



Primo Piano - Useful Idiots, a movie by Maurizio Mistretta is a tribute to Pier Paolo Pasolini

Dal nostro corrispondente a Bangkok - 17 feb 2022 (Prima Pagina News) *Useful Idiots* is a tribute film to Pier Paolo Pasolini for the centenary of his birth, also inspired by Harold Pinter and Renato Guttuso. The film is a strong invitation to courage and to stand up alone to fight against oppression and inequality.

The movie "Useful Idiots" sees the presence of actors of 10 different nationalities who participated in the filming all fulfilled in compliance with the regulations in force in the field of protection from Covid. The creativity that was released at the base of this filmic work sees the presence of Pier Paolo Pasolini, in the centenary of his birth, Harold Pinter but also the colorful and imaginative vision of Renato Guttuso. The film production has also obtained the adhesion of the Pantera Film company which will take care of the distribution all over the world. In the presentation text of the film, among other things, Mistretta writes: "'Useful Idiots' wants to be a meeting point between neorealism and the absurdity of existence. A combination of modern elements and a desire for poetry that is lost without remedy. The film is set in a hopelessly corrupt present and uses contemporary language. It is a tragicomic epic of absurd characters inserted into a plot that seems like a noir revenge well plotted by some hidden entity. My film is a representation of the madness of life in a rigorously realistic way: the perfect encounter between Pasolini and Pinter. The result brings a feeling of magical realism where sometimes you can feel the comedy, but not for long." Let's go into more detail, interviewing the director himself, Maurizio Mistretta, founder of BIAG, Bangkok International Artists Guild Co. Ltd, actor, writer, lecturer. What was the genesis of the "Useful Idiots" film project, the story of its development? "Useful Idiots" was born after a long study between Pasolini and Pinter. Its genesis goes back to a theatrical event, perhaps one of the most successful ones in my long activity of theatrical production in Bangkok: *The Dumb Waiter* by Pinter. The film was born almost as a misdirection; about a year ago, my actors asked me to put it back into production, mindful of the great success it had achieved in the past. While they were preparing the second theatrical edition, the covid pandemic broke out and we decided to turn it into a film. To the theatrical script I had already added an action by two women, which does not appear in the Pinterian original. In my first film draft, the women's plot grew out of all proportion until it became the main plot. The action of the women has its own precise Pasolinian character: they are rebellious and poetic as opposed to the Pinterian mediocrity of the two killers. When I finished my draft, I sent the screenplay to Gerard Maurez, a French screenwriter who modulated it for a more mainstream audience. It still remains a film with a strong authorial edge. What is the message that this film conveys, in the name of Pier Paolo Pasolini? I tried to make a film without taking any particular part in it, at least emotionally. This may not seem very Pasolinian but -in fact- the result was surprising. This attitude of mine increased the intensity of the various messages that everyone can grasp. The



most Pasolinian message, so to speak, is entrusted to the women and is a message of rebellion, of breaking out of the mould and, in the end, of not adhering to a certain system. A deaf rebellion, a rebellion from below without any emphasis. Women will not accept a status quo that could also bring them advantages. The women of "Useful Idiots" are special, poetic and exemplary, women who evoke a past of strong ideals. Pier Paolo Pasolini was an author who has left a deep mark on Italian culture, in the form of journalist, essayist, film director, literary author. A "Renaissance" artist, if we want to say so, but perfectly placed in the actuality of his time. Probing the human soul and its frailties, he has also "told" the power of the media in subjugating minds and thus, has also become "understandable" throughout the world. How does this film, "Useful Idiots" communicate this to us? "Useful Idiots" is a story of decadent characters who are already devastated by the world around them. They are the fruit of this power of the media and other powers. I didn't talk much about this aspect but that all their actions are influenced by it is evident. To the power of the media I dedicated some scenes, very ironic. In one of them, one of the characters is reading the newspaper aloud telling his companion a very far-fetched story that he seems to believe blindly. The slightly more critical companion tries to convince him that what he has read is just fake news. The result is one of the funniest scenes in the film.

di Francesco Tortora Giovedì 17 Febbraio 2022