

The Other Revolution

Gorky and Lenin on Capri

Documentary 52'

by Raffaele Brunetti and Piergiorgio Curzi

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Against the backdrop of a crystalline ocean, on the most fashionable island in the world, Gorky and Lenin confront each other over the preparation of the Russian Revolution. A story decisive for the future of mankind was to remain untold for many years.

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Photography: Gianni Maitan

Editing: Ilaria de Laurentiis

Sound: Massimo Casseriani

Synopsis

On Capri, at the turn of the century, the most active of the Russian revolutionary political circles in exile gathered around the legendary literary figure of Maxim Gorky. With them was the philosopher Alexander Bogdanov, the leading figure in the Bolshevik Party, at the time more eminent than Lenin. This group was regarded as the most credible influence on the destiny of the Russian people oppressed by Tsarist rule.

On the island the Russian exiles plotted, wrote, worked and studied for seven consecutive years. Here they opened the first revolutionary academy, which came to be known as "The School of Capri." And it was here that a system of thought was developed whereby Socialism and Religion could be reconciled. The most influential intellectuals and revolutionaries flocked here. Lenin went too. He could hardly stay away as the island had become the most important focus for the Party's activities and funds. But his own vision of the revolution and that of the "Capresi" were too divergent. Paradoxically, it was here on jet-set Capri, among the magnates, reigning monarchs, dandies and avant-garde artists, that the great game for the future of Russia and the entire world was played out.

Director's note

Gorky's name has been familiar to me since early childhood. Villa Pierina, the final place of residence of the Russian writer on Capri, is the house in which I grew up. My grandfather Alfonso would, somewhat brusquely, turn away any curiosity seekers who looked through the gates. But with a patience which he did not extend to them, he would tell me the history of the house we lived in. It was the same one in which Maxim Gorky had lived. Many years later, after the Soviet Union had been swept away, the red walls of that house would come back to my mind ever more frequently, as did the photos of those revolutionaries with long beards and moustaches with the calm sea in the background. For years my imagination had inserted Russian workers and intellectuals in the scenario of early 20th century Capri.

This film will be a way to interpret 100 dramatic years of history through a story as little known as it is significant, a story which was censored for many years and that only today can be revealed through documents which were recently declassified and also through the extensive research work carried out in Russian archives that brought to light letters, photos and inedited footage.

RAFFAELE BRUNETTI

Raffaele Brunetti has been a documentary-film director and producer since 1987. He received the “Award for Creative Excellence” at the U.S. International Film Festival, the “Globo d’Oro” with his film *Mitumba*, produced with NDR Arte and YLE. His latest film, *Hair India*, was selected for the official competition of IDFA (The Netherlands, 2008), Festival dei Popoli (Italy, 2008), Full Frame Film Festival (USA, 2009), Hot Docs (Canada, 2009), Prix Italia (Italy, 2009), as well as for other major film festivals and won the Ondas Award as best International Programme (Spain, 2009) and the Jury Award at GZ DOC (China, 2009). He recently produced *Housing* by Federica Di Giacomo which was selected for the Locarno Intl. Film Festival (2009), CPH:DOX (2009) and Thessaloniki (2010).

He is a member of the Foreign Press Association in Italy and Doc/it (Organization of Italian Documentary Makers), where he has been a member of the board of directors since 2005. He is the director of the “Italian Doc Screenings”, Italian documentary showcase. Since 2009 he is a member of the EDN Executive Committee.

THE PRODUCTION COMPANY

B&B Film is a dynamic Italian production house based in Rome. The company develops and produces documentaries and documentary series through co-production and broadcast agreements, ranging from social issues, to history, to creative themes, working with quality European partners such as ZDF, Arte and YLE and international such as National Geographic and Al Jazeera.

B&B Film’s documentaries have been shown in more than 160 countries and have been selected at major international festivals among which IDFA, HotDocs, Full Frame and have received several awards among which the Creative Excellence at the US Film & Video Festival, the Globo d’Oro and the Ondas Award 2009. In 2006 and in 2009 B&B Film received Slate Funding from the Media Plus Programme.