

SPETTACOLO

**Once Upon a time, for 50 years, a tiny town
in Tuscany turned its life into a play**



**FILM SCREENING
NOVEMBER 25, 7PM**

**A Documentary Directed by Jeff Malmberg & Chris Shellen
Free for Tyringham Residents \$5 General Admission**

Union Church Of Tyringham 128 Main Rd, Tyringham
Film Presented by UBU Theater ubutheater.org spettacoloilm.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UBU Theater will be screening the documentary “Spettacolo”, a film that chronicles a tiny Tuscan village’s 50 years of community-based theater, demonstrating theater’s impact and transformative influence.

Tyringham, MA (November 16) On November 25th, **UBU Theater** will screen the 2017 film, “Spettacolo”, directed by Jeff Malmberg & Chris Shellen at 7pm, 128 Main Road/Union Church in Tyringham, MA. On the tail of Tyringham’s August, community-based production of “Our Town”, this screening is the next step towards celebrating Tyringham’s sense of self through theater.

As rural communities’ cultures and traditions rapidly disappear, and as populations age and diminish, those left behind, whether by choice or by necessity, deserve a method in which to reflect on the meaning of this rapid transformation which is devastating their worlds and community identities. This screening of “Spettacolo” is intended to peak the interest of Tyringham’s residents to do just that. By introducing Tyringham to the town of Montecchiello, a similarly small, rural village, we can demonstrate how theater can examine similar struggles of universal societal demons. UBU Theater continues its mission to expose the Tyringham residents to the power of theater and its potential impact on community. This screening is the seed being planted in the Tyringham community with the goal of devising our own play/”autodrama” over the next year and a half.

Overview

SPETTACOLO

**(Pronounced “speh-TAK- ò-lō – think of the English word “spectacular”)
An Italian word for performance, spectacle, or play.**

A Film by Jeff Malmberg & Chris Shellen United States * 2017 * 89 minutes * Italian with English subtitles

Synopsis

Once upon a time, villagers in a tiny hill town in Tuscany came up with a remarkable way to confront their issues – they turned their lives into a play. Every summer, their piazza became their stage and villagers of all ages played a part – the role of themselves.

While neighboring villages turned to tourism for survival, Monticchiello’s annual tradition kept the town together for 50 years, preserved in time.

Every issue the villagers have faced in their history - their near annihilation by Nazis, the women’s movement, the struggles of the town’s independent farmers, the commercialization of their land - every major event has been debated and dramatized by the villagers in the center of town.

Leading this process is Andrea Cresti, a painter and sculptor descended from Italian royalty who’s devoted his life to helping his village tell their story. At 75, he still scales scaffolding to adjust lights and pulls the stage apart after midnight rehearsals. But with no qualified heir and a future generation more interested in Facebook than farmers, he struggles to keep their tradition and town from crumbling.

“Spettacolo” tells the story of Teatro Povero di Monticchiello, interweaving episodes from its

past with its modern-day process as the villagers turn a series of devastating blows into a play about the end of their world.

Film Directors' Statement

It was an honor to be the first filmmakers to record Teatro Povero di Monticchiello's process from beginning to end. Fifty years of self-examination have given the villagers an unusual perspective on their world and, fortunately for us, enough curiosity and humor to open their lives up to two Americans with film equipment. For us the film was a chance to learn from a town of people who have chosen to make art the center of their lives – through a very unique theatrical experiment.

The theater's process of "autodrama" doesn't follow a schedule, so we moved into the center of town, learned Italian, and tried to emulate the theatre's process. We listened, translated what we observed into a portrait, and then presented that portrait back to the villagers for their thoughts.

The experience was utterly unique. We started the process as the ultimate outsiders – two people from Los Angeles who barely spoke a word of Italian when we arrived. But gradually, we began to realize how connected our stories are, and how many of Monticchiello's fears and experiences we all share. Five years later, this film has become a collaboration with a group of people we both admire and love.

This past summer marked the 50th anniversary of this one-of-a-kind theatre. But like so many important artistic traditions, Teatro Povero is struggling to survive. Funding for the arts has disappeared, younger generations are losing interest, and Andrea Cresti has announced that he may not return for the theatre's 51st year. We hope that it continues and that the world can learn from their story.

At its most basic level, this film is a chance for the audience to go on a journey to a place they've never been to before. But our real hope with this film is that it's able to pull us all out of our mad scramble into the future and – if even for just 90 minutes – remind us of the value of culture, genuine community engagement, and everything else we're leaving behind as we all move forward.



Photo's by Jeff Mamberg



*"Why are we here tonight to do this strange vigil?
To live better.
Being together like this helps us to live better."
-Andrea Cresti*



Biographies

Ann Gallo (Producer/UBU Theater) is the Founder and Artistic Director of UBU Theater. The company's mission is to give communities a voice through theater. In 2017 Ann produced a community-based production of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" in and with the residents of Tyringham, MA. Ann teaches theater and directs at the Boys and Girls Club of the Berkshires in Pittsfield, MA, taught and directed for the Pittsfield Public Schools' EOS program and PPS's Gateways ESL summer program in partnership with Multicultural Bridge. Directing credits: *The Hundred Dresses*, *A Fly in My Soup and Other Works*, and *A Spy, A General and June Peas* at the BGC. Devised and directed *Maloh, a Congolese Folktale* with PPS's. She has a BA from Bennington College and an MA in Theatre Education from Emerson College.
<http://ubutheater.org/about/>

Jeff Malmberg (film's director / producer / camera / editor)

Jeff Malmberg is a documentary director and editor based in Los Angeles. In 2017, his feature documentary "Spettacolo" will world premiere at the SXSW Film Festival. The film is a portrait of a small Italian hill town that deals with conflict by turning the lives of its villagers into a play. The film is supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship and grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Sundance Documentary Fund, Creative Capital, and the Tribeca Film Institute. Jeff's debut film "Marwencol" won over two dozen awards, including two Independent Spirit Awards, Best Documentary of the Year from Boston Society of Film Critics and Rotten Tomatoes, and the Grand Jury Prize at the 2010 SXSW Film Festival.

Chris Shellen (film's director / producer / sound)

Chris Shellen is a writer and filmmaker based in Los Angeles. She produced the award-winning documentary "Marwencol" and co-authored the companion art book "Welcome to Marwencol," which was named one of the Best Books of 2015 by Amazon.com. She began her career as a film development executive based at a Paramount Pictures, and has worked in documentary, narrative and new media for over 15 years. Her directorial debut "Spettacolo" will world premiere at the 2017 SXSW Film Festival.

Lele Marchitelli (film's composer)

Lele Marchitelli is a film and television composer based in Rome. His score for "La Grande Bellezza" ("The Great Beauty"), winner of the 2014 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, was nominated for Golden Globe and David di Donatello awards. He has collaborated on film scores with notable Italian directors such as Giuseppe Piccioni, Renato De Maria, Carlo Verdone, and Oscar winner Paolo Sorrentino, for whom Lele is currently scoring HBO's "The Young Pope" starring Jude Law.

Matt Radecki (film's producer)

Matt Radecki is part of the award-winning team that produced the documentary "Marwencol." In 2006, Matt co-directed and edited the documentary feature "TV Junkie," which won the Special Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival and later aired on HBO. He also served as producer and co-cinematographer on the PBS documentary "Red White Black & Blue." More recently, he edited "Who's Back," shot by DA Pennebaker, which appeared on the definitive Who DVD collection "Amazing Journey." Matt is the co-founder of Different By Design, a Los Angeles-based production and post-production company.

Andrea Cresti (film's main subject)

Andrea Cresti is an Italian artist based in Tuscany, and the artistic director of Teatro Povero di Monticchiello. For six months of every year, Andrea works as a painter and sculptor with a studio inside of Monticchiello. Every winter, he takes on the additional roles of artistic director and writer for Teatro Povero. After 50 years of performances, Andrea and the theatre were recently awarded Italy's most prestigious theatrical award – the Ubu Prize. The film was a recipient of the TFI/IWC Prize