A never-ending emotion

Rome: the great movie set

AZIENDA DI PROMOZIONE TURISTICA DI ROMA
Between Rome and the cinema, it was love at first sight. Ever since 1945 and Roberto Rossellini’s - Open City, given the circumstances, post war Italian directors had no other choice but to film outdoors, on real squares and streets. The Cinecittà studios had been bombed out during the war and budgets were insufficient to hire other Studios. But neorealism became famous the world over and, even later, never reverted to conventional production methods again, but continued to work on “location” rather than in Studios. This new system of production was also adopted by a considerable part of the American motion picture industry. From the Fifties on, many directors started preferring the banks of the Tiber to the wealth of Hollywood. Truly, it can be said that it all started with William Wyler’s Roman Holidays. Rome had undoubtedly bewitched the motion pictures. So squares and Cinquecento palaces, Trastevere’s narrow streets, barges on the Tiber, but also Rome’s new suburbs turned into natural settings of numberless Italian and foreign films, from the post-war days to the present. The city’s sceneries have inspired Roman directors: Rossellini, Scola, Moretti and Muccino, for one. But also directors who did not live in Rome and were not Roman natives, felt the magic of these settings and, in a way, turned Roman for the love of this city: Fellini, Antonioni, Bertolucci, Germi and Pasolini, just to mention some of the most famous. This feeling of love between Rome and the seventh art did not fade with time. On the contrary, as in all true love-stories in which both partners keep improving and helping each other, Rome, on the one hand, contributed to the great success of Italian motion pictures all over the world, and on the other hand, our cinema made the Eternal City universally known from a decidedly new and very different angle as compared to the usual stereotypes. In writing this guide jointly, the Rome Tourist Promotion Office and the CineROMACittà Filmcommission, (an institution to support the Roman motion picture industry), have meant to honour this close and vital tie between Rome and the cinema. A tie that will last in times to come.

Walter Veltroni
The Mayor of Rome
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In baroque Rome, in the part from Piazza della Rotonda to Piazza Farnese, motion pictures have captured all sorts of atmospheres: from the folkish aspects to high-society scenes, from mysterious and bewildering suggestions to the make-believe easy-going ways of the Romans. Film directors have skillfully transformed the city into one among the other heroes of their films. The English director Peter Greenaway turned the Pantheon, in one of the first scenes of the **Belly of an Architect (Il ventre dell’Architetto)**, into a sort of alter ego of the main character, the American architect Kracklite (Brian Dennehy). While in Rome to organize an exhibition in honour of a colleague of the past, Etienne - Louis Boulèe, Kracklite participates in a dinner in Piazza della Rotonda, to inaugurate this exhibit. The contemplation of the building triggers off Kracklite’s obsession about Roman cupolas he associates with his enormous stomach that causes him intense pain, heralding the cancer he will discover having.

Again in Piazza della Rotonda, Vittorio De Sica shot a touching scene of **Umberto D.** (1952). Umberto (Carlo Battisti), alone and desperate, can no longer survive on his meager pension and has to beg. He is begging in the Pantheon colonnade and here, per chance, meets an old colleague and feels ashamed of what he is doing. So he pretends he happens to be there casually. The film is intensely beautiful but crudely realistic in describing the solitude of old age. The picture was very controversial. For instance, Giulio Andreotti, who was Undersecretary of Entertainment to Show Business at the time, wrote an open letter to De Sica accusing him of defeatism for having defamed Italy and urging him to adopt a healthy and constructive optimistic approach in his successive works.

Two steps away from the Pantheon, across Via dei Pastini, you hit on Piazza di Pietra with the Adrian Temple (Tempio di Adriano), the historic seat of the Roman Stock Exchange. Here, inside the building, Vittoria (Monica Vitti), meets Piero (Alain Delon), for the first time in Michelangelo Antonioni’s
Bird’s eye view of the Pantheon

Piazza Navona

The portico of the Pantheon
film *The Eclipse* (1962). Piero is the broker of Vittoria’s mother, a rich bourgeois lady who gambles on the stock-market. This first meeting, amidst the chaotic trade of stocks and bonds, is not love at first sight. But when the two young people see each other outside, in front of the ancient colonnade dominating the square, their eyes meet in a long gaze of embarassment and attraction.

Walking along via Giustiniani and again passing the Pantheon, you see one of the best known Roman squares in motion picture: Piazza Navona. This is where Romolo (Maurizio Arena), and Salvatore (Renato Salvatori) live, the two friends of *Poor but Beautiful* (*Poveri ma belli*), directed by Dino Risi in 1956. That two poor young men should live on Piazza Navona in the Fifties is not surprising. In those days Rome’s city center was still generally popular, as it had been in its past history. So it was normal, that a life-guard, a sales-clerk in a musik shop and a young dressmaker, Giovanna, should be living there. The two boys fall in love with the girl and start competing for her favours. It was equally normal that a prostitute should be living in the attic of a palace, between Piazza Navona and Piazza di Tor Sanguigna, as it is seen in the third episode of Vittorio De Sica’s *Yesterday Today and Tomorrow* (*Ieri,oggi e domani*) (1963). Mara (Sofia Loren) entertains clients of high standing in her apartment. A seminarian, the nephew of an ancient couple of neighbours, falls in love with Mara and watches her from the nearby terrace. His grandmother wants to save her nephew from perdition and steps in, interrupting more than once, the encounters between Mara and Rusconi (Marcello Mastroianni). Only at the end, to please a hyper-excited Mastroianni, Loren performs the most famous and sensous ironic strip-tease of Italian film history.

Piazza Navona again, in the Fifties, is the set of the first Roman scene of Anthony Mingella’s *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (*Il talento di Mr. Ripley*) (1999). The hero, Tom Ripley
(Matt Damon), has been charged by an American millionaire with the task of convincing the millionaire’s son Dickie Greenleaf (Jude Law) to return to the States. But Tom is fascinated by the life-style of the boy and ends up by falling in love with him. But on Piazza Navona enters Freddy (Philip Seymour Hoffman) in his red roadster and immediately exerts such an influence on Dickie as to worry Tom.

Palazzo Taverna, a majestic Cinquecento palace near Piazza Navona, situated between Via di Monte Giordano and Via dei Coronari, is the Roman home of Isabel Archer (Nicole Kidman) in Portrait of a Lady (Ritratto di signora), directed by Jane Campion in 1996. Here, Henry James’s heroin lives unhappily married to Gilbert Osmond (John Malkovich), the man she fell in love with and who turned out to be a shrewd fortune hunter. While in James’s novel, Isabel bears masochistically the consequences of her error sacrificing herself to her man, in the film, the New Zealand director gives the heroin a chance letting her ending the course of her life as an emancipated woman.

Crossing Corso Vittorio Emanuele, you reach Piazza Farnese. Here, in the building number 44, Pietro Germi located his film The Facts of Murder (Un maledetto imbroglio) (1959, which is an adaptation of Carlo Emilio Gada’s novel Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana (The Horrible Mess in via Merulana), probably the best Italian thriller on the screen. In the book, the story takes place during Fascism, but in the film during the Fifties. However, this does not change much of the novel’s general set-up. Police inspector Ingravallo (Pietro Germi) is investigating two crimes committed on the same floor of a building: a theft in the apartment of a bachelor and the murder of a young woman. Using very modern cinematographic devices, Germi stresses the various every-day obsessions of all his characters, revealing their scheletons in the closet and creates, thus, a fascinating human fresco.

Walking down all of via dei Giubbonari and crossing via Arenula, you get to the Ghetto. In the center of Piazza Mattei a pictures-
Piazza Farnese in
The Facts
of Murder
que fountain, called the Turtle Fountain (Fontana delle Tartarughe) faces Palazzo Costaguti. Here we find **The Talented Mr. Ripley** again, as Tom Ripley, back in Rome after having murdered his friend Dickie in a boat, off the coast of Sanremo, settles down here. Tom tries to conceal the murder he committed by taking on the identity of his friend. This way, he also manages to receive Dickie’s huge income and can afford an apartment in Palazzo Costaguti. But here, Freddy discovers Tom’s crime and, consequently, becomes the victim of the second murder committed by Tom, the murder that will, however, condemn him forever to a fate of crimes and falsehood.
Glamour, artists, fashion: generally, this is associated with the area of Rome, between Piazza del Popolo, Fontana di Trevi and Via Veneto. Starting out from Porta Pinciana, crossing the wide, square-like space named after Federico Fellini, and proceeding down Via Veneto, one feels like stepping into the symbolic foot-steps of one of the most famous Italian film of all times: La dolce vita (1960). Fellini’s unique representation of a society no longer believing in any traditional values, tells the story of a journalist (Marcello Mastroiann) and of his restless zigzagging in life, his superficial encounters in the fascinating world of glamour in the Roman of those years. In Cinecittà Fellini reconstructed exact copies of Via Veneto, its restaurants and night clubs where all the famous film and theater stars met, where bored aristocrats spent their nights and where “paparazzi” were kings. The word paparazzo, now used in many languages, was coined precisely in that film. If you continue down the via della dolce vita, you cannot miss the Hotel Excelsior on the left. Here Anita Ekberg returned at dawn after having spent the night roaming around Rome with Marcello. In the film, the real Via Veneto appears empty and silent. Anita’s fiancé turns up and beats both black and blue. A little further down, at number 66, the back-door of the Grand Hotel Palace opens. In the The Nights of Cabiria (Le notti di Cabiria) (1957), the film star Alberto Lazzari (Amedeo Nazzari), takes Cabiria (Giulietta Masina), a prostitute, to a night club which was in those days situated exactly here. Cabiria goes wild in one of the scenes and dances a frenzied mambo. In a way, a Fellinian prelude to the atmosphere of La dolce vita. At the end of Via Veneto, on Piazza Barberini, the homonymous palace was the Embassy in which Anna lived in Roman Holiday (Vacanze Romane) (1953), as a naive princess in Rome on a State visit. In William Wyler’s picture Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck are the heroes of a variation on the Cinderella tale. The princess slips out of the Palace at night to escape from her boring official duties. He, the hero, is Joe Bradley, a cynical American journalist who reports on the princesses’escape
Marcello Mastroianni
in Via Veneto in
*La dolce vita*

Bernardo Bertolucci
and Thandie Newton
on Trinità dei Monti on
the set of *Besieged*
writing the scandal gossip that could help save his career. Naturally, Joe ends by falling in love with the princess.

Walking down, on the right sidewalk of Piazza Barberini, you reach Via del Tritone and further down still, a crossing with Via del Traforo (where a tunnel opens on the left). In 1948, Vittorio De Sica chose this spot for a crucial scene of his **The Bicycle Thief** (*Ladri di biciclette*), the picture for which he was awarded the Oscar for the second time. Here, Antonio Ricci’s (Lamberto Maggiorani) bicycle is stolen on the first day he goes to work. His bicycle is essential in his new and long awaited job as a poster-sticker. Antonio’s desperate chase after the thief all the way into the Tunnel (Traforo Umberto I) proves hopeless. In the dramatic consequence that follows, De Sica analyses effectfully and clearly what the post-war Italian reality was like.

Closer to the city-center, short Via della Stamperia, leads to the Fontana di Trevi, the most spectacular and celebrated fountain of Rome, known the world over for the famous scene from **La dolce vita**. Sylvia (Anita Eckberg), escorted by Marcello (Marcello Mastroianni) in her nocturnal whims, insists in looking for some milk for a kitten she just picked up from the street. The two young people lose their way in the meanders of the narrow streets around Piazza di Trevi. Then, after much wandering, they realize that they are standing in front of the marvelous fountain of Trevi. Instantly, the young woman rushes into the water of the fountain and calls Marcello to join her. He does but also tries, adoringly, to touch her as if she were a remote, inaccessible goddess. But in vein. Suddenly, as if by magic, the water stops flowing, everything turns silent, the day is braking and the couple’s crazy night has ended.

This sequence has become so famous as to be used in an endless number of publicity spots, photographic series and films, to the point of being included in another film, namely in Ettore Scola’s **We All Loved Each Other so Much** (*C’eravamo tanto amati*), (1974). Here, Antonio (Nino Manfredi) and Luciana (Stefania Sandrelli), meet after years in front of this very Fountain during
the night in which Fellini and Mastroianni (who played the role themselves), are at work on their own film **La dolce vita**.
The Fontana is also a background to **Three Pennies in the Fountain** (*Tre soldi nella fontana*), Jean Negulesco’s film of 1954, a great commercial success in the States. Three American girls have been travelling through Italy and their trip ends here in Rome. Together they throw a coin in the waters of the Trevi Fountain, hoping this will bring them back to Rome where they fear having to leave behind the boys they have fallen in love with. But, unexpectedly, the three beloved ones appear, and the happy ending could not be more complete.
Still on the same square of the Fountain, princess Anne (Audrey Hepburn), furtively followed by Joe Bradley (Gregory Peck), decides to enter a small hair dresser shop and have her long hair cut as she wants a more stylish hair-do. This scene is part of **Roman Holiday**, with a final scene filmed in Palazzo Colonna on Piazza Santi Apostoli, a short distance away from the Trevi Fountain. In the imposing Mirror Gallery (Galleria degli Specchi), the princess, back at the Embassy, meets the foreign press of which Joe is a member. In the course of the ceremony, the two heroes say an unspoken, yearning farewell to each other.
Back in Via del Tritone and turning right into Via Due Macelli, Piazza di Spagna is a short way off. Ettore Scola chose this place to film one of the most touching scenes of **We All loved Each Other so Much**. While Luciana (Stefania Sandrelli) is being courted by Nicola (Stefano Satta Flores) who simulates the famous pram scene from **The Battleship Potëmkin**, Antonio (Nino Manfredi) sits dejected on the steps. He is angry because Luciana does not return his love and walks away down Via Condotti, followed by Nicola who tries to calm him down. In the meantime Luciana has her picture taken in one of the automatic booths on the Square. Nicola comes back to look for Luciana. All he finds are the photographs of her, showing her in tears because her love affair with Gianni (Vittorio Gassman) has ended.
Of recent, Piazza di Spagna, the Spanish staircase and the
William Wyler and Gregory Peck on the set of Roman Holiday

Guyneth Paltrow crosses Piazza di Spagna in The Talented Mr. Ripley
nearby Vicolo del Bottino have been the site of Bernardo Bertolucci’s dramatic intimate conflict **Besieged** (*L’assedio*) (1998). This picture suggestively tells of Shandurai’s (Thandie Newton’s) escape from her native country in Africa for political reasons. The heroine lives as a servant in the palace of Mr. Kinsky who, very soon, falls in love with her. The woman is, thus, torn asunder between the love of this man and the hope to see the man she left behind in Africa as political prisoner.

In **The Talented Mr. Ripley**, Tom Ripley dates Marge, the fiancée of deceased Dickie Greenleaf, in a bar in Piazza di Spagna, but also, at the same time and place, the rich heiress Meredith (Cate Blanchett), whom he makes believe to be Dickie. By not showing up himself at the appointment, the Machiavellian boy succeeds in having Marge think Dickie is still alive.

Finally, on the Trinità dei Monti stairs, Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn meet, in **Roman Holiday**, after an adventurous but chaste night spent together. She is enjoying an icecream-cone sitting on the steps, he, after having followed her the whole morning, approaches her pretending to be there by chance. They both decide to spend an entire day, a *vacation*, together, long Via del Babuino leads to Piazza del Popolo. The first Roman scene of Gus Van Sant’s **My Own Private Idaho** (*Belli e dannati*) (1991), was filmed here. It is the story of Mike (River Phoenix), a young male prostitute from Portland, who comes to Rome in search of his mother. A victim of one of his narcoleptic attacks in the prairies of Idaho, Mike wakes up, and by a daring elliptical effect, finds himself to be at the foot of the Obelisk in Piazza del Popolo, surrounded by Roman street-boys who yell at him in a language he does not understand.

In **We All Loved Each Other so Much**, director Ettore Scola is back in Piazza del Popolo. Antonio meets his friend Gianni after twenty five years and mistakes him for an unlicensed car-park attendant. Actually Gianni has made a lot of money and has become very rich by betraying the ideals of his young years, but he is ashamed to tell his old-time friend the truth.
Inevitably, the archaeological center area of Rome and the motion picture world were to meet. For one, the area is such, that spectators are immediately aware of what city they are looking at. But, apart from that, the unique power of fascination of the area between Celio, Campidoglio and Aventino is due both to the historical memories it recalls, as well as to the imposing architecture of its buildings. The Colosseo is the most representative building of archaeological Rome, the one best known generally. Here, Bernardo Bertolucci situated the last scenes of his *The Conformist (Il conformista)* (1970), the film that brought him fame. The story, taken from Alberto Moravia’s novel, is directed with exceptional elegance and modern sophistication and was due to influence an entire generation of American film-makers.

The conformist of the title, is Marcello Clerici (Jean Louis Trintignant), a man unable to face the fact of being a homosexual. He offers his services to the Fascist secret police and is charged with the task of killing his tutor at the university, professor Quadri, an intellectual exile in Paris. At the end of the film, during the days of Liberation, Marcello is seen, against the background of the Colosseo, as he recognizes the man who had tried to seduce him when he was a child. Having changed political sides, the Conformist denounces the man accusing him of the murder he himself had committed in Paris.

Contrasting with the sombre atmosphere of the Colosseo in Bertolucci’s film, the same monument is a background to the amusing *Un americano a Roma* (1954), a classic comedy, Italian style, directed by Steno. Alberto Sordi is Mericoni Nando, one of the characters most loved by the public. Nando, a simple minded lad from Trastevere, would much rather be called Santi Bailor, obsessed as he is with all things American. His dream is *the Kansas City* and in order to be able to make his dream come true and go there himself, he climbs on top of the Colosseo threatening to jump down and kill himself. As he stands up there, his friends, one at a time, tell exhilarating epi-
The Colosseo

Alberto Sordi on the Colosseo in An American in Rome
sodes from Nando’s life, getting the story started. Via dei Fori Imperiali leads straight to Piazza Venezia with one of the most controversial monuments of Rome, the towering Vittoriano. Erected in honour of king Vittorio Emanuele II, between 1885 and 1911, it was therefore called il Vittoriano. The way Peter Greenaway uses it in his film The Belly of an Architect (1987), undoubtedly shows how scenographic this monument is, though it has often been malignantly defined a “Wedding cake”, for its colour and a “Typewriter” for its shape. In Greenaway’s film, this monument, actually the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, is where Kracklite prepares the exhibition on Boulée. The American architect, increasingly obsessed by the sight of the cupolas, by the paunches of the Roman statues and by the tumor he has in his own stomach, commits suicide.

Climbing up the steep stairway in Piazza Venezia, called Cordonata, you land on Piazza del Campidoglio, one of Michelangelo’s architectural masterpieces. It seems like an ideal stage and its suggestiveness has never been more effectively captured than in the film Nostalgia (Nostalghia) (1983). Andreij Tarkovskij, the greatest Russian post-war director, meant to create a poetic film rather than one which tells a story. In the nostalgic mood of a Russian artist, exiled between Tuscany and Rome, there are moments of intense beauty, but none is as powerful as the one scene on Piazza del Campidoglio. Accompanied by the Beethovenian Hymn of Joy, Domenico, the insane friend of the hero, sets fire to himself in the center of the square, on the equestrian statue of Marco Aurelio, in the name of a simplicity forever lost in modern life.

Palazzo dei Conservatori is adjacent to Piazza del Campidoglio. The courtyard contains particularly impressive rests of huge Roman sculptures. New Zealand director Jane Campion, always very careful to select settings that add unusual elements to a scene, has chosen this place for an important dialogue in her
**Portrait of a Lady.** American heiress Isabel Archer faces ambiguous Madame Merle (Barbara Hershey), the woman who has ruined her life by pushing her in the arms of Gilbert Osmond, a cruel and scheming man. In this scene, Isabel finally begins to realize she is the victim of a terrible intrigue which aims at depriving her of her huge fortune. The disquieting scenery showing gigantic marble fragments of the Constantinian head, hand, arm, leg and feet accentuates the young woman’s sinking into an open eyed nightmare.

While Rome is the stage of a nightmare for this young, Jamesian American of the end of the Nineteenth Century, for millions of Isabel’s compatriots, the Eternal City is a dream come true, a dream of walking in the footsteps of a Hollywood romantic classic: **Roman Holiday.** There are no less than three, among the most famous scenes, that take place in the archaeological area. The first encounter between Anna and Joe, based on a misunderstanding, occurs near the Arch of Settimio Severo with all of the Foro Romano in the background. Here, in this sequence, the journalist who is interpreted by Peck, fails to recognize the princess and mistakes her for a drunkard. He does not know that her strange behaviour is due to a strong sedative. The second scene is a short visit of the two heroes who are touring the city on a Vespa motorcycle. But the most famous scene of all is the one close to the Campidoglio, near the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin. A well-known sculptured monumental stone representing a fluvial divinity with its wide open mouth, called la Bocca della verità (The Mouth of Truth), is placed under the porch of the church. Here Joe tells Anna the legend according to which in Roman times, anyone lying while sticking his hand in that mouth would be bitten by it. The princess is a bit scared and just pretends to try and stick in her hand. But when it is Joe’s turn, the film-director skilfully thrills the audience for a second: suddenly the journalist’s hand is sucked into the stone mouth, and when he draws his arm back there is nothing left
The Vittoriano on Piazza Venezia

The end scene of the film *Nostalgia* on Piazza del Campidoglio
Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck visit the Colosseo in Roman Holiday

Terme di Caracalla used as a scenery for Aida
but a stump. Of course, the hand is hidden in the cuff, and the princesses’ fright immediately turns into the laughter of both young actors.

Proceeding along Via della Greca, you reach the vast, flat space of Circo Massimo park. Here, Nanni Moretti filmed the end of *The Red Wood Pigeon (Palombella rossa)* (1989). The symbolic sequence is rather unusual in Moretti’s work always, at least apparently, realistic. The enigmatic red cardboard sun rising from Aventino over Circo Massimo can be interpreted in many ways. In seeing it, the little boy, the main character as a child, laughs himself to tears.

One of motion picture directors most visited hills of Rome is Aventino, the South end of Circo Massimo. Only of recent, Via Santa Melania and Via Sant’Anselmo, appeared on the big screen in Gabriele Muccino’s *The Last Kiss (L’ultimo bacio)* (2001). The scene has the hero Carlo (Stefano Accorsi) definitively breaking with Francesca (Martina Stella), with whom he had a short affair. Many have identified with Carlo. The young man is at the crucial point of his life in which a man has to make up his mind and become at last a responsible husband and father, but shirks at the last moment, hoping to get involved into another sentimental affair that will bring back, for the last time, the adolescence he just left behind. But even more gripping, is the character of Francesca. She is seen just as she starts facing life, trying to handle one of the many difficult lessons one feels life has in store for her.

Another illusion of love, another poignant disappointment is contained in *Nights of Cabiria (Le notti di Cabiria)* (1957). The heroine of Federico Fellini’s film is a prostitute, hopelessly romantic and sentimental, uniquely interpreted by Giulietta Masina. She is courted by a man, Oscar, who seems, unfortunately only seems, to be the right man. Part of this courtship takes place in the most panoramic spot of Aventino, the Giardino degli aranci (Orange Garden).

Across Viale Aventino, one reaches Terme di Caracalla, the
imposing, partially ruined monumental III Century building. For year this architectural complex has been a hide-out of prostitutes and, during the summer, a stage for open-air Opera. Precisely here, again in Nights of Cabiria, Cabiria, her friend Wanda and all the other colleagues, meet every night to see if they can pick up clients. In one of the most suggestive sequences the girls stand there and witness the passing by of a procession of pilgrims heading for the sanctuary of the Divino Amore (the Divine Love).

Film director Bernardo Bertolucci, used the operatic aspect of the Terme to locate the last sequences of his psychological drama Luna (La luna) (1979). The story tells of an American soprano who settles down in Rome with her son, after her husband’s death. The rehearsals of the Verdi opera Un ballo in maschera, of which Caterina (Jill Clayburgh) is the star, are held here. In a long sequence, under the full moon shining on the antique building of the Terme, the scenery and the music melt into a moving ending of the plot. In fact Joe (Matthew Barry), the son of Caterina, finally meets his real father who makes up for the traumatic lack of a paternal presence in the boy’s life. In such scenes of truly great cinema, Rome is undoubtedly the real hero.

La bocca della verità
in the portico of S. Maria in Cosmedin
Before the existence of the typically Roman township units called “borgate”, Trastevere and Testaccio were considered working class suburbs of Rome. Today things are very different, and the two urban sections compete with one another in offering the best quality of a Rome-by-night life. However in none of the two places has the genuinely characteristic Roman quality gone lost.

Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere is the central square of this Quarter which is named after the homonymous, beautiful church situated on one of its sides. In the last years, three American film have chosen precisely this square to show the most picturesque features of Rome, namely: Neil Labute’s *Nurse Betty* (2000), Michael Lehmann’s *Hudson Hawk* (1990) and Norman Jewison’s *Only you* (1996).

In the first case, the Trastevere scenery appears only at the end. Betty (Renée Zellwegger) arrives in Rome, object of her dreams, after a series of incredible adventures crossing the United States. In this film, one of the last years’ most original American productions, the director has very impressively depicted the main character, a provincial American in love with a soap opera star.

In *Hudson Hawk*, to the contrary, ample use is made of Roman sceneries wherein Bruce Willis, a wizard in stealing, is seen in action. After a crazy chase on the roofs of the Vatican, the hero finds himself catapulted in a restaurant dining romantically with Anna (Andie MacDowell), a mysterious woman who changes identity, alternating between an art-expert, a secret agent and a nun.

Finally, in *Only You*, Piazza Santa Maria is the setting where the two heroes: Faith (Marisa Tomei) and Peter (Robert Downey jr.) first meet. The story is about the vicissitudes of a young American girl to whom it had been predicted she would find her true love in a boy named Damon Bradley. Having discovered that a Damon Bradley actually existed, Faith starts looking for him all over Italy. In the Trastevere scene, Peter who
Piazza S. Maria in Trastevere

Lamberto Maggiorani crosses Ponte Palatino in The Bicycle Thief
has fallen in love with the girl while slipping on a shoe on her foot, pretends his name is Damon Bradley, so as to conquer her.

As we all know, typical restaurants, streets and buildings of Trastevere have been amply used as film-backgrounds for the most varied situations. A famous one is Pasolini’s scene in a Trastevere restaurant in *Mamma Roma* (1962). Anna Magnani plays the part of an ex-prostitute, now desperately trying to become respectable. To avoid the bad influence of her good-for-nothing suburban friends on her son Ettore, she finds a job for him as a waiter in a restaurant on Piazza de’Rienzi. At night, proudly watching him from a side of the street, she hardly imagines how brief her happiness will be. Magnani, an emblem of the Roman way of being, is unforgettable in the role of a woman marked by a timeless tragedy that life cannot end.

Another famous scene of *The Bicycle Thief*, a classic loved the world over, takes place on Lungotevere Ripa, between Isola Tiberina and Porta Portese. In De Sica’s and Zavattini’s film, a poster-sticker and his son go through an odyssey in the hostile and desperate Rome of the immediate post-war years. The two are after the stolen bicycle which the man absolutely needs for his work. In the big Roman Porta Portese flea-market, the largest one in town, open every Sunday, father and son are on the point of getting their bicycle back. But the thief escapes again after an unsuccessful chase along the Lungotevere. From here on, all hope has vanished for the two. Most subtly, De Sica builds up a slow, inexorable gripping mood, an emotion which has its catharsis in the ending of the film.

Behind Porta Portese, new housings were built in the Sixties. In one of them lives the hero of *I Knew Her Well* (*Io la conoscevo bene*) (1965). In this film, an outstanding director of those years, Antonio Pietrangeli, creates an extraordinary contemporary feminine portrait letting one of the best Italian motion picture actresses, Stefania Sandrelli, give her best performance. Sandrelli plays the part of Adriana, a girl who falls
victim to the vulgar world of show-business, but who, herself, totally lacks ambitions, passion, ethics. She lets life happen without realizing how empty her existence is. Finally she throws herself from the balcony of her flat with the same indifference with which she lived, or rather, failed to really live. Adriana is a child of Italy’s boom, but she is also and already, a woman of our present days. The building in which she lives and dies on Lungotevere Portuense 158, is cold, modern, anonymous, a perfect reflection of Adriana’s condition and mood.

Ponte Testaccio faces Adriana’s building. The last scene of Accattone! (1961) was shot here, on the corner with Lungotevere Portuense. In one of his first experiences as film director, Pier Paolo Pasolini expresses in motion picture the same under-dog world of Roman suburbs he describes in novels such as Ragazzi di vita and Una vita violenta. The film is interpreted by Franco Citti, Accattone, a pimp who dies in a motorbike accident trying to escape after having stolen a chunk of ham. Accattone’s life is fated never to go beyond the dereliction he was born in. The last sentence he utters dying, leaning against the glaring white marble of Ponte Testaccio in summer, is unforgettable: Ah! Mo’ sto bene! (Ah, at last I’m feeling good!).

The sequence ending this way, starts on the other side of the river, in Testaccio at the crossing of Via Franklin and Via Bodoni. Accattone and his two chums are trying to steal grocery from a van, they are caught and chased by the crowd.

A most successful, very recent picture, Ferzan Ozpetek’s The Ignorant Fairies (Le fate ignoranti), (2001), shows the Ostiense Quarter, the streets between the Tiber and the Gazometro (Via dei Magazzini Generali, Via Acerbi and Via Caboto). The Turkish director has a very original, catching idea: Antonia (Margherita Buy) discovers, after her husband’s death, that he was leading a double life, had a homosexual lover, Michele (Stefano Accorsi) and a second family consisting of a
Franco Citti on a motorcycle in Testaccio in the end scene of Accattone!

The gazometro
heterogeneous group of people far remote from the bourgeois life her husband usually led. These two realities meet, hesitating, on the terrace of Michele with the unmistakeable outline of the gazometro towering in the background.

Taking Via Ostiense from here, you reach Piazza di Parco San Paolo. The dinner scene on the banks of the river in Luchino Visconti’s *Bellissima* (1951) shows a famous Tavern facing the Tiber. Also Pasolini and Moravia used to come here at the time. Anna Magnani, directed by Visconti, plays in another of her great roles, Madalena Cecconi, a plain Roman working-class woman, bedazzled by the myth of motion pictures. She is ready to do almost anything to have her daughter Maria enter the golden world of the “movies”. She goes to the extent of paying big money to Alberto Annovazzi (Walter Chiari), a shady dealer of Cinecittà, who promised her to pull some strings in favour of Maria. In this scene, Annovazzi is seen not only buying a Lambretta with Maddalena’s last savings, but also trying unsuccessfully to seduce her. A much more differentiated picture of the proletariat is conveyed in Visconti’s film than one sees in most neorealist films of those days.

Walking up Via Rocco, in front of the *Bellissima* restaurant, you reach Garbatella, Nanni Moretti’s favourite quarter. In *Dear Diary (Caro diario)* (1993), the Roman director, on his Vespa, roams around the steets of the Quarter between Via Passino, via Cesinale and Via Cavazzi. Moretti, fascinated by the popular buildings of the Twenties, cannot resist the temptation to enter in one of the houses. To be let in, he invents an excuse, pretending he has to survey the grounds for his next film, a musical on a Trotzkyite baker of the Fifties.
The Vatican and the surrounding area are utmost expressions of Baroque architecture and of the scenographic taste of those days. This is a part of town which has often offered an exceptional setting for many productions. Ponte Sant'Angelo is an ideal access to take a walk in this area. The bridge was used as a springboard for a vertiginous dive into the Tiber in Pasolini’s Accattone! Vittorio, a Roman suburban good-for-nothing, known by all as Accattone, bets with his friends that he will survive his diving in the river, right after a large meal. Curious on-lookers watch the plunge from barges and bath houses along the river banks.

The same location was chosen by Federico Fellini for an important scene of The White Sheik (Lo sceicco bianco) (1952). This is his first film and his extremely original taste for things fantastic, which has made him famous in whole world, is already perceptible. A young bride by the name of Wanda (Brunella Bovo), on her honeymoon in the Eternal City, loses her way while looking for the White Sheik (Alberto Sordi), the hero of a serial who stole her heart. When she finally succeeds in finding him, she is disappointed and hurt by the mediocrity of her idol. Tormented by a sense of guilt for having betrayed her husband, Wanda decides to put an end to it all. At night, on the banks of the Tiber, under that very Ponte Sant’Angelo, impressed by the Bernini angels on the bridge who remind her of her sin, she throws herself into the river. But the waters are too shallow and all Wanda does is to get her clothes wet.

Under this same bridge princess Anna goes dancing with Joe on a barge in Roman Holiday. A group of clumsy secret agents try to bring back Her Highness to the Palace. Audrey Hepburn, though a beginner as an actress, is already unforgettable in this role, which in fact brought her an Oscar. A fight started on the barge and Joe rescues the princess and swims till he reaches Ponte Vittorio Emanuele II. The two heroes, dripping and freezing, exchange their first tender kiss under the vault of this bridge.

Crossing Ponte Sant’Angelo and coasting the castle, you reach
Piazza Cavour. Here, unhappy Joe (Matthew Barry), the hero of *Luna* (*La luna*) (1979), takes friend Arianna to the Adriano, such as it was before it was made into a multiplex cinema, to see a picture. And here the two young people live their first, fleeting moment of love, crowned by a full-moon shining down on them when the gliding dome-shaped roof opens up, as it used to, in old-fashioned cinemas.

Walking back towards the Vatican and all the way along Via della Conciliazione, you land on Piazza San Pietro and its surrounding, majestic Bernini colonnade. In *The White Sheik*, Wanda meets the relatives of her husband here, for the first time. They have lost patience with her: throughout the whole story, Ivan (Leopoldo Trieste) had to invent thousands of excuses to justify his young wife’s disappearance. Finally, when all its members have gathered, the family crosses Piazza San Pietro to attend a papal audience. All Fellini needs to show the tender reconciliation of the two young people is the expression on their faces. Wanda, shyly tries to be considered innocent and declares to her husband that only he is her true *White Sheik*. The story ends happily as the group rushes towards the Basilica and is accompanied by the tune of a funny little march written by composer Nino Rota for this film. It was his first contribution to his future steady collaboration with Fellini.

More recently, across Piazza San Pietro, Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) in Francis Ford Coppola’s *The Godfather, part III* (*Il padrino parte III*) (1990), passes an imaginary customs to gain access to mysterious palaces of the mighty Vatican, in a free interpretation of the real Banco Ambrosiano incident. We see the Vatican palaces populated by unscrupulous cardinals and ruthless business-men who unscrupulously compete with the American Mafia.

*L’udienza* (*The Audience*) (1971), by director Marco Ferreri is a scourging satyre on the Catholic hierarchy and on power. The set is almost exclusively the area around San Pietro. We see Amedeo (Enzo Jannacci) trying desperately to speak with
Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg on the San Pietro cupola in *La dolce vita*
the Pope in his attempt to fight both clerical bureaucracy and commissar Aureliano Diaz (Ugo Tognazzi). The story, with its Kafkian undertones, reaches its climax under the Bernini colonnade where the exhausted hero, hopelessly frustrated in his attempts. dies.

The entrance to the stairway to the Michelangelo cupola is on the left side of the San Pietro Basilica. Going up is no ordinary matter: dizziness, claustrophobia and breath-taking sights alternate. Fellini reconstructed the sequence in Cinecittà for La dolce vita, in which Marcello chases Sylvia on the narrow stairway to the cupola. Having reached the top, the two are spellbound by the beauty of Rome seen from above. He tries to get closer to her, but in that precise moment the wind blows Sylvia’s hat away and she breaks out in a mirthful laughter again.
Motion pictures have rather neglected a large part of Rome, north of Porta del Popolo. The area is considered residential and usually associated with the wealthier section of the native population. This specific atmosphere is most perceivable in motion picture. Of course, there are exceptions. The hero of De Sica’s *Umberto D* (1952), certainly cannot be considered wealthy. The old, retired man lives in a flat on Via Flaminia, between Piazzale Flaminio and Piazza della Marina. The owner of the apartment is a woman with whom the poor man is heavily indebted. She is about to get married, wants her apartment back and intends to evict Umberto D. This preliminary situation develops into one of the most intense portraits of old age that has appeared in the cinema worldwide. Loneliness, a scanty pension, the general indifference of neighbours, all this was considered by the “silent majority” of those days, in Italy, a skeleton in the closet not to be publicly exhibited.

Continuing along Via Flaminia you reach Via Pietro da Cortona and see the Stadio Flaminio in the background. De Sica chose this street with its little staircase leading up to the Lungotevere Flaminio, to situate the touching end-scene of *The Bicycle Thief*. Generally speaking, there are some scenes which have become legendary, and this is one of them. The same can be said of the one of Anna Magnani’s death in *Open City* (*Roma città aperta*) (1948) and of one in *La dolce vita* in the Trevi Fountain.

The moment is unforgettable in which the little boy Bruno squeezes his father’s hand he is holding on. The father, caught trying to steal a bicycle in front of the entrance of house n.1 in Via Pietro da Cortona, escapes getting lynched by the crowd streaming out of the Stadium. For the first time, Italian neorealism was showing true emotions of real life in motion picture. An amusing episode seems to contradict this fact: paradoxically, in order to have little Bruno cry at the right moment, De Sica secretly filled the boy’s pockets with cigarette butts (precious possessions in post-war poverty) and then accused him of being a *ciccarolo* (a vendor of cigarette butts) until the boy burst out in tears.
Flaminio stadium in the end scene of *The Bicycle Thief*

A suggestive angle of Piazza Mincio in the Coppedé Quarter
The family of **Mignon è partita (Mignon has left)** (1988), lives on nearby Piazza Melozzo da Forlì. In this film director Francesca Archibugi proved a sensitive story-teller of the work-a-day world in its apparently most ordinary aspects. The arrival of Mignon, a pretty French, snobbish cousin, is upsetting for this Flaminio Quarter family in which the girl causes anxieties in one of the adolescent sons, Giorgio.

The Flaminio Quarter, stretching at the foot of Parioli heights, is unanimously considered the residential section of the wealthier Romans.

This feature is brought out by Roberto Rossellini in **The Greatest Love (Europa ’51)** (1952). Ingrid Bergman is a rich American who lives with her husband and son in Via Caroncini. Her world, remote from all unpleasantness, is one of social engagements and high society friends. But the suicide of her son upsets her life: she now visits the slums, sees proletarian reality and tries to help the needy, lavishing the love she feels having denied her son. Rossellini’s style does away with all the obvious, and rather aims at the essential in sequences, creating unique scenes precisely because they are seemingly haphazard. Barely outlined shreds of life, these impressions stay on forever. Bergman walking down the staircase of the building rushing to assist her son who threw himself down the shaft, is one these moments.

Inmidst of the Salario Quarter, beyond an imposing archway leading to Via Tagliamento, the Coppedé Quarter is a true Roman eccentricity. A group of buildings around Via Brenta, named after the architect who created this original style, seems a haywire Art Nouveau variation generated by some bloodcurdling literature. No wonder Dario Argento used this place as a setting for one his most visionary films, **Inferno (Inferno)** (1980). Three houses of divinities, of guardians of Hades: Mater Lacrimarum, Mater Sospiriorum and Mater Taenebrarum, are present in the Eternal City, as well as in New York and Fribourg. While inquiring on his sister’s death, -Rosa had found **Il Libro delle tre Madri** (The Book of the Three Mothers) in an antique shop-, Mark Elliot (Leigh
McCloskey) discovers that terrible crimes are being committed in the three houses.

Villa Maria Luisa, also known as Mirafiori, is not far from here. It was named after countess Rosa di Mirafiori, morganatic wife of king Vittorio Emanuele III who lived and consumed her passion for the monarch here. Today the Department of Language and Philosophy of the University La Sapienza lodges in the building. But the surroundings are still a perfect setting for adventures of adultery, such as those in D'Annunzio’s novel *L’innocente*. The story, in turn, inspired director Luchino Visconti in his last, homonymous film *The Innocent* (*L’innocente*) (1976). Though not one of his major works, it is noteworthy for at least two reasons: the outstanding interpretation of the two heroes: Laura Antonelli and Giancarlo Giannini, who are seen living in Villa Mirafiori, and the great director’s skillful restauration of Rome in the days of King Umberto I (*Roma umbertina*).

Another couple of great actors in, probably, their best interpretation, is that of Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni, who steal the scene in Ettore Scola’s: *A Special Day* (*Una giornata particolare*) (1977). Scola’s film is taken entirely in the building of Via Enrico Stevenson n° 24 and represents life during the twenty years of Fascism as no other has done. A huge central courtyard is typical of fascist architecture. The two main characters live across each other on the opposite sides of the building and also in life they stand on opposite sides. She, a housewife, is completely overwhelmed by Mussolini’s personality whom she worships, he, her neighbour, is a homosexual radio-announcer who expects to be sent to confinement. The gradual closeness of these two persons to one another is handled with great sensitively and much attention is paid to psychological subtleness. Everything happens in one day only, on May 6 1938, when Hitler visited Rome. The encounter of the two heroes, doomed and crushed by history, is accompanied by the radio-chronicle of this visit.
The area of Rome, east of the City, from San Giovanni to the foot of the Castelli Romani, has undoubtedly been the one most exploited by Italian motion pictures in the descriptions of the new proletarian suburb life. Writer and director Pierpaolo Pasolini located his first two films here: Accattone! and Mamma Roma (1962). Again here, Rossellini did the greater part of his masterpiece Open City (Roma città aperta) (1945).

Pina (Anna Magnani), the heroine, lives in a housing in Via Montecuccoli 17, in the Pigneto Quarter. Rome is still under German occupation and Pina is one of the many women who suffers from the consequences of the war. Widowed, with a son, Marcello, Pina tries to manage as well as she can in everyday life and also to fight for a better world, in which Marcello and the child she is expecting from Francesco (Francesco Grandjacquet), can grow up and develop their capacities. But on the very day of her wedding to Francesco, in a round-up of the Germans, all the men living in the same building, including the bridegroom, are taken prisoners. At first, Pina tries to revolt against the arrest of her man, she tears herself from the grasp of a German soldier, runs out of the courtyard where women and children have been gathered, rushes out on the street and runs following the Gestapo van screaming the name of Francesco. At this point, in one of the most important and touching scenes of Italian cinema, Pina is shot down by the bullets of German rifles. While the vehicle drives on, the woman falls to the ground, dead, under the eyes of her son, Marcello.

Also a considerable part of Accattone! takes place in Pigneto. In his first film, Pasolini is neorealist as description goes but not as style is concerned. He tells Vittorio’s (Franco Citti) story, the story of a suburban character from Via dei Gordiani, called Accattone (beggar) and of the world that surrounds him: the friends who meet at the bar, Maddalena the prostitute whose pimp he is, his ex wife who no longer wants to hear from him, the son he is not allowed to see. When Maddalena ends up in
prison, Vittorio is left pennyless and with no intention of working. As he meets an artless girl, Stella, he immediately plans to have her pace the side walk.

Even now, Pigneto seems like a small village in the midst of town but in those days it was even more remote from the rest of the world. Here, in the bar in Via Fanfulla da Lodi, a crossroad of Via del Pigneto, Accattone hangs out with his friends, acts the tough guy who wants to be challenged, out for bravadoes and petty thefts. Here, is where the fight breaks out between Vittorio and those who laugh at him for having fallen in love with Stella and for not having the courage to make her walk the streets. Actually, the first experience of Stella as a prostitute was traumatic and Vittorio had to go and rescue her on Via Appia Antica.

Crossing Via Casilina from Via del Pigneto, you reach Via Tuscolana, a big road leading to Cinecittà. Pasolini’s second film Mamma Roma, was done here, a part of the city called Quadraro. Anna Magnani is Roma, the prostitute who wants to start a new life with Ettore (Ettore Garofalo) as her pimp is getting married. Ettore is Roma’s adolescent son who has grown up without her and with whom she is now having trouble getting along. Roma, now a mother, opens a fruit stand on the market in Via del Quadraro, while Ettore gets a job as a waiter. The restless adolescence of the boy as opposed to the imposing maternal figure of Magnani, are the central feature of the film. We see Ettore playing with his peers in the Parco degli Acquedotti, Ettore who discovers sex behind the bushes of the Parc, Ettore who gets involved with a gang of small-time crooks, Ettore who dies in prison... When Mamma Roma receives the news, she leaves the fruit stand and runs home, opens the windows and screams desperately looking down on the street below, a white street, glaring with sunlight, deserted, motionless.

Crossing Via Tuscolana, on the opposite side of the Quadraro, on nearby Piazza San Giovanni Bosco, Federico Fellini directed some scenes of La dolce vita. Professor Steiner (Alain Cluny),
Anna Magnani running in the Pigneto in *Open City*
The bar of Via Fanfulla da Lodi in the Pigneto Quarter in *Accattone!*

Anna Magnani in the Aqueduct Parc in *Mamma Roma*

Onrushig paparazzi in Piazza San Giovanni Bosco in *La dolce vita*
a friend of Marcello, lives on this square. The film starts with the long sequence of the Christ statue flown by a helicopter over the metal cupola of the San Giovanni Bosco church and on, over all of Rome. But the scene to remember is the one in which Steiner’s wife is informed of her husband’s suicide, all the paparazzi rush to interview her on the square and Mastroianni, trying to protect her, gets her into a car and defends her from the photographers. Strangely, Fellini filmed the square in all exteriors of Steiner’s apartment, while he used the Palaeur as background in the reconstructed interiors in Cinecittà, making believe to be in the EUR.

Cinecittà proper is situated at the end of Via Tuscolana, before you reach the Raccordo Anulare. In its studios numberless Italian and American films were made, but Cinecittà is also the location of three important films on the world of motion picture: Luchino Visconti’s *Bellissima (Bellissima)* (1951), Vincent Minelli’s *Two Weeks in Another Town (Due settimane in un’altra città)* (1962), and Jean-Luc Goddard’s *Contempt (Il disprezzo)* (1963). In Visconti’s film, Magnani is Maddalena, a Roman proletarian housewife who dreams of her daughter becoming a film-star. The child has to submit to endless auditions for a film in which a little girl was needed. From a hiding, Maddalena watches the showing of the auditions and only then realizes that the world of the cinema is a world of broken dreams. In the projection booth, director Blasetti (enacting himself) and his collaborators laugh and ridicule the performance of Maddalena’s girl who cries desperately in front of the camera. *This is not a child, it’s a dwarf*, howls one of the men.

In *Two Weeks in Another Town*, Minelli draws a bitter balance of Hollywood’s creative decline in the beginning of the Sixties. Jack Andrews (Kirk Douglas), an actor on his sunset boulevard, finds new energy when he becomes the director of a film he is interpreting in Cinecittà. The film is the disenchanted portrait of American motion pictures unable to regenerate, even after having moved to *Hollywood on the Tiber*.
Finally, *Contempt* tells about a French scriptwriter, interpreted by Michel Piccoli, who comes to Rome with his beautiful wife, Brigitte Bardot, to try and rescue a disastrous film directed by Fritz Lang (impersonated by Piccoli himself). The story of love and jealousy develops in this context, between the scriptwriter and his wife who is being chased by the American producer of the film, Jack Palance. Initially, the writer tolerates the producer courting his wife, thus causing the latter to despise him, but when he finally objects, it is too late. The long, initial scene showing a troupe at work in a Cinecittà valley is one of the most beautiful ever seen on the workings of a motion picture set.

The legendary Roman studios that have been operating for almost seventy years, are related to an era of American motion pictures, an era in which films seen worldwide recreated in *Hollywood on the Tiber* ancient Rome and its glories: William Wyler’s *Ben Hur* (*Ben Hur*) (1959), Mervyn LeRoy’s *Quo Vadis* (1951), Joseph L. Mankiewicz’s *Cleopatra* (*Cleopatra*) (1963) and Anthony Mann’s *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (*La caduta dell’impero romano*) (1964). But Federico Fellini’s contribution was essential to the fame of Cinecittà. In famous Studio 5, the largest one in Europe, Fellini produced great part of his masterpieces.

After many years of partial decline, Cinecittà has recently welcomed important international productions. Suffice it to mention films like Johnathan Mostow’s *U-571* (*U-571*) (2000), Terry Gilliam’s *The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen* (*Le avventure del barone di Münchhausen*) (1989) and Renny Harlin’s *Cliffhanger* (*Cliffhanger*) (1993). Martin Scorsese’s last film *Gangs of New York* (*Gangs of New York*) was done entirely here.

Visiting Cinecittà is not exactly easy, except when there are special summer exhibitions or initiatives. But a recent project of the Rome Municipality plans to open a Museum of the Cinema that will permit access to the famous Studios.
On a large square called Quadrato della Concordia, the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro is probably the one most frequently seen in motion pictures. The natives call it *Colosseo quadrato* (Square shaped Coliseum). Like most other monumental EUR buildings, it was built during Fascism. The Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro is a scenery background in Rossellini’s *Open City* (1945), where partisans attack the police cars of the Germans who had just arrested Manfredi (Marcello Paliero), a communist leader of the Resistance movement, and Francesco (Francesco Grandjacquet), Pina’s (Anna Magnani’s) fiancè. The *square shaped Coliseum* is the surrealistic setting of Fellini’s *The Temptations of Dr. Antonio (Le tentazioni del dottor Antonio)* (1962), an episode of his *Boccaccio ’70 (Boccaccio ’70)*. Antonio is a bourgeois, moralist professor who is upset by an obscene poster in front of his house., in Viale Asia. The gigantic poster portrays a provocative Anita Eckberg inviting to drink a glass of milk. Poor Antonio protests so radically against all this woman represents, that she becomes his obsession... and Eckberg pays him back with the right money. One night, Antonio wakes up suddenly, goes to check the poster and to his amazement sees that the woman is no longer on the poster. Very suspicious, Antonio leaves the house and roams around the alleys until the moment when she, in flesh and blood, gigantic in size, identical to the one on the poster, appears before him on the steps of the *square shaped Coliseum*. Antonio tries to escape, but this time, Big, in the true meaning of the word, Anita (Anitona), chases him along the entire Viale della Civiltà del Lavoro, up to the Palazzo dei Congressi...

Also Bruce Willis made his appearance as *Hudson Hawk (Hudson Hawk)* (1991), in Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro, transformed for the occasion into headquarters of the multinational corporation of vicious billionaires Darwin and Minerva Mayflower. The two super-crooks blackmail Hudson into stealing in the Vatican Museum the Leonardo Codex containing the instructions to turn lead into gold. For once the building is not
The Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro in the Eur Quarter

EUR from Peppino De Filippo’s terrace in The Temptations of Dr. Antonio
only a background to an out-door scene, but is seen inside in the large conference room where the Mayflower meet.

Recently, the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro has been suggestively shown in Julie Taymor’s *Titus* (*Titus*) (1999). This adaptation from Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* is specially interesting in its scenography. The square shaped Coliseum is transformed into the palace of Emperor Saturnino (Alain Cummings) and of his wife Tamora, queen of the Goths, interpreted by Jessica Lange. The woman has sworn Roman general Titus Andronicus (Anthony Hopkins), vengeance for having killed her first-born under her very eyes. The meeting of the two pretenders to the throne, Saturnino and Bassiano, is the oddest scene in the beginning of the film. The two brothers reach the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro separately, heading two troops, each with the colour of his soccer team: the Saturnino supporters waving the red-and-yellow flags, while the Bassiano crowd waved the white-and-blue ones. The fight between the two brothers is a true derby: each of the two has to convince the Roman Senate and general Titus that he is the worthy successor of the departed emperor. Alas, the Senate and Titus chose perfidious Saturnino...

But EUR does not only mean Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro. Moving along Viale Pasteur and crossing Viale Europa, you reach Viale America and a little lake, the Laghetto dell’EUR. Here, in Gabriele Muccino’s *The Last Kiss* (*L’ultimo bacio*) (2001), Carlo (Stefano Accorsi) and his friends meet at night: standing on a little waterfall coming down the hill of Palazzo dello Sport, they cheer to their future, trying to remove all fears of a life to come so different from the one desired. And again here, the film ends with Giulia (Giovanna Mezzogiorno). She is jogging and does not object to winks from a handsome speeder who approaches her and smiles at her: an obvious tribute to the ending of Pietro Germi’s *Divorce, Italian Style* (*Divorzio all’italiana*) (1961).

Two important Italian films were made in the area around the
panoramic restaurant, known as the Fungo (mushroom), on Piazza Pakistan and around Palazzo dello Sport, between Viale dell’Umanesimo and Viale della Tecnica, in the Sixties: Michelangelo Antonioni’s The Eclipse (L’eclisse) (1962) and Federico Fellini’s La dolce vita (1961). Two directors who have used to the best the geometric layout and the spaces of EUR’s residential section, built in the Fifties, to express metropolitan anxiety. Both Fellini and Antonioni, in fact, in a landscape of lakes and deserted alleys, show couples at a crucial point. Vittoria (Monica Vitti), in the long and very slow initial scene of The Eclipse, taken in an apartment overlooking the Fungo, leaves her boy-friend Riccardo as they no longer have anything to say to each other, love is over. When Vittoria meets Piero (Alain Delon), she begins a new affair with him, but is unable to abandon herself totally, held back by the cynicism of the young man, a broker. One morning Piero’s car, stolen the night before, is found in the Laghetto dell’EUR. When the car is fished out of the water, they discover that the thief is still inside, drowned. Walking along the sideways of the Park, Vittoria is dismayed by Piero’s words. He is worried that the car should have suffered too much damage and is totally indifferent as to the death of the man inside. Also the end scene is worth remembering when both Piero and Vittoria miss their last date and life goes on, slow, boring and repetitious along EUR’s barren alleys.

In La dolce vita, EUR is the section of town where Marcello and his fiancée Emma (Uvonne Founeaux) live. She is in a perennial crisis due to the social life her man is leading and to his Don Giovanni ways. When Emma attempts suicide, Marcello takes her to a futuristically built hospital, which is none other than the EUR Palazzo dei Congressi. The same Palazzo, in Bernardo Bertolucci’s The Conformist, is now an office of the Fascist secret police. Here, the hero of the film, Marcello Clerici, is hired as killer of professor Quadri. Through Bertolucci’s camera the surroundings turn into a land-
Anita Ekberg, in the background the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro in *The Temptations of Dr. Antioni.*
scape of the soul in which the architecture of this area is almost a tangible presence of Fascism. An illusory order in which a black, depraved soul is hiding, embodied by an enigmatic feminine figure.

As we are in the EUR, why not go as far as the sea? Ostia is Rome’s beach and is part of the city. Here, Antonio Pietrangeli’s *I Knew her Well* begins. Adriana (Stefania Sandrelli) is sunbathing one summer afternoon. She wakes up at the sound of a radio’s time signal, gets up, picks up her towel and walks along the shore in a bikini. She must open up the hairdresser shop where she works. Right from the first scene, Adriana is shown as a superficial girl who is more concerned with her
looks than with her work. While manicuring, she absentmindedly alternates filing her client’s nail and her own. Out of Ostia, you head for Fiumicino and go through the suburban part coasting Via dell’Idroscalo. This is the road taken by Nanni Moretti at the end of the first episode of *Dear Diary*. On his Vespa, Moretti goes on a pilgrimage to the spot where Pasolini was murdered: an untilled meadow, two hundred meters from the seaside with a central strange and shapeless memorial statue. The most touching and beautiful part of Moretti’s entire picture is his slow proceeding along a landscape both disconsolate and warm and, in the background, Keith Jarrett’s celestial piano music.
List of the mentioned motion pictures

Accatone!  
(1961) by Pierpaolo Pasolini pg.26-29-37

A Special Day  
(1977) by Ettore Scola pg.36

Ben Hur  
(1959) by William Wyler pg.42

Besieged  
(1998) by Bernardo Bertolucci pg.12

Bellissima  
(1951) by Luchino Visconti pg.28-41

Cleopatra  
(1963) by Joseph L. Mankiewicz pg.42

Cliffhanger  
(1993) by Renny Harlin pg.42

Contempt  
(1963) by Jean-Luc Goddard pg.41-42

Dear Diary  
(1993) by Nanni Moretti pg.28-49

Divorce, Italian Style  
(1961) by Pietro Germi pg.45

Gangs of New York  
(2001) by Martin Scorsese pg.42

Hudson Hawk  
(1990) by Michael Lehmann pg.23-43

I Knew Her Well  
(1965) by Antonio Pietrangeli pg.25-48

Inferno  
(1980) by Dario Argento pg.35

La dolce vita  
(1960) by Federico Fellini pg. 9-11-32-33-41-46

Luna  
(1979) by Bernardo Bertolucci pg.22-30

Mamma Roma  
(1962) by Pierpaolo Pasolini pg. 25-37-38

Mignon è partita  
(1988) by Francesca Archibugi pg.35

My Own Private Idaho  
(1991) by Gus Van Sant pg.14

Nights of Cabiria  
(1957) by Federico Fellini pg.9-21-22

Nostalgia  
(1983) by Andreij Tarkovskij pg.17

Nurse Betty  
(2000) by Neil Labute pg.23

Only You  
(1996) by Norman Jewison pg.23

Open City  
(1945) by Roberto Rossellini pg. 33-37-43

Poor, but Beautiful  
(1956) by Dino Risi pg.5

Portrait of a Lady  
(1996) by Jane Campion pg.6-17

Quo Vadis  
(1951) by Mervin LeRoy pg 42

Roman Holiday  
(1953) by William Wyler pg.9-12-14-18-29

The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen  
(1989) by Terry Gilliam pg. 42

The Audience  
(1971) by Marco Ferreri pg.30

The Belly of an Architect  
(1987) by Peter Greenaway pg.3-17

The Bicycle Thief  
(1948) by Vittorio De Sica pg.11-25-33

The Conformist  
(1979) by Bernardo Bertolucci pg.15-46

The Eclipse  
(1962) by Michelangelo Antonioni pg.3-46

The Facts of Murder  
(1959) by Pietro Germi pg.6

The Fall of the Roman Empire  
(1964) by Anthony Mann pg.42

The Godfather part III  
(1990) by Frances Ford Coppola pg.30

The Greatest Love  
(1952) by Roberto Rossellini pg.35

The Ignorant Fairies  
(2001) by Ferzan Ozpetek pg.26

The Innocent  
(1976) by Luchino Visconti pg.36

The Last Kiss  
(2001) by Gabriele Muccino pg.21.45

The Red Wood Pigeon  
(1989) by Nanni Moretti pg.21

The Temptations of Dr.Antonio  
(Boccaccio ’70) (1962) by Federico Fellini pg 43

The Talented Mr. Ripley  
(1999) by Anthony Minghella pg.5-6-14

The White Sheik  
(1952) by Federico Fellini pg.29-30

Three Coins in the Fountain  
(1954) by Jean Negulesco pg.11

Titus  
(1999) by Julie Tymor pg.45

Two Weeks in another Town  
(1962) by Vincent Minnelli pg.41

U-571  
(2000) by Johnathan Mostow pg.42

Umberto D.  
(1952) by Vittorio De Sica pg.3-33

Un americano a Roma  
(1954) by Steno pg.15

We All Loved Each Other so Much  
(1974) by Ettore Scola pg.11-12-14

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow  
(1963) by Vittorio De Sica pg.5
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