



DYNASTY
Richard Madden and Guido Caprino star in "Medici," one of many high-quality Italian series finding global success.

ITALIAN TV BIZ PUTS ON HOLLYWOOD SHOWCASE

Screenings, panels and party planned to highlight small-screen renaissance

STORY BY ANNA TINGLEY

Tipsheet

WHAT: Italian TV Festival

WHEN: Sept. 19

WHERE: Soho House, Los Angeles

WEB: ittvfestival.com



WITH THE ADVENT OF STREAMING, European television has successfully solidified its place in Hollywood, conquering international audiences with shows such as "Gomorrah," "Medici" and "Suburra: Blood on Rome," all Italian dramas available on Netflix, in addition to HBO's "My Brilliant Friend" and the Italian-French-Spanish drama "The Young Pope."

And now, the first-ever Italian Television Festival, spearheaded by Good Girls Planet and Marco Testa Los Angeles, will showcase quality Italian content to Hollywood. Ahead of this year's Emmys, the event will take place Sept. 19 at an exclusive private club and will feature screenings of teasers and trailers, an awards ceremony, plus an informative panel focused on the future of Italian television. The industry event will wrap up with a red carpet and bash at the London Hotel in West Hollywood.

"The point of this festival is that Italy is producing so much content with really, really good talent, and it's starting to be recognized internationally. It's an Italian TV renaissance," says Valentina Martelli, the founder and CEO of Good Girls Planet, alongside Francesca Scorucchi and Cristina Scognamillo. Netflix's slate will soon be made up of nearly 80% international titles, and HBO and Warner Bros. are beginning to seek out more non-domestic shows. "It's a never-ending market, so why not bring this opportunity to the states?"

Notable attendees include Jared Har-

ris, Oscar winner Paolo Sorrentini, Italian actors Moran Atias ("The Village"), Emanuela Postacchini ("Who Is America?"), Stefania Spampinato ("Grey's Anatomy"), Logan Laurice Browning ("Dear White People"), and Francesco Baucò ("Ford v Ferrari"), alongside other creatives such as Oscar-nominated composer Marco Beltrami.

An hour-long panel titled "Opening Boundaries" will kick off the afternoon, in which writer-director-producer Peter Landesman ("Concussion"), Nils Hartmann, the director of original production at Sky, and Martha De Laurentiis, president of De Laurentiis Prods., will talk to *Variety's* Elaine Low about what Italian television can offer to the domestic industry.

"Italy has great locations where people can shoot, they have a great tax credit, they have all the elements and stories that are relevant internationally," Martelli says. The festival will effectively advertise Italy to Hollywood veterans as fertile ground for production.

As founding partner Marco Testa, the president of Armando Testa Group, says: "The main reason for my participation is not strictly related to my work, I am an 'emotion booster,' always fascinated with Italian talent to communicate emotions, in America and around the world. Exactly like this festival aims to do, while promoting and supporting Made in Italy products."

Eleonora Andreatta, director of Rai Fiction: "The Italian TV Festival in Los Angeles is an excellent opportunity to highlight Italian TV series and increase the amount of attention they receive in the land of the most powerful serial television production. The festival is beneficial for connecting with the leading players in global distribution on large-scale international co-productions, such as 'Medici,' 'My Brilliant Friend' and 'The Name of the Rose.'"

Landesman will discuss why Italy-centric stories appeal to American audiences. De Laurentiis will talk through her decision to shift her production company from film to television as small-screen shows have amped up their quality in recent years.

In celebration of Sorrentini's pioneering hand in this entertainment revival, the director behind "The New Pope" is set to receive the Hand...The Winner Is Award for successfully bringing Italian stories to the forefront of the entertainment industry. Custom-made by Italian artist Fidia Falaschetti, the anthropomorphic sculpture holds a remote control in one hand to symbolize modern-day viewer's freedom to choose what they watch.

At the end of the day, a mix of Hollywood executives and Italian creators will party in WeHo to network and share their ideas, which Martelli says will be "a natural way to bridge the gap between the two territories."

"You never know," she says. "This could be the beginning of some amazing American-Italian TV to come." ▣