNA STORIA TRA CINEMA E PERIFERIA
1991 MUSICHE BRUCIANO
1987 LA FABBRICA SOSPESA
1986 VOCI CELATE

CREDITS

CREW

Director	SILVIO SOLDINI
Story	DORIANA LEONDEFF and SILVIO SOLDINI
Screenplay	DORIANA LEONDEFF, ANGELO CARBONE, SILVIO SOLDINI
Photography	RAMIRO CIVITA (A.D.F.)
Editing	CARLOTTA CRISTIANI
Music	GIOVANNI VENOSTA
Sound	FRANÇOIS MUSY
Production design	PAOLA BIZZARRI
Costumes	SILVIA NEBIOLO
Assistant director	CINZIA CASTANIA
Casting director	JORGELINA DEPETRIS (U.I.C.)
Production manager	ANTONELLA VISCARDI (A.P.A.I.)

Produced by **LIONELLO CERRI**
Co-produced by **RUTH WALDBURGER**

CAST

Anna **ALBA ROHRWACHER**
Domenico **PIERFRANCESCO FAVINO**
Alessio **GIUSEPPE BATTISTON**
Miriam **TERESA SAPONANGELO**
Chicca **MONICA NAPPO**
Bianca **TATIANA LEPORE**
Domenico's father-in-law **SERGIO SOLLI**
Aunt Ines **GISELLA BURINATO**
Mr. Morini **GIGIO ALBERTI**
Bruno **FABIO TROIANO**