

David di Donatello 1956–2016: Sixty Years of Awards

Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies

Call for Papers

New deadline: 30 March 2015

The David di Donatello Award, named after Donatello's bronze statue of David (1440s), is a prestigious Italian film prize awarded each year for cinematic performances and productions by the Accademia del Cinema Italiano (The Academy of Italian Cinema). The trophy is in the form of a golden David on a square malachite base with a golden plaque recording the award category, year and winner.

The Accademia del Cinema Italiano Premi David di Donatello is supported by two Italian major institutions: Associazione Generale Italiana dello Spettacolo (AGIS) (Italian General Show-Business Association) and Associazione Nazionale Industrie Cinematografiche Audiovisive (ANICA) (Italian National Cinema and Audiovisual Association). The Accademia del Cinema Italiano operates in collaboration with and thanks to the contribution of the Ministry of the Performing Arts and the Ministry for Cultural Properties and Activities. Gian Luigi Rondi, the current president, has worked with the organization since its inception.

In the 1950s, during Italian cinema's period of heightened success, the Open Gate Club was founded in Rome. Its logo was an open door symbolizing the positive post- World War II cultural climate and the beginning of a new international artistic exchange. Respectively in 1953 and 1954, within the Open Gate Club, the Comitato per l'Arte e la Cultura (Art and Culture Committee) and the Circolo Internazionale del Cinema (International Cinema Association) were created.

In 1955 the Circolo Internazionale del Cinema became the Club Internazionale del Cinema (International Cinema Club). In the same year, under the leadership of Italo Gemini (1901-1984), film operator and president of AGIS, the two cine-file associations, presided respectively by Gino Sotis (1902-1960) and Lidio Bozzini (1924-2006), established the David di Donatello with the aim to honor the best Italian and foreign motion picture production, following the example of the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The David di Donatello Awards were first awarded in Rome on 5 July 1956 at the movie theater Fiamma. From 1957 to 1980, the ceremonies were held at the Greek theatre in Taormina, during the Taormina Film Fest, with a few exceptions: in Rome at the Terme di Caracalla (1971), in Florence at Piazzale Michelangelo (1978), and in Rome at Teatro dell'Opera (1979). In 1981 the award ceremony was held in two different sites: in Rome at Teatro dell'Opera and in Florence at Palazzo Vecchio. In 1982 the David di Donatello returned to Rome, with the support of the President of the Republic and with the collaboration of the Rome City Council Cultural Policies Department.

Since 1956, the David di Donatello has been the main national film prize in Italy and has been awarded by the people in the industry: filmmakers, screenwriters, performers, technicians, and producers. For six decades, the award ceremony has celebrated international directors, producers, actors and actresses alongside the best Italian productions. Movie stars from all over the world have attended the ceremony held in Taormina, Florence and Rome. Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini, Mario Monicelli, Francesco Rosi and Ettore Scola have been awarded this prize several times. In addition to these *masters* of Italian cinema, the David di Donatello has been awarded to young directors for their first feature films.

During the 1980s, a nomination ballot was introduced and the Awards widened the categories of professionals included in this annual celebration of Italian cinematic excellence. Consequently, categories dedicated to international productions were reduced and today the Accademia del Cinema Italiano recognizes two separate awards for feature films produced abroad and distributed in Italy: Best Film from the European Union and Best Foreign Film. There are 24 categories as of 2014.

In 2006, a documentary celebrating the 50th anniversary of the David di Donatello, produced by Accademia del Cinema Italiano, RaiCinema and Istituto Luce, and directed by Massimo Mascolo, who worked with authentic audiovisual material and newsreels footage from the Archivio LUCE and the Archivi RAI, was released on DVD and attached to the book *David di Donatello 1956-2006 50 Anni di Premi* (Rondi et al. 2006). The book features a year-by-year history through a collection of images and the lists of all the nominees and winners from 1956 to 2006.

In 2016, the *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies* will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the David di Donatello prize with a themed issue. The purpose of this issue is to pay homage to this award for its cultural influence on Italian and world cinema, to review its history and endorse its international role. The Editor intends to publish a collection of articles that would document and historicize the value of the David di Donatello as the utmost expression of Italian and international film heritage and symbol of collective cinematic memory.

This CFP invites scholars, award ceremony organizers, archivists, film-makers, actors, journalists, producers and other professionals in the film industry to contribute with critical and historical articles, reports, interviews and biographies.

Send proposals in British English to the Editor, Flavia Laviosa, at flaviosa@wellesley.edu, by 30 March 2015 and provide the following information:

- 1) a 500-word abstract outlining:
 - a) the topic
 - b) critical approach

The abstract should clearly state the goals of the article and provide a cohesive description of the objective of the argument.

In addition to the abstract, please submit the following:

- a) relevant bibliography and filmography
- b) 200 word biographical notes followed by a detailed list of academic publications or professional accomplishments.