

Member and guest feedback for *Investigation of a Citizen above Suspicion*

A difficult watch for several reasons: dated, uncomfortable attitudes cf. today, lead was not charismatic even unpleasant, slightly to very enigmatic. One redeeming feature was Morricone's soundtrack. Very pleased to have had a chance to see it though. Did Cronenberg get the idea for Crash having watched this? The scene with waving of the Little Red Book reminded me I had one! Every public school boy from that era wrote to the Chinese Embassy to get one!

Either I am missing something but this is a first for me - the first time I have given an RFS film a Dreadful score. Talk about building obstacles in order to knock them down again. An extremely heavy-handed, signposted in every direction supposedly, satirical attempt at exposing police and institutional corruption in Italy at the end of the 60s by, I wouldn't be surprised, privileged bourgeois dreaming of a Marxist utopia, on top of which, however bad or great this may have been at the time, it hasn't aged at all well to put it mildly. I remember seeing Dario Fo's Accidental Death of an Anarchist at the Wyndham's Theatre in 1980, which has a similar theme and yes, I was a lot younger then but it worked in a live setting and was funny and brilliantly acted and directed. Unlike this. Still, I can see why this was chosen as the European classic film. It seemed to take a shed load of money at the Italian box office (I am still trying to work out how much near enough two billion lire was at the time) and is even considered, according to the Italian Ministry of Culture, "one of the films that have changed the collective memory of the country between 1942 and 1978". I'd give La Dolce Vita, Rome Open City, The Innocent, The Battle of Algiers etc such an accolade, but this? Unless, it had such an effect that after watching it people stopped going to the cinema altogether.Definitely part of the Zeitgeist in an era I dimly remember but right now this just comes across as the worst kind of over-the-top agitprop. Truly abysmal.

An intriguing, stylish, entertaining and troubling film that has not lost any relevance for society today.

Weird - but once you're used to the totally over-the-top style, a very interesting product of its time.

I was disappointed with this film, which I found rather weird and very dated, with no female police officers! The close-up handheld camera work was difficult to watch and the sound was rather strident.

Intriguing film that gave me much to think about.

At the film start I was not paying full attention thinking that it was just another movie about a bad cop and a murder. By the finish I was well-briefed about the relationship between authority and the citizen, legality, hypocrisy and even possible phantasy power sex games. An excellent evening's entertainment.

Clever idea for a story but I thought the film showed its age - particularly in the attitude to women. Slightly disappointed overall.

This film was absolutely bonkers. I did not enjoy the manic and shouty acting, the story, the promised psychological thriller that failed to deliver. Even the Morricone score was disappointing. Overall, I felt it was boring and pointless.

Very pertinent subject given the current political scandals.

Interesting and absorbing but felt rather long, though it wasn't! Depiction of the immunity of the powerful was scary and a message for all times.

Interesting to see an Oscar winning satire that still resonates today.

Very illuminating on the Italy of that time with a repressive, corrupt state and naive but sometimes violent left-wing students. Delightfully cynical. A great choice for the international classic slot.

A bit too shouty for me...

While it was interesting to see a film made over 55 years ago and there were some amusing elements, overall, I found it very dated and didn't like the shouty nature of the dialogue. What was possibly the most astonishing element was the absence of any women protagonists except for the murdered mistress - something you wouldn't see today.

A two but only just. I'd really like to give it two and a half! I liked the atmosphere created in this film, some Hitchcock some Noir and very Italian in its satire. Morricone's dissonant score emphasised the suspense and unease I felt, especially for the first half of the film when I was unsure of 'il Dottore's motive. It was very pertinent to late 60s Italy and looked gorgeous too with an interesting range of shots. But I found it very shouty and after a while that grated on me.

Top grade for relevance. An unprincipled thug getting away with crime and using the immunity of his position to propagate hatred and the ruthless crushing of dissent. Petri may have had Mussolini in mind but we can think of such dangers in our own time. A prophetic and timeless piece of cinema. The quotation from Kafka was the final brilliant touch. Will we never learn?

I enjoyed it although (obviously) found the main character pretty despicable. I liked the black humour and enjoyed the ending. I also liked the music!

This film has not aged well, it lacked nuance, was loud, in your face and full of stereotypical characters. I did not enjoy it at all, which was a shame given I would like the Society to show more classic films than it does. Also, the Fo ending did not work. The first, dream, ending embodied the logic of the film, any alternate simply confused its message. A generous Poor!

I couldn't agree with all the rave reviews. Unsympathetic main character and the political point about people with power being above suspicion was one dimensionally driven home with the subtlety of a sledgehammer. The endless shouting was so so tedious.

I sense this film was polarising, with the absence of characterisation a problem for some. That didn't bother me so much and I very much liked the core premise that the powerful and rich can be above justice (very topical). I did, though, think it lost its way a bit in the middle before what was, in my view, a strong ending. That the protagonist was required to sign a confession of innocence was a nice touch.

Visually stylish but relentless in tone and not an enjoyable watch.

I thought this film was Dreadful. I get that it was a satire but can't understand why it was universally acclaimed. The music was also irritating, even though it was by Morricone. I'm giving the next film a miss as well as I understand that it will be long and harrowing. Any chance of a film that is lifts the mood or is not so downbeat.

I hovered between boredom (it was far too long) and horror. I imagine that it was intended to be over the top and appreciate that it must have been quite innovative in its time. It well portrayed the stereotypical roll of bullying misogynist, mentally ill, power-hungry male but if I could have escaped my seat without disturbing others, I would have!

My favourite film so far, a rip-roaring political farce in which the Commedia Dell'arte anarchic zest of Dario Fo is married cinematically to the bleak dystopian pessimism of Kafka. Authoritarian, fascistic, patriarchal, arrogant are all words that correctly describe the Italian law enforcement system of the post war decades - (believe me as I have Italian antecedents.) - and perhaps they still do? Here the story of a police chief's sordid dalliance with a bored high-end divorcee is told in clever flashback sequences after he has brutally murdered her during one of their sex game fantasies. Arrogance leads him to leave numerous clues for his murder colleagues to easily conclude their boss is the killer, such is his belief that the system is hermetically sealed to prevent his detection. They suspect him but are too intimidated to name him. And in any case the system cannot permit his attempts to confess to be believed. To do so would be to shatter the organisation's carefully manufactured illusion that the police are the sole bastions of civilised values. A witty, entertaining and politically intelligent film of the highest order. Just one reservation. The caricature of a sexually predatory woman is unlikely to stand up to a feminist analysis in this post Me Too politically correct era.

Sorry I'll give this a Dreadful. I did not enjoy at all!

Sorry...we hated it and would have left very soon after the start but couldn't do so without disturbing other people. Too loud, very stilted, melodramatic, dated, too "male"(apart from all the "prostitutes "). Maybe just too "old fashioned" for our taste.

It felt a bit dated (as well it might after 56 years) but an interesting film.

I found this film mesmerising from the start and the music was extremely clever. The main actor was excellent despite playing such an utterly loathsome and devious character!

Actually, dropped off halfway through! So not that gripping.

Sorry, but it's a Dreadful'.

Found it very interesting and still thinking about it. It really conveyed that the hero-worship of the police chief was more about fear than admiration, whether from citizens or colleagues. The lead actor's physical transformation from supremely arrogant man to pathetic and childish spurned lover was so impressive.

I really didn't like it, I have no tolerance of violence against women especially when the styling of the film makes some people laugh - defo not for me.

I was bored. It was silly.

Interesting interaction between "The Doctor's" need to assert dominance in his private and public life. Similar dynamics seem to emerge in recent scandals involving politicians and CEOs?

I found it an interesting and intriguing film. I was shocked by the lack of women but that was of the time. I found the shouting too much at times but overall was pleased that I had seen the film.

Impossible to comprehend. I'm sure that with greater knowledge of Italian society in the 70's one could make more of this film. The surrealistic style is now outmoded and seems tortured.

What a great film! I had not heard of it before but really enjoyed the absurd, black comedy and the razor-sharp satire of Italian society in the early 1970s – with some resonances of what is happening across the Atlantic today. My favourite film of this season so far. Great choice!

Excellent film!

Did not enjoy this film at all. Meant to be a satire? Lost on me! Main character was horrid. Very disappointing for a 'classic'!

I found this a perplexing and quite disturbing film but it certainly made me think about its relevance to some of the current state opposition to dissent and oppression of protestors around the world. I liked the scenes where the "citizen above suspicion" was trying to protest his guilt and his confession being brushed aside.

It made a point but not in a very entertaining way.

This was a one idea film that, with the idea established, ended up by being boring. Billed as a black comedy, it wasn't very funny. By today's standards it was misogynistic, although it undoubtedly represented something of Italian society when made.

Execrable. I got what the film was trying to say but it was thoroughly unpleasant and I would have found the film objectionable even at the time it came out. It was like resurrecting Alf Garnett.

Well, what a great choice. I enjoyed it a great deal. It was a serious and complex exploration of power and its corruption. I was initially disconcerted by the main character's sexual relationship with the beautiful woman not least by her 'collusion' later it was revealed as their apparent mutual pleasure in the sex game. But then given the vile/ violent result the film pivots to the examination of the core idea of the law and its disinterested enforcement as the murderer/chief of police is promoted to a different role in the law. Given this switch, we watched his former subordinates investigate a crime scene in which he had left clues as to his own guilt. Then we get different layers about the political challenges presented by people wishing to overturn the whole capitalist system. That is so hard to sum a complicated film is banal but true – so, I wanted to comment that the music, the direction, the script, the acting, the cinematography: FANTASTIC- enough thanks for this choice of film.

On reflection it was thought provoking covering power, corruption etc. Relevant for our times. Stylish if slightly confusing.

So disappointing!

I found the film somewhat difficult to follow at times.

Showing its age, with its blunt political satire.

This a personal reaction to an obviously clever, beautifully shot satirical film. I do not like it- too many men in dark suits behaving in a brutal manner. Not my idea of fun.

Perfect Italian tailoring and superbly acted but essentially sexist deluded tosh.