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Wexner Center for the Arts summer film series spotlights Italian legend Federico Fellini

The retrospective kicks off July 7 with La Strada

Columbus, OH—June 16, 2022—**July 7 through August 18**, the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University will present a tribute to one of the world’s most influential filmmakers. ***Retrospective: Federico Fellini*** offers digitally restored versions of 12 of the director’s films, including the most beloved and celebrated works of his career.

Few filmmakers are as associated with art-house cinema of the 1950s and ‘60s as Federico Fellini (1920–1993). The Italian maestro’s style, with its extravagant visuals and air of surrealism, is so distinct and influential that it has its own adjective: “Felliniesque.”

Fellini began his film career working on scripts for Roberto Rossellini’s neorealist classics *Rome, Open City* (1945) and *Paisan* (1946) but gradually developed his own cinematic language, blending fantasy and theater alongside psychoanalysis and cultural critique. Among his many honors are four Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film and a 1993 Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Retrospective: Federico Fellini is part of the *Federico Fellini 100* tour, a series of centennial tributes to the director coordinated by Paola Ruggiero and Camilla Cormanni of Luce Cinecittà in Rome. Originally scheduled to screen at the Wex in summer 2020, the program was delayed due to the pandemic but will now roll out on the big screen to celebrate the 102nd anniversary of Fellini’s birth.

The program:

La strada (1954)

Thursday, July 7 | 7 PM

The film that made Fellini and wife Giulietta Masina international stars, this powerfully emotional melodrama stars Anthony Quinn as the brutish traveling strongman Zampanò and Masina as assistant, Gelsomina, who’s devoted to Zampanò despite his abuse. *La strada* won more than 50 international awards, including the first Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. (108 mins., 4K DCP)

Nights of Cabiria (1957)

Friday, July 8 | 7 PM

Masina stars as the titular character, a sex worker in Rome who searches for love despite life’s hardships, in this “deep, wrenching, and eloquent filmgoing experience” (*New York Times*). With *Nights of Cabiria*, Fellini won another Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. (110 mins., 4K DCP)

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La dolce vita (1960)

Saturday, July 9 | 7 PM

Fellini's critique of postwar Rome and the rise of celebrity culture follows Marcello (Marcello Mastroianni), a tabloid journalist who captures the rich and famous in compromising situations. Costarring Anouk Aimée and Anita Ekberg, who takes a dip in the Trevi Fountain in one famous scene, *La dolce vita* was Fellini's biggest commercial hit, as well as the original source of the word "paparazzi." (174 mins., 4K DCP)

8½ (1963)

Thursday, July 14 | 7 PM

Following the success of *La dolce vita*, Fellini struggled with a creative block that he overcame by casting Mastroianni as his alter ego for this often imitated but unparalleled drama about the power of fantasy and memory. Beloved by filmmakers to this day for its reflection of the creative process, *8½* is filled with surreal and erotic dream sequences. An Academy Award winner for Best Foreign Language Film and Best Costume Design. (138 mins., 4K DCP)

Amarcord (1973)

Thursday, July 21 | 7 PM

In the semiautobiographical *Amarcord*, Fellini recreates his hometown of Rimini and populates it with eccentric characters living under the constraints of Catholicism and Italian Fascism. At the center of this satirical story is Titta (Bruno Zanin), a teen prone to mischief, sexual fantasies, and fights with his strict father. *Amarcord* won an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. (123 mins., 4K DCP)

I vitelloni (1952)

The White Sheik (1952)

Thursday, July 28 | Double Feature | 7 PM start; second feature begins at 9 PM

This pairing of Fellini classics highlights the director's gift for capturing messy truths about the human condition. A major influence on Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*, *I vitelloni* fixes on five hell-raising wastrels in Rimini (Fellini's hometown) as they stumble through life, mooching off their parents and friends to get by. In *The White Sheik*, Fellini's solo directorial debut, a young couple honeymooning in Rome is comically at odds over how to spend their time, torn between duty and desire. (First film 103 mins., 4K DCP; second film 83 mins., 4K DCP)

Juliet of the Spirits (1965)

Thursday, August 4 | 7 PM

Fellini's first film in color, *Juliet of the Spirits* stars Masina as a woman who turns to spiritualism to cope with her husband's infidelity and receives messages suggesting that sexual exploration could be a key to happiness. Visually stunning, the film lends itself to deep analysis when one considers Fellini said he made it as a gift to Masina. (137 mins., 4K DCP)

Il bidone (1955)

Tuesday, August 9 | 7 PM

Released between the international hits *La Strada* and *Nights of Cabiria*, this often-overlooked crime drama brings neorealist grit to the story of three con men—two of them played by American character actors Richard Basehart and Broderick Crawford—at a career crossroads. (113 mins., 4K DCP)

Roma (1972)

Thursday, August 11 | 7 PM

Film/Video Theater

The lush and monumental memoir *Roma* follows the 18-year-old Fellini (Peter Gonzales Falcon) as he arrives in Rome during the reign of Mussolini. The impressionistic portrait of Rome inspired by the director's memories is blended with contemporary footage of Fellini and his crew shooting everyday situations in the city, allowing him to draw comparisons between the past and present. (120 mins., 4K DCP)

Variety Lights (1950)

I clowns (1970)

Thursday, August 18 | Double feature | 7PM start; second feature begins at 8:45 PM

This Fellini double feature spotlights the director's love of theater and taps into his obsession with clowns and circuses. Fellini's first directing effort, *Variety Lights* follows a traveling vaudeville group whose enthusiasm helps compensate for limited talent. Made for Italian television, the rarely screened "mockumentary" *I clowns* is Fellini's filmic realization of his childhood obsession with clowns and circuses. The cast is filled with real-life clowns as well as film figures such as Anita Ekberg and French clown and filmmaker Pierre Etaix. (First film 97 mins., 4K DCP; second film 92 mins., 4K DCP)

Visitor Information

Retrospective: Federico Fellini takes place July 7–August 18, 2022, at the Wexner Center for the Arts, 1871 N. High St. on the campus of The Ohio State University. Admission to each program is \$9 for adults, \$7 for Wex members and seniors over 60, and \$5 for students with ID.

Parking is available nearby at the Ohio Union South and Arps garages, and a discounted rate of \$2 is available for Film/Video events. Parking is also available on-street, and the Wex is accessible via COTA. [Up-to-date COVID-19 protocols for the center are available here.](#)

Support

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