



MARCO VISALBERGHI presents

# IN UN ALTRO PAESE/ EXCELLENT CADAVERS

directed by **MARCO TURCO**  
produced by **VANIA DEL BORGIO**

with **ALEXANDER STILLE**  
photographs by **LETIZIA BATTAGLIA**

a **DOCLAB** production  
with **RADIOTELEVISIONE ITALIANA - RAI TRE**  
and the participation of **FRANCE 2**  
in association with **ARTLINE FILMS**  
**BBC, YLE Teema, Sveriges Television,**  
**SBS TV Australia**

**92' • 4:3 letterbox • Digibeta**

## **MAFIA AND POLITICS IN ITALY.**

THE STORY OF THE BIGGEST ANTI-MAFIA TRIAL IN HISTORY AND OF THE  
MEN WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE: **GIOVANNI FALCONE AND PAOLO  
BORSELLINO.**

Selected for the 58. Locarno International  
Film Festival, in the Filmmakers of the Present section.

Winner Best Documentary 46° Festival dei Popoli, Florence, 2005

Nominated for the 2005 IDA/ABC News Videosource Award  
Los Angeles, December 9, Directors Guild of America, Los Angeles

Selected for the 19th edition of FIPA, Biarritz, 2006  
European Creation section

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## CREDITS

directed by  
MARCO TURCO

produced by  
VANIA DEL BORGO

executive producer  
MARCO VISALBERGHI

co-producer  
OLIVIER MILLE

treatment and script  
VANIA DEL BORGO, ALEXANDER STILLE, MARCO TURCO

directors of photography  
FRANCO LECCA, ENZO CARPINETA

sound  
ALESSIO COSTANTINO

music  
ANDREA PANDOLFO, C.A.M. Original Soundtracks

editor  
LUCA GAZZOLO

photographs by  
LETIZIA BATTAGLIA, FRANCO ZECCHIN, ERNESTO BATTAGLIA, RICCARDO LIBERATI, FILIPPO LA MANTIA

archive  
RAI RADIOTELEVISIONE ITALIANA, ARCHIVIO AUDIOVISIVO DEL MOVIMENTO OPERAIO E  
DEMOCRATICO, B&B FILM, BLUE SERVICE, FRANCESCO LA BRUNA, MANFREDI PRODUZIONI

a DOCLAB production  
with RAI RADIOTELEVISIONE ITALIANA – RAITRE  
with the participation of FRANCE 2  
in association with ARTLINE FILMS (Paris)  
BBC, YLE Teema, SVERIGES TELEVISION, SBS TV AUSTRALIA

developed and distributed with the support of the MEDIA PROGRAMME of the EUROPEAN  
UNION and the participation of the Centre National de la Cinématographie, PROCIREP,  
ANGOA-AGICOA and the City of Palermo

Format  
DIGITAL BETACAM PAL / 4:3 LETTERBOX / STEREO/

Languages  
ITALIAN AND ENGLISH

Duration  
92'

Distribution  
Esther van Messel, FIRST HAND FILMS

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## SYNOPSIS

**In un altro Paese/Excellent Cadavers** is a feature-length documentary based on Alexander Stille's book *Excellent Cadavers: The Mafia and the Death of the First Italian Republic*. It's the story of the biggest anti-Mafia trial in history and the men who made it possible, **Giovanni Falcone** and **Paolo Borsellino**, the first Sicilian prosecutors to take on the Mafia and win. But at an enormous price. Their spectacular assassinations in 1992 are still an open wound throughout Italy.

Made in close collaboration with **Alexander Stille**, the film examines the relationship between the Mafia and Italian politics, a system of power still in place in Italy today. Stille travels to Palermo and visits his friend Letizia Battaglia, Sicily's best-known photographer and a vocal opponent of the Mafia. Her astonishing photographs on the scene of most major Mafia hits over the past 30 years play a major role in the film.

Stille interviews Falcone and Borsellino's closest colleagues, first-hand witnesses of the Palermo maxitrial: the magistrates **Giuseppe Ayala, Giuseppe Di Lello, Leonardo Guarnotta, Ignazio De Francischi, Antonio Ingroia** and **Francesco Lo Voi**, as well as the journalist **Francesco La Licata**.

In Stille's vision, Sicily is the stage for a bloody civil war – fought on one side by the Mafia and on the other by hundreds of brave Sicilians. Consistently, the film shows, key figures in the Italian government effectively supported the wrong side, exposing men like Falcone and Borsellino to the Mafia's gunfire.

### The Time Frame

The history of the Mafia and of the modern Italian state begin together, in the mid-19th century, but the film's focus is on the 1980s and 1990s. These are the years Falcone and Borsellino take advantage of a bloody feud within the Mafia to win over to their side key Mafiosi, whose testimony would provide a precise picture of Cosa Nostra at a time when it was common in Italy to deny its very existence.

These are the years the city of Palermo sees the construction of a special armed courtroom the size of a football stadium, with thirty huge steel cages designed to restrain several hundred defendants. For the first time two men who grew up in the same Palermo neighbourhood take on Cosa Nostra.

They demonstrate that the Mafia is not an anthropological phenomenon, a by-product of being Sicilian, but an organisation composed of identifiable people who can be successfully prosecuted and put out of business.

The Mafia hits back fiercely: in ten years, more than 50 "excellent cadavers", the term used over police radios to signal the death of a judge, politician or police officer. As Falcone and Borsellino prepare their 9,000-page trial brief, their closest allies in the police and in the justice system are killed, one by one. No friend or family member of the Mafia witnesses is spared.

The prosecutors themselves live under armed guard until the fateful year 1992. The year of their unforgivable victory. The year the Italian Supreme Court upheld the trial convictions – putting hundreds of Mafia bosses behind bars for life. The year Falcone and Borsellino were murdered.

### The Epilogue

The mutual dependence between Italy's governing parties and organised crime was for decades justified by the Cold War and the urgent need to do anything to keep the Communists from coming to power. This system appeared to come to an end with the

passing of the Cold War. After the public outrage over the assassinations of Falcone and Borsellino, the Italian government for the first time passed tough anti-Mafia measures.

The revelations of extensive collusion between members of the governing Christian Democratic Party and organised crime were an important factor in the party's dissolution. The leading men of Italy's post-war governments, the men who had protected the Mafia for nearly a half century, were at last driven from office.

But the Mafia has proved more resilient than a generation of politicians. It has outlived the Cold War. Today, 80% of Sicilian businessmen pay protection money and the lion's share of Sicily's public contracts are controlled by Cosa Nostra.

This is only possible, according to Stille, because after the magic period that followed Falcone and Borsellino's murder, once again the Italian state has decided to ignore the mafia. In their candid interviews the magistrates Giuseppe Di Lello and Giuseppe Ayala both underline that the mafia continues to be an organic part of the Italian system of power and that the grey area of collusion between politicians and organized crime is today more visible than ever.

## Director's Statement

When I was asked by Doclab to make a documentary on Falcone and Borsellino, I thought the hardest part would be to find an original approach to a subject treated by many other writers and directors. The dilemma lasted a day and a night, the time it took me to read Alexander Stille's powerful book *Excellent Cadavers*, which was to be the basis of the documentary. Stille's work had the force of a great political thriller.

Together with my co-author and producer Vania Del Borgo and Stille himself I decided to construct the film around the research process which led to Stille's book. The American writer returns to the key places in his investigation: archives, courts and Palermo libraries. He visits the men who shared with Falcone and Borsellino the immense joys and hardships of a war without quarter: the magistrates of the anti-mafia "pool".

The Sicilian photographer Letizia Battaglia, who knows Stille well, accompanies him on his journey. Together they explore the alleys of Palermo, where many top mafia bosses were born and raised, and where Falcone and Borsellino grew up. Letizia knows her city intimately and is a precious witness to the mafia war that tore apart Palermo starting in the late 1970s. Alternating these two planes of past and present, Stille's apparently detached eye lets the facts speak for themselves. Letizia's haunting photographs form the emotional counterpoint of the film.

**Marco Turco**

## Production Notes

Two summers ago, after turning down a project Marco Visalberghi and I had just tried to interest him in, a BBC commissioning editor asked us whether we'd ever heard of a book titled *Excellent Cadavers* by Alexander Stille, and suggested we develop a documentary based on it. Days later we were sitting round a table with Stille who was passing through Rome at the time.

A year on, having secured the rights to the book, we began developing a treatment with funding from the BBC and the EU's Media programme. The first challenge was how to tell this story both to an Italian and an international audience. While most people abroad had heard of Falcone and Borsellino's assassinations in 1992, the political context of their deaths was relatively unknown. We knew we didn't want to make a journalistic film but rather a historical reconstruction with intimate interviews with the main surviving protagonists of those years. But we also wanted to underline the significance of Falcone and Borsellino's courage and tragic fate *today*, at a time when in Italy respect for the law and the fight against the mafia are at a low ebb.

While we prepared the first treatment, Silvio Berlusconi told journalists: "To be a magistrate one must be mentally disturbed". I was struck by the contrast with a statement made by Borsellino in 1990: "I never asked to become an anti-mafia prosecutor. I fell into it and then I had to stay. People were dying around me." The tension between these parallel universes informed our work from the beginning.

Once the treatment was ready we were able to confirm co-production and pre-sale agreements with France 2, RAI Tre, YLE Teema and SVT. We began working with an international distributor and sales agent, Esther van Messel of First Hand Films. At IDFA, the international documentary festival where we presented the project to find other financing, we met our French co-producer Olivier Mille, of Artline Films.

We had been in contact with Marco Turco for some time and in the first months of 2004 we began working in earnest on the shooting script. Finally that summer - two years after the first BBC meeting - we were in Sicily filming with Alexander Stille and Letizia Battaglia. Three weeks between Palermo and Rome and then months of post-production with Luca Gazzolo and of script-writing between Rome and New York. The final result is **In un altro Paese** (*Excellent Cadavers* in the English version) which with great pleasure we premiered at the Locarno International Film Festival in August 2005. In 2006 the film will be released in DVD in Italy in collaboration with Fandango.

**Vania Del Borgo**

## PRODUCTION TEAM

### **Marco Turco, Director**

A writer and filmmaker based in Rome, Marco Turco was assistant director for Gianni Amelio's feature films *Porte Aperte*, *Il Ladro di Bambini* and *Lamerica*. In 1994 he made his first short, *La Svegliata*, which won a special mention at the Young Lions' competition at the Venice Film Festival 1994 and the Lumière Award at Bologna's "Invisible Cinema" Festival. His first feature film *Vite in Sospeso* was presented out of competition in Venice in 2002. He works regularly as a screenwriter for television and film, collaborating on the screenplay for Roberta Torre's satirical feature film *Tano da morire*. He has made several documentaries, including 'A *Famiglia*, shot in Corsica, and a portrait of the well-known Italian film director Gillo Pontecorvo. He is presently shooting his second feature film, *La Straniera*.

#### *Filmography*

1994 *La sveglia* (short);  
1995 *Coincidenze* (short);  
1996 *Vite sospese* (documentary);  
1997 *Jazzitudine: appunti sul jazz italiano* (documentary);  
1998 *Vite in sospenso* (feature film);  
1999 *A famiglia* (documentary).  
2001 *Gillo Pontecorvo* (documentary)  
2005 *In un altro Paese/Excellent Cadavers* (documentary)

### **Vania Del Borgo, Producer**

Vania Del Borgo is a Rome-based producer with many years' experience in the UK where she worked as an independent producer and director until 1999 mainly for Channel 4. Among her UK credits are *Dead West: The War on the American Desert* (1994), *The Hanged Man: Nigeria's Shame* (1995), *An Open Letter to India* (1996), *Letters from America* (1997) and *Love Me Tender* (1999). In Italy she has worked as a producer/director for the RAI's thematic satellite channel RAI SAT ART and for the current affairs documentary series *C'era una volta*, broadcast by RAI 3. She is currently based at DocLab Productions.

### **Alexander Stille**

Alexander Stille is a journalist and writer born in New York in 1957. After his BA at Yale University, he worked in publishing in Italy and the US. From 1990 to 1993 he was the Italian correspondent for *US News & World Report*, *The Boston Globe* e *The Toronto Globe & Mail*. In 1994 he published the acclaimed *Excellent Cadavers: The Mafia and the Death of the First Italian Republic*. Among his other publications are *Benevolence and Betrayal* (1992) and *The Future of the Past* (2003). His most recent book *The Sack of Rome*, on Silvio Berlusconi, is forthcoming. Stille writes regularly for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Nation* and for *La Repubblica*. He lives in New York City and teaches at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University.

### **Marco Visalberghi, Executive Producer**

DocLab is a Rome-based independent production company founded in 1999 on the strength of producer/director Marco Visalberghi's 20 year experience producing science/technology and natural history documentaries for the Italian and international markets. DocLab tends to focus on science, history, culture and current affairs, more recently developing a number of feature-length documentary projects. DocLab is working in partnership with Gabriel Films in the US, Artline Films and La Compagnie des Taxi Brousse in France, and Ma.Ja.De in Germany, co-producing documentaries with the main Italian networks and a wide range of international broadcasters including the BBC, Arte/ZDF, WGBH Boston, the Discovery Channel, the National Geographic Channel, Fox Television, France 2, France 3, France 5, Spiegel TV and NHK.