

Italian Films

at Ames Public Library



In Italian with English captions, unless otherwise noted.

***Amarcord* (DVD FOREIGN AMA)** 127 min. 1973. In this carnivalesque portrait of provincial Italy during the Fascist period, Fellini satirizes his youth and turns daily life into a circus of adolescent desires, male fantasies, rituals, sensations, and emotions. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1974.

***Baaria* (DVD FOREIGN BAR)** 151 min. 2009. The course of a lifetime reflects the evolution of a country as young Peppino takes work as a shepherd to support his family in the Sicilian town of Bagheria, nicknamed 'Baaria' by its residents. During the next five decades he experiences the passionate love of his life, undergoes a powerful political awakening and discovers a destiny he could have never imagined.

***The Best of Youth* (DVD FOREIGN BES)** 368 min. 2003. Originally produced as a miniseries for Italian television and subsequently released as a motion picture. A family epic spanning four decades from the 1960s to the 1990s. Focusing on two brothers, Nicola and Matteo, the film incorporates defining events in Italy's history, including the hippie movement, the flood of Florence, the Red Brigades, Mafia scandals, kidnapping and political assassinations.

***The Bicycle Thief* (DVD FOREIGN BIC)** 89 min. 1948. An unemployed man in Rome finds a job as a billposter for which he needs a bicycle. When the bicycle is stolen, he and his son search for the thief in one of the most devastating weeks of their lives. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1949.

***Big Deal on Madonna Street* (DVD FOREIGN BIG)** 106 min. 1958. Five men conspire to burglarize a small-time jeweler's safe. When the time comes to carry out the scheme, the men become hopelessly clumsy and have to eventually give up and go home.

***Bread & Tulips* (DVD FOREIGN BRE)** 112 min. 2000. When a harried housewife is accidentally left behind while on a family vacation, she decides to take a holiday of her own in Venice. She becomes charmed by the city and her newfound freedom. She decides to extend her stay, finding a job in a flower shop, renting a room from a wistful waiter, and rediscovering her love for playing the accordion.

***Brief Vacation* (DVD FOREIGN BRI)** 112 min. 1973. For anyone who's ever yearned for respite from a life of loveless drudgery—or just a break from the daily routine—this is a breath of fresh air. Clara (Florinda Bolkan) is an exhausted factory worker in Milan, unappreciated by her family and suffering from the onset of tuberculosis. Sent to a sanitarium in the Italian Alps for rest and treatment, she's befriended by wealthy and working-class patients alike, and falls in love with a charming Frenchman (Daniel Quenau) who promises everything she's denied by her selfish, jealous husband.

***Caterina in the Big City* (DVD FOREIGN CAT)** 106 min. 2003. Caterina moves from a small seaside town to an ailing aunt's apartment in Rome. Her private school reflects modern-day Italy in all its political and class-skewed complexity.



***Ciao, Professore* (DVD FOREIGN CIA)** 93 min. 1993. The story of an upper-class teacher from conservative Northern Italy who, due to a computer error, finds himself teaching third-grade truants at a ramshackle school in the south.

***Christ Stopped at Eboli* (DVD FOREIGN)** 145 min. 1979. Levi, an intellectual exiled by the Fascist government during World War II to a mountain village in southern Italy, discovers the resilience and dignity of people who live close to the land.

***Cinema Paradiso* (DVD FOREIGN CIN)** 121 min. 1988. A young boy in a small Italian village is befriended by the projectionist at the movie theater, the Cinema Paradiso. As the boy grows up, he learns to love films and is encouraged by his good friend to pursue his dream of one day making movies. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1989.

***Come Undone* (DVD FOREIGN COM)** 124 min. 2010. Anna has everything she thought she could ever need: a respectable career, a caring family, and a loving partner, Alessio. But when she meets Domenico, a handsome, married waiter, her neatly ordered world begins to fall apart. They quickly fall into a heated affair, based on secret meetings, stolen caresses, cell phone fights, and endless lies. Anna's increasingly distant behavior goes unnoticed by Alessio, while Domenico's wife becomes steadily more suspicious of her husband.

***The Conformist* (DVD FOREIGN CON)** 111 min. 1970. A 30-year old Italian man is targeted by a Fascist espionage organization to lead a deadly mission in France. He has to arrange an assassination attempt on his former teacher, who is now a political threat. On his journey, his wife will see his troubled past and current moral dilemma violently collide.

***Days and Clouds* (DVD FOREIGN DAY)** 115 min. 2007. Elsa leaves her job and fulfills an old dream of studying art history. Her life changes when she finds out her husband hasn't worked in two months. They eventually break up and realize they risk losing their most precious possession.

***Il Divo* (DVD FOREIGN DIV)** 110 min. 2008. Seven-time Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti's long career was dogged by persistent accusations of conspiracy, Mafia connections, and state-sponsored terror. This compelling film explores the shocking political machinations and shady criminal surrounding this fascinating and controversial figure.

***La Dolce Vita* (DVD FOREIGN DOL)** 178 min. 1960. A journalist ventures into the decadent society of modern Rome and finds that his values are being destroyed, leaving him totally disillusioned.

***8 1/2* (DVD FOREIGN EIG)** 138 min. 1963. Fellini's autobiographical film about a famous film director who loses his inspiration in the midst of making a film. Much of the story is told in flashback sequences. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1963.

***Fiorile* (DVD FOREIGN FIO)** 105 min. 1993. On a long drive to visit their grandfather, Luigi Benedetti tells his children the mysterious story of their ancestors - a story filled with forbidden love, passion, and romance.

***The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (DVD FOREIGN GAR)** 94 min. 1970. Set in Italy in 1938 when Mussolini's anti-Semitic edicts began to isolate the Jews from their communities. Among them were the Finzi-Continis, an aristocratic Jewish family forced for the first time to acknowledge the world beyond its fenced garden. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1971.

***Il Generale Della Rovere* (DVD FOREIGN GEN)** 132 min. 1959. During wartime in Genoa, an opportunist tries to cheat his fellow countrymen, until the Nazis force him to pretend to be a deceased general to get information from fellow inmates.

***Girl by the Lake* (DVD FOREIGN GIR)** 96 min. 2007. When a beautiful young girl is found murdered in an idyllic northern Italian village, Inspector Giovanni Sanzio is called in from the capital to investigate. In a small town where nobody is what they seem, anyone could be capable of homicide and everyone may be hiding a dark secret, including Inspector Sanzio.

***Giulia Doesn't Date at Night* (DVD FOREIGN GIU)** 106 min. 2009. Giulia teaches swimming at a pool. One of her pupils is the young daughter of Guido, a successful and married writer grappling with feelings of futility about his profession. When they meet at the pool, Guido gets intrigued by this charming woman who initially keeps a certain distance, because Giulia hides a secret and a mysterious past. Their brief affair based on abdication, fragility, and selfishness will lead Giulia to an extreme decision.

***Golden Door* (DVD FOREIGN GOL)** 118 min. 2007. A Sicilian farmer and a worldly British woman fall in love on a perilous trans-Atlantic journey to America. Neither of them is prepared for the realities of Ellis Island, where they'll stop at nothing to make it through the golden door to America.

***Gomorrah* (DVD FOREIGN GOM)** 137 min. 2008. A contemporary Neapolitan mob drama that exposes Italy's criminal underworld by telling five stories of individuals who think they can make their own compact with Camorra, the area's Mafia.

***I Vitelloni* (DVD FOREIGN I)** 107 min. 1953. This film compassionately details a year in the life of five young men in post-adolescent limbo, dreaming of adventure and escape from their small town and struggling to find meaning in their lives.

***I Am Love* (DVD FOREIGN I)** 120 min. 2009. The wealthy Recchi family has undergone sweeping changes. Eduardo Sr. has named a successor to the reins of his company, and surprised everyone by splitting power between his son Tancredi and grandson Edo. But Edo has always dreamed of opening a restaurant with his friend Antonio. To make matters worse, the very foundation of the entire family may be totally shattered after Tancredi's wife Emma falls deeply in love with Antonio and begins a passionate love affair.

***I'm Not Scared* (DVD FOREIGN IM)** 102 min. 2003. While playing in a wheat field, nine-year old Michele discovers a boy chained to the ground at the bottom of a hole. Michele is unsure who to tell about his discovery, eventually telling his close friend, Michele's parents warn him to forget what he saw.

***Intervista* (DVD FOREIGN INT)** 116 min. 1987. A Japanese film crew interviews Federico Fellini about his career as he films the memories of his life as a young journalist walking into his beloved studio Cinecitta for the first time.

***Italian for Beginners* (DVD FOREIGN ITA)** In Italian and Danish, with English captions. 112 min. 2000. Several students of an Italian language class find romance in their studies of the language of love.

***Juliet of the Spirits* (DVD FOREIGN JUL)** 137 min. 1965. Suspecting her husband of infidelity, a housewife unleashes an inner self of erotic fantasies. This was Federico Fellini's first feature-length color film. His examination of the sexual psyche unfolds with the use of surrealistic and abrupt cut-aways to illustrate the woman's sexual fantasies.

Kapo (DVD FOREIGN KAP) 117 min. 1959. A young woman tries to save herself from a concentration camp by assuming the identity of another person and becoming a vicious warden instead.

Keys to the House (DVD FOREIGN KEY) 107 min. 2004. Gianni is reunited with Paolo, the 15-year old son he has never seen, whom he abandoned at birth. The reunion is the idea of Paolo's doctor in hopes the connection will benefit the troubled boy. Gianni experiences a Pandora's Box in Paolo, full of shocks and wonders, but the key to one's house is often found in the key to one's heart.

The Lark Farm (DVD FOREIGN LAR) 120 min. 2007. An Armenian family is caught up in the destruction of World War I, and their only hope is in a passionate relationship with the enemy.

The Leopard (DVD FOREIGN LEO) 185 min. 2004. During the years of Italy's "Risorgimento," the aristocracy lost its grip and the middle classes rose to form a democratic Italy.

Life is Beautiful (DVD FOREIGN LIF) 116 min. 1997. A charming, bumbling waiter who's gifted with a colorful imagination and an irresistible sense of humor wins the heart of the woman he loves and creates a beautiful life for his young family. Then that life is threatened by World War II. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1998.

Little Girl (DVD FOREIGN LIT) 100 min. 2009. A captivating tale of people at the margins of society who open their hearts to a stranger. In a run-down park on the outskirts of Rome, a two-year-old girl is discovered and taken in by a family of hard-luck circus performers. A note from a desperate mother reveals little about who she is or why she was left. As the bond grows between the girl and her surrogate family, this naturalistic drama becomes a revealing and soulful portrait of courage and discrimination, and of loss and togetherness.

Mafioso (DVD FOREIGN MAF) 102 min. 1962. Auto factory foreman Nino takes his proper, modern wife and two blonde daughters from industrial Milan to antiquated rural Sicily to visit his family and get back in touch with his roots. Nino gets more than he bargained for.

Mid-August Lunch (DVD FOREIGN MID) 75 min. 2009. A middle-age man living with his elderly mother finds the best way to pay for their debts is to take care of the building manager's mother during the biggest festival of the year. Soon he finds himself with not two but four mothers to keep fed and happy.

My Brother is an Only Child (DVD FOREIGN MY) 108 min. 2007. Brothers find themselves supporting political campaigns, and learning that they have more in common than they ever imagined during the unrest of Italy in the 60s.

The Night of the Shooting Stars (DVD FOREIGN NIG) 107 min. 1982. Depicts the final days of World War II in Italy as seen through the eyes of a six-year-old girl. It is a mythic recollection by the protagonist of life on the run when a group of Italian villagers flee from brutal Nazi occupiers in the summer of 1944.

Nights of Cabiria (DVD FOREIGN NIG) 117 min. 1957. Cabiria, a simple-minded prostitute, searches Rome for true love. She is romanced and abandoned by men who exploit her. She endures even in the face of tragedy with the vain hope of finding marriage and happiness. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1957.

1900 (DVD FOREIGN NIN) 317 min. 1976. The son of a landowner and the son of a peasant become enemies in early 20th century Italy.



***Open City* (DVD FOREIGN OPE)** 105 min. 1945. The loyalties of an impoverished mother-to-be and a parish priest are tested by German forces occupying their homeland during World War II.

***The Orange Thief* (DVD FOREIGN ORA)** 84 min. 2007. Living on the outskirts of society, an orange thief and some other country-wise ruffians steal fruit for sustenance and the sheer excitement of courting danger. After the thief ends up in jail, his life takes a turn when his bunkmate promises him a deal.

***Ossessione* (DVD FOREIGN OSS)** 135 min. 1942. The story of the ill-fated love between Gino, a virile young drifter, who arrives by chance at a roadside restaurant and filling station, and Giovanna, the beautiful young wife of the fat old man who owns the place. Gino leaves, only to return because he can't get her out of his mind. Giovanna and Gino kill her husband, but his death haunts the guilt-ridden Gino.

***L'Avventura* (DVD FOREIGN L'AV)** 145 min. 1960. This is the story about the search for a girl lost on an island; but gradually the searchers become pre-occupied with their own problems, and the girl is never found.

***Il Postino* (DVD FOREIGN POS)** 108 min. 1995. The postman, Mario, is aided by the poet Pablo Neruda to win the heart of the beautiful Beatrice.

***Il Posto* (DVD FOREIGN POS)** 93 min. 1961. A young worker from a small village is overcome when he gets a job on the bottom rung of the bureaucratic ladder in a huge, faceless company. But he finds a reason for hope when he meets his co-worker, the beautiful Antonietta.

***Quiet Chaos* (DVD FOREIGN QUI)** 114 min. 2008. Pietro has just lost his wife, and he is left alone with their young daughter. He promises the girl that he will wait for her in the car when she returns to school for the first time, but his temporary offer turns into habit. Now Pietro spends his days in the car, watching the world around him and grieving in his own way.

***Red Desert* (DVD FOREIGN RED)** 117 min. 1964. A neurotic young woman, who is married to an engineer in the industrial wasteland of northern Italy, searches in vain to find meaning in her life.

***Roma* (DVD FOREIGN ROM)** 119 min. 1972. A film adaptation of Federico Fellini's reminiscences of Rome before World War II, as compared to the Rome of 1972.

***Seven Beauties* (DVD FOREIGN SEV)** 115 min. 1976. A small-time Casanova with no political convictions and fewer brains shoots his sister's pimp to save the family honor. He is caught, tried, and sent to an insane asylum. He then volunteers for the Italian army and ends up in a Nazi concentration camp where he learns to survive at any cost.

***Shoeshine* (DVD FOREIGN SHO)** 91 min. 1946. In post WWII Italy, Giuseppe and Pasquale work on the street shining the shoes of American troops. But when the boys are falsely accused of a crime, they are sent to a brutal state juvenile detention center.

***The Sicilian Girl* (DVD FOREIGN SIC)** 110 min. 2009. A 17-year-old Sicilian girl whose father and brother were both Mafia members (and victims) breaks the vow of silence that enshrouds that world, and gives evidence to famed anti-Mafia judge Paolo Borsellino. Her days are numbered from that moment on.

The Son's Room (DVD FOREIGN SON) 99 min. 2002. A family struggles to go on after a devastating loss. Giovanni (Moretti) is a psychiatrist with a successful practice. He has a warm relationship with his wife Paola (Morante). They have a daughter, Irene (Trinca) and a son, Andrea (Sanfelice). The family's calm is shattered when Andrea is unexpectedly killed in an accident. Arianna (Vigliar) is a girl who had a summer romance with Andrea the year before, and has come to town to pay him a surprise visit, unaware of his recent death.

The Star Maker (DVD FOREIGN STA) 107 min. 1995. A con man travels from one small town to another claiming to be a talent scout for a top movie studio.

La Strada (DVD FOREIGN STR) 107 min. 1954. A pathetic, impressionable little woman is sold to the strong man in a traveling sideshow. She falls in love with him, but her love is not returned until it is too late. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1956.

Swept Away (DVD FOREIGN SWE) 116 min. 1975. A wealthy upper-class capitalist and a working-class deckhand on her yacht are marooned on an uninhabited island for several weeks. The woman becomes totally dependent on the man for survival, falls in love with him, and the two temporarily reverse their roles.

Tickets (DVD FOREIGN TIC) 115 min. 2005. An elderly businessman finds solace and new insight into life when he meets a younger woman, who then arranges his train ticket after his flight is canceled. A young man is torn between an older woman who controls him and a younger one who attacks him. And three Scottish youths on their way to the football match of their dreams are forced to open their eyes and see the bigger picture. In each case, the train journey changes the course of all their lives.

The Tree of Wooden Clogs (DVD FOREIGN TRE) 177 min. 1978. Deceptively simple tale of a village of peasants in Italy at the turn of the century. It follows four families through the seasons, and shows the seemingly small events that influence their lives and the love they feel for the land and their families.

The Trial Begins (DVD FOREIGN TRI) 96 min. 2007. Young Filippo Costa rises through the ranks of the Financial Police via his own opportunity for corruption. But when he connects with a wealthy older widow, Filippo quickly becomes a part of Rome's social, financial, and political elite. In a nation that rewards ruthless ambition, what must one man ultimately sacrifice to build his own empire?

Two Women (DVD FOREIGN TWO) 110 min. 1961. To escape city bombing, an Italian mother and daughter travel Italy during World War II trying to survive famine, rape by soldiers, and horrors of war.

Umberto D. (DVD FOREIGN UMB) 89 min. 1955. A government pensioner, living alone with his beloved dog, struggles to keep up a semblance of dignity on his inadequate pension.

The Unknown Woman (DVD FOREIGN UNK) 120 min. 2006. A Ukrainian woman with a secret works her way into the lives of an affluent family. She becomes the couple's trusted maid and beloved nanny to their daughter. But deep cracks in Irena's dedication appear as her horrific past and chilling obsession are revealed.

Vincere (DVD FOREIGN VIN) 125 min. 2009. Benito Mussolini scorned, denounced and wrote out of history the woman he once loved. His rise to power and her descent into insanity are tragic counterpoints.

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (DVD FOREIGN YES) Dubbed in English. 119 min. 1963. Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni team up in three hilarious sexual escapades in this delightful comedy anthology that helped establish the two stars as the most popular Italian performers of 20th century cinema. Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film of 1963.

