

# REEL SUSPECTS

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## AND THEY CALL IT SUMMER

Original title: E LA CHIAMANO ESTATE

A film by Paolo Franchi

**ROME IFF**

**Winner - Best Director**

**Winner - Best Actress**



89 min, Italia, 2012, Colour, DCP - Scope - Digital 5.1  
Italian – English subtitles

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

Dino and Anna love each other intensely, but their relationship is not conventional: between them there has never been sexual intercourse. Dino always escaped from this, as if inside him there were a sharp and painful division between sex and love. Dino's discomfort is expressed by compulsive sex with prostitutes. He goes in search of Anna's ex-boyfriends to understand their relationships with her, asking them to return with her. Dino's pain makes Anna feel deeply loved, unique. Anna is unable to find a solution: she is not able and cannot resolve this tormented relationship...

A provocative contemporary romantic drama from the director of *FALLEN HEROES* (NESSUNA QUALITÀ AGLI EROI) and *THE SPECTATOR* (LA SPETTATRICE).

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## LONG SYNOPSIS

Dino and Anna are a couple in their forties. They are very close, but their love is not conventional: they have never had sex. Dino shays away from it, as if within him there was a sharp and painful split between sex and love.

Dino has a complex personality. The suicidal death of his only brother, and the subsequent abandonment by his mother left a profound and indelible mark in his soul.

Tormented for not being able to live with Anna all the experiences of a loving relationship, Dino is nevertheless able to accept help from anyone, not even from his psychologist. Dino expresses his discomfort with extreme behaviors such as compulsive sexual relations with prostitutes and partner swingers. As sort of self-punishment that pushes him to separate himself from the only important thing in his life, Dino goes in search of Anna's ex-boyfriend to know how was their relationship, to ask them to go back with her.

For her part, Anna is unable to find a solution, either she does not know the way or she does not want to put an end to this tormented, indispensable relationship of love. The suffering of Dino makes her feel deeply loved and unique. It seems that there is no possible way out.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Anna and Dino and their "summer." Can we call it "love"? A love restrained from sex, and therefore from its realization in pleasure and satisfaction of the pulse? Dino "loves" Anna but he is afraid to disappoint her, to hurt her. So he "can not" desire her. Anna is beautiful, maybe too beautiful for him... Dino thinks he does not deserve anything, maybe he hates himself, maybe he is the greatest enemy of himself...

The story unfolds through the alternation of narrative scenes displaying the couple's life in a "symbolic" bedroom, friends and strangers accounts of the story, hyper-realistic - almost stolen - scenes, memories that surface along with old photographs, images taken by Dino with his mobile phone during his desperate nights. All this elements combines into a puzzle of sorrow, a portrait of a man imprisoned in his "unhappy consciousness", as defined by Sartre.

A mosaic of many pieces, which belong to the past, present, and future that mingle, revealing the ultimate meaning only at the last piece, at the last frame. The split between love and sex suffered by Dino is ruthless and total and leads him to live a double life, where he experiences compulsive sex with prostitutes and couples swingers after which he returns home with a great emptiness inside and an even deeper plague in his heart.

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And Anna, his "beloved", how does she react to all this? Why does not she rebel, why does not she leave him? It may seem absurd, but this emptiness, this suffering of Dino makes her feel deeply loved, as if she was his irreplaceable chimera.

She feels satisfied, despite the frustration of the absence of a physical relationship. Anna has always refused schemes, even the golden prison of a family a reassuring family or the relationship with a former companion, who with his suffocating love, did not leave her room to breathe or to imagine ... Because maybe, in this story, the element of imagination plays an important role. It's the point of departure and arrival of this "love" that remains "potential", that remains an abstraction, a hope, a dream. Or perhaps it is an escape from reality that frustrates and defies expectations, too often.

Anna and Dino form a deeply romantic, almost harrowing couple. Some would call this man a borderline neurotic with a great sense of guilt that does not allow him even to touch happiness, completeness, and fulfillment. His transgressive nights merely dry him up, dragging him down and down, to the bottom of an abyss.

Without love, sex is likely to become a mechanical act. Obsessive. Compulsive. Dino is aware, because behind his neurosis or perversion, there is a tragic hero. Its sensitivity prevents him from becoming indifferent, like too many men, but does not allow him even to ask anyone for help. Dino prefers to turn upon himself all the violence and pain that lurks within, away from his "great love" that dissolves in the air like a flutter or a summer too short.

For what concern the stylistic appearance, I felt in this very peculiar story the need to detach myself from a certain classic plant. The fragmented narrative pace seemed to me the most suitable to describe the anxiety, the drama of this love. The multiplicity of forms suits perfectly an art project like this.

The short monologues shot in close-up refer to a psychoanalytic session and represents an appeal to the viewer to suspend judgment. Images that allude to dreams and memories, and present scenes that in their repetition acquire their ultimate meaning.

But above all, I find it important to emphasize, the fragments are conveyed with great simplicity and usability, like when you are in front of an old, messy photo album, where you found old photos in black and white, faded polaroids mixed with more recent pictures. And we stand there in disbelief, with a lump in the throat in front of the life that passes by.

Paolo Franchi

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Paolo Franchi, forty-two, was born in Bergamo and lives in Rome, where he graduated from the Experimental Centre of Cinematography. Scholar in Modern Literature and Art Criticism Psychoanalytical he makes his first experiences on set as assistant director for Peter Del Monte. He shoots several documentaries on video art. In '96 he makes a short film about the writer Goliarda Sapienza, "Frammenti di Sapienza" presented at the Venice Film Festival in Venice and other international festivals.

He directed his first length feature in 2004: "The Spectator", starring Barbora Bobulova. It is the only Italian film selected by TriBeCa Film Festival directed by Robert De Niro. The film is sold in 25 countries, and it is presented to international festival all over the world obtaining 21 awards (in New York Film Festival in

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Montreal, Edinburgh, Tokyo, Chicago, Busan...).

In Italy Paolo Franchi receives the nomination for the Silver Ribbon assigned by Italian National Syndicate of Film Journalists and the David di Donatello Award as best emerging director. He won the Italian Golden Globe for Best First Feature. Even in France the film is receives enthusiastic praise from the critics and many awards.

In 2007, the second feature film "Fallen Heroes" is in official competition at the Venice Film Festival in Venice, where the film gives rise to great scandal and clear division from critics. When the film is released in Italy the critical reception is very enthusiastic. The film received four Italian Golden Globe nominations (best film, best actor, best director and best screenplay) and is nominated for a Silver Ribbon. It participates in numerous international festivals (Busan International Film Festival, Mons F.F., Annecy F.F. ...) and Paolo Franchi is awarded by the foreign press as best director of the year 2008.

## CAST

Jean-Marc Barr  
Isabella Ferrari  
Luca Argentero  
Filippo Nigro  
Eva Riccobono  
Romina Carrisi Jr.  
Jean-Pierre Lorit  
Anita Kravos  
Maurizio Donadoni  
Christian Burruano

## CREW

Directed by Paolo Franchi  
Written by Paolo Franchi, Daniela Ceselli, Rinaldo Rocco, Heidrun Schleef  
Produced by Pavarotti International 23 srl  
Producer: Nicoletta Mantovani  
Director of photography: Cesare Accetta, Vincenzo Carpineta  
Editing by Alessio Doglione, Paolo Franchi  
Music by Philippe Sarde  
Sound : Mario Iaquone, Francesco Liotard  
Production Designer : Gian Maria Cau