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THE
LAST ONE
FOR THE
ROAD

A FILM BY **FRANCESCO SOSSAI**

WITH **FILIPPO SCOTTI** **SERGIO ROMANO** **PIERPAOLO CAPOVILLA**



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100 MINUTES | COMEDY, CRIME, DRAMA, ROAD TRIP | ITALIAN | ITALY, GERMANY | 2025

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LOGLINE

Two middle-aged friends, who swear each drink is their last, cross paths with a shy architecture student and take him under their wing on a free-flowing bender through the Italian countryside in a scruffy intergenerational odyssey.

SUMMARY

The bottom has fallen out for Carlobianchi and Dorian, two small-time Italian crooks. They haven't been able to mount an honest scam since the 2008 financial crisis and now face the impending mediocrity of middle age. The return of an exiled partner-in-crime from Argentina affords a second chance for long-buried riches, but can Carlobianchi and Dorian put down their beers long enough to keep their eyes on the prize? Along their slow motion, alcoholic grand tour of the Venetian countryside, they cross paths with Giulio, a shy architecture student who reluctantly warms to the sodden pair and indulges their rants about the folly of globalization and the slow decline of local color. Each roadside tavern offers the promise of one last drink – unless the next one ups the ante. Francesco Sossai's dazzling sophomore feature is many things at once: a road movie, a casual caper, a tribute to a vanishing industrial Italy, a scruffy intergenerational odyssey, and free-flowing bender through time and space.



INTERVIEW WITH FRANCESCO SOSSAI



WHAT WAS THE STARTING POINT OF THE FILM?

The Last One for the Road was born on a winter night almost ten years ago, after getting completely drunk in Venice with a dear friend. That night, we met a young architecture student from IUAV University in Venice, and a great friendship began. The next morning, half-jokingly, we told him about a film – *The Last One for the Road*, of course – about two men coming down from the mountains to have one last drink in Venice. In short, the film began as a bit of a joke, centered around three key themes: alcohol, friendship, and architecture.

THE FILM IS SET IN THE VENETO REGION, AND AT THE BEGINNING THERE'S A CHARACTER WITH YOUR SAME LAST NAME. HOW AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IS THE STORY?

The film is inspired by what I know – by my homeland and the people I have spent time with – but the autobiographical element is very slight. The worker at the beginning of the film is named Primo Sossai, but only because I found it amusing to use my own last name, which is quite common in my area, within a collective narrative. For me, it's a way of putting myself on the front line and suggesting that this world truly exists – it is not fiction.

WHAT ROLE DID CHANGE AND OBSERVATION PLAY IN WRITING THE FILM?

When I began wandering through the Venetian plains six years ago, I didn't yet know what I was looking for. Just as a photographer takes hundreds of shots to choose only a dozen, I collected hundreds of small scenes – snippets of overheard conversations in bars, on trains, buses, in deserted town squares. For years, I wrote everything down. Then I retreated to the hills of the Pedemontana with Adriano Candiago, who co-wrote the screenplay with me. In an abandoned church, we spread all our notes out on a table and started trying to rearrange them, as if they were pieces of a larger map. We began telling a story: he would read aloud while I wrote, then I would read aloud while he wrote. We never read again, never went back. We were traveling toward a destination we didn't yet know. Outside the window, the heart of the Veneto landscape: we wrote the film immersed in that setting, and out of it came *The Last One for the Road*.

THE TERRITORY PLAYS A CENTRAL ROLE IN THE FILM: HOW DOES THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE VENETIAN LANDSCAPE REFLECT THE LOSS OF REFERENCES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD?

First of all, as Count Bugnello says in the film, I find it meaningful that today we use the word “territory” rather than “land” – that semantic shift says a lot about how little is left of rural Veneto. What you breathe in the countryside now feels more like urban solitude. That was the main feeling I wanted to convey in the film: a countryside that is no longer countryside, but hasn’t yet become a city. We wanted to explore the soul of a region that has become a very wealthy cemetery; anything that doesn’t relate to commerce is disappearing, ecosystems are polluted, old homes abandoned or demolished to make way for characterless residential buildings.

Peasant civilization belonged to a place – it was an expression of the land itself. A way of life that shaped these spaces for centuries is now gone. You could say I made the film among the ruins of that Veneto.

WHAT PERSPECTIVE DO YOU BRING TO THIS WORLD IN TRANSFORMATION, AND WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONVEY THROUGH THIS FILM?

I think my way of looking at a changing world is to search for lost ways (of life) in order to find a new path forward. I really like Pasolini’s idea of “the scandalous revolutionary force of the past” – searching for traces of humanity, insights, visions from the past that might ignite new ideas full of future.

ARCHITECTURE IS ALSO A RECURRING THREAD IN THE FILM: THERE ARE SYMBOLIC BUILDINGS AND LOCATIONS (LIKE THE WORK OF CARLO SCARPA), AND THE CHARACTER OF GIULIO IS AN ARCHITECTURE STUDENT.

I think that if I hadn’t become a director, I would’ve liked to be an architect – and since I use film to explore my desires, I thought stepping into the shoes of a young IUAV University architecture student was a good way to imagine a life I never lived. In the film, Giulio has an intense passion for Carlo Scarpa, which I share. For me, here presents the climax of Venetian culture: in the Brion Tomb, for instance, you can sense echoes of Venice and, at the same time, Japan. Scarpa was, above all, a pure humanist, with a deep ability for cultural syncretism – a quality I hope my cinema can aspire to as well.



WHAT ROLE DO CARLOBIANCHI AND DORIANO PLAY? WHAT DO THEY REVEAL ABOUT A GENERATION?

I wanted to portray a true Lost Generation: men born in the 1970s, in a time of intense economic growth, who found themselves, after the 2008 crisis, facing a radically different world. To me, they belong to a twilight generation – children of a world that was already fading, and strangers to the one they now inhabit. Carlobianchi and Dorianò have been ejected from the production system, and that's what makes them interesting in my eyes.

I'm not interested in creating identification between these characters and the audience – that kind of emotional shortcut doesn't appeal to me. What I aim for instead is a sense of wonder toward the characters. I like the idea that the audience is struck by their presence, rather than spending the film trying to decide which one they most resemble.

AND THEN THERE'S GIULIO...

Giulio represents a type of human being – the humanist – who is also in decline, and who seems to have very little space left in today's world. He makes me think of the words of philosopher Giorgio Agamben, who said that only those who are not contemporary – those who live in fracture with their own time – can truly be contemporary. I like the idea of portraying people in a moment of crisis or transition, because it's in those moments that we're more open to what life might place in front of us by chance. These are people who, even though they can't quite name the pain they're feeling, still hold on to a radical hope for healing.

HOW AND WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THESE ACTORS FOR THEIR ROLES?

For me, casting is a lot like falling in love – I need to fall for something in the actors before I can choose them. With Filippo Scotti, I immediately loved that we could share and open up about our generational anxieties, as well as his deep sensitivity – truly humanistic, just like Giulio. At our first meeting, I gave him *Sillabari* by Goffredo Parise. It was important for me to know if he could connect with that kind of material. He called me a short time later, in tears, after reading a specific story called *Altri*. That moment confirmed to me that he was the right person.

I saw Sergio Romano at a party, and through talking to him, I knew he was perfect for the role – but I couldn't have known the level of mastery, dedication, and transformative skill he was capable of. He went so far as to live for a while in my hometown, going from bar to bar, picking up the movements and speech of the men who spend their lives between the factory and the bar. When he came back, he was completely transformed. When I watch the film, I don't see Sergio – I only see Carlobianchi.

Pierpaolo Capovilla is the frontman of a rock band, Il Teatro degli Orrori, which I've been a huge fan of since I was a teenager. His performances on stage always struck me deeply. I always imagined Dorianò as someone with a dark, poetic side – fragile, but dangerous. Those same traits were present in the raw energy of Teatro degli Orrori's shows. Pierpaolo approached acting with incredible humility, since it was his first time taking on a role. I watched him become an actor in front of my eyes, rehearsal after rehearsal.

WHICH FILMMAKERS OR FILMS DO YOU FEEL CLOSEST TO?

I feel a deep connection with Marco Ferreri, Elio Petri, Francesco Rosi, Carlo Lizzani, and with a whole tradition of Italian cinema that had the power to penetrate reality and portray it poetically, yet without illusion. When I watch their films, I can't help but feel they were speaking directly to their time, with clarity and depth. That's the kind of cinema I would like to make: a cinema capable of looking squarely at the present. To do that, I try to revive certain "lost" cinematic forms – for *The Last One for the Road*, it was the Commedia all'italiana (Italian-style comedy). *Il Sorpasso* and *I Vitelloni* were two key films I studied closely during the writing and preparation phases.

I'm also deeply fascinated by Japanese cinema – I'm obsessed with Masaki Kobayashi, and the scene at the Brion Tomb was shot using the tatami shot, a technique invented by Yasujiro Ozu that helped reveal the Japanese essence of Scarpa's architectural space. At the same time, I feel very close to many contemporary writers, like Vitaliano Trevisan and Francesco Maino.

As I answer these questions, many of the places we filmed in no longer exist – bars have closed, old houses demolished to make way for new developments. The old towns are making way for the new, and once again, we're forced to redraw our inner maps. In the meantime, we have this film – I hope it can serve someone.

WHAT ROLE DO SOUND, KRANO'S MUSIC, AND THE FILM'S SOUNDSCAPE PLAY?

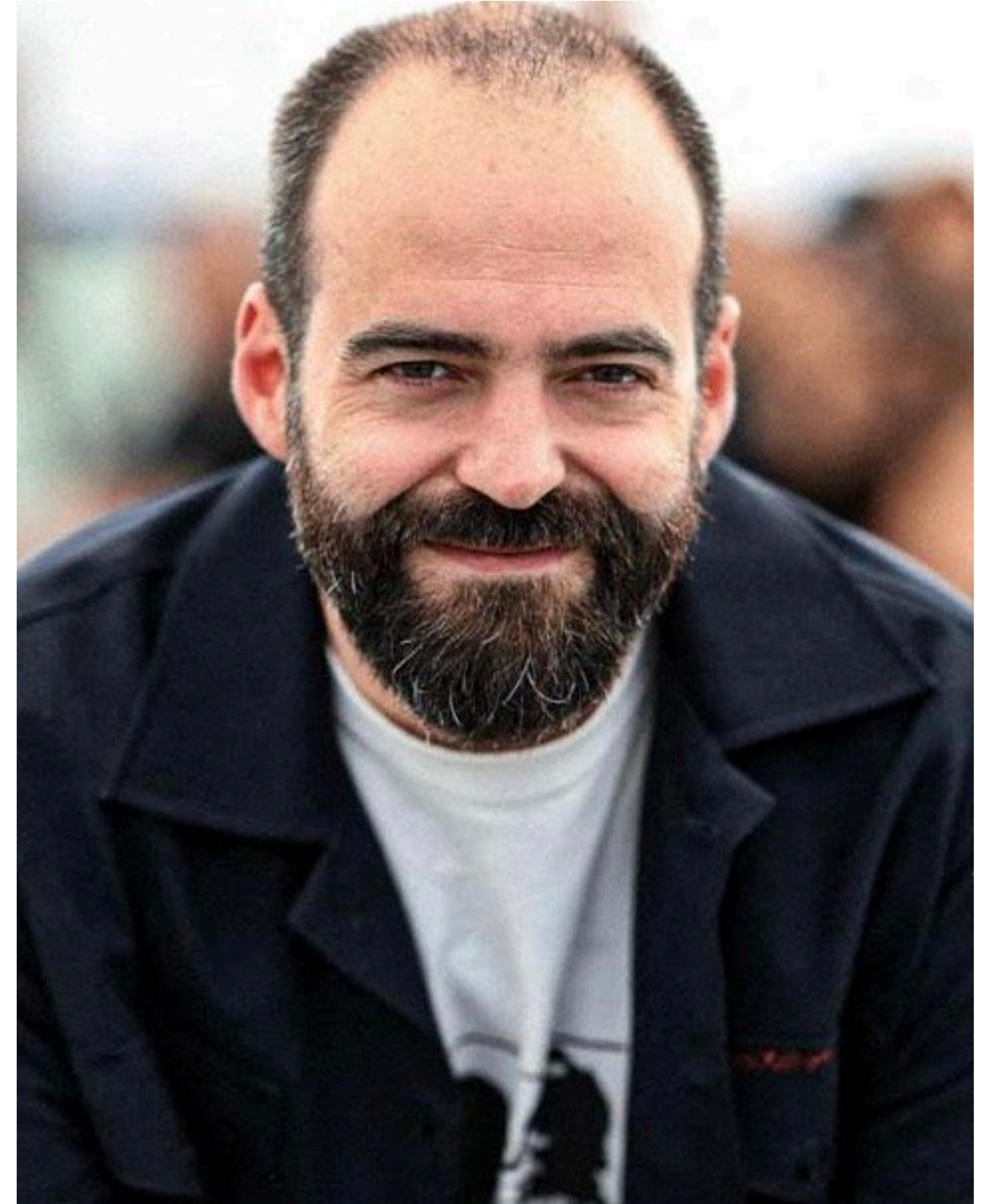
In Veneto, there's a constant background noise. It feels like a low frequency always resonating in our heads: the sound of combustion engines, the movement of goods. Cars, trucks, motorcycles, airplanes: the soundscape we live in is marked by this constant cacophony of indistinct mechanical sounds. In the film, I recreated this sensation of endless transit, counterbalanced by Krano's soundtrack: heartbreaking yet lighthearted. Krano sings in dialect, but his sound draws from the great American folk tradition of the 1970s. I loved the contrast between these two elements: the traffic's harsh noise and the gentle melodies of Krano.

WHAT PATH LED YOU TO FILMMAKING?

From a young age, I knew this was going to be my life. When I was 16, I used to watch a TV program in the night to discover forgotten masterpieces and cult movies. I devoured VHS tapes from the rental shop in my town – I loved American westerns and New Hollywood films. Then, in the summers, I started filming with friends on Mini DV. I never made short films: right from the start, I went for full-length features. I dreamed of going abroad, of American cinema. But one day, while waiting for a bus at the Belluno station, I read the first story in *Altri Libertini* by Pier Vittorio Tondelli. It spoke of the very world around me, and that's when I realized I could tell stories about the people and landscapes I actually knew.

ABOUT FRANCESCO SOSSAI

Francesco Sossai was born in Feltre, in the Italian Dolomites area. After a degree in English and German Literature at the Università La Sapienza in Rome, he graduated in Film Direction at the Deutsche Film-undFernsehakademie in Berlin. While attending Film School, he created his first feature film, *Other Cannibals (Altri Cannibali, 2021)*, which was awarded as the best debut feature at the Poff Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival and with the Vanguard Award at the Vancouver International Film Festival, among many others. His short film *The Birthday Party (2023)* premiered at the Quinzaine des cinéastes, was awarded at the Curtas Vila Do Conde and Premiers Plans D'angers, among others, and was nominated to the European Film Awards and the Deutsche Kurzfilmpreis. *The Last One for the Road* premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in the Un Certain Regard section.



ABOUT THE CAST

FILIPPO SCOTTI | GIULIO

Filippo Scotti, born in 1999, began his artistic career in Naples, attending theatre workshops from a young age. Over the years, he participated in various theatre and film projects. Among his early works is the short film *La Gita* (2018), presented at the Venice Film Festival, where he received the award for Best Emerging Actor. In 2019, he appeared in the Netflix series *Luna Nera*. A major turning point in his career came in 2021, when Paolo Sorrentino cast him in the lead role of *The Hand of God*, earning him international recognition. Since then, Scotti continued to alternate between film and television, appearing in projects such as the Sky series *Un'estate fa* and *L'Orto Americano* by Pupi Avati, which premiered at the 2024 Venice Film Festival.



SERGIO ROMANO | CARLOBIANCHI

Sergio Romano studied at the Paolo Grassi Theater School in Milan. He worked with renowned directors such as Massimo Castri, Benno Besson, Valerio Binasco, and Giulio Bosetti. Other key collaborations followed, including work with Alvis Hermanis, Jacques Lassalle, Giorgio Albertazzi, and Antonio Calenda. He has performed in both classical and contemporary theatre, as well as in international co-productions. Onscreen, he appeared in *Romulus*, *Petra*, *Delta*, *The Champion*, and *Il Nibbio*, prior to Francesco Sossai's *The Last One for the Road*.



PIERPAOLO CAPOVILLA | DORIANO

Pierpaolo Capovilla, born in 1968, is an Italian independent musician and writer. He was the lead singer and bassist of One Dimensional Man, one of the most influential bands of the 1990s, and since 2005, he has been the frontman of Il Teatro degli Orrori, becoming a central figure in the Italian music scene. Capovilla also contributed bass to the first two albums of Buñuel, a quartet led by American vocalist Eugene S. Robinson. In 2022, he released the debut album of his latest project, Pierpaolo Capovilla e i Cattivi Maestri. Capovilla's artistic work is deeply influenced by raw Anglo-American rock, with a strong poetic and dramaturgical sensibility. A long-standing passion for poetry has led him to perform literary readings of poets such as Vladimir Mayakovsky and Antonin Artaud. *The Last One for the Road* marks his first appearance on screen.





CAST

Giulio Filippo Scotti
Carlobianchi Sergio Romano
Doriano Pierpaolo Capovilla

Cavalier Fadiga Roberto Citran
Genio Andrea Pennacchi

CREW

Director Francesco Sossai
Screenplay Francesco Sossai, Adriano Candiago
Cinematography Massimiliano Kuveiller
Editing Paolo Cottignola
Original Music Krano
Production Design Paula Meuthen
Costume Designer Ilaria Marmugi, Guillem Soler Pou
Production Sound Marco Zambrano
Sound Design Sebastian Pablo Poloni
Mix Francesco Tumminello
Producers Marta Donzelli and Gregorio Paonessa
Co-producers Philipp Kreuzer, Cecilia Trautvetter



ABOUT MUSIC BOX FILMS

Music Box Films is the prestigious North American distributor of acclaimed international, independent, and documentary feature films. Recent releases include Cannes Directors' Fortnight baseball comedy *Eephus* by Carson Lund; Sarah Friedland's Venice prize-winning coming-of-old-age drama, *Familiar Touch*, starring Kathleen Chalfant; Angus MacLachlan's poignant family portrait, *A Little Prayer*, starring David Strathairn; and Charlie Shackleton's Sundance award-winning true-crime autocritique, *Zodiac Killer Project*. Upcoming releases include the Dardennes' Belgian Oscar Entry, *Young Mothers*; Amanda Kramer's Sundance body swapping comedy starring Juliette Lewis, *By Design*; and François Ozon's Albert Camus adaptation, *The Stranger*.

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