

Fading Gigolo: Woody Allen Returns to Acting in Film by John Turturro

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Written and directed by the prolific Italian-American actor, *Fading Gigolo* is the story of two penniless men who turn to the gigolo business to survive. The cast included Sofia Vergara and Sharon Stone.

The last time Woody Allen appeared in someone else's film was back in 2000, when he starred in Alfonso Arau's comedy *Picking Up the Pieces* and did an uncredited cameo in Peter Askin and Douglas McGrath's *Company Man*.

The last time he cast himself in his own film was back in 2006 for *Scoop* and soon he will appear onscreen in his next film, *Nero Fiddled*, which SPC will release on June 22, 2012. The film, shot on location in Rome, perceived to have been a modern-day take on Giovanni Boccaccio's *The*



Decameron, is a romantic comedy starring, along Mr. Allen himself, Roberto Benigni, Antonio Albanese, Riccardo Scamarcio, Ornella Muti, Penelope Cruz, Judy Davis, Alec Baldwin and Jesse Eisenberg.

The film will be in Italian theaters on April 20, 2012 with the title *A Roma con amore* (In Rome with Love) and Allen will be starring opposite Judy Davis as a couple whose daughter is about to marry an Italian. The director has so described his storyline to the press "I can't play the love interest anymore, which is tremendously frustrating. My wife and myself go to Rome because our daughter is going to marry an Italian boy that she met there, and we go over to meet him and meet his family, and what ensues. The film is very broadly funny."

Allen, who is coming off an Oscar win for writing Sony Pictures Classics' *Midnight in Paris*, has now been cast in John Turturro's newest film, *Fading Gigolo*. i-Italy had the chance to meet Mr. Turturro at a Gala organized by the Scuola d'Italia Guglielmo Marconi for its anniversary and the director did not confirm or deny the news, he simply admitted they are "talking about it."

"Based on a script by Turturro, who will also direct, the story is about two penniless best friends who are growing old and become gigolos to make some money. Allen begins to pimp out Turturro, but things go wrong when the folks in the Hasidic Jewish community where they live begin to suspect them (although they start using the pseudonyms Virgil and Bongo) and Turturro falls for a Jewish widow. The actress playing the widow has not been cast yet, but deals have been made with Sofia Vergara and Sharon Stone. Variety reports that "Stone will play Allen's dermatologist who hires Turturro to sleep with her, while Vergara is expected to play another wealthy client who's bored with her marriage and wants to have a threesome with Turturro and Stone."

"It's a pretty outlandish premise, but it's not hard to see why Allen signed on. The guy has an impeccable sense of humor and pairing him with Turturro seems like a perfect match," Adam Chitwood wrote in for Collider.com while NME Magazine writes "Allen rarely appears in films he is not directing, so his casting is considered a coup for Turturro."

According to Indiewire "casting Allen is a smart bid to brand *Fading Gigolo* to the smart comedy crowd. Italian-American Turturro has delivered four indie films to date, all of them well-reviewed, none of them commercial, from the superb semi-autobiographical *Mac* and Cannes entry *Illuminata* to outrageously funny musical *Romance & Cigarettes*, which starred Susan Sarandon, Kate Winslet and James Gandolfini and fell victim to the end of United Artists. *Romance & Cigarettes* was such a hit in Italy that financiers hired Turturro to direct a doc, *Passione*, showcasing the music, old and new, of Naples."

Passione also was a great success, a film filmmaker Magazine describes as "A musical adventure that chronicles the world of contemporary Neapolitan music from top to bottom, a rare film in our cynical times that embraces large gestures, outsized emotions and the lure of melodrama and sentimentality."

Turturro played a writer in Allen's 1986 pic *Hannah and Her Sisters*, and the two were featured in *Company Man*. Production of *Fading Gigolo* is still to be decided, Mr. Turturro mentioned the spring or the fall. No matter when, the people of New York City will find out firsthand as the city will welcome production.

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