



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
COMPETITION
2019 OFFICIAL SELECTION



THE TRAITOR

Il Traditore

A film by **Marco Bellocchio**



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A film by **Marco Bellocchio**

With **Pierfrancesco Favino, Maria Fernanda Candido, Luigi Lo Cascio**

2019 / ITALY-FRANCE-GERMANY-BRAZIL / COLOR / RUN TIME: 145 MINS

INTERNATIONAL SALES

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SYNOPSIS

In the early 1980's, an all out war rages between Sicilian mafia bosses over the heroin trade. Tommaso Buscetta, a made man, flees to hide out in Brazil. Back home, scores are being settled and Buscetta watches from afar as his sons and brother are killed in Palermo, knowing he may be next. Arrested and extradited to Italy by the Brazilian police, Buscetta makes a decision that will change everything for the Mafia: He decides to meet with Judge Giovanni Falcone and betray the eternal vow he made to the Cosa Nostra.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Traitor is more the story of Tommaso Buscetta than of the Cosa Nostra.

Tommaso Buscetta is fickle and constantly on the move, both in his life and in personal relationships. He's out of the ordinary, intelligent, charming, effective and endowed with natural authority. A mafioso loyal to the Cosa Nostra, but also to his own personal principles, he's not afraid of challenging authority.

From the end of the 1970s to the start of the 1980s, he faces the growing strength of the Corleonesi, headed by the uncompromising Totò Riina. This new small group has no mercy and flouts the basic principles of the Cosa Nostra: they kill women and children and eliminate whatever gets in their way. This group holds no place for Tommaso Buscetta. When in 1982 he moves to Rio de Janeiro with his beloved wife and children, he aims to end his involvement with the mafia. But there's no such thing as leaving the mafia – the organization hunts him down. However, the Brazilian police beat them to it and extradite him to Italy.

Buscetta then proposes a deal to the Italian judiciary: he'll cooperate and dismantle the mafia in exchange for his own protection and survival. He's soon confronted with the imposing, inflexible and tenacious Judge Giovanni Falcone, and we're plunged into the depths of the Sicilian organization: murders, shoot-outs and scams. All this provides the backdrop to Buscetta's account, who turns out to be the Cosa Nostra's biggest mystery: no one knows why he's collaborating. He seems motivated by revenge and the desire to dismantle a mafia no longer in line with his values. Buscetta is a traitor for deserting to the enemy, but he doesn't see himself that way.

In the course of his confessions, he highlights the gulf that exists between 'his' mafia and that of the Corleonesi. He intends to do justice to the true Cosa Nostra in this way. He makes Totò Riina the ultimate traitor of the story.

Betrayal is a recurrent theme tirelessly explored in film, precisely because it makes us reflect on change. Can a man truly and profoundly change in the course of his life or is it just a pretense? Is change a way of healing, of repenting? Did Buscetta, who refused the label of «informer» all his life, embark on this process of healing, of redemption, to become a new man? Or did he create his own justice?





THE CHARACTERS

TOMMASO BUSCETTA

PIERFRANCESCO FAVINO

Tommaso Buscetta, also known as Don Masino, is a fascinating character who left an indelible mark on the history of the fight against the mafia. Born in Palermo in 1921, the youngest of a poor family with 17 children, he married early and had two sons by the age of 16. He embarked on a career of crime in 1945 and soon demonstrated his skills, rapidly climbing the hierarchy of the Cosa Nostra. In 1963, pursued by the Italian judiciary, he fled first to the United States, then to Brazil. This earned him the nickname «the boss of two worlds.» But Buscetta's empire was to collapse. He was arrested by the Brazilian police, then imprisoned and tortured in Italy. In 1980, he managed to escape from prison and returned to Brazil in order to flee from the mafia war. After marrying his third wife, Cristina, a young Brazilian with whom he had two children, Buscetta was again arrested by the Brazilian police. Deeply affected by the executions of those close to

him, and in particular by the brutal murder of his two eldest sons, he tried to commit suicide by poisoning himself. But his life was narrowly saved and he was extradited to Italy. Once back in Italy, he made a decision that would change both his life and the mafia. He met Judge Falcone and went on to collaborate with the judiciary. The information which Buscetta provided the Italian authorities was the most important ever obtained. For the first time, it was possible to weaken the Cosa Nostra. 475 people were charged and the «Maxi Trial» took place in Palermo. Buscetta was the key witness and took the stand at considerable risk. He made the Cosa Nostra his enemy and, despite the danger, held firm to his course of action: «In the past, the Cosa Nostra had nothing to do with the perverse entity that it is today. [...] I decided to collaborate with the State to prevent others from believing in the dignity and honor of the Cosa Nostra. These values have

been buried under a mountain of innocent victims.» The criminal organization murdered two of his children, further members of his family and friends. The trial ended with 360 convictions. In 1992, Judge Falcone was assassinated. Buscetta then went further and denounced the links between the mafia and Italian politicians. Don Masino's revelations incriminated powerful men like Giulio Andreotti, a former prime minister. To secure his own peace and anonymity, he underwent cosmetic surgery and moved first to Brazil, then to the United States, where he spent the rest of his life under the US Witness Protection Program. Buscetta's greatest victory, however, lay in his demise: after a life full of murder and the settling of scores, he was able to live his final days in peace, finally dying of cancer in 2000.



CRISTINA BUSCETTA

MARIA FERNANDA CANDIDO

Maria Cristina de Almeida Guimaraes was Buscetta's third and final wife, as well as the mother of his youngest children. She was Brazilian and much younger than him. Passionate, strong, clear-headed and always present, she was very different from the regular mafiosi wives who lived in their husbands' shadows. Cristina was active, intelligent and autonomous – she was a keystone in Buscetta's life and played a crucial role in his decision to betray the mafia.





TOTÒ RIINA NICOLA CALÌ

Salvatore Riina (born on November 16, 1930, in Corleone, and died November 17, 2017, in Parma), also known as Totò Riina, was nicknamed «Totò u Curtu» in Sicilian dialect because of his shortness (158 cm) and «La Belva» (The Beast) due to his ferocity.

Totò was one of the most influential members of the Sicilian mafia. In the course of his criminal career, he personally murdered approximately 40 people and is suspected of having ordered the killing of 110 others. During the 1980s and in the early 1990s, Riina and his mafioso family, the Corleonesi, led a merciless campaign of violence against both rival mobsters and the Italian state, whose anti-mafia judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino were murdered just two months apart in 1992. The mafia's terror spread within the population and caused the authorities to introduce strict measures, which led to the arrest and imprisonment of Riina and several of his associates in 1993. Sentenced to life in prison, he died of cancer in 2017 after word of his possible release on health grounds provoked public outrage.

TOTUCCIO CONTORNO

LUIGI LO CASCIO

Salvatore Contorno, known as Totuccio Contorno (born May 20, 1946, in Palermo, Sicily) was a former mafia soldier under the command of Stefano Bontade. He later became a witness in the Maxi Trial. Contorno was initiated into the Cosa Nostra in 1975. He was one of Bontade's favorite hitmen and was also associated with Tommaso Buscetta. During the Mafia War, the Corleonesi wanted to eliminate Contorno, but he was able to escape and protect his family. He decided to collaborate with the Italian authorities, following Buscetta's example.





PIPPO CALÒ

FABRIZIO FERRACANE

Pippo Calò, whose real name is Giuseppe Calò, was born on September 30, 1931, in Palermo, Sicily. He was a very influential member of the Cosa Nostra and was nicknamed the «Mafia's Cashier» because of his involvement in a number of money laundering cases. A very close friend of Tommaso Buscetta, he nevertheless chose to support the latter's principle rival Totò Riina at the start of the 1980s. After several years on the run, he was arrested on March 30, 1985, and tried in Palermo's Maxi Trial for money laundering, associating with the mafia, murder and racketeering. He received two life sentences. He remained an active member of the Cosa Nostra even in jail, where he led a life of luxury and less influential inmates were his servants. Pippo Calò's crimes include the bombing of the Naples-Milan train in 1984, which killed 15 people and injured 116.

GIOVANNI FALCONE

FAUSTO RUSSO ALESÌ

Giovanni Salvatore Augusto Falcone, born in Palermo May 18, 1939, and murdered May 23, 1992, in Capaci, was an Italian judge committed to fighting the mafia. His assassination was ordered by Totò Riina, head of the Corleonesi clan. Falcone came to prominence in 1984 when he took the testimony of one of the Cosa Nostra's most important informers, Tommaso Buscetta, known as «Don Masino.» On the basis of this testimony, Falcone opened the Maxi Trial in Palermo in 1986, which he initiated with his friend Paolo Borsellino (who would be assassinated a few months after Falcone). Palermo's criminal court wasn't large enough to accommodate the 475 accused who were to stand trial, so a courtroom known as «the bunker» was created. Falcone asked for additional resources to pursue the fight against the mafia, but decisions weren't immediately forthcoming. Giovanni Falcone became a hero and an icon throughout Italy. He also became the number one enemy and main target of the Cosa Nostra. The police escort provision wasn't enough to protect Giovanni Falcone. On May 23, 1992, he was murdered by the Cosa Nostra in what is known as «The Capaci Massacre.»





MARCO BELLOCCHIO

FILMOGRAPHY (A SELECTION)

- 2016 **Sweet Dreams** (Fai bei sogni)
- 2015 **Blood of My Blood**
- 2012 **Dormant Beauty** (Bella Addormentata)
- 2010 **Sorelle Mai**
- 2009 **Vincere**
- 2006 **The Wedding Director** (Il Regista Di Matrimoni)
- 2003 **Good Morning, Night**
- 2002 **My Mother's Smile** (L'Ora Di Religione)
- 1999 **The Nanny** (La Balia)
- 1997 **The Prince of Homburg** (Il Principe Di Homburg Di Heinrich von Kleist)
- 1994 **The Butterfly's Dream** (Il Sogno Della Farfalla)
- 1991 **The Conviction** (La Condanna)
- 1988 **The Witches' Sabbath** (La Visione Del Sabba)
- 1986 **Devil in the Flesh** (Diavolo In Corpo)
- 1984 **Henri IV** (Enrico IV)
- 1982 **The Eyes, The Mouth** (Gli occhi, La Bocca)
- 1980 **A Leap in the Dark** (Salto Nel Vuoto)
- 1977 **Il Gabbiano** (Il Gabbiano)
- 1976 **Victory March** (Marcia Trionfale)
- 1972 **Slap the Monster on Page One** (Sbatti Il Mostro In Prima Pagina)
- 1971 **In the Name of the Father** (Nel Nome Del Padre)
- 1967 **China Is Near** (La Cina è vicina)
- 1965 **Fists in the Pocket** (I Pugni In Tasca)

CAST

Tommaso Buscetta	Pierfrancesco Favino
Cristina, Tommaso's wife	Maria Fernanda Candido
Pippo Calò	Fabrizio Ferracane
Totuccio Contorno	Luigi Lo Cascio
Giovanni Falcone	Fausto Russo Alesi
Totò Riina	Nicola Calì
Tano Badalamenti	Giovanni Calcagno
Alfonso Giordano	Bruno Cariello
Franco Coppi, avv. Andreotti	Alberto Storti
Luciano Liggio	Vincenzo Pirrotta
Stefano Bontate	Goffredo Bruno
Benedetto, Tommaso's son	Gabriele Cicirello
Antonio, Tommaso's son	Paride Cicirello
TV Journalist	Elia Schilton
Giuseppe «Scarpuzzedda» Greco	Alessio Praticò
Cesare (chief escort)	Pier Giorgio Bellocchio





CREW

Directed by **Marco Bellocchio**
Screenplay, Dialogs **Marco Bellocchio, Ludovica Rampoldi, Valia Santella, Francesco Piccolo**
Director of Photography **Vladan Radovic**
Production Sound Mixer **Gaetano Carito, Adriano Di Lorenzo**
Original music **Nicola Piovani**
Costume Designer **Daria Calvelli**
Art Director **Andrea Castorina**
Editor **Francesca Calvelli**
Composer **Nicola Piovani**
Production Companies **IBC Movie, Kavac Film with Rai Cinema, Ad Vitam Production, Match Factory Production, Gullane Entretenimento**
International Sales **The Match Factory**

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