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There Will Come a Day

Abstract

This is a film review of *There Will Come a Day* (2013) directed by Giorgio Diritti.

Keywords

Roman Catholicism, Brazil

There Will Come a Day

Directed by Giorgio Diritti

World Dramatic Competition

Tragedy and loss bookend this beautiful and honest depiction of the quest for spiritual recovery in the life of a young Italian woman. Augusta's (Jasmine Trinca) dark journey of

transformation begins with the haunting image of a fetus in sonogram juxtaposed with a bright half-moon, invoking an icon; a cut to Augusta



sobbing indicates that something terrible has happened. Indeed, infertility has cost her her marriage. Her father's recent death also seems to be ever-present for her and her mother (Anne Alvaro), from whom she is emotionally and geographically distant.

Augusta's way of rebuilding her life is to aid an older nun, Sister Franca (Pia Engleberth), as she ministers to the Indio villages along the Amazon River, whose poverty the nun compares to the poor material state into which Jesus was born. Along the way they encounter a Pentecostal church in one of the missions Sister Franca had established, but they are ousted by the fire-breathing pastor who

derides their Catholicism as “impure.” Clearly the nun has been long devoted to improving these peoples’ lives, both materially and spiritually, but the world is changing, even along the Amazon. There is a clear tension between the two women over Franca’s way of assisting these peoples, and finally Augusta confronts the nun. “Baptisms, confessions... is that what makes you happy?

You’re making them do things they don’t understand!” In an interview with JR& F, director Giorgio Diritti elaborated on his skepticism regarding the Church, and religion in general. “Perhaps the weakness of the religion is that it is too certain. . . . [People’s spirituality] is in an ongoing state of evolution.”



(L-R) Dereck Daschke, Director Giorgio Diritti, and Jeanette Solano at Sundance. Diritti directed *There will Come a Day*.

Augusta disembarks at the stilt-house *favela* in the city of Manaus, Brazil, whose community is under the threat of destruction by the government’s anti-poverty relocation measures. She quickly finds purpose by organizing several men into a work team that keeps them from needing to leave the *favela*. The community creates a stable and meaningful force in Augusta’s life, and she responds by befriending the local children and even considering love with a

young man in the work force. This spiritual turn reflects the theology of St. Francis of Assisi, according to Diritti: God can be found in the Earth and in people, in just one face in the *favela*, maybe an old woman or a young child. Alas, the happy state is not to last; another tragedy befalls one of Augusta's friends, Janaína (Amanda Fonseca Galvão), and her infant son. Augusta sets out to rebuild herself again, this time on her own, continuing her spiritual journey down the river as so many have done before her. However, she must go through a true dark night of the soul; in a state of isolation akin to a vision quest, she sits at the edge of the river, exposes herself to the sun and rain, and rails to God about what she has gone through. "Why did you give me the baby? I didn't even want it!" Giorgio Diritti explained in his interview that Augusta is not an atheist, because her anger at God shows how much she needs Him. In her struggles, God plants the seed and waits to see how she will find her way to him.

Strikingly, Janaína, whose tragedy propels Augusta's new direction, is sent to Italy to live with Augusta's mother and care for her grandmother (Sonia Gessner), who may be in the remaining days of her life. Much as Augusta sought to lose her identity in the wake of her loss, Janaína finds herself again by, in some ways, slipping into Augusta's old role. Her prayer over each body part of another woman in Anna's hospital room, thanking it for the role it has played in that stranger's life, is a stirring moment of grace that lends a sense of hope to

Augusta's Job-like despair, with which it is juxtaposed. Ultimately a fisherman and his family offer her the small gifts Augusta needs to begin again – fish and the playful company of the fisherman's son, perhaps the very face of God that can reawaken her ability to feel joy and look again to the future.

—Dereck Daschke