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1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com



Pilot Review: The Young Pope (Sorrentino, 2016) Italy

Description

Writer/director Paolo Sorrentino unleashed a pilot of the first two episodes of a new, fictional, ten-part series titled, â??The Young Pope,â?• at the 73rd Venice International Film Festival.



Jude Law plays the primary character, Lenny Belardo, aka Pius XIII, the first American Pope in history. Young and charming, his election appears to be the result of a simple yet effective media strategy orchestrated on behalf of the College of Cardinals. But appearances can be deceptive. And above all, in the place and among the people who have chosen the great mystery of God as their guiding compass. The place is the Vatican and the people are the hierarchical leaders of the Catholic Church. And, young Lenny Belardo, raised in an orphanage, proves to be the most mysterious and contradictory of them as Pius XIII. Shrewd yet naÃ¯ve, ironic and pedantic, primeval yet modern, melancholy and ruthless, doubting yet resolute, Pius XIII is evoking a God he can give to mankind. And to himself.

Sorrentino is bound to shock the sensibilities of some of his Catholic viewers with the imagery in the opening sequence. He opens with a baby in a dimly lit St. Peterâ??s Square crawling over a sea of other babies until we see a man emerge from beneath the pile. A cut is made to Lenny awakening from a sleep and donning the attire of a Catholic Pope. As Lenny leaves his dressing area Sorrentino makes effective use of slow motion as he shows Lenny gracing the Vatican personnel with his presence. He

glides across screen from left to right with non-diagetic music to the admiration and respect of the on-lookers until sitting upon his papal chair. He embodies a pious pose while envisioning a lovely topless blonde sitting in a green pasture as he presumably, as a young boy, looks on. He comes to and makes his way to the Papal Balcony where a deafening roar is heard from a rain-soaked crowd waiting to hear his Holiness.

Suddenly, the rain stops, the clouds clear and the sun shines forth and again the crowd roars. Lenny as Pius XIII begins a most dynamic and appropriate speech on how he serves God and how he serves the audience before switching it up telling the audience to indulge in forbidden pleasures and desires including masturbation, gay marriage and a free and liberated lifestyle. At this point, his Secretary of State tells Pius he is not the Pope, that the Secretary of State is Pope and that Pius XIII is excommunicated. A cut is made to Lenny awakening from a sleep. From here Sorrentino takes the viewer on a wild ride as he delves into the psychological state of the young pope through moments of Belardoâ??s introspection and through his interactions with his subordinates.

Cinematographer Luca Bigazzi creates a plethora of luscious visuals throughout the seamless show. Laura Rosenthal and Annamaria Sambucco have compiled a stellar cast. The cast does look the parts with thanks to the work of Carlo Poggioli and Luca Canfora. The musical score by Lele Marchitelli keeps pace with the action. The production design is exquisite and is handled by Ludovica Ferrario. The editing is seamless. Cristiano Travaglioli is credited with editing.





Popeâ?• by Paolo
5 sc. 264 ep. 2In the
.Photo by Gianni

set of â??The young Popeâ?• by Paolo Sorrentino. 10/22/2015 sc. 264 ep. 2 In the picture CÃ©cile De France. Photo by Gianni



set of â??The young Popeâ?• by Paolo Sorrentino.09/11/2015 sc.219 â?? ep 2 in the picture Silvio Orlando.Photo by Gianni Fiorito



set of â??The young Popeâ?• by Paolo Sorrentino. 08/10/2015
sc.219 â?? ep 2 in the picture Paolo Sorrentino on Photo by Gianni Fiorito

All in all, Young Pope brings style and swagger to the role of Leonty. Silvio Orlando brings to life the machinations and cajoling of Secretary of State, Cardinal Voiello, and Cecele De France adds nicely to the filmâ??s rich muse-en-scene with cinematographic in close ups as the Vatican Marketer, Sofia Dubois. Last and certainly not least, Diane Keaton solidly depicts Sister Mary adding a much needed grounding presence as Sorrentino is not pulling any punches with his attempts for humor. Nevertheless, it is a delightful production with interesting dialogue and a dark, ominous and foreboding first Papal Speech.
My recommendation is donâ??t miss a chance to see â??The Young Pope.â??

The Young Pope is a joint Sky, HBO, CANAL+ production and will be broadcast on Sky Atlantic in 5 countries: in Italy from October 21st, in UK, Germany, Ireland and Austria from late October, and in France on CANAL+ from late October. Early indications for the US market is February 2017.

Category

1. Venice International Film Festival

Tags

1. 73rd Venice International Film Festival
2. Annamaria Sambucco
3. Cecele De France
4. Diane Keaton
5. Film
6. Film Festival
7. Filmmaking
8. Jude Law
9. Laura Rosenthal
10. Luca Bigazzi
11. Paolo Sorrentino
12. Silvio Orlando
13. The Young Pope

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